

# *Reflections of Redemption*

Essays on the Weekly Torah Reading and Moshiach,  
Based on the talks of the  
Lubavitcher Rebbe,  
Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson

Reprinted for Parshat Vayeitzei, 5782  
(Vol. 7)



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**IN LOVING MEMORY OF**

Horav **Schneur Zalman Halevi** עי"ה  
ben Horav **Yitzchok Elchonon Halevi** הי"ד  
**Shagalov**

Passed away on 21 Tamuz, 5766

Reb **Dovid Asniel** ben Reb **Eliyahu** עי"ה  
**Ekman**

Passed away on 5 Sivan - Erev Shavuot, 5765

Mrs. **Devora Rivka** bas Reb **Yosef Eliezer** עי"ה  
**Marenburg**

Passed away on the second day  
of Rosh Chodesh Adar, 5766

Reb **Yitzchok Moshe** (Ian)  
ben Reb **Dovid Asniel** עי"ה

**Ekman (Santiago, Chile)**

Passed away on the 24th day of Shevat, 5769

ת. נ. צ. ג. ה.

**AND IN HONOR OF**

Mrs. **Esther Shaindel** bas **Fraidel Chedva** שתחיל  
**Shagalov**

**DEDICATED BY**

Rabbi & Mrs. **Yosef Y.** and **Gittel Rochel** שיחי  
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by  
Dovid Yisroel Ber Kaufmann

# Vayeitze

## FROM A HUNDRED-FOLD TO A THOUSAND-FOLD

*The negotiations between Lavan and Jacob allude to the role of the non-Jew, and the blessing he will receive for assisting the Jew in learning Torah and observing mitzvos.*

*In the times of Moshiach, the non-Jew will also be blessed a thousand-fold.*

When discussing the Redemption and the coming of Moshiach, one of the most frequently asked questions concerns the role of the non-Jew. While almost everyone understands that the era of Moshiach will be one of universal peace, as Maimonides explains at length, there are still many unresolved issues. True, the “world will be filled with knowledge of G-d as the sea fills the ocean bed;” true Moshiach will “improve the entire world, motivating all the nations to serve G-d together;” true, “in that era there will be neither famine nor war, envy or competition, for good will flow in abundance and all delights will be as common as dust.” But the question remains: what is the role of the non-Jew? Or, more specifically, what will be the relationship of the nations to the Jewish people? That depends, of course, on what relationship the nations have to the Jewish people now, not just over the centuries, but most importantly in the current situation, in the last few moments before the coming of Moshiach.

Answers to these questions – and the definition of that relationship – can be found in this week’s Torah reading, *Vayeitze*. After the birth of Joseph, Jacob seeks to take his family and return home. His uncle Lavan wants Jacob to continue working for him. In the exchange that follows, as they negotiate over wages, G-d’s blessing is mentioned twice. First Lavan declares, “I have observed the signs, and the Lord has blessed me for your sake.” Jacob, for his

part, asserts that the disproportionate increase in Lavan's herds is due entirely to the blessing given for the sake of Jacob. "You know how I have served you, and how your cattle have fared with me. For you had little before I came, and it has increased abundantly; the Lord has blessed you wherever I turned."

The *Zohar*, the primary work of Kabbalah, discusses two opinions concerning the extent of the increase. By how much did Lavan's herd grow? According to one opinion, it was a hundred times; according to Rabbi Abba, it was a thousand times, since a blessing from Above never results in less than a thousand-fold expansion.

In order to understand why there are two opinions – and the significance of increasing a thousand-fold as opposed to a hundred-fold, we first have to understand the essential nature of a blessing.

In general, a blessing draws forth an emanation from the spiritual source of the one being blessed. What does this mean? A blessing increases one's well-being. One can have better health, a better livelihood, more stable relationships, or even greater understanding. One's spiritual capability may be concealed, its expression in this world blocked. A blessing, which is connected to the root, the spiritual origins of the individual, opens the spiritual pathway, so to speak. It actualizes potential, acting as a channel to enable possibilities – better health, better livelihood, etc. – to be realized. As a result, one's efforts lead to success or well-being; the previously hidden or obstructed inner reality becomes revealed. Since the physical world is a manifestation of the spiritual, the nature of one's soul, its spiritual source, determines the nature of one's physical life and thus the type and extent of a blessing. Factors such as physique, genetics, personality and environment determine one's physical strengths and weaknesses. So, too, the extent and effectiveness of a blessing depends on the source of one's soul.

We can now understand the difference of opinion concerning

how many times Lavan's flock multiplied. According to the first opinion, it was Lavan's blessing. It's just that Jacob had earned the right to be the transmitter, the vehicle through whom the blessing came down to Lavan. But the nature and form of the blessing was determined by the spiritual source of Lavan's soul. Accordingly, his flock increased a hundred-fold, for that number indicates perfection for Lavan, a complete realization of his spiritual potential.

On the other hand, according to Rabbi Abba the blessing belongs to Jacob. He brought it with him. Thus, even though he brought it to Lavan, the blessing comes from the root and source of Jacob's soul. Therefore the flock increased a thousand-fold, for the number one thousand is connected with the perfection of Jacob, the complete realization of his spiritual potential.

This observation leads to two questions: first, what is the reason for the association between the numbers and the individuals – one hundred for Lavan, one thousand for Jacob; second, why is the property of Lavan blessed through the merit of Jacob?

The second question can be answered easily: As Rashi points out, the world was created for the sake of Torah and for the sake of Israel. The purpose of creation in general is to assist the Jewish people in serving G-d, in observing the commandments. When a *tzaddik* such as the patriarch Jacob comes to a place and there serves G-d, the place and all its inhabitants fulfill their life's mission by helping the Jewish people be a "nation of priests."

As to the difference in numbers, it may be explained this way: The number one hundred indicates completeness within the realm of nature. Thus, a hundred-fold increase means that the natural blessing is complete and perfect. A thousand, on the other hand, indicates a perfection that reaches beyond the laws and boundaries of nature. In fact, the letters of the word for a thousand in Hebrew can be rearranged to form the word "wonder." Saying that something occurs a thousand times means that it is wondrous or

miraculous, that it goes beyond the normal limitations, that it is outside the common experience.

This is also the difference between the nations of the world and the Jewish people. The nations in and of themselves are confined to the natural order, while the Jewish people have a connection with G-d that goes beyond creation, enabling them to serve G-d in a miraculous manner.

The question is, do the nations of the world have a connection to the status of the Jewish people? When they fulfill their Divinely ordained task by assisting the Jewish people to observe the Torah, is their blessing limited to a hundred-fold, to the natural consequence? According to the first opinion of the *Zohar* quoted above, the blessing of the non-Jews is in fact limited, because their connection with the Jewish people, and hence G-dliness, is limited. However, according to Rabbi Abba, who says that Lavan's flock increased a thousand-fold, when the nations of the world do what G-d has commanded them, namely, obey the seven universal laws, the Noachide commandments, and thus enable the Jewish people to observe the Torah, then the nations can also approach the level of the Jewish people, receiving a blessing akin to the thousand-fold, miraculous blessing of the descendants of Jacob.

The lesson for our times is clear: first, although the Jewish people are dependent on the non-Jewish nations in which they live, the life and blessing of the non-Jew depends on the assistance rendered to the Jew. Recognizing this, the non-Jew will joyously help the Jew perform that which brings life and blessing, namely, observance of Torah and mitzvos. When this thousand-fold blessing will apply to the entire world, with the coming of Moshiach, then G-d will "turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the L-rd, to serve Him all together."

*(Based on Likkutei Sichos 20, pp. 136-143)*

IN LOVING MEMORY OF  
Mrs. **Chana** (Carrie) bas Reb **Meir** ע"ה **Greenberg**  
Passed away on 9 Sivan, 5781

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**Leah** (**Leslie**) ע"ה bas Reb **Mordechai Yonatan** שיחי **Clark**  
Passed away on 15 Kislev, 5757

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