

What We're All About

*Discovering Moshiach
in every detail of
the Rebbe's nesius*

Part 7: Shofar Gadol:
The Six-Day-War
and Russian Jewry

לעילוי נשמת
הרה"ת ר' ישראל מנחם
בן הרה"ח ר' אלתר הלל ע"ה
רבינוביץ
נלב"ע כ"א סיון ה'תשע"ו
ת"נ צ"ב ה'
נדפס ע"י משפחתו שיחיו



Eretz Yisroel, Spring 5727*: Tensions in the Middle East erupted into a full scale war between Eretz Yisroel and the neighboring Arab countries. Aside for the fact that the Yidden were outnumbered in every conceivable way, the leaders of the Arab world proclaimed a war of genocide, רחמנא ליצלן, and the global Jewish community was in a terrified panic.

During this time of confusion, fear and terror, the Rebbe's voice of assurance rang forth with clarity and confidence. In addition to calling upon all Yidden to strengthen the security of Eretz Yisroel through wearing tefillin, the Rebbe remained in close contact with the military and political leadership, providing support and comfort in immeasurable ways.

The world was shocked and amazed when a ceasefire was declared only six days after hostilities began, with a resounding victory for the Yidden in Eretz Yisroel. They had decimated their enemies and conquered enormous swaths of territory. The astounding miracles were obvious and undeniable.

As a result of all this, a wave of *teshuvah* swept through the Jewish world which has unabated ever since.

Soviet Union, 5726*-5727*: For over four decades, the Soviet Union had imprisoned the millions of Yidden within its borders. It was excruciatingly difficult to live a Jewish life and impossible to leave. Since the legendary escape known as the *Eshalonen* in 5706*, the Iron Curtain was virtually impregnable and barely a handful of Yidden succeeded in leaving the accursed country.

For years, the Rebbe remained in close contact with the Yidden there and constantly spoke of their plight publicly and *bentched* them that they merit to leave imminently.

In 5726* the situation began to change. Through various secret channels of communication, the Rebbe instructed Russian Chassidim that the time was ripe to apply for exit visas from the USSR, and to everyone's amazement, hundreds of families immigrated to Eretz Yisroel in less than two years.

The new immigrants were invited to celebrate the festive month of Tishrei 5728* in 770 with the Rebbe. Their travel expenses were covered by the Rebbe and throughout the month, the Rebbe showed a great deal of *kiruvim* to these legendary *mesiras nefesh* Yidden.

The Maamar Explains it All

During the farbrengens of Tishrei 5728* the Rebbe revealed how these two trajectories in history were interconnected and, in fact, the realization of the *nevua* of Yeshayahu Hanavi about the sounding of the great shofar that would precede the final *geula*.

In unprecedented fashion, three Tishrei *maamarim*—Rosh Hashanah, Shabbos Shuva and Shabbos Bereishis—all started with the *possuk* והיה ביום גדול והוא יתקע בשופר, and other *maamarim* focused on the same theme as well. In a landmark *sicha*¹ during the second Shabbos Bereishis farbrengen the Rebbe explained that this specific *nevua* was particularly relevant to current world events in general and to the prevailing mood throughout global Jewry in particular.²

The Rebbe opened the *sicha* explaining that the *maamar* he had just delivered at the farbrengen was based on the *maamar* of the Frierdiker Rebbe, published in the famed Hakria Vehakedusha magazine in 5703.³ Although the *maamar* had been said and published over 20 years earlier, its message contains the key to understanding a peculiar phenomenon unfolding in the Jewish world.

Never before had the entire Jewish world been shaken to its core in response to a tragedy happening to *klal Yisroel*. Even while the murderous Nazis were unleashing the most gruesome and horrifying Holocaust upon millions of Yidden in Europe, the Jewish response in the free world was somewhat subdued in comparison to what would have been expected.

However, in 5727*, when the Arabs threatened to destroy Eretz Yisroel and mobilized at its borders, Jews



RUSSIAN IMMIGRANTS ARRIVE IN ERETZ YISROEL, 5731.

from all walks of life, from all over the world, were *tzutreiselt* and utterly petrified for their brothers and sisters. And when the miraculous victory occurred, this communal fear gave way to collective relief, elation and spiritual awakening, the likes of which had never been seen before in Jewish history.

Two Prophecies – Two Eras

There are two prophecies proclaiming that before the final *geula* two major events will happen in connection with a “shofar.”

In general, a shofar blast represents the idea of being terribly frightened and shaken to the core for reasons one does not necessarily understand. As the *navi* Amos declares—היתקע שופר בעיר ועם לא יחרדו—“Is it possible for one to blow a shofar in the city and the citizens will not be frightened?”

Since the *geula* will usher in an era of global transformation, not only for the Yidden but for all of humanity, it is therefore necessary to pave the way for the new world order by destroying the status quo in incomprehensible ways. These seismic changes are represented by two “Soundings of the Shofar”—two

What We're All About

major events in two separate eras that will alter the course of world history in a terrifying fashion, in preparation for the *geula*.

וְהָ' עֲלֵיהֶם יֵרָאֵה וְיֵצֵא כְבָרֶק חֲצוֹן וְאֵד ה' (אֱלֹקִים) בְּשׁוֹפָר יִתְקַע
וְהִלָּךְ בְּסַעֲרוֹת תִּימֹן: זְכַרְיָה ט, יד

And Hashem shall appear over them, and his arrows shall go forth like lightning. And Hashem shall sound the shofar, and He shall go with the whirlwinds of the south.

The *navi* Zecharia declares that before Moshiach will come, Hashem will “sound the shofar” and cause stormy wars to shake civilization and cause terribly painful suffering upon the Yidden as part of *Mשיח*, the birth pangs of Moshiach.

וְהִיָּה | בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יִתְקַע בְּשׁוֹפָר גְּדוֹל וּבָאוּ הָאֲבָדִים בְּאֶרֶץ אַשּׁוּר
וְהַגְּדָחִים בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לָהּ בְּהַר הַקֹּדֶשׁ בִּירוּשָׁלַם: יִשְׁעִי
כ"ז, י"ג

And it shall come to pass on that day, that a great shofar shall be sounded, and those lost in the land of Assyria and those exiled in the land of Egypt shall come and they shall prostrate themselves before Hashem on the holy mountain in Yerushalayim.

The *navi* Yeshayahu declares that after the era of world war, the “great shofar shall be sounded,” and this will cause a great spiritual awakening specifically for *klal Yisroel*. Even those who have drifted far away from *Yiddishkeit* will be awakened by this call.

World Wars – Preparing the World

The *nevua* of Zecharia came to pass during the era of the world wars.



THE FARBRENGEN OF SIMCHAS TORAH 5728*. MANY OF THE RECENT IMMIGRANTS FROM RUSSIA JOINED THE REBBE FOR TISHREI THAT YEAR.

World War I broke out as a result of the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir presumptive to the Austro-Hungarian Empire by a Serbian national. Europe was certainly a tinderbox before the assassination, but it was one gunshot that escalated into a catastrophic war consuming most of civilization, displacing millions from their homes and creating the geopolitical atmosphere ripe for another world war that would destroy civilization again.

World War II was caused by a man who was lacking in every possible way—an absolute “nothing.” Inexplicably, eight million Germans feared him and accepted his leadership unquestioningly. Even when the world nations understood his intentions of conquering



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the world, they were paralyzed by fear and did nothing to stop him from preparing Germany for another major war.

These two ghastly wars changed civilization forever and their causes defy all rationale. They all occurred because the “hearts of kings and princes are in the hands of Hashem,” the result of the “sounding of the shofar” as articulated by Zecharia Hanavi. Wars of unprecedented destruction which prepared the world for the great changes of *geula*.

It was during the era of the “sounding of the shofar” of Zecharia’s prophecy that the Friediker Rebbe said the *maamar* והיה ביום ההוא, and indicated that there was another era to come as a prelude to the *geula*.

Astounding Miracles - Preparing Klal Yisroel

While these wars certainly changed the world, they did not awaken all of *bnei Yisroel*. To do so necessitates the “Sounding of the *Great Shofar*” as described by Yeshayahu Hanavi.

This *nevua* came to pass in the spring of 5727*. The danger facing the Yidden of Eretz Yisroel was so great that it captured the attention of Yidden everywhere in the world, from every stripe of the religious spectrum.

What We're All About

But when it all ended with a miraculously astonishing victory, a wave of relief, joy and *hisorerus teshuvah* swept over all of *klal Yisroel*—representing the fatherly, loving call of Hashem to each and every Yid to come home.

A new era of preparing *klal Yisroel* for Moshiach had begun. The *shofar gadol* sounded loud and clear, manifest in the great spiritual awakening of Yidden all across the religious spectrum, returning to their roots. Even those who had run away from Torah life or had never had the opportunity to receive a Jewish education were now inexplicably drawn to learning Torah and doing more mitzvos. The promise that every Yid will do *teshuvah* before the arrival of Moshiach was becoming a reality.

Lost in Prosperity – האובדים בארץ אשור

While the “sounding of the shofar” is capable of shaking and restructuring the world through war, it is not powerful enough to awaken a Yid lost to the temptations of pleasure, liberty and wealth.

The call of the “*shofar gadol*” reaches the core of the Yid and is able to awaken him or her from his or her prosperity-induced spiritual slumber. This is the meaning of the words “ובאו האובדים בארץ אשור”. The word “Ashur” represents wealth and prosperity.

Before the coming of Moshiach there will be millions of Yidden who will be so entrenched in the comforts of *galus* that they will be uninterested in any change. The fatherly loving call of Hashem to the Yidden through the miracles of the Six-Day-War managed to awaken even the most assimilated Jews in the free world.

Shackled in Poverty – הנדחים בארץ מצרים

Before the *geula* there are יחידי סגולה—an elite cadre of Yidden—chosen to undergo an especially difficult and treacherous type of *nisayon*. These are the “נדחים בארץ מצרים”—living under a cruel government which forbids them from learning Torah and doing mitzvos, and subject to poverty and deprivation. And just like the borders of Mitzrayim were sealed shut and *bnei Yisroel* were unable to leave on their own, the Yidden in the USSR are imprisoned behind the Iron Curtain with no option to flee.

Such a *nisayon* can lead one to a situation where even Moshe Rabbeinu’s assurances of the imminent *geula* could be ignored; not out of lack of faith, but due to the excruciating pressures of *galus*.

Yet despite the impossible conditions, these Yidden go above and beyond their capabilities to live a Jewish life and they educate their children to do the same.

The fact that the Iron Curtain is starting to crack open, and Yidden are managing to leave that terrible *galus* and emigrate to Eretz Yisroel, is clear proof that the “*shofar gadol*” which will reach and awaken the נדחים בארץ מצרים has started to be manifest in a practical and physical sense.⁴

(Although the Rebbe did not mention this publicly at the time—for obvious reasons—it is noteworthy that the victory of the Six-Day-War caused a tremendous *hisorerus* by the millions of Jews still trapped behind the Iron Curtain and many started to seek out ways to connect to Yiddishkeit - ed.)



YIDDEN POSE AT THE KOSEL HAMAARAVI SHORTLY AFTER THE CONQUEST OF THE CITY DURING THE SIX DAY WAR.

Channeling the Power

Six months after the miraculous victory, in a long and fascinating *sicha* during the Yud-Tes Kislev farbrengen,⁵ the Rebbe addressed a question posed by many: How do we know that the tremendous *hisorerus* that gripped the Jewish world during the Six-Day-War was connected to *teshuvah*? After all, many millions of Yidden had not yet adopted the lifestyle of Torah and mitzvos.

The Rebbe explained that although the “sounding of the *shofar gadol*” will awaken every Yid, channeling this awakening in the right direction will not be dictated by Hashem and everyone continues to have free choice. It is up to those fortunate to be connected to Torah and mitzvos to approach these recently awakened Yidden and to guide them in applying this newfound warmth and excitement through learning Torah and doing mitzvos.

The fact that the *hisorerus teshuvah* did not lead to immediate שמירת התורה ומצוות does not disqualify the *hisorerus*, and when someone will approach this Yid and connect with him or her הלב מן הלב בדברים היוצאים מן הלב (words that come from the heart and enter the heart), it will certainly succeed.

“It has been proven, that those Yidden approached in Tel Aviv, in Chadera or even in Times Square, and were offered to wrap tefillin, to think about Hashem,

to recite a *bracha*, *bentch* the lulav and esrog—the overwhelming majority agreed to do so!”

It is up to us to channel this global *hisorerus teshuvah* caused by the sounding of the *shofar gadol* in the right direction, by influencing every Yid to connect with Torah and mitzvos, thereby paving the way for the true and ultimate *geula*, when we will merit very soon to the realization of the conclusion of the *nevua* “והשתחו לה' בהר הקודש בירושלים”.

התקיעה בשופר גדול פועלת לעורר את כולם (עס וועט אלעמען דערנעמען). והיינו שגם אלו ששום דבר לא פעל עליהם (קיי ענין האט זיי ניט דערנומען) ועד כדי כך, שאפילו בזמן גילוי המשיח הם עדיין במעמד ומצב דעור ופסח, הנה גם הם יתעוררו על ידי התקיעה בשופר גדול, להיות קהל גדול ישובו הנה.
מאמר ד"ה הנגי מביא אותם, ש"פ נח תשכ"ח

The next installment of this series will focus on the connection between the *mitzvoim* and *geula*.

1. Toras Menachem vol. 51 page 210.
2. It is noteworthy that this *sicha* was edited by the Rebbe to be transmitted live on radio and published in the *Di Yiddische Heim* magazine.
3. Sefer Hamaamarim Yiddish page 78.
4. Toras Menachem vol. 51 pages 23 and 187.
5. Ibid pages 383-399.