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## Tefillah - 084 Preparing For The Redemption

### ***The Two Aspects of Exile***

**תקע בשופר** - We ask Hashem in this blessing of Shemoneh Esrei to “blow the shofar” and herald the redemption.

To give a general description, there are two parts to our exile. The first aspect of our exile is that we are subservient to the nations of the world; that the nations have jurisdiction over us. There is another aspect of exile, which is that we were exiled from Eretz Yisrael and dispersed throughout the countries of the world.

The first part of this blessing of *Shemoneh Esrei*, in which we ask Hashem to blow the shofar, is a request to Hashem to take away the jurisdiction of the nations over us. In the second part of the blessing, we ask Hashem to gather in the exiles, and this is a request to end the second aspect of our exile, which is the fact that we have been exiled from the land of Eretz Yisrael and spread out throughout the world.

### ***The Concept of Blowing The Shofar***

Let us reflect, with the help of Hashem, into the first part of this blessing, in which we ask Hashem to take away the jurisdiction of the nations on us.

There are a few times when we blow shofar. We blow shofar on Rosh HaShanah. We would blow shofar on the year of *Yovel* (Jubilee), in which all slaves would go free. There was a blowing of the shofar in the desert when the camps would gather together; in these instances, the shofar serves to create a musical sound. But generally speaking, the shofar serves to return something to its root. The shofar is blow to awaken us to *teshuvah*, to awaken us to return to our root. Shofar is about returning something to its point of origin. Thus, the shofar in the future will return everyone to their root. We will blow with the shofar, and this will gather together all the exiles, and return us all to our root, to freedom.

Here we will not speak about the shofar of Rosh HaShanah, but rather when the shofar is blown to bring about freedom, which will be the blowing of the shofar that heralds the redemption.

The word “blow” is *tekiah* in Hebrew, which can mean to “establish.” A *tekiah* is about establishing permanence. It disconnects something from where it is and returns it to the place where it belongs. The concept of *tekiah* is about creating a connection - to connect us to good. In order for us to be connected to good, though, we have to first be disconnected completely from the previous source.

When we are subservient to the nations in exile, when we are connected to things that are improper for a Jew's soul, we need to be severed from this.

The *tekiah* of the shofar in the future will disconnect us from the situation of exile, and return us to our root. First we will be disconnected from the influences of the exile on us, and then we will be moved to teshuvah, where we will return to our root.

So a *tekiah* is about disconnecting us from where we are not supposed to be, to the place that we are supposed to be. The *tekiah* of the shofar serves to totally disconnect us from an improper place and to restore us back to good. In order for the disconnection from evil to be a real disconnection, it has to be a total disconnection, and only then can we be reconnected to our source. Only a *tekiah* which causes a total disconnection from evil can be considered a true *tekiah*, because the whole point of a *tekiah* is to totally disconnect us from what is improper; if it doesn't accomplish a total disconnection from evil, the *tekiah* has not served its purpose. If a *tekiah* just inspires us but it doesn't cause us to be totally moved, the *tekiah* was pointless.

So in order for the *tekias shofar* in the future to be a true *tekiah* that will remove us from evil, we have to already disconnect ourselves from this world beforehand. Our earlier Rabbis wrote that if we want anything to work for us, we need to cause an awakening down here on this earth, in order for Hashem to channel down any Heavenly sustenance. This is the general concept of *Tefillah* (prayer) – whenever we need something from Heaven, the only way to get it is by awakening it down here on this earth, which we can accomplish when we daven for it.

Thus, in order for us to merit the *tekias shofar* of the future, which will disconnect us from the exile, we need to do our part already here on this earth, which is by working to disconnect ourselves as much as we can, from the current lifestyle.

The outcome of this discussion is not that you should take a shofar and blow it now so you can disconnect yourself from the lifestyle of exile. That is clearly not the intention of *tekias shofar*. Rather, *tekias shofar* is a lesson that tells us that we need to disconnect ourselves from anything improper that we are connected to on this world, and to instead connect ourselves totally with Hashem.

### ***Do We Really Want The Redemption?***

We daven in Shemoneh Esrei for the redemption. What are we davening for? Why do we want the redemption? So that we will all sit under the fig trees and relax? Are we hoping for things that are frivolous...?

Chazal say that the reason to await the redemption, which all the righteous people awaited for and desired, is solely because it will be a time in which we can learn Torah with no distractions. According to one opinion in the Gemara, nothing will change in the future except for the fact that we will be able to be free from the jurisdiction of the nations. Even according to this opinion, the reason why we should want the redemption is not so that we will be free from the rule of other nations. The point is that we will be able to sit and learn Torah peacefully without having to deal with the other nations.

Is a person awaiting the redemption because he's stressed out from life? Does a person really yearn to live in a world which will entirely be about doing Hashem's will? If a person doesn't yearn for the redemption for this reason, his heart inside is not matching the words being uttered in his lips when he davens for the redemption. He is davening for something he doesn't really want.

Imagine if a person would be given the choice right now to live with no stress from life, and to instead just sit and learn Torah be entirely immersed in doing Hashem's will. What would he choose? If a person feels "Yes", then his prayer for the redemption is an earnest prayer. But if a person has no

desire for such a life, and he simply wants to be free from the stresses of life, he is not directing his soul to the redemption. His soul isn't prepared to disconnect from this world, and thus he won't be able to connect with Hashem. Our prayer for the redemption needs to be coming from a truthful place in ourselves. It has to be something we wish for, something we hope for.

When we ask Hashem to blow the shofar and gather in all the exiles, we need to clarify what's going on inside of us. Of course, even if one doesn't make this inner clarification, he is still obligated to daven in Shemoneh Esrei for the redemption. But this doesn't exempt us. One needs to make sure his prayers are truthful and thus ask himself if he really wants what he davens for.

It's very possible that a person is always davening for the redemption, but deep down, he doesn't want it! It's tough to admit this. A person can daven and daven for the redemption, but his soul does not want the redemption. Is he really ready to connect to that world of the future? Does he really want it...?

### ***This World - A World of Many Desires***

There is a major difference between this world and the Next World (of the future). What is the difference between physical existence and spiritual existence of the Next World? The Jewish nation is "*a nation that is scattered and individual among the nations*" (as Haman said), and this is true not only with regards to the general whole of the Jewish people, but it is also true within one's private soul as well, that a person's soul can be scattered inside. One's actions can be connected to many things; he speaks about many things he wants; he has many desires that he feels connected to. All of this scatters the soul inside. That is a description of This World - the constant chasing of various desires that people feel so connected to.

In the Next World, there is only one desire alone that people will have. People there realize that besides for Hashem, there is nothing else to want. In the Next World, it is revealed that we have one desire alone: to desire our Father in Heaven. "We have only one heart, directed toward our Father in Heaven." This is the inner way to define the difference between This World and the Next World. The Next World is not just about reward; that is just the superficial understanding. The reward of the Next World is that we get to leave a viewpoint of disparity and instead attain the perspective of oneness, to leave all the many desires and instead connect to the one desire of our soul. If someone on this world is truly connected with Hashem, he lives a paradise-like kind of existence - he is called a "*ben olam haba*". It is possible for a person already on this world to live in a world that resembles the Next World.

The *Chovos HaLevovos* warns that a person needs to avoid *pizur hanefesh*, a "scattering of the soul". A person's soul can be scattered inside due to the many varying desires that a person is pursuing, and this can even be due to spiritual desires. As the generations go on, the *pizur hanefesh* in the world increases. In our generation, the amount of *pizur hanefesh* is astounding. There is almost no time for people to reflect about their priorities. It used to be that a person would sit calmly and reflect on his priorities. The whole lifestyle of today's generation, especially in the last couple of years, does not allow for any calmness in a person's life. The lifestyle of today is the antithesis of *yishuv hadaas*.

### ***Cellphones and Gadgets***

A cellphone in your pocket might have a *hechsher* on it, but it can still cause so many spiritual problems, besides for problems of *bittul Torah*, and a threat to your holiness and modesty. The very fact that there is a cellphone in your pocket already disconnects a person from being a *ben olam haba*. It is such a sickness. It's an issue of *bittul Torah*, and not only in regards to taking away time from your learning; it takes away a person's very connection to the Torah!

All the many kinds of gadgets today, whether they are in our pockets, or whether they surround us wherever we go, take us out of a life of concentration. They make our soul scattered inside. Even if a person claims that he has a cellphone in his pocket all the time so that he can help people, is it really because he loves others so much? And how much of his spirituality is he losing in the process?

### ***Disconnect, So You Can Reconnect***

The Next World will be one thing alone – the recognition and desire for Hashem. It will be the total opposite of today's world, which is all about so many different desires that people have. The redemption will be the situation of the Next World – the entire redemption will be a redemption from our current situation, in which people are scattered inside themselves. The redemption will take us and return us to the situation of wanting only one thing alone: Hashem.

It is impossible for anyone to change the generation and the lifestyle that the world is living. But each person, on his own, can search for truth, for closeness with Hashem, and realize how much *pizur hanefesh* surrounds us. A child born into today's generation is being born into a world of tremendous *pizur hanefesh*. And those who have been around before the new generation have also entered a lifestyle of total *pizur hanefesh* as well.

If one's soul doesn't yearn for the general redemption, as well as a private redemption – in other words, if one's soul doesn't have a yearning to live in a pure world where there will only be Hashem and His Torah – then he needs to unify his desires into one desire alone: to desire the situation of the Next World, and to leave all the many scattered desires behind. We must desire to live in a world of oneness, and if not, we won't be able to live in the future times, where there will only be Hashem with His Torah!

Without this desire to live in a world of oneness, maybe a person will still have a will for holiness, but he hasn't yet programmed himself to live in a world in which there will be only one desire alone: Hashem.

In order to merit the redemption, we need to prepare ourselves and make ourselves into a container that will receive its light. This is by disconnecting from all that we are connected to on this world, and by inwardly connecting ourselves to the pure state of the future. Even if a person feels that this is too hard and that he can't change his lifestyle, this does not exempt him from having the aspiration. He has to try his hardest.

**One should therefore set aside time, an hour or two a day – each according to his ability – and during this time of solitude, *disconnect yourself from the entire world*.<sup>[1]</sup>** Unless there is a life-threatening situation, you must connect yourself to one thing alone, during this time of solitude every day that you set aside for yourself. Don't do anything during this time of solitude and just connect yourself, totally, to the Creator. For anyone who searches for Hashem in his life, this is the essential ingredient he needs: to have this time of solitude every day, totally disconnected from the world – and totally connected with the Creator.

If a person does this and sets aside time every day for this reflection, he will receive great *siyata d'shamaya* in his life and see tremendous growth. If a person doesn't have times of solitude every day with the Creator, it is almost indefinite that he will be swept up with the dismal situation of this generation.

Through doing this, by setting aside times of solitude every day in which we disconnect from the world and instead connect ourselves as much as we can with *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*, we are doing our part on this earth, which awakens all Heavenly blessing. That will awaken the great light of the

redemption that will come to the masses, where we will all hear together the great *shofar* blow of Moshiach. *Amen v'amen*.

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[1] For more detailed guidance on how to do *hisbodedus*, see:

**[Getting To Know Your Inner World](#)** [1] and [2]

**[Bilvavi Part 4, \(Chapters 1-7\)](#)** [2] and [3]

**[Bilvavi Part 5 \(Fundamentals In Avodah\)](#)** [3]

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**Source:** <http://bilvavi.net/english/tefillah-084-preparing-redemption>

#### **Links**

[1] <http://bilvavi.net/sugya/daes.yehu>

[2] <http://bilvavi.net/sugya/bilvavi.dalet>

[3] <http://bilvavi.net/english/bilvavi-part-5-012-fundamentals-avodah>