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Passed away on 13 Kislev, 5786
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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 Chayei Sarah, 5787

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And even if there is only a doubt that G-d will restrain the Jews in exile even a minute for the great pleasure and satisfaction that the Divine service in exile creates for Him, a Jew cries: "all that the master of the house tells you, do, except to leave."[23] All that the master of the house - this is G-d - says, one must do "except to leave." One must not remain even a minute, G-d forbid, in a situation of "leaving," the table of their father. One begs and demands, as it were, of G-d: "send now the one You will send" - in the beginning of the year "by whom You will send"[24] and bring **already** the true and complete Redemption!

And together with the completion of the work of *shlichus* (at the conclusion of *Likkutei Torah*, Parshas Brocha[25]) one immediately reaches the completion of the wedding - the Song of Songs - of Israel and G-d (specifically through an actualization of the good resolution to learn all of *Torah Or* and *Likkutei Torah*, all their chapters until the end. For learning the Torah contained within them hastens the actual Redemptive process.)

(From the talk of Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sarah, 25 Mar-Cheshvan, Blessing of the month of Kislev, 5752)

23. *Pesachim* 86:b.

24. *[The Hebrew words numerically add up to (5)752, the year in which the sicha was said. Translator's note.]*

25. *[Torah Or and Likkutei Torah, comprise the Alter Rebbe's Chassidic discourses on the five books of the Torah and the Song of Songs. The concluding words on Deuteronomy deal with Shlichus and the commencement of the next section on Song of Songs deals with the wedding of Israel and G-d. Translator's note.]*

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by
Rabbi Dovid Yisroel Ber Kaufmann, Ph.D

Chayei Sarah

Influencing the Nations

The miraculous birth of Isaac enabled Sarah and Abraham to influence the nations of the world. The two ways they influenced the world anticipate how Moshiach will affect the world.

After the death of Sarah, the Torah tells us that Abraham took another wife, Keturah, who bore him six sons. There is something rather puzzling about this. We know that the birth of Isaac – which occurred when Abraham was one hundred years old – was a miraculous event. In fact, the Torah goes to great length to emphasize the miraculous nature of Isaac's birth, repeating on several occasions the wonderment of Abraham and Sarah when told the news, the advanced age of Abraham and Sarah, etc.

Yet, when Abraham has six more sons – forty years later – there is no indication that it's a miracle or at all unusual. If the birth of Isaac when Abraham is one hundred is a miracle, how much more so the birth of six more sons when Abraham is one hundred forty! We would expect some indication – either from Abraham's perspective, as when he laughed when told of Isaac's birth, or from the Torah's perspective – that this too is unusual. But there is nothing beyond the statement of the fact.

We must therefore ask, why doesn't the Torah focus on the miraculous nature of the birth of Keturah's children? Why only Isaac, the son of Sarah? The answer, surprisingly, includes an important insight about the times of Moshiach.

When Isaac was born, Sarah remarks that others will rejoice with her. Rashi, foremost of Biblical commentators, explains that the

Moshiach,"[18] but all the days of Moshiach - also the completion of "absolutely Moshiach"[19] etc.)

From the international convention must come and be brought good resolutions such that every *shliach* must prepare himself and prepare all Jews in his place and city, etc. to greet our righteous Moshiach. This should be done through his explanation of the concept of Moshiach, as explained in the Written Torah and the Oral Torah, in a way that **it will be received** by everyone according to his intellect and understanding. This includes in particular learning the subject of Moshiach and Redemption, and specifically in a manner of Wisdom, Understanding and Knowledge.

And since this is the Divine service of the time, it's understood this applies to every Jew without any exception whatsoever.

…Further and fundamental: since the work of shlichus has already ended, every *Shliach* needs to approach the true *M'Shalayach*[20] - G-d - and declare: I have done my *shlichus* and now the time has come that You, as it were, should do Your *shlichus* (for G-d is also a *shliach* (He tells His word to Yaakov, etc."[21]) and together with the ten Sefiros (G-d, Himself, it is essence and being, as it were, is our righteous Moshiach[22]), is the essence and being as it were of our righteous Moshiach). "Send now the one You will send" - send us our righteous Moshiach in actual reality.

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18. Rambam, *Laws of Kings*, chapter 11, halacha 4.
19. ibid.
20. *[M'Shalayach - literally the one who causes to be sent. As a "shliach" is an emissary, the "m'shalayach" is the one who sends him on his task. Translator's note.]*
21. *Tehillim* 147:19. See also *Shmos Rabba* chapter 30, 9.
22. *[In the sicha the Rebbe refers to the fact that the word "shliach" (numerically 348) plus ten equals "Moshiach" (numerically 358). Translator's note.]*

now at the opening and commencement of the "International Convention of *Shluchim*."

We must come out with a resolution and an announcement to all *shluchim* that the work of *shlichus* now and for every Jew is to their capacity to lead to the greeting of our righteous Moshiach.

This means that all the details of the work of *shlichus* in spreading the Torah and Judaism and spreading the Wellsprings of the inner teachings of Torah outward must be permeated with greeting our righteous Moshiach.

As emphasized in the program of the convention - "all the days of your life **to bring** the days of Moshiach."[16] All aspects of Divine service (every day of your life, and in every day itself - in every detail and hour of the day) must be permeated with "to bring the days of Moshiach." It's not sufficient "to increase" (as stated in many places),[17] or that he (the *shliach*) should stand and wait until Moshiach will come, at which point he will take part and have the satisfaction. Rather he is "**to bring**." He does all that depends on him **to bring** "the days of Moshiach." [The word "days" is] in the plural, [meaning] not only the beginning of one day but the days of Moshiach (and not only when Moshiach is "presumed to be

16. *Brochos* chapter 1, mishneh 5. *[The expression "All the days of your life to bring the days of Moshiach" is the Mishneh's interpretation of the Biblcial commandment to "Remember the Exodus from Egypt all the days of your life." The Mishneh deduces that the added emphasis of the word "all" is "to bring (i.e., include) the days of Moshiach." This means simply that we will have to remember the exodus even in the Messianic Age. The Previous Rebbe in his sicha cited by the Rebbe combines the Biblical phrase and the Mishneh's interpretation to produce a novel idea, namely, that "All the days of your life [you must endeavor] to bring the days of Moshiach." Translator's note.]*

17. *[See previous note. In most places where a Biblical word implies the inclusion of other points, the Talmudic term employed is "to include" rather than "to bring." This the Rebbe interprets as a lesson for us to be proactive in bringing the days of Moshiach. Translator's note.]*

blessing and miracle of Isaac's birth brought with it many blessings and miracles: many barren women were remembered with Sarah, many sick people were healed on that day, many prayers were answered, and there was much joy in the world. The birth of Isaac brought salvation and rejoicing to the world at large.

Because Isaac was born, Sarah became the agent for and source of miracles and blessings for many other people. In the same way, the miracle of Isaac's birth caused Abraham to experience other miracles, namely, the birth of six more sons forty years later.

There is another parallel which, as we shall see, is very significant. Those who benefited from Sarah – the multitude that shared in her miracle and blessing – were not Jewish. In the same way, the six sons of Abraham from Keturah – who were born as a result of Isaac's birth – also were not Jewish. In other words, the birth of Isaac, the link to the Jewish people, enabled his parents to influence and benefit the rest of the world.

Still, there are essential differences between Sarah and Abraham in this regard. The first difference is *when* the world benefited. The extension of Sarah's blessing and miracle occurred immediately. When she gave birth, other previously barren women also gave birth; on that day the sick were healed, etc. The extension of Abraham's blessing and miracle to the nations of the world was delayed. In fact, it happened forty years later, with the birth of the six non-Jewish nations.

The second difference is *how* the benefit came about. In Sarah's case, the effect was automatic, requiring no further action on her part: as she was blessed, so automatically the nations were blessed. They benefited as a natural consequence of her situation. On the other hand, in order for the nations to benefit from Abraham's miracle, another miracle was required. The blessing required a separate action on the part of Abraham.

Clearly, the birth of Isaac was a catalyst in Abraham and Sarah's relationship to the world. Isaac is unique because he was the first child born as a Jew. His birth - and its consequences - serves as a paradigm for the birth of the Jewish people - and the consequences thereof. Specifically, one of the fundamental aspects of Isaac's birth – and therefore the birth of the Jewish people at Sinai, with the giving of the Torah – was its effect on the nations of the world. That effect has two aspects, one connected with the miracles associated with Abraham, one connected with the miracles associated with Sarah.

Now, it's well known that there are seven Noachide commandments – seven commandments that apply to all mankind. According to Maimonides, Moses was instructed by G-d to compel the nations to accept these seven commandments. Further, any non-Jew who accepts and observes the seven Noachide commandments is a righteous gentile, and has a share in the World to Come. However, his acceptance must be based on the fact that G-d commanded them in the Torah and knowledge of them came through Moses.

Since the Torah and its mitzvos were given solely to the Jewish people, we may well ask why the Jewish people have to compel the nations of the world to accept the Noachide commandments, or why the non-Jew must observe them because they are commanded in the Torah.

The question may be answered thus: because Creation exists for the sake of Israel and for the sake of Torah, after the birth of the Jewish people and the giving of the Torah, every commandment to the world at large must be through the mediation of Israel and the Torah.

Looking more closely at Maimonides, we see that there are two ways in which the Jewish people can get the nations to accept the

The *shluchim* have already begun long ago to fulfill the work of *shlichus* in spreading the Torah, Judaism and the Wellsprings of the inner teachings of Torah outward, and for a long time have even reached **completion** in the work of *shlichus*, according to the announcement of my sainted father-in-law mentioned above. Nevertheless, the true and complete Redemption has not yet actually come. It must be said, then, that there must be something that remains to be done that will bring the Redemption into reality.

What is needed is the following: It is known that "in every generation an individual descended from Yehuda is born who is qualified to be the Moshiach for Israel,"[13] and that "one who qualifies because of his righteousness to be the Redeemer and when the time arrives G-d will be revealed to him and send him, etc."[14] And according to the announcement of my sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation, the singular *shliach* of our generation, the singular Moshiach of our generation, that everything has already concluded, it's understood that there has begun to be fulfilled the "send now the one You will send,"[15] the shlichus of my sainted father-in-law. And therefore it's obvious that the only thing that now remains in the work of *shlichus* is **to greet our righteous Moshiach in actual reality**, in order that he should be able to fulfill his *shlichus* in actuality and bring all the Jews out of exile!

…This then must be the practical lesson that results as we gather

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princes is Moshiach. Translator's note.]

13. The commentary of the Bartenura on *Megillas Rus*.

14. See *Sha'alos v'Teshuvos Chasam Sofer Choshen Mishpat* (vol. 6) at the end (section 98). And see *S'dei Chemed*, *Peas HaSadeh*, entry Aleph, klal 70, ff.

15. *Shmos* 4:13. *[In the passage from Exodus referenced in note 9, Moses demurs from the shlichus, or mission, of redeeming the Jewish people. His last protest before accepting the shlichus are the words quoted. This phrase, "send now the one You will send" is classically seen as a reference to Moshiach. Thus, Moses asked G-d to send Moshiach immediately. This - the immediate sending of Moshiach - was also the shlichus of the Previous Rebbe. Translator's note.]*

We also see (as mentioned many times) that many of the signs of the Redemption have been fulfilled in the events of the world, beginning with the sign (in *Yalkut Shimoni*[4]) that "the time for your Redemption has arrived" when "the nations incite one another."[5] This has taken place particularly in the Arab countries.

...And we see in reality how it was and it will be that "he will fight the wars of G-d"[6] and be victorious in various situations, and specifically through a war of peace.[7] And "victory" is also an expression of "eternity,"[8] connected with the revelation of "Endurance":[9] Nun - revelation of the 50th gate;[10] Tzaddik - the ninetieth year (as Jewish people have designated the year);[11] and Ches - the revelation of our righteous Moshiach, who is connected with the number eight (eight princes of man[12]).

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4. *Yeshayahu, remez* 499.

5. *Midrash Lekach Tov, Lech Lecha* 14:1. See also *Bereishis Rabba*, chapter 42, 4.

6. Rambam, *Laws of Kings*, chapter 11, halacha 4.

7. *["Fighting the wars of G-d" is one of the qualifications an individual must meet before being presumed to be Moshiach. There is no necessity, however, for the war to involve bloodshed or even to be on a physical level (as the fight for spirituality and observance of mitzvos may also properly be described as a "war of G-d.") Hence the expression "a war of peace." Translator's note.]*

8. *[The word for "victory" in Hebrew - nitzachon - is etymologically related to the Hebrew word for "eternity" - nitzchiyus. Translator's note.]*

9. *["Endurance" - Netzach, in Hebrew - is one of the ten Sefiros, or Divine Attributes through which the universe is created. It is etymologically related to nitzachon and nitzchiyus (victory and eternity, respectively) Its three Hebrew letters - nun, tzadik and gimmel - are here used not just as the letters of a word but as an acronym revealing a deeper meaning of the word.. Translator's note.]*

10. *[A reference to the fiftieth and final gate of Wisdom. Translator's note.]*

11. *[The numerical value of the letter Tzadik is 90. This discourse was delivered in the Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach's 90th year. Translator's note.]*

12. *Sukkah 52:b. [The numerical value of the letter Ches is 8. The passage in the Talmud referenced in note 6 discusses a verse in the prophetic book of Micah that mentions seven shepherds and eight princes. In the Talmudic discussion, each of the shepherds and princes is identified. One of the eight*

seven commandments incumbent upon them. On the one hand, the Jewish people can compel the nations (verbally as well as physically) to accept the commandments. Or, the influence may be indirect, so that the nations recognize on their own the necessity of keeping their seven mitzvos, since they were also given by G-d in the Torah.

These two methods, compelling and persuading, have a role in the times of Moshiach as well. Maimonides explains that Moshiach, after the ingathering of the Jewish people, will correct the world, so that so that all the peoples of the world will serve G-d together. Later, Maimonides says that in the times of Moshiach there will be neither hunger nor jealousy, etc., and the business of the world will be to know G-d.

In the first case, Moshiach compels the nations to acknowledge G-d's sovereignty and presence; in the second, as a result of the tranquility and security of the Jews, the nations recognize the G-dliness in the world on their own.

These two methods parallel the different types of miracles that accompanied Abraham and Sarah as a result of the miraculous birth of Isaac. Abraham, being the father of many nations (which is what the word "Abraham" means) had to be directly involved, compelling the nations over the course of time to acknowledge G-d's sovereignty. Sarah, on the other hand, was a ruler (the name "Sarah" meaning princess, in a general sense), removed, like a monarch, from a direct connection. The effect of her miracle followed automatically, like a royal decree, without her involvement or interference.

And at the end of exile, with the coming of Moshiach, this fundamental purpose of the birth of Isaac will finally be perfected. Then, since the revelation of G-dliness to the Jewish people will be complete, their influence on and recognition by the nations of the

world will be a necessary consequence, so that "the world will be filled with knowledge of G-d as the waters cover the ocean bed."

(Based on Likkutei Sichos 35, pp. 94-100)

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The most recent innovation in the work of *shlichus** is: **to receive our righteous Moshiach in the true and complete Redemption**. Indeed, the preparation for the coming of our righteous Moshiach is the most all encompassing aspect of Judaism and includes all the other points and details of the work of shlichus.

As has already been said many times, according to the declaration of our Sages of blessed memory[1] "all the appointed times have passed." According to my sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation, that teshuvah has already been done, to the extent that all aspects of Divine service have already been completed (even "polishing the buttons"[2]), and we therefore stand ready to greet our righteous Moshiach. The work of *shlichus* must be to prepare in reality to **actually** greet our righteous Moshiach.

Thus the goal of today's international convention of *shluchim*[3] is: to produce good resolutions of how to accomplish the special *shlichus* of these times: greeting our righteous Moshiach.

...It was already mentioned earlier that my sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation, had declared that already all aspects of Divine service have already ended and we stand prepared ("stand all of you prepared") to greet our righteous Moshiach.

** ["Shlichus" comes from the word "to send." Thus a "Shliach" is an emissary or messenger and "shlichus" is the mission or purpose for which he is sent. The term "shlichus" here refers to the goal of Chassidism in general, and Chabad in particular, to spread the wellsprings of Torah, increase observance of mitzvos and be a resource for one's fellow Jew, materially and spiritually. Translator's note.]*

1. *Sanhedrin* 97b.
2. See the talk of Simchas Torah 5689.
3. *["Shluchim" is the plural of "Shliach," hence it means "emissaries." Translator's note.]*

6

In our days we have completed all the requisite actions and Divine service, in all the details symbolized by the "hundred years," the "twenty years," and the "seven years" associated with the age of the Matriarch Sarah's passing, years which like Sarah's were all equally good.[1]

This is consistent with the words of my sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation, that we have already polished the buttons[2] and we therefore stand ready[3] to receive our righteous Moshiach.

More particularly, since then several decades have elapsed, during which time the Jewish people have cried out "*ad mosai* - how long must we remain in exile!" (which must also have a limit)

May it thus be G-d's Will -- that the true and complete Redemption, through our righteous Moshiach, will occur immediately.

(From the Ma'amar "Vayihyu Chayei Sarah, 5751" - Sefer HaMa'amarim melukat, vol. V p. 60)

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1. *[The age of Sarah is presented in the Torah (Bereishis 23:1): "The life of Sarah was a hundred years, twenty years and seven years." The Rebbe explains in his discourse how these three time periods of Sarah's life relate to different aspects of her soul which were permeated with Divinity and goodness. The same is true of the cumulative service of the Jewish people; it is complete not only in a general and peripheral manner, but it has penetrated into the inner dynamics of the Jewish nation's character, represented by the numbers hundred, twenty and seven. See the original discourse for the elaboration of these concepts. Translator's note.]*
2. Talk of Simchas Torah, 5689.
3. See *Igros Kodesh Admor MaHaRayatz, vol. IV*, beg p. 279.

BESURAS HAGEULO
The Announcement Of The Redemption

5

[This talk refers to the publication, and the Rebbe's subsequent distribution to men, women and children, of two special treatises by the Rebbe Rashab. The first, "Kuntres Eitz HaChaim," was written shortly after the Rebbe Rashab founded the Yeshivah Tomchei Temimim and appointed his son and successor, the Rebbe Rayatz, director. In "Kuntres Eitz HaChaim" he outlines the objective of the founding of the Yeshivah and what was expected from its students. The second treatise was a previously unpublished Chassidic discourse of the Rebbe Rashab.]

...One of the reasons for the publication of the special edition of *Kuntres Eitz HaChaim* and its distribution to all the men, women and children at the conclusion of the Rebbe Rashab's birthday on the 20th of MarCheshvan (which led into this erev Shabbos)... is to emphasize that all these words of the *Kuntres Eitz HaChaim* have retained their power and perfection (with even added force) through the leadership of his son and successor, my sainted father-in-law, the leader of our generation, the "director" of the Yeshivah Tomchei Temimim. This is especially true since forty years after his passing "one can fathom the ideas of his teacher."[1]

Consequently, the service of the third generation (from the Rebbe Rashab), the generation of Redemption, has already been completed. Concerning this generation, it is said: "On the third day He will raise them up and we will live before Him."[2]

...May it be G-d's will that: the increased study of the teachings of Chassidus and its dissemination, along with an increase in the

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1. *Avodah Zara* 5b3)
2. *Hoshea* 6:2. See *Metzudas David* there.

study of the revealed parts of Torah;[3] the propagation of Torah and Judaism, including - and with special emphasis on - the establishment of new institutions; and the fortification and strengthening of the existing institutions of Torah, prayer (Divine service) and loving kindness - shall hasten and bring immediately the true and complete Redemption through our righteous Moshiach. Then, according to the Midrash, we will say specifically to the Patriarch Yitzchak, "That you are our father,"[4] and thus we will be called "Toldos Yitzchak - the offspring of Isaac."

The reference of the Redemption to Yitzchak gains added importance because of the connection to my sainted father-in- law, the leader of our generation - whose second (and final) name was Yitzchak, since already in his time he declared that all of our service was completed, including the "polishing of the buttons."[5] He therefore directed and empowered us to "stand ready all of you"[6] to greet our righteous Moshiach. How much more so is this true in our own day.

The relationship between the future Redemption and Yitzchak becomes even more significant when we consider the recent developments involving the "offspring of Yishmael" (discussed in the conclusion of this week's Torah portion). Generally speaking, conflicts among nations - any nation - constitute one of the signs of Redemption. As our sages said:[7] "If you see nations provoking one another, anticipate the footsteps of Moshiach." Involvement of the "descendants of Yishmael" in the conflict magnifies the connection

3. *[As indeed several matters of the revealed part of Torah can be found in this additional discourse of the Rebbe Rashab which was recently discovered and distributed. Translator's note.]*

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

5. Talk of Simchas Torah 5689.

6. His *Igros Kodesh*, vol. IV, beg. p. 279.

7. *Bereishis Rabba*, 42:4. *Midrash Lekach Tov, Lech Lecha* 14:1.

to Moshiach, as specified in the Yalkut Shimoni:[8] "The year in which the King Moshiach will be revealed... the king of Persia will be in conflict with the Arabian king... All the nations of the world will be in turmoil and terror." (Indeed, we have clearly seen how confused and disoriented the nations of the world were, not knowing how to react, groping for solutions, etc.) And G-d says to Israel, "My children do not fear. Whatever I have done, I have done only for your sake... the time for your Redemption has arrived." The Yalkut then continues: "The King Moshiach... will stand on the roof of the Beis HaMikdash[9] and proclaim to Israel: "Humble ones, the time for your Redemption has arrived." As was, and continues, to be proclaimed, especially most recently.

(From the talk of Shabbos Parshas Chayei Sarah, 22 Mar-Cheshvan, 5751)

8. *Yeshayahu* 499.

9. Note the emphasis of the Midrash that "he will stand on the roof of the Beis HaMikdash" - the roof being a part of the Temple which was not sanctified (Pesachim 85, end b. Rambam, Hilchos Beis HeBechirah 6:7). It may be suggested that this alludes to the fact that the announcement "Humble ones, the time for your Redemption has arrived," comes from the diaspora which has not been sanctified with the holiness of Eretz Yisrael, analogous to the distinction between the roof of the Beis HaMikdash and the Beis HaMikdash itself.