

# LIKKUTEI SICHOS

AN ANTHOLOGY OF TALKS

by the  
**Lubavitcher Rebbe**  
**Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson**

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# LIKKUTEI SICHOS

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF TALKS

RELATING TO THE WEEKLY SECTIONS OF THE TORAH AND  
SPECIAL OCCASIONS IN THE JEWISH CALENDAR

by the  
**Lubavitcher Rebbe**  
**Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson**

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Volume II: *Shemot*

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In English rendition  
with Introduction and Notes  
by  
**Jacob Immanuel Schochet**

PEKUDEI

פקודי

A

I. Every word, indeed every letter, in Torah in general and in Scripture in particular, is precise and considered.<sup>a</sup> Many *halachot* are derived from single words or even single letters in the Torah.

Nonetheless, we find in the *parshiyot* of *Vayakhel* and *Pekudei* a repetition of the detailed description of the vessels of the *mishkan* and the priestly garments which had already been described in greatest detail in the earlier *parshiyot* of *Terumah* and *Tetzaveh*.

Why this repetition? The Torah could have stated very briefly that the Jewish people made the vessels of the *mishkan* and the garments of the *kohanim* 'as the Eternal had commanded Moses'<sup>b</sup> and thus avoided dozens of verses!

II. Many *halachot* are not stated explicitly in the Torah and are derived from single letters. This is so because since all these *halachot* can be derived from an extra word or letter in the Torah, any explicit statement is superfluous.

This is also the reason why many laws are merely alluded to in the *Mishnah* while they are discussed at length

a. [See *Sanhedrin* 99a; *Zohar* III:149a-b. Maimonides, *Principles of the Faith*, Principle VIII, and *Moreh Nevuchim* III:50. Nachmanides, Introduction to his Torah-commentary. Adding or omitting even a single letter thus renders a Torah-scroll unfit for use; see *Eruvin* 13a; Nachmanides, *ad. loc.*; Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh De'ah, sect. 274. Cf. Introduction to the English translation of *Lik. Sichot*, Bereishit, notes 13-14.]

b. [This phrase occurs anyway numerous times in *Pekudei*, at the completion of every part; cf. further on, sect. VIII.]

in the *Gemara*.<sup>1</sup> Compared to the *Gemara*, the *Mishnah* is extremely brief. If, therefore, one can derive laws from allusions in a *Mishnah*, because of its peculiar style and precise idiom, any elaboration there would be superfluous. The same applies to the *Gemara* relative to the *rishonim* (early authorities), and to the *rishonim* relative to the *acharonim* (later authorities).

This premise increases the difficulty of the question posed: the whole description of the work of the *mishkan* in *Vayakhel* and *Pekudei* would seem to be superfluous wording.

III. The answer can be found along the lines that a similar difficulty is resolved. In *parshat Nasso*<sup>c</sup> the Torah repeats the offerings of the princes twelve times, with all the details, notwithstanding the fact that they were all identical. Why could it not say that every prince brought the same offering as his predecessor?

The answer given there is that every prince achieved altogether different purposes, as alluded in the *Midrash* on *parshat Nasso*.<sup>2</sup> The Torah could not, therefore, state that one prince brought the same as another, for each one effected something different.

IV. The question about the *sidrot* of *Vayakhel* and *Pekudei* can be answered the same way.<sup>d</sup>

The *mishkan* about which G-d instructed Moses, as described in *Terumah* and *Tetzaveh*, and the *mishkan* constructed by the Jewish people, as described in

1. See *Ta'anit* 21a. Maimonides, Introduction to his *Mishnah*-commentary, *s.v.* achar kach raah [in *ed.* Kapach, *s.v.* veraah shelo lehazkir; in the Arabic-Hebrew edition, p. 33].

c. [Numbers 7:12ff.]

2. *Bamidbar Rabba*, ch. 13-14. See *Torah Or*, Bereishit, p. 8b. *Likutei Torah*, Berachah, p. 98c.

d. [Cf. *Derashot ibn Shu'iv*, *Pekudei*, p. 34d; and *Or Hachayim* on Exodus 39:1.]

*Vayakhel* and *Pekudei*, refer to two separate tabernacles. Our sages thus speak of 'a *mishkan* below and a *mishkan* above.'<sup>3</sup> That is why all details were enumerated for a second time.

More specifically: the first account of the vessels of the *mishkan* and the priestly garments (in *Terumah* and *Teztaveh*) speaks of instructions that were (a) spoken by G-d, and (b) spoken to Moses.

The special meaning of this, especially in our context, is threefold:

a) Moses, who heard and received the instructions, is a soul of *Atzilut*.<sup>e</sup> Even as he was here below, in this world, he remained as in the World of *Atzilut* itself, as our sages expressed it: 'The *Shechinah* speaks out of his throat.'

All souls are, in the ultimate sense, from *Atzilut*, but only in terms of their<sup>4</sup> roots. When we speak of souls of *Atzilut*, however, it means that even here below they remain on the level of *Atzilut*.

To be sure, there is a distinction between the souls and the *kelim* of *Atzilut*. Thus it is stated in *Igeret*

3. *Bamidbar Rabba* 12:12; and elsewhere.

e. [Cf. *Tanya*, ch. 42. Though it was mentioned earlier that the soul of Moses was of the world of *tohu* (see above, *Tetzaveh*, note dd; *Vayakhel*, note z), thus transcending *Atzilut*, we must distinguish between soul on its level of manifestation, the immediate root or source of the soul, and the ultimate root or source of the soul (as, e.g., stated even here, in the following paragraphs, that 'all souls are, in the ultimate sense, from *Atzilut*,' though on the proximate level 'most souls are from the worlds of *Beriah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*'). In this sense, then, the soul of Moses had its root in *tohu*, but it was invested in its body from a level in *Atzilut*. For a detailed (albeit extremely technical) discussion of the soul and levels of Moses, as dealt with in the texts of the Kabbalah and Chassidut, see *Lik. Sichot*, vol. VI, pp. 244-254.]

f. [*Zohar* III:232a and 306b; cf. *Shemot Rabba* 3:15 (and *Radal* there). The significance of this statement is that Moses was on a level of total self-negation before G-d to the point of being absorbed in Divinity, thus becoming a passive tool, as it were, for the speech of the *Shechinah*. See *Tanya*, ch. 34; *Igeret Hakodesh*, sect. XXV.]

4. See *Likkutei Sichot* [Eng.] Vol. I, Lech Lecha, sect. III [pp. 31-32].

*Hakodesh*<sup>5</sup> that '[the souls of *Atzilut*] already emerged and became separated from the *kelim*.'<sup>8</sup> Nonetheless they remain on the level of *Atzilut*.

b) The manner in which Moses received the instruction and prophecy was, as Scripture says, 'and there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses.'<sup>6</sup> This entails two aspects: i) Moses retained his normal state in the face of the prophetic manifestation,<sup>7</sup> unlike all other prophets, and ii) the prophecy of Moses was on a level of *zeh* – meaning *this is*, as opposed to the level of *koh* (meaning *like this*).<sup>h</sup> In other words, with all the prophets their physical body interfered even with a manifestation on the lower level of *koh*, but with Moses his body was a vessel even for the higher level of *zeh*.<sup>i</sup>

c) The Divine instruction was received on Mount

## 5. Section XX.

g. [Every level divides into *orot* and *kelim* – 'lights' (the infinite core or essence) and 'vessels' (the external, relatively finite aspects or 'bodies' in which the *orot* are vested and contained); see *Mystical Concepts in Chasidism*, ch. V, for a detailed explanation of these terms. The *kelim* are in effect the lowest degrees on each level. As the souls of *Atzilut* emerge from the *kelim* of *Atzilut*, and are separated from them, it would seem that perhaps they lose the manifest character of *Atzilut*. Thus it is stated that this is not the case.]

## 6. Deuteronomy 34:10

## 7. Maimonides, *Hilchot Yessodei Hatorah* 7:6.

[All prophets, when prophecy came upon them, were filled with fear and consternation, and became physically weak. Not so Moses, of whom Scripture says, 'As a man speaks to his neighbor' (Exodus 33:1); that is, just as a man is not startled when he hears the words of his fellow-man, so was the mind of Moses in comprehending the words of prophecy, and he remained completely in his normal state. See also *Zohar* I:171a; *ibid.* III:133a and 268b; *Sifre Zutta* on Numbers 12:8 (ed. Horowitz, p. 276) and cf. above, *Va'eira*, notes 1-2.]

h. [*Sifre*, and Rashi, on Numbers 30:2. *Zeh* means *this is*, i.e., the actual words or vision (see above, *Va'eira* note 2), while *koh* means by way of allegory. The implication is that Moses heard, comprehended and transmitted the actual words of G-d, while for other prophets it was by means of allegory. Cf. *Yevamot* 49b; *Vayikra Rabba* 1:14; *Zohar* I:171a; *et passim*. See also Numbers 12:8, and Rashi there; *Hilchot Yessodei Hatorah* 7:6.]

i. [*Zohar* III:268b]

Sinai,<sup>8</sup> when Moses was on a level higher than normally when on earth. This is seen clearly in the fact that there 'he did not eat bread and did not drink water,'<sup>9</sup> notwithstanding that even after Moses came down from the mountain his eating and drinking differed also from that of all other people.

It follows, then, that the *mishkan* of that context [G-d's words to Moses] was not made of material gold and silver, etc.<sup>10</sup>

The vessels of the sanctuary and the priestly garments described in *Vayakhel-Pekudei*, however, were made i) by people, most of whose souls are from the worlds of *Beriah*, *Yetzirah* and *Asiyah*;<sup>11</sup> ii) here below on earth; and iii) of physical gold, silver, copper, and so forth.

V. There is thus a great difference between the 'potentiality' [of the celestial *mishkan*] and the 'actuality' [of the terrestrial *mishkan*]. Nonetheless, the ultimate Will of G-d, and His promise of 'I shall dwell in their midst,'<sup>j</sup> became fulfilled only in the physical *mishkan* of *Vayakhel-Pekudei*, and not in the spiritual *mishkan* 'shown to you on the mountain,' as stated there in the *Midrash*.<sup>3</sup>

For 'the Holy One, blessed be He, desired to have an

8. *Zohar* II:159a. See also *Bamidbar Rabba* 12:8. It appears that the interpretations in these sources differ from the *Gemara* (*Menachot* 29a). As for the issue raised in *Iyun Ya'akov* (on *Menachot* 29a, and also *Berachot* 55a), that question is both asked and answered in the *Zohar* there.

9. Exodus 34:28

10. See *Bamidbar Rabba* 12:8: 'The Holy One, blessed be He, showed Moses on high red fire, green fire, black fire, and white fire . . .'

11. *Torah Or*, *Mishpatim*, p. 74c.

[See above, *Tetzaveh*, note 11.]

j. [Exodus 25:8]

abode specifically in the lower worlds,<sup>k</sup> and it is explained in *Tanya*<sup>12</sup> that this refers to 'this [material] world, lower than which there is none.' Though this world is material and gross, a world of doubled and redoubled darkness — as described in detail in *Tanya* — still, and precisely for that reason, the ultimate intent is realized only in this world.

From this perspective we can better understand the problem raised with regard to the precious stones which the *nesi'im* (princes) donated for the sanctuary: these precious stones came about in a miraculous way,<sup>13</sup> how then could they be used for making the priestly garments?' After all, the whole purpose of the *mishkan* and *mikdash* is that it be made specifically of material substances, thus only objects that are natural — to the exclusion of anything wrought through miracles!

VI. There is here a moral applying to us. No one should ever feel disheartened, thinking to himself: "As I am aware of my own lowly status, how can I fulfill the Divine Will — and do it in a way that is in accord with His ultimate intent?" To be sure, we live in the intense darkness of the bitter *galut*. Nonetheless, we must keep in mind that if there is only the attitude of *nediv lev* (willingness of the heart), i.e., involvement with Jewish warmth and heart, the Almighty assures us that 'I will dwell in

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k. [*Tanchuma*, Nasso:16]

12. Chapter 36.

13. *Yoma* 75a.

[The word *nesi'im* may mean either princes, or clouds (as in Proverbs 25:14). According to tradition, heavenly clouds (*nesi'im*) brought down precious stones and pearls to the Israelites in the desert. These were gathered by the princes who later donated from these the stones required for the priestly garments (or according to another version, they were gathered by Moses). See *Targum Yehonathan*, *Midrash Hagadol*, and R. Bachaya, on Exodus 35:27; and *Shemot Rabba* 33:8.]

l. [Cf. *Torah Sheleimah*, Vayakhel, p. 27, note 98.]

their midst,' He will help us realize and achieve the ultimate intent.<sup>m</sup>

VII. The two tabernacles are alluded to in the beginning of the *parshah*: 'These are the enumerations of the *mishkan*, the *mishkan* of testimony.'<sup>n</sup> Scripture should have stated simply: 'These are the enumerations of the *mishkan* of testimony;' why the double meaning of *mishkan*? This alludes to the two tabernacles, the *mishkan* which G-d showed to Moses and the *mishkan* constructed by Israel.<sup>o</sup>

The term *eidut* (testimony) is not mentioned with the first *mishkan*, the one shown by G-d, but only with the second one which was made by Israel.

*Eidut* (testimony) relates specifically to something that is concealed. When something is known and obvious there is no need for testimony. (This is seen in the law about sanctifying [declaring] a new month. Generally, witnesses must appear before the *bet din* [court]. If, however, the members of the *bet din* themselves have seen the new moon, they can sanctify the new month without any further witnesses, so that 'it should not appear as if hearing carries greater weight than seeing.')<sup>14</sup> Moreover, for something that is bound to come to light eventually

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m. [Cf. *Shemot Rabba* 33:8: When the Holy One, blessed be He, instructed Moses concerning the *mishkan*, he said: 'Lord of the Universe! Will the Israelites be able to construct it?' The Holy One, blessed be He, replied: 'Even any one individual Israelite will be able to make it;' as it is said 'of every man whose heart makes him willing . . .' In other words (as interpreted by *Yefei To'ar*), if there is but the willingness of heart anyone can have all the materials necessary, for G-d shall provide them, as the *Midrash* continues to explain how the precious stones came down in a miraculous way. Cf. also above, *Vayakhel*, end of sect. VI.]

n. [Exodus 38:21]

o. [*Zohar Chadash*, beg. of *Tikunim*, 93c. See also *Tanchuma*, *PeKudei*:1-2; and above, note 3.]

14. *Rosh Hashanah* 25b

there is no need for full, legal testimony.<sup>15</sup> The whole purpose of testimony is for something concealed.

This explains why the term *eidut* is mentioned only with the second *mishkan*, and for two reasons:

a) The second *mishkan* was a human construction and composed of physical materials in which Divinity is not manifest. Thus it is in need of 'testimony.' The first *mishkan* is altogether spiritual, evidently so, and thus does not require any testimony.

b) It is only through the physical *mishkan* that one elicits a manifestation of the Divine Essence, something beyond all forms of revelation, thus something altogether concealed.<sup>16</sup>

The *mishkan* which G-d showed Moses was a source of Divine revelations, effusions, illuminations and influences; but there was not a manifestation of the Divine Essence. In the physical *mishkan* constructed by Israel, however, there was the fulfillment of 'I shall dwell in their midst' — relating to the Essence of G-d.

The *mishkan* constructed by Israel was made of physical materials. They used gold, silver and copper in the literal sense and made a *mishkan* of these. Precisely this fact brought about that 'the essence of the *Shechinah* came to be in this lowly world'<sup>p</sup> — and as explained in Chassidut, the very essence of the *Shechinah*, and not just some forms of revelations.<sup>17</sup>

15. *Rosh Hashanah* 22b.

[Full, legal testimony requires at least two witnesses (Deuteronomy 19:15). In the case of something that is bound to come to light later, that is, the truth will ultimately be established in any case, we accept even the word of a single witness. We proceed on the presumption that under such circumstances people will not lie. Thus, if a man were to come (even from the other end of the world) and say: 'The *bet din* have sanctified the new moon,' his word is taken.]

16. See *Sefer Hamaamarim* 5700, p. 51

p. [*Shir Rabba* 5:1; see also *Bereishit Rabba* 19:7 etc.]

17. See *Bati Legani* 5711 [*Sefer Hamaamarim-Bati Legani*, p. 29-30.]

VIII. We can now understand a statement in *Yerushalmi*:<sup>18</sup>

'Man recites eighteen benedictions every day . . . corresponding to the eighteen mentions of '[As the Eternal did] command' written in the section of the second *mishkan*.' The *Yerushalmi* refers to the *mishkan* of *Terumah-Tetzaveh* as the first (the spiritual) *mishkan*, and to the *mishkan* of *Vayakhel-Pekudei* as the second (the physical) *mishkan*. Thus, corresponding to the eighteen times that 'as the Eternal did command' is mentioned with the second *mishkan*, we recite the eighteen benedictions [of the daily *Amidah*].

The *Yerushalmi* notes on the spot that actually there appear to be nineteen mentions of 'did command,' and explains that we count "only from 'And with him was Aholiab the son of Achisamach'<sup>p\*</sup> to the end of the book.'" In other words, we count these references only as they are mentioned with Betzalel and Aholiab together, but not where it is mentioned with Betzalel alone. This raises several questions: a) What is the relationship between the eighteen benedictions of the *Amidah* and the eighteen mentions of 'as the Eternal commanded'? b) Why is prayer connected specifically to the second *mishkan*? c) Why do we count the eighteen mentions in relation to the eighteen benedictions only as they appear with the inclusion of Aholiab?

There is another problem: the word *tefilah* (prayer) has a meaning of union, conjunction<sup>19</sup> (as in '*hatofel* — if one plasters a clay vessel'<sup>q</sup> [to keep it together]); and in

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18. *Berachot* 4:3

<sup>p\*</sup>. [Exodus 38:23]

19. *Torah Or*, *Terumah*, p. 79d

<sup>q</sup>. [*Kelim* 3:5. Actually the word *hatofel* there is spelled with a *tet*, while *tefilah* is spelled with a *tav*; but a) the root-word is generally taken to be the same, with the spelling interchangeable; see *Aruch Hashalem*, s.v. *tatal-tefilah*; and moreover b), *Tikunei Zohar* 47:84b already notes the two

'*naftulei* . . . *niftalti* — by bonds from G-d have I been joined');<sup>r</sup> for *tefilah* means the union and conjunction of the supplicant to Divinity. This principle would seem more closely related to Betzalel by himself, as he is from the tribe of Judah, than to Aholiab who is of the tribe of Dan; for a) the tribe of Judah was the most prominent of the tribes (as the *Midrash*<sup>20</sup> states that Betzalel and Aholiab were singled out to construct the *mishkan* because one represented the most prominent of the tribes and the other the lowliest of the tribes); b) the name Judah is an idiom of *hoda'ah* (praise; thanksgiving),<sup>s</sup> which is especially relevant to the context of the *Amidah*,<sup>21</sup> for the attachment of prayer can be achieved only by means of *hoda'ah* and *bitul* (self-negation). Why then is this related to Aholiab?

IX. The *Zohar*<sup>22</sup> comments on the verse, 'A ladder set *artzah* (in the earth) and its top reaching *hashamaymah* (into heaven)': the ladder refers to prayer. The *Midrash*<sup>23</sup> comments on the same verse that the ladder refers to Sinai, i.e., Torah. Chassidut explains the difference between Torah and *tefilah*: Torah means to draw down from Above, and prayer means to elevate, from below upwards.

'A ladder set up *artzah* and its top reaching *hashamaymah*' in the context of prayer means that the ladder is *artzah* (lit. to the earth). It is not simply *be'aretz*

spellings for *tafal* and emphasizes that *tefilah* is to be related to *tafal* with a *tav*. See the glossary notes on *Sefer Hamaamarim* 5709 (Kuntres 64), p. 79.]

r. [Genesis 30:8. See there Rashi, and also *Targum Onkelos* and *Targum Yehonathan*.]

20. *Shemot Rabba* 40:4

s. [See Genesis 29:35, and Rashi there.]

21. *Torah Or*, Vayechi, p. 45a; *Yehudah Atah* 5688 [*Sefer Hamaamarim* 5688, p. 46.]

22. *Zohar* I:266b, and III:306b. *Tikunei Zohar* 45:83a.

t. [Genesis 28:12]

23. *Bereishit Rabba* 68:12

(in the earth, but *artzah* — drawn to the earth,<sup>24</sup> to earthliness, deep in the earth.<sup>25</sup> It is man's task to take the lowliest things, even those that are 'beneath the earth,' and to elevate them to be not only *bashamayim* (in the heavens) — i.e., *makifim*,<sup>u</sup> but much higher — *shamaymah*, signifying *makifim* to the *makifim*, and indeed still higher — *hashamaymah*, signifying the very Essence. That is how high material entities must be elevated.

This is, as stated, an *avodah* of sublimation, 'from below upwards,' analogous to the work of a servant. It may generate delight, but its character is the *avodah* of a servant.<sup>v</sup>

To be sure, man receives special strength from Above to achieve this, as indicated in the phrase 'and Laban rose early in the morning,'<sup>v\*</sup> i.e., in the morning there is a radiation of the Supreme whiteness<sup>26w</sup>

24. See *Keli Yakar* on this verse.

25. Cf. *Bereishit Rabba* 68:12 — 'set up *artzah* — as it says "and they stood at the nether part of the mount" (Exodus 19:17), and *ibid.* 13 — 'as it says "He set it up in the plain of Dura" (Daniel 3:1).'

u. [*Makifim* (encompassing; encircling) refers to supreme levels and influences which transcend revealed or immanent levels and influences. They are from the supreme aspect of the Divine transcendence. See *Tanya*, ch. 48.]

v. [In other words, this is an *avodah* of working with physical objects to endow them with a spiritual quality which they do not have independently. Moreover, this is done analogous to the work of a servant — which is not necessarily gratifying to the servant, but undertaken because the Master's ends are attained. The servant may in fact enjoy his work, but essentially he performs it as a duty.]

v\*. [Genesis 31:55]

26. *Torah Or*, Vayeitze, p. 24c.

w. [Laban is a personal name, but also has the meaning of whiteness. On the mystical level, then, in the context of the aspects of holiness, Laban signifies the 'supreme whiteness,' i.e., the attribute of *chessed* (R. Joseph Karo, *Magid Mesharim*, Vayeitze-2). Our verse thus is interpreted in the context of the premise stated in *Zohar* II:21b, that in the morning there is a radiation of the supreme whiteness; that is, in the morning the Divine attribute of mercy and kindness prevails and extends itself to the world, making the morning a most auspicious time. Cf. *Zohar* II:21a-b; *ibid.* 63a and 81a; *et passim*.]

Nonetheless, this is merely the granting of a special ability while the *avodah* itself is performed by man, 'from below upwards.'

In this context we can understand why prayer is related to the *second mishkan*, for both signify the same principle: the principle of taking material entities and transmuting them into a *mishkan* and dwelling for G-d.

X. Prayer, as noted, is an act of sublimation, 'from below upwards.'

This means that one must elevate even the lowliest things, and in accord with the well-known expression that 'even the boots must be taken along.'<sup>27</sup>

It is not enough, though, to take and elevate all of one's own soul-powers, including the lowly ones. The same principle applies also to the totality of the people. It is stated in *Peri Etz Chaim*,<sup>28</sup> and the *Alter Rebbe* quotes this in his *Siddur*, that before prayer one must take upon himself the *mitzvah* of 'Love your fellow-man like yourself.'<sup>x</sup> Each one must include himself with everybody else. One must elevate even such as are on a level of *Aholiab* — i.e., as stated in the *Midrash*, the lowliest of the tribes.

After all, that is the meaning of 'Love your fellow-man like yourself.' The *Baal Shem Tov* taught: The *mitzvah* of *ahavat Yisrael* (love of a fellow-Jew) relates even to someone at the other end of the world whom one has never seen or had any relationship with.<sup>y</sup>

Before one is ready to pray there are a number of preparations to follow. These preparations generally in-

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27. See *sichah* of *Simchat Torah* 5701, sect. 9 (published in *Sefer Hamaamarim* 5710, p. 85f.)

28. *Sha'ar* III:ch. 2.

x. [Leviticus 19:18]

y. [See *Keter Shem Tov*, *Hossafot*, sect. 140. See there also sect. 139-147.]

dicate that man has divorced himself from everything mundane and is ready to stand before the Almighty.<sup>29</sup> Clearly then, they raise man to a very exalted level.

When one is thus ready to pray he may possibly think: 'There is no relationship between myself and someone who is not yet ready to pray, let alone someone who is still before any of the preparations, in other words, a lowly person.' Thus he is told that the *mitzvah* of *ahavat Yisrael* encompasses even a person at the other end of the world, i.e., the other end of his own spiritual world.

He is told, moreover, that the *mitzvah* of *ahavat Yisrael* encompasses even the sort of person 'he has never seen,' that is, a person who is not even at the level he was prior to his preparations to pray; 'and has never had any connection with,' that is, a person with whom he had nothing at all in common even before his own preparations, even at his own lowest level when 'his soul is (but) in his nostrils.'<sup>30</sup>

This concept is not limited to the *mitzvah* of *ahavat Yisrael* — which is the fundamental principle of the whole Torah.<sup>2</sup> It affects his *own* prayer and his *own* ascents. *Ahavat Yisrael* is a preparation and introduction to his own prayer.

In order to achieve an ascent one must raise from the lowest level, as in the familiar metaphor of using a lever to raise a building.<sup>31</sup>

29. See *Lik. Sichot*, vol. II, Matot-Massei, p. 349ff.

30. *Berachot* 14a; explained in *Or Hatorah-Bereishit*, vol. VI, p. 2039ff.

[‘Cease from a man whose breath (lit. *soul*) is in his nostrils, for how little is he to be accounted’ (Isaiah 2:22). The *Gemara* applies this verse to man prior to prayer. *Zohar Chadash*, Ruth, 90d, comments that when man’s soul is restored every morning it is initially only in his nostrils and will be settled in its normal place only after prayers. Cf. also *Zohar* II:192a; and Rav Hai’s interpretation of *Berachot* 14a, quoted in *Abudraham*, s.v. *dinei shemoneh esreh* (which accords with *Zohar Chadash*).]

z. [*Shabbat* 31a; *Tanya*, ch. 32.]

31. *Torah Or*, Bereishit, p. 4a.

By analogy, therefore, in his own soul he must take along not only the 'Betzael' of his soul but also the 'Dan,' the lowliest level. He must pray with all soul-powers together, to transmute all of them into a *mishkan* for G-d.

XI. This then is how the eighteen benedictions of the *Amidah* correspond to the eighteen times that 'as the Eternal commanded' is mentioned with the second *mishkan* in conjunction with Aholiab. For the ultimate intent is to transmute even the aspects of Aholiab into a *mishkan*. In prayer, too, one must elevate 'Aholiab' as well.

XII. In the *mishkan* there was a *hala'ah* (elevation; sublimation), from 'below upwards' (and especially by means of the sacrifices offered there which constitute one of the principal services of the *mishkan*). This effected a *hamshachah*, eliciting 'from above downwards' — as expressed in the words 'and I shall dwell in their midst' ('a pleasing odor').<sup>aa</sup> The *hala'ah* and *hamshachah*, in turn, effect that it be 'as [the Eternal] *tzivah* (commanded)': *tzivah* is an idiom of *tzavta* — company, alliance, relating to the union of physical beings and G-d's Essence, the union of creature and Creator.

This union is made possible by Moses (i.e., the element of Moses inherent in every individual).<sup>bb</sup> That is why Scripture states 'as the Eternal commanded Moses.'

The same principle applies to *tefilah*, prayer ('the prayers were instituted to correspond to the daily sacrifices').<sup>cc</sup> There must be *hala'ah* (sublimation; elevation of self), that he who prays is fully conscious that he

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<sup>aa</sup>. [A phrase continuously cited in the Torah with reference to sacrifices, and interpreted to mean 'a gratification of spirit before Me, that I commanded and My will was carried out;' *Sifre* on Numbers 15:7 and 28:8. Rashi on Exodus 29:18; *et passim*.]

<sup>bb</sup>. [See above, *Vayakhel*, note 23.]

<sup>cc</sup>. [*Berachot* 26b.]

must turn to no one but G-d. Thus he effects a *hamshachah*, drawing forth from above all he needs — manifestations of the Almighty healing the sick, blessing the years, and so forth.<sup>dd</sup> This *hala'ah* and *hamshachah*, in turn, effect the joining and unification of man and Divinity to the highest degree, as the *Amidah* concludes — *bashalom*, with peace.<sup>ee</sup>

(Adapted from the Sichot of Shabbat Parshat Vayakhel-Pekudei 5711 and 5718)

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XIII. From *parshat Pekudei* we proceed into *parshat Vayikra*.

The relationship between these two *parshiyot* is as follows. The last verses of *parshat Pekudei* speak of the *anan* (cloud) that was upon the *mishkan*. *Anan* signifies concealment, preventing Moses from entering the *ohel mo'ed* — 'And Moses was not able to come . . .'<sup>ff</sup> The subsequent *parshah* begins: 'And the Eternal called unto Moses . . .',<sup>gg</sup> — 'call' signifying revelation. Thus there was a revelation that follows upon concealment.

A revelation that follows concealment is superior to revelation by itself.

XIV. In man's *avodah*, the *avodah* of a revelation following upon concealment is the *avodah* of *teshuvah*: *teshuvah* follows after man had removed himself from G-d — a form of concealment; and *teshuvah* literally means *return* — the aspect of revelation.

In *teshuvah* — as in the revelation following upon concealment — there is the aspect of 'twofold for

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dd. [The specific requests made in the *Amidah*.]

ee. [Peace is the highest degree of union, for it harmonizes and joins together even opposite extremes; see *Igeret Hakodesh*, sect. XXX.]

ff. [Exodus 40:35]

gg. [Leviticus 1:1]

salvation,<sup>32</sup> and beyond that to the ultimate degree of *teshuvah* when 'premeditated sins are transmuted into merits'<sup>hh</sup> and 'darkness is converted into light.'<sup>ii</sup>

XV. This indeed is the meaning of the ruling that 'where *ba'alei teshuvah* (the penitent) stand, the perfectly righteous are unable to stand.'<sup>33</sup> *Tzadikim*, the righteous, have merits. This includes two levels: a) there is a *hamshachah* (drawing forth of the Divine effusions) by means of positive precepts, which is the aspect of 'do good';<sup>jj</sup> b) there is a *hamshachah* by means of the negative precepts (observing the prohibitions), but this is no more than a repulsion of evil<sup>kk</sup> and not a conversion of evil into good. On the level of an *avodah* related to revelations and manifestations there are restrictions. Evil remains evil and must be repulsed. *Teshuvah*, however, touches the very core of the soul, and above too — it reaches to the Divine Essence. It is beyond any restrictions. Even premeditated sins are transmuted into virtues.

This is the ultimate call which follows after concealment. It is not a mere repulsion and removal of the concealment, but 'the night shines like the day.'<sup>ll</sup>

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32. See above, end of *Ki Tissa*, sect. XVII.

hh. [*Yoma* 86b. See *Tanya*, ch. 7.]

ii. [See *Zohar* I:4a; *Tanya*, ch. 10 and 27.]

33. *Berachot* 34b. Maimonides, *Hilchot Teshuvah* 7:4; see glossary note on *Sefer Hamaamarim* 5709, p. 183. [Cf. above, *Ki Tissa*, note nn.]

jj. [Psalms 34:15: 'Depart from evil and do good.' See *Tanya*, ch. 23 and 37; *Igeret Hateshuvah*, ch. 1.]

kk. [See *Tanya*, ch. 24 and 37; *Igeret Hateshuvah*, ch. 1.]

ll. [Psalms 139:12. The night — signifying darkness and evil — will itself be transformed to shine like the day.]

To clarify the above paragraphs:

In man there are 248 organs and 365 blood-vessels by means of which the body functions. These 613 components are animated and able to perform their appropriate functions by virtue of 613 faculties or powers in the soul. (See R. Chaim Vital, *Sha'arei Kedushah* I:1. Cf. *Targum Yehonathan* on

XVI. This principle offers a lesson to everyone in his *avodah*. One must never despair, Heaven forbid, regardless of his status. On the contrary, the concealment itself makes it possible to achieve a superior revelation.

The same idea applies to generations also. A question has been raised: there have been worthier generations

Genesis I:27; and *Zohar* III:222b.) The 613 'organs' (or faculties) of the soul receive their vitality or sustenance from the Torah: there are 248 positive precepts corresponding to the 248 organs, and 365 prohibitions corresponding to the 365 blood-vessels. (*Zohar* I:170b. See also *Maccot* 23b; *Tanchuma*, *Tetze*:2.)

In this context, the *mitzvot* are metaphorically called the 'organs of the King' (*Tikunei Zohar* 30:74a; see also *Zohar* II:118a). The implication is that the performance of every *mitzvah* elicits a particular illumination or revelation of Divinity (the *hamshachah* spoken of in the *sichah*). The one performing the *mitzvah* enjoys a fresh insight or sensitivity to G-dliness, or, one may say G-d 'reveals' something of Himself appropriate to the *mitzvah*. There is a reciprocal interaction between the organs of the body performing the *mitzvah*, the 'organs' of the soul which animate their physical counterparts, and the 'organs' of the King.' (See on all that, *Tanya* ch. 4 and 51, and the references cited above in notes *jj* and *kk*.)

The orderly and systematic *avodah* of the *tzadik* is predictable, since it is based on Torah-prescription: he goes by the book. Inherent in this *avodah* is its limitation — a limitation of intellect or heart or physical action, since these are engaged in the *mitzvah* at hand. He moves from illumination to further illumination.

The *avodah* of the *ba'al teshuvah* is not orderly, gradual or predictable. His anguish at his past impels him to change radically, swiftly: he draws onto himself with a 'more intense longing of the heart and with greater forcefulness to approach the King . . .' (*Zohar* I:129b. Cf. above, Bo note 9). 'As his soul had been in a barren wilderness and in the 'shadow of death' . . . removed from the light of the Divine Countenance, his soul now thirsts [for G-d] even more than the souls of the *tzadikim*.' (*Tanya*, ch. 7).

The *ba'al teshuvah* 'jumps,' 'leaps,' rather than the gradual walk of the *tzadik*. More than the mind and heart are engaged: his core, the very essence of his soul breaks out of the bounds of habit and experience. He flees the darkness for the light. This is an experience unknown to the perfect *tzadik* who never sinned and consequently never experienced the remorse and yearning of a repentant soul. Thus it is said that the *ba'al teshuvah's* premeditated sins are transmuted into virtues (*Rosh Hashanah* 29a), since thereby he has attained this great love (*Tanya*, ch. 7). This is the meaning of the ruling that 'where *ba'alei teshuvah* stand, the perfectly righteous are unable to stand.'

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preceding our own, yet they were far from the Messianic redemption. How can we understand that *this* generation will merit the redemption? Surely the present generation is not better!<sup>mm</sup>

The answer, however, is — on the contrary! That is precisely the reason why [this generation will merit the redemption], and as explained above.

Just before daybreak sleep is deeper.<sup>nn</sup> Thus there must be a special effort not to oversleep, and to wake up for the morning-light until we merit to see 'the night shining like the day.'

(Adapted from the Sichot of Shabbat Parshat Pekudei 5717)



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<sup>mm</sup>. [Yevamot 39b]

<sup>nn</sup>. [Just before day-break, before the light of day is about to shine and prevail, the darkness of the night intensifies (*Zohar* II:46a; cf. *Midrash Tehilim* 22:4) casting a deeper sleep upon man, all in order to sustain its hold upon him. Thus one must make a special effort to overcome the darkness, and to anticipate and welcome the light.]

# BESURAS HAGEULO

## The Announcement Of The Redemption

### 70

It may be suggested that the Temple of the future ("it will be revealed and come from heaven already built and perfected"<sup>1</sup>) will first be revealed in the place "That the Temple traveled and settled there"<sup>2</sup> in the time of exile ("The House of our Rebbe in Bavel"<sup>3</sup>); from there it will be transported to its place in Yerushalayim.

...Perhaps it can be said that this is alluded to in the Rambam's choice of words (in *Hilchos Melech HaMoshiach*<sup>4</sup>) "And build the Temple **in its place**." For apparently [there is a question]: what is the need to inform us here that the building of the Temple will be **in its place**? On the other hand, why isn't the place specified: "And build the Temple in **Yerushalayim**?" [It must be] that "in its place" alludes as well to the place of the king Moshiach in the time of exile (**before** [the status of] "behold he is certainly Moshiach"). Therefore, while he is still **in exile** (for there he sits<sup>5</sup> and waits and anxiously looks forward to redeeming the Jewish people, and the Divine Presence with them in exile) the king Moshiach builds a Temple (in microcosm). This is an illustration and example of the Temple in Yerushalayim (like "the synagogue of He slipped and settled,"<sup>6</sup> "that the Temple traveled and settled there."). [This

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1. Rashi's commentary and Tosfos on Sukkah 41, end of side a and in other sources.

2. *Aruch*, entry Shaf (brought in the *Chiddushei Aggada MaHaRaSHA*, on *Megillah* 29a).

3. *Megillah* 29a. [In Hebrew, "Beis Rabbeinu Sh'B'Bavel". Translator's note.]

4. End of chapter 11.

5. See *Sanhedrin* 98a: "He is dwelling at the gate of Rome." [In the referenced passage, Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi asks Eliyahu HaNavi where Moshiach can be found. The quotation actually combines the end of the question ("Where is Moshiach dwelling?") and the answer ("At the gate of Rome"). Translator's note.]

6. *Megillah* 29a. [The phrase is a reference to the Divine Presence going into exile with the Jewish people: G-d's Presence slipped away from Jerusalem and

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settling serves] as a preparation for the future Temple, which will be revealed there first, and from there return (with G-d and the Jewish people) to Yerushalayim.

...Perhaps it can be said that the statement in the Midrash,<sup>7</sup> that "at the time when the king Moshiach comes, **he will stand on the roof of the Beis HaMikdash** [Temple] and announce to the Jewish people, saying, Humble ones, the time for your Redemption has arrived," refers to the roof of the Beis HaMikdash which is **the Temple in microcosm** outside the land,<sup>8</sup> which takes the place of the Temple in Yerushalayim ("The Temple traveled and settled there"). [This may be said] because after the future Temple is revealed and descends to the earth below, there is no need **to announce** to the Jewish people that "the time for your Redemption has arrived."

...The above can be applied to "The House of our Rebbe in Bavel" **of our generation**, the house (the synagogue and study hall) of my sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation:

...In this generation, the last generation of exile and the first generation of Redemption, "our actions and Divine service during the time of exile"<sup>9</sup> to make the lands of the nations into the land of Israel even in **the lowest possible place**, that is, **the lower hemisphere** (where the Torah was not given<sup>10</sup>) has been concluded

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*settled in Bavel. Translator's note.]*

7. *Yalkut Shimoni, Yeshayahu, remez 499.*

8. Accordingly, the expression "He stands on the roof of the Beis HaMikdash" becomes clarified; that "roofs... do not become sanctified" (Rambam, Hilchos Beis HaBechirah, chapter 6, halacha 7). Hence this alludes to the lands outside of Israel in comparison to the holiness of the land of Israel.

9. *Tanya*, beginning of chapter 37.

10. See *Igros Kodesh of the Rebbe RaYaTZ*, vol. 2, p. 492 ff. See there for

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and completed. Through the elevation of the lowest possible place all the other lands of the nations are also elevated.<sup>11</sup> This [objective] is achieved through "**Beis Rabbeinu**" [Our Rebbe's House] in the lower hemisphere, from which light goes out to all the world, to make the whole world (until the furthestmost corner of the world) into the land of Israel. This is the concept that "In the future the land of Israel will extend into all the lands,"<sup>12</sup> and "In the future, Yerushalayim will extend over all the land of Israel."<sup>12</sup> For then there will be established a connection between all the synagogues and study halls throughout the entire world and the Beis HaMikdash. [This will occur] in the true and complete Redemption through our righteous Moshiach, the leader of the generation, who is the Moshiach (the Redeemer of Israel) of the generation. Further, and this is also essential, he is the leader of the Torah of Chassidus,<sup>13</sup> since through the spreading outward ("when your wellsprings spread forth," until there is nothing beyond, to all corners of the world) is achieved the coming of the king Moshiach.<sup>14</sup>

Therefore the greatness of "Beis Rabbeinu" can be understood. It is the essential "Temple in microcosm" of the final exile, "that the Temple traveled and settled there." Therefore, it is the actual place of the Temple of the future; not only that, but the future Temple will be revealed there, and from there return to Yerushalayim (as

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cross-references.

11. "As in raising the walls of a house, it is necessary to raise the lower beam and then the uppers beams will be raised automatically; this is not the case if one begins in the middle of the wall, one does not raise the lower beams" (*Torah Or Bereishis* 4, beginning of side a).

12. See *Sifrei Devarim* at the beginning, *Pesikta Rabbasi*, *Parshas Shabbos v'Rosh Chodesh*. *Yalkus Shimoni*, *Yeshayahu*, remez 503.

13. One should note that the Torah of Chassidus is the aspect of the Yechida in Torah (See the pamphlet concerning "On the essence of Chassidus), which is connected with the aspect of Yechida in Israel - the soul of our righteous Moshiach (*RaMaZ on Zohar* vol. 2, 40b and other sources).

14. *Igros Kodesh* of the *Baal Shem Tov - Kesser Shem Tov* at the beginning.

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mentioned above).

It may be added, that this concept is also alluded to in the name<sup>15</sup> of "Beis Rabbeinu" in our generation:

**"Rabbeinu"** [our Rebbe] - His two names alluded to the Redemption: His first name - Yosef - "And it shall come to pass that on that day, the L-rd shall **continue to apply** [yoseef] His hand a second time to acquire the rest of His people that will remain from Assyria and Egypt, etc. and from the islands of the sea, etc, and He shall **gather** [Asaf] the lost of Israel and the scattered ones of Judah He shall gather from the four corners of the earth."<sup>16</sup> His second name - Yitzchak - refers to the laughter and rejoicing that will be complete in the future Redemption, and which will be completed through our righteous Moshiach. Thus it is written,<sup>17</sup> "Then our mouths will be filled with laughter [S'chok]. It specifies "then," in the future,<sup>18</sup> when they will say to Yitzchak (specifically), "Because you are our father."<sup>19</sup>

And **Beis** (Rabbeinu) [**The House** of our Rebbe] - its number is seven hundred seventy.<sup>20</sup> The name by which "Beis Rabbeinu" is called by all Jews has been universally accepted to be this number,

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15. As is well-known, the name indicates the content and nature of the thing called with that name (*Tanya*, "*Shaar HaYichud v'HaEmunah*," end of chapter 1. See at length *Teshuvos u'Be'urim* (Kehos, 5734), section 1 and the cross references there).

16. *Yeshayahu* 11:11-12.

17. *Tehillim* 126:2.

18. Which is not the case during the time of exile, when "it is forbidden for an individual to be completely joyful [literally, fill his mouth with laughter] in this world, since it is written that "Then our mouths will be filled with laughter [we will be completely joyful]" (*Brochos* 31a).

19. *Yeshayahu* 63:16. Shabbos 89b.

20. One should note the customs of the leaders of the Jewish people, who learned allusions and lessons in Divine service from secular matters as well (for example, the number of wagons in the train, which is incidental, and all the more

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"770."<sup>21</sup> This number in Gematria is "**Paratzta**," derived from "You shall spread out [U'Faratzta] west and east and north and south."<sup>22</sup> This indicates that from this house light will go forth to all four corners of the world, in a manner of **breaking through barriers**, so that all four corners of the world will be elevated to the status of the land of Israel. (In the future the land of Israel will extend to all the lands.) This means in particular that all the synagogues and study halls throughout the world will be established in the land of Israel and connected to the Beis HaMikdash in the true and complete Redemption through our righteous Moshiach. For about him it says,<sup>23</sup> "**You have broken barriers for yourself**," which our Sages of blessed memory explain<sup>24</sup> as follows: "This is Moshiach, about whom it is said,<sup>25</sup> "**The breaker** is come up before them."<sup>26</sup>

...In the completeness of the number seven (seven hundred and seventy) can also be found an allusion to the completeness of the Divine service of our Rebbe during his complete lifetime of **seven** decades, **seventy** years (5640-5710). His Divine service was concluded and completed in the lower hemisphere in the **seventh** decade (from the house whose number is seven hundred seventy). [This completeness] includes as well the extension of his Divine service in the years afterwards, through the **seventh** generation -

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so in regard to an established dwelling). This is particularly true in our case, when the number becomes **the name of** the house, as discussed below.

21. Whether in Hebrew, Yiddish or English - "Seven Seventy."

22. *VaYeitze* 28:14.

23. *VaYeshev* 38:29.

24. *Aggados Bereishis*, end of chapter 63. See *Bereishis Rabba*, end of chapter 85 and Rashi's commentary on it.

25. *Micha* 2:13.

26. One should note that "Beis Moshiach" in gematria is "Paratzta" (770). Consider this carefully. [*Gematria is the numerical analysis of words. Translator's note.*]

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"all sevenths are beloved."<sup>27</sup> Through this [extension] is accomplished the completion of our actions and Divine service during the time of exile in all seven continents of the world. Immediately and imminently "the L-rd shall **continue to apply [yoseef]** His hand a second time, etc., and He shall **gather [Asaf]** the lost of Israel, etc." In this way, "**You have broken** (in Gematria, seven hundred and seventy<sup>28</sup>) barriers for yourself," "The breaker is come up before them."

All this receives added emphasis in this last period:

The Divine service of spreading Torah and Judaism and the wellsprings outward from "Beis Rabbeinu" ("770") has continued and expanded with greater vigor and greater strength, even after (the last ten years of) his life in this world, for more than forty years (5710-5750). It has done so in a way that "G-d has given you a heart to know and eyes to see and ears to hear."<sup>29</sup> Thus we find that "Beis Rabbeinu" ("770") is a "fortress," "the mount that all mouths turn to,"<sup>30</sup> for more than a Yovel of years (5700-5750) - "Forever."<sup>31</sup>

[That Beis Rabbeinu is a "fortress"] receives further emphasis when we see with our own eyes the many Jewish people, and the increasing numbers of them, that come to "Beis Rabbeinu," with greater vigor and greater strength, - "in the multitude of people is the splendor of the king"<sup>32</sup> (which includes also "Who are the

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27. *Vayikra Rabba*, ch. 29:11. See the discourse *Basi L'Gani* of the year 5750 at the beginning. Also at length, the same-named discourse of 5751.

28. [*The letters of the word "Paratzta" have the numerical value of 770: Peh=80; Reish=200; Tzadik=90; Tuv=400. Translator's note.*]

29. *Tavo* 29:3.

30. *Brochos* 30a.

31. *Shmuel I* 1:22 and Rashi's commentary. *Yerushalmi Brochos*, chapter 4, halacha 1. See *Kiddushin* 15a. *Mechilta* and Rashi's commentary on *Mishpatim* 21:6.

32. *Mishlei* 14:28.

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kings? the rabbis,"<sup>33</sup> and specifically the leader (king) of the generation). [The increase] has made it necessary to enlarge and expand "Beis Rabbeinu" further. The enlargement and expansion must be in a way that breaks through barriers, "Paratzta" (770 in Gematria), as if constructing **a new building**.<sup>34</sup>

According to what was said previously concerning the pre-eminence of "Beis Rabbeinu Sh'b'Bavel" - that "the Temple traveled and settled there," and "this is the place of the actual Temple in the future," so that there the future Temple will be revealed and from there return to Yerushalayim - the great merit each and every Jew has in becoming a partner, physically and monetarily<sup>35</sup> (and all who increase are praiseworthy) in building "Beis Rabbeinu Sh'b'Bavel" is obvious. And this is like a preparation for the actual descent and revelation of the future Temple, imminently and immediately.

*(Pamphlet concerning "Mikdash M'at Zeh Beis Rabbeinu Sh'B'Bavel" - Sefer HaSichos 5752, p. 465)*

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33. See *Gittin* 62, end of first side. *Zohar*, vol. 3, 253b in *Raya Mehemna*.

34. Including the laying of the corner stone. [*On the eve of 18 Elul 5748 was arranged the laying of the cornerstone for (increasing and expanding) the synagogue and study hall of Lubavitch in Lubavitch. The Rebbe placed the cornerstone with his holy hands. Publisher's note.*]

35. Following the example of the Beis HaMikdash, that "everyone is obligated to build and support it themselves and with their money, etc." (*Rambam, Hilchos Beis HaBechirah*, chapter 1, halacha 12).

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