

# *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 Pekudei, 5785  
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*Reflections*  
*of*  
*Redemption*

Essays on the Weekly Torah Reading and Moshiach,  
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by  
Rabbi Dovid Yisroel Ber Kaufmann, Ph.D

# Pekudai

## COUNTING TO REDEMPTION

*Counting connects the last Torah reading of Exodus to the first. Although the theme of Exodus is Redemption, it begins with an accounting of Jacob and his family and ends with an accounting of the donations and vessels of the Sanctuary. By connecting counting and Redemption, the limited and the limitless, the Torah reading teaches that the true goal is to reveal the Infinite within the finite.*

This, the last Torah reading of the book of *Exodus*, starts with an accounting of the contributions towards the Tabernacle, then details its vessels and utensils, concluding with its construction. The culmination of the process was the descent of the Divine Presence: “Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the L-rd filled the Tabernacle.” So powerful was the Divine Presence, that even Moses was not able to enter the Tent of Meeting.

Since Moses refrained from entering, G-d had to call him. Thus begins the book of *Leviticus*, with G-d calling Moses, inviting him inside the Tent of Meeting to hear about the sacrifices. The transition makes sense: the last half of *Exodus* describes the construction of the Tabernacle, and *Leviticus* begins by defining the sacrifices offered there.

However, *Exodus* doesn't end with this successful raising of the Tabernacle, indicated by the descent of the Divine Presence. Rather, it concludes by explaining the role of the Cloud of Glory. The presence or removal of this Cloud determined the movements of the Jewish people. When it rested on the Tabernacle, they encamped. When it was removed, they began to journey. The placement of the Cloud determined when they wandered and when they rested.

This interlude seems out of place. Apparently, the text flows smoothly without it – from building the Tabernacle in *Exodus* to using it in *Leviticus*. Why interrupt that? Besides, later on, in Numbers, the Torah describes all the journeys of the children of Israel. Why give an abbreviated version here, out of order?

There's another question: What connection does the end of *Exodus* have with the beginning? In general, the book of *Exodus* concerns the Redemption of the Jewish people from Egypt. Yet it begins with a list of names and ends with an accounting and inventory of the Tabernacle. In fact, the Hebrew name for the book, *Shmos*, means "names." The name of the last Torah reading, *Pekudai*, means accounting.

So *Exodus*, which focuses on the Redemption, begins and ends with numbering – whether the names of the children of Jacob or the money and material given to the Tabernacle. Accordingly, the concept of Redemption is connected with the concept of numbering.

But these seem to be contradictory concepts. Counting indicates limitation: there is precisely this amount of money, this number of people, etc. Redemption, on the other hand, indicates a departure from limits; one is not restricted by particular boundaries, physical or spiritual.

This paradox of combining the numbered and the innumerable we find within the two Torah readings as well. The first Torah reading names the children of Israel who went into Egypt, then says they multiplied and increased exceedingly, as if without limit. The last Torah reading begins with an accounting of the vessels of and donations to the Tabernacle, but concludes with the indwelling of the Divine Presence. G-d, the Infinite, comes to reside in the confines and structure of the Tabernacle.

So, the content of the first and last Torah readings of *Exodus* concern counting, a limitation, while the book as a whole concerns

Redemption, the limitless. And this paradoxical combination of the finite and infinite, of the numbered and the innumerable, is also found **within** the first and last Torah readings.

This pattern of the book of *Exodus* serves as a paradigm. The purpose of both the individual and of creation as a whole is Redemption, a level without limitations on spiritual growth and awareness. We must rise above the measurements and boundaries of the world. But this must be done **within** the world, within the confines and borders of physical existence. There must be a conjunction and union of the finite and the infinite, the limited and the limitless. The book of *Exodus*, which provides the prototype for Redemption and teaches the concept of Moshiach, exemplifies this fusion of opposites, of the infinite within the finite.

This strange truth about reality can be viewed a different way: Creation occurred because G-d desired a dwelling place in the lower realms. This requires two things: First, an actual **dwelling**, a place of G-dliness. Second, there must be a **lower realm**. The dwelling must be located in this physical realm, the lowest of all possible worlds.

The practical expression of these two aspects is the difference between the Jewish people and the world. The dwelling place of G-dliness is the Jewish soul, since, as the *Zohar* states, The Holy One, Blessed be He and Israel are entirely one. Where is this dwelling? Where are Jewish souls found? In the physical world, the lower realm. When a Jew is a proper dwelling, then the world does not prevent a revelation of G-dliness. Rather, G-dliness can now also reside within the domain of the physical.

The book of *Exodus* reveals that the world was created “for the sake of Torah and the sake of Israel.” It begins by counting the children of Israel, to show that they are united with and beloved by G-d. It concludes with the construction of the Tabernacle, the utilization of the physical world for a spiritual purpose.

This explains the connection between the beginning of *Exodus* and its conclusion. Redemption is the process of bringing the Divine Presence into the physical world, of revealing the Infinite within the finite. Hence, the connection between numbering the innumerable: At first, the children of Israel are named. But they are not limited to the seventy souls that entered Egypt, for the children of Israel, one with the Infinite, will be as countless as the stars. At the end, the articles associated with the Tabernacle are counted. The physicality of the world is emphasized. But because the Tabernacle is built by the Jewish people, the material is transformed into the spiritual, and the Divine Presence dwells there – openly.

What of our original question, why *Exodus* concludes with a digest of Israel's journeys? Is this not an interruption between the Tabernacle of *Exodus* and the sacrifices of *Leviticus*?

Actually, no. The sacrifices of *Leviticus* parallel the Cloud-directed journeys of *Exodus*. Both fulfill the purpose of the Tabernacle, built to house the Divine Presence. The Tabernacle was not a goal in itself; building it provided the means to transform the entire world into a Divine dwelling. G-dliness penetrates the world in one of two ways: by bringing the physical into the Tabernacle or by bringing the Tabernacle to a place currently devoid of the Divine Presence. Sacrifices subjugate the animal and materialistic to the spiritual. Journeying through the wilderness extends the dominion of holiness to locations as yet unredeemed.

Like our ancestors, we must be prepared to travel among the nations, into a spiritual desert. For the wanderings in the desert allude to the wandering among the nations during exile. Our travels in exile purify the environment, transforming the wilderness of the nations into a residence for the Tabernacle, a place where sacrifices can be offered.

The removal of the cloud from above the Tabernacle metaphorically implies a concealment of G-d's presence, a darkness in the world,

even a personal darkness. Yet when G-d's presence is removed, elevated beyond perception, it is also time to move forward with our Divine service. True, while traveling, while in exile, we have no direct perception of G-dliness. But only by transporting the Tabernacle can we reach our destination, bring the Redemption. For we do not roam aimlessly through exile, but move inexorably forward towards the days of Moshiach.

As in those days, when the Cloud of Glory rested on the Tabernacle at journey's end, so too will we, along with the world transformed by our mitzvos, see G-dliness revealed in the Third Holy Temple.

*(Based on Likkutei Sichos 16, pp. 475-480)*



## The Announcement Of The Redemption

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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

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

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

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 upper 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.

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,

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

"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.*]

"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

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.

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).

**IN LOVING MEMORY OF**

**Reb Moshe Boruch ben Reb Yakov ע"ה Fishman**

Passed away on Shabbat Parshat Vayakhel-Pekudei, 27 Adar, 5777

**ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.**

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