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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 Pinchas, 5786
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Reflections of Redemption

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 Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson



by
 Rabbi Dovid Yisroel Ber Kaufmann, Ph.D

Pinchas

OUR PORTION, OUR LOT, OUR HERITAGE

The mitzvah of inheritance is listed last in Maimonides's book of commandments. This indicates that the laws of inheritance complete the laws of the Torah. The laws of inheritance will only be fully applicable in the times of Moshiach, which completes the purpose of giving the Torah. There are three methods of dividing the land – by tribal size, by lot, by inheritance. Dividing by tribal size resembles a sale, where there is a rational basis for the exchange; assigning land by lot resembles a gift, where the apparently random selection reveals a deeper, non-rational relationship; dividing by inheritance reveals unity of being, a oneness between the generations. These three methods correspond to three parts of the morning Ashreinu prayer and the three stages of Jewish history.

This week's Torah reading contains the laws of inheritance. Maimonides, in his list of the six hundred thirteen commandments, places this as the last positive mitzvah. This parallels a reference to the inheritance which occurs in the last Mishneh in the last of the six Orders. (Uktsin 3:12 begins: "Rabbi Joshua ben Levi said, "The Holy One, blessed be He, will at a future time cause all the righteous to inherit three hundred and ten worlds [and he quotes Proverbs 8:21].") The commentators explain that the six Orders of the Mishnayos end this way because that Mishneh speaks about the ultimate reward for learning Torah and observing mitzvos. Similarly, Maimonides concludes the listing of the six hundred thirteen commandments with the mitzvah of inheritance because completion, or perfection, of the mitzvos is connected with inheritance, as will be explained.

In general, something comes last because it completes and

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).

"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.

culminates all that comes before. Just as the first object in a series comes first because it is the most fundamental element, the foundation and source for all that follows, so that which comes last concludes and perfects all that came before. In our case, the first positive mitzvah is to know that G-d exists. This is the source for all other mitzvos and the most important principle. By the same token, the law of inheritance comes last because with the observance of that mitzvah, Torah – and thus Creation – is complete. The mitzvah of inheritance is the final fulfillment of the Torah's purpose.

Now, we know that Revelation occurred for the sake of Redemption: G-d gave the Torah, so that the Jewish people, through their Torah-study and mitzvah-observance, could bring Moshiach. With and through Moshiach comes universal recognition of G-dliness. Thus, if there is one mitzvah that culminates and concludes the entire order and process, that mitzvah must obviously have a connection to Moshiach and Redemption.

On the simplest level, the law of inheritance comes last because it is the last stage of Redemption. The final verification of Moshiach is gathering in the exiles. Moshiach's conclusive act will be to bring the Jewish people back to Israel. (After that, the rest of the world will automatically recognize G-d's sovereignty, and G-dliness will fill the world as the waters cover the ocean bed.) Obviously, the people cannot take possession of their land – they cannot inherit it – until they once again dwell on and occupy it. When the Jewish people return to the land of Israel, only then will the law of inheritance become finally and fully operative. Since bringing the Jewish people back to the land of Israel is the last thing Moshiach must do, the law of inheritance will be the last mitzvah to be fully and properly observed.

However, the connection between inheritance and Moshiach goes deeper: Moshiach is the culmination of Jewish history. Inheritance

is the culmination of Jewish law. Moshiach's ultimate purpose is to facilitate and enforce Jewish law. Inheritance, the last law, cannot be truly implemented until the pre-conditions – associated with Moshiach – have been truly met. Only after Moshiach successfully brings the Redemption, will the Jewish people inherit the land.

Now, the laws of inheritance were instituted in conjunction with the division of the land. During the discussion of how the Jewish people are to divide the land of Israel, a problem arose. Z'lafchad, from the tribe of Menashe, had died without sons. His daughters came to Moses and asked, "Why should our father's name be removed from his family because he did not have a son? Give us a portion of land along with our father's brothers." In response, G-d told Moses to instruct the Jewish people concerning the laws of inheritance.

Ultimately, the Jewish people would live in the land of Israel, where all the mitzvos could be observed fully and completely. The land itself had to be divided among the tribes and their families. As a natural consequence, the Torah had to establish the laws of inheritance.

But inheritance was only one of three ways by which land was acquired. Based on the description of the division and the response to the daughters of Z'lafchad, we learn that three methods determined possession: inheritance, the size of the tribe or family and the drawing of lots. On the simplest or lowest level, there was a logical division to the land: the larger the tribe, the greater the area it received. There was also a division that went beyond logic and depended on a more fundamental relationship: the portions were chosen by lot, indicating a basic connection between that part of the land and that particular family. This connection had nothing to do with size or other rational considerations. It was an internal connection that could only be revealed in a non-rational, apparently random manner.

"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. *VaYitze* 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.*]

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

However, both of these methods involved transferring the property from one owner to another. In this, they resemble a sale and a gift, respectively. That is, a sale occurs when the buyer pays the price for the item. Here, there is a logical exchange of value, initiated by the buyer's efforts. This corresponds to the division according to the size of the population. We can rationally evaluate the worth of the exchange.

A gift is apparently arbitrary, given without a logical reason. The giver simply has a desire to bestow something on another person. A gift thus depends on the will of the giver. This corresponds to choosing a portion by lot: the apparent randomness of the selection indicates a deeper, more fundamental relationship than logic allows.

Still, in both cases, there is a transmission, either from seller to buyer or from giver to receiver. Whoever initiates the exchange, there are two separate beings involved; whatever the nature of the connection, each participant stands apart from the other. The third method, that of inheritance, is different. Here, the inheritor stands in place of, and thus is unified with, the owner. In order for an heir to take possession, no transfer is necessary. Rather, succession is automatic and inherent, because the heir simply manifests the essence, the true nature of the one from whom he inherits. Inheritance indicates a unity of being, a oneness between the generations.

Interestingly, this distinction is recognized in the morning prayer service. In reference to the Torah and the relationship of the Jewish people with G-d, the following is recited: "How good is our portion, how pleasant our lot, and how beautiful our heritage." The first phrase, "how good is our portion," corresponds to the logical division of the land of Israel; our "portion" we receive according to our efforts, the work we put into Torah and mitzvot. The second

phrase, "how pleasant our lot," refers to the deeper relationship. We cannot earn "our lot" through our labors; G-d apportions it to us simply because He chooses to do so. Distribution by lot is only apparently random; lots are actually assigned according to G-d's Will.

The last phrase, "how beautiful our heritage," indicates that the Jewish people are united with the essence of G-d. As the *Zohar* expresses it, Israel and the Holy One, blessed be He, are entirely one entity. Moshiach makes this third level manifest.

These three concepts are connected with the three general periods of Jewish history. The first stage, before the giving of the Torah, corresponds to division by logic, "how good is our portion." The holiness and relationship with G-d came as a result of the personal efforts of the Patriarchs and their descendants. The second stage, beginning with the giving of the Torah, corresponds to G-d's choosing the Jewish people, simply as a matter of the Divine Will. "How pleasant our lot."

The third stage will occur with the complete fulfillment of the Torah and mitzvos. Then, "how beautiful our heritage." The third stage is the period of Moshiach and Redemption, when we will truly inherit the land, and the unity of the Jewish people with the Essence of G-d will be truly revealed.

(Based on Likkutei Sichos 28, pp. 174-181)

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 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.

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

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

The Announcement Of The Redemption

31

All the signs for Redemption indicate that we are literally at the Redemption. As my sainted father-in-law publicized and declared, we have completed everything necessary for Redemption. Even the "polishing of the buttons"¹ and "stand, all of you ready,"² have also been achieved. This means that "all is prepared and ready for the banquet"³ and we are ready to approach the table and partake of the feast of Livyoson and the Shor HaBor, because "Behold he (the King Moshiach) is coming"⁴ - imminently!

* * *

As we stand in such close proximity to the Redemption, every Jew must accustom himself to this reality. Everyone must internalize a state and feeling of Redemption, by making his personal day a "personal day of Redemption," and transforming one's private space into "the land of Israel." One achieves this by doing, at each moment and in every place, one's service in thought, speech and action to utter perfection.

Also, the result of perfecting one's service (in thought, speech and action) must be expressed in one's speech. That is, just as the "the lots themselves spoke,"⁵ so too when one has internalized one's

1. See talk of Simchas Torah, 5689.

2. See *Igros Kodesh, Admor MaHaRayatz*, vol. 4, p. 279. See *Hayom Yom 15 Teves*.

3. Mishnaic expression, *Avos* 3:16.

4. *Shir HaShirim* 2:8 and *Shir HaShirim Rabbah* on this verse.

5. [When the land of Israel was divided among the 12 tribes, the lots that were used to determine the division miraculously spoke, declaring out loud which territory belonged to which tribe. Translator's note.]

Divine service to "make Israel here,"⁶ to the point of penetration of one's very core, one speaks to others about it with enthusiasm. At that point one will eagerly publicize the directive of "make Israel here" to one's family and acquaintances, and certainly to one's students, and ultimately to all those he can reach. Because this message comes from within, one's words are words which come from the heart, which are guaranteed to enter the heart⁷ and will have their intended effect. When one actually becomes a living example of this ideal in his own efforts, he can certainly have the effect on others. This is true to such an extent that the listeners themselves become speakers - "the lots themselves begin to speak."

*(From the talk of Shabbos Parshas Pinchos,
Mevorchim HaChodesh Menachem Av, 24 Tammuz, 5751)*

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 exile with the Jewish people: G-d's Presence slipped away from Jerusalem and

6. See *Igros Kodesh*, Admor MaHaRayatz, vol. 1, p. 485 ff.

7. *Sefer HaYashar* by Rabeinu Tam 13, cited in *Shaloh*, 69a.