

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 Simchat Torah, 5784
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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

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AND IN HONOR OF

Mrs. **Esther Shaindel** bas **Fraidel Chedva** תחיל'
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by
Rabbi Dovid Yisroel Ber Kaufmann, Ph.D

V'zos Haberachah

CROWNING G-D THROUGH UNITY, JOY AND TORAH

The last Torah portion is always read on the holiday of Simchas Torah. Since all holiday readings concern that particular holiday, V'zos Haberachah should be about Simchas Torah. Simchas Torah culminates a month of holidays, completing the spiritual theme begun by Rosh Hashanah. That theme is the coronation of G-d as King. The reading for Simchas Torah emphasizes the same idea. Crowning G-d as King depends on the unity and oneness of the Jewish people. Unity of the Jewish people and the subsequent coronation of G-d as King over all the earth is the accomplishment of Moshiach. Simchas Torah emphasizes simchah – joy. An inner connection exists between joy and crowning G-d as King. There is a special joy on Simchas Torah.

Unity, joy and Torah bring Moshiach and crown G-d as King.

The last Torah portion, *V'zos Haberachah*, is always – and only – read on Simchas Torah. On holidays, we temporarily set aside the chronological order of Torah readings; instead we read a section that talks about that particular holiday. On Passover, for example, we read about the laws, customs and sacrifices of Passover. On Simchas Torah, then, the Torah reading should concern the basic themes and activities of Simchas Torah. In this sense, *V'zos Haberachah* is actually about Simchas Torah.

Simchas Torah is not a holiday unto itself, but the conclusion and culmination of a month of holidays. Since Rosh Hashanah is the first holiday and Simchas Torah the last, Simchas Torah must conclude what Rosh Hashanah began. That is, Simchas Torah exemplifies the theme of Rosh Hashanah, revealing its most mystical aspects and significance.

The basic theme of Rosh Hashanah is the coronation of G-d

as King over the Jewish people, and hence all creation. *V'zos Haberachah*, as the Torah reading of Simchas Torah, must also be about the acceptance of G-d's Kingship. Indeed, in *V'zos Haberachah* we find the verse that declares G-d's Kingship and describes how it will occur: "He was King in Yeshurun when the people's leaders gathered themselves together, and the tribes of Israel were united."

This verse contains two critical, interdependent concepts: the coronation of G-d, making G-d King, and the unity and oneness of the Jewish people. Its very phrasing emphasizes the mutual dependence of G-d's coronation and the unity of the Jewish people: "He was King . . . when . . . the tribes of Israel were united."

The connection of this verse, and thus both Simchas Torah and *V'zos Haberachah*, with Moshiach, is obvious. Moshiach will actualize the coronation of G-d. Indeed, that will be the central accomplishment of Redemption: universal recognition of G-d's Kingship, which will lead automatically to an elevation of spiritual perception. Thus we pray in the last paragraph of Aleinu: ". . . they will all take upon themselves the yoke of Your Kingdom. May You soon reign over them forever and ever, for kingship is Yours, and to all eternity You will reign in glory, as it is written in Your Torah: The L-rd will reign forever and ever. And it is said: The L-rd shall be King over the entire earth . . ."

But G-d's coronation cannot be complete until there is unity – *achdus* – among the Jewish people. Unity requires a nullification of the ego and acceptance of the "yoke of heaven." First, we must negate the sense of self-importance, the conceit and arrogance that arise when we focus on or stress differences. We cannot truly unite until the distinctions of wealth, power, intellect, experience, etc., become irrelevant. The distinctions, although they still exist, become irrelevant when everyone submits to the same authority. Surrendering autonomy creates equality.

When a king is crowned, all the people are equally subservient. The greatest minister and the simplest peasant stand in the same relationship with the king. Both shout “long live the king” in a total subordination of will. The differences arise only after the coronation, in the enactment and enforcement of decrees. But at the moment when they shout, “long live the king,” there is unity and equality among the king’s subjects.

Crowning G-d as King is the theme of Rosh Hashanah. The theme of Simchas Torah is joy, which is what the word “simchah” means. Yet the verse about G-d’s coronation, “He was King in Yeshurun when the people’s leaders gathered themselves together, and the tribes of Israel were united,” occurs in the reading for Simchas Torah. We must conclude that “the beginning is lodged in the end,” that establishing G-d’s Kingship and being joyful have an inner connection.

Furthermore, the coming of Moshiach will completely and permanently establish G-d’s Kingship. Therefore, our joy on Simchas Torah also helps bring Moshiach.

We’ve said that the prerequisite for making G-d King, so to speak, is the oneness and accord, the gathering together, of the Jewish people. That unity and oneness becomes most manifest on Simchas Torah. The joyful unity of Simchas Torah contrasts with – and is higher than – the solemn unity of Rosh Hashanah.

On Rosh Hashanah, the unity derives from the negative: negation of ego, of will. The Jewish people are united by their subservience. Since no one can see how much we subjugate our minds and hearts, this remains a concealed unity. On Simchas Torah, however, the unity results from joy – and true joy reveals itself openly.

Of course one might ask, aren’t all the holidays supposed to be joyful? Aren’t they called “times appointed for joy”? The answer is

yes, all the holidays **are** supposed to be joyful. However, the joy of every other holiday depends on a particular mitzvah or concept: Passover is the time of our liberation, Shavuot, the giving of the Torah, etc. Therefore, the joy of the holiday is limited to and by the mitzvah or event being celebrated.

Simchas Torah, however, is different. Its sole concern is joy. Obviously, if Simchas Torah is the time of our joyfulness, we are to rejoice not over matzoh or a sukkah, but over joyfulness itself. To properly observe the time of our joyfulness, our joy must be potentially limitless. The joy of every other holiday is measured within the framework of its mitzvah. The joy of Simchas Torah is encompassing and unconditional, without differentiation or hierarchy. Everyone – men, women and children – rejoice together, equally, without distinctions. The collective rejoicing dissipates pride and self-regard. The “head” does not distinguish itself from the “foot.” Rather, all are on an equal footing, so to speak, which is why we dance on Simchas Torah. In fact, the two points of the verse, “He was King in Yeshurun” and “the people’s leaders gathered themselves together, and the tribes of Israel were united,” are most openly revealed and expressed by the dancing on Simchas Torah.

Given all this, why is the holiday called Simchas **Torah**? Since the Torah itself contains laws, standards and measurements, which is a type of limitation, how can it be the catalyst for limitless joy? These questions indicate the paradoxical nature of our approach to the holiday. Since Torah is G-d’s Wisdom, it would seem to make more sense to celebrate Simchas Torah by studying, deepening our comprehension and intellectual understanding of its teachings and precepts. Perhaps we should stay up all night learning, as we do on Shavuot.

Instead, we dance and celebrate at great length. We don’t even open the Torah. Rather, we make seven circles – *hakkafos*

– with the scrolls covered, hidden in their mantles. Why does the culmination of G-d's coronation occur specifically when we rejoice – in togetherness – over the Torah? The answer lies in the spiritual nature of Torah, of the souls of the Jewish people and the relationship of each with G-d.

The source of the Jewish soul precedes everything, even Torah. However, in order to be clothed in a body, the soul becomes a separate existence, much as a son, although drawn from (and part of) the very being of the father, exists independently, detached from the father. The Torah, on the other hand, even when in the physical world, remains united and one with the very Essence of G-dliness. Therefore, only through Torah can the souls of the Jewish people reunite with G-d. Torah is the intermediary, the channel and connecting link between G-d and the Jewish people.

Joy – simchah – breaks all barriers, including that of exile. But true oneness – with each other and with G-d – comes only through Torah. When the Jewish people unite, rejoicing together with the Torah, this in itself is G-d's coronation. Through unity, joy and Torah we bring Moshiach, turning a prayer that "The L-rd shall be King over the entire earth" into reality.

(Based on Likkutei Sichos 14, pp. 164-70)

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"¹) will first be revealed in the place "That the Temple traveled and settled there"² in the time of exile ("The House of our Rebbe in Bavel"³); 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*⁴) "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 sits⁵ 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,"⁶ "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

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,⁷ 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,⁸ 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"⁹ 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 given¹⁰) has been concluded

exile with the Jewish people: G-d's Presence slipped away from Jerusalem and 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.¹¹ 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,"¹² and "In the future, Yerushalayim will extend over all the land of Israel."¹² 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,¹³ 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.¹⁴

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

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 name¹⁵ 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."¹⁶ 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,¹⁷ "Then our mouths will be filled with laughter [S'chok]. It specifies "then," in the future,¹⁸ when they will say to Yitzchak (specifically), "Because you are our father."¹⁹

And **Beis** (Rabbeinu) [**The House** of our Rebbe] - its number is seven hundred seventy.²⁰ 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."²¹ This number in Gematria is "**Paratzta**," derived from "You shall spread out [U'Faratzta] west and east and north and south."²² 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,²³ "**You have broken barriers for yourself**," which our Sages of blessed memory explain²⁴ as follows: "This is Moshiach, about whom it is said,²⁵ "**The breaker** is come up before them."²⁶

...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 -

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."²⁷ 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 seventy²⁸) 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."²⁹ Thus we find that "Beis Rabbeinu" ("770") is a "fortress," "the mount that all mouths turn to,"³⁰ for more than a Yovel of years (5700-5750) - "Forever."³¹

[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"³² (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,"³³ 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**.³⁴

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 monetarily³⁵ (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)

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
Mrs. **Henna Gittel** bas Reb **Yehoshua Eliyahu** ע"ה **Einbinder**
Passed away on Motzoay Simchat Torah - 24 Tishrei, 5777

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

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