



# Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim

IN THE HEART OF THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM

The Torah of Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner, Rosh Ha-Yeshiva

Rosh Hashanah 5768

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## The Shofar of the Past and the Shofar of the Future

The Shofar signals both the birth and the future of the Nation of Israel. In the words of the prophet Yeshayahu, "You revealed Yourself to Your holy people in the cloud of Your glory in order to speak to them, You revealed yourself to them in thunder and lightning, and You appeared to them through the sound of the Shofar." (Yeshayahu 27:13 & quoted in Musaf of Rosh Hashanah). Yeshayahu also tells us that in the final redemption, "It shall be that on that day a great Shofar will be blown, and those who were lost in the land of Ashur (capital of Assyria) will come, and those who were cast aside in the land of Mitzrayim (Egypt), and they shall bow down before God on the Holy Mount, in Jerusalem."

### **Text Message Responsa**

Rav Aviner answers hundreds of text message questions a week. Here is a sample:

Q: Is it forbidden to cross the street against a red light when there is no danger, based on the principle that "the law of the land is the law"?

A: Yes, it is forbidden.

Q: Is it permissible to make change from the shul tzedakah box?

A: Yes, but with great caution.

Q: Is smoking completely prohibited or a good recommendation?

A: It is a serious prohibition. Tens of thousands are killed every year. Hundreds of thousands are sick.

The Creator reveals Himself through the Shofar, first in the revelation of the Divine Will at the Giving of the Torah on Mt. Sinai, in the Shofar of "You revealed Yourself." The aim of this revelation is its culmination - the revelation of the Light of God throughout the world, "And they shall bow down before God on the Holy Mount, in Jerusalem. . . . Then a great Shofar will be blown" (ibid.)

There are two types of Jews: those "lost" and those "cast aside," as the Chassidim explain. Some are in Ashur and some in Mitzrayim. The land of Ashur is the land of the blessed and the blissful (The Hebrew root A Sh R means "bliss"). Some people get lost in all of this bliss, as the Torah teaches, "And Yeshurun waxed fat, and he kicked" (Devarim 32:15). Too much good may lead men to lose the sparks of divinity in their souls; they drown in the flood of material pleasures and foreign influences to which

they are constantly exposed. Other people are cast aside in Egypt (Mitzrayim – from the root TZAR – sorrow), where their poverty and suffering causes them to abandon God. “And they did not listen to Moshe on account of their distress and the hard work” (Shemot 21:9). Their trials and tribulations marred the splendor of their spirits. It is up to the Great Shofar of the Redemption to awaken all those who have fallen into the clutches of Ashur or been swallowed up by Mitzrayim, as the Rambam teaches (Hilchot Teshuvah 3:4), “Although the Shofar blowing on Rosh HaShanah is a mitzvah for which no reason is stated, it hints to us: ‘Wake up from your sleep, you who slumber. . . .’”

This is also the expression of Rabbi Elchanan, the sainted author of the “Netanah Tokef” prayer of Musaf: “A great Shofar blast shall sound, and a small still voice will be heard.” If a great Shofar is blown, how can the sound be of a small still voice? And why? The answer is that on that awesome day, man hears an inner voice, the voice of his soul, the Divine speaking from within him. The Shofar blast is the catalyst which frees his soul from its bonds and allows man to listen to it, “And a small voice will be heard.”

### **Shut She'eilat Shlomo**

#### Questions of Jewish Law

Q: If Hashem decides everything on Rosh Hashanah, why should we pray?

A: The same gemara in Rosh Hashanah (16a) which says that Hashem judges us on Rosh Hashanah, also says that Hashem judges us every day and that Hashem judges us every moment. Therefore there are judgements at different times. The gemara itself asks, if everything is decreed on Rosh Hashanah, why do we pray for the sick? The answer is that prayer always helps. Perhaps it is decreed that we will be sick, but we can pray that we will be healed.

### **Stories of Rabbenu – Our Rabbi**

#### Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook

Our Rabbi would greatly lengthen his private Shemoneh Esrei, and on the High Holidays they could not wait for him because of the length and his awesome cleaving to Hashem.

On Yom Kippur 5734, the day on which the Yom Kippur War broke out at 2:00 PM, when the center of the city shook from sirens and megaphones, some students who were called to the army ran to depart from our Rabbi. At that moment he was engrossed in the repetition of the Shemoneh Esrei of Musaf. They called and yelled to our Rabbi, but he was so engrossed in prayer that he did not respond, until a Torah scholar was somewhat brazen to shake his shoulder, and inform him that the war broke out. Our Rabbi turned around with teary eyes and said, "Go to an obligatory war to sanctify Hashem's Great Name, there is no doubt that you will be victorious, the Guardian of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps, and His word will not return empty, the Redemption continues on."

#### Book of the Week Written by Rav Aviner



**Tal Chermon PART 1 – Holidays**. Written in 5745 (23 years ago), this inspiring book includes philosophical talks about each of our holidays based on the teachings of Rav Avraham Yitzchak Ha-Cohain Kook. It was partially translated into English as "Moadim Le-Simchah."

Parashah Sheet prepared by Mordechai Friedfertig