Galus Yishmael: what is the endgame?

# Suri Cohen: 8th of MarCheshvan 5776 and October 21, 2015

This was an amazing shiur, very in depth. I am going to send only some highlights of the shiur. This is a shiur that must be listened to, to understand clearly.

We know that at the bris bein habisorim, while Avrohom Aveinu was waiting for Hashem, the posuk tells us ‘hina aima gedola nofeles’ a big darkness is falling. Chazal say, what was this darkness? It was Avrohom Aveinu seeing the 4 golius of Klal Yisroel. A great darkness came over him, when he saw how the Yidden would suffer. Hashem gave him a choice, either the Yidden could go through these 4 difficult golius or they could live in gehonim for life. Avrohom Aveinu chose the 4 golius, as painful as they are, he felt it was better.

In Sefer Berishis, the posuk that speaks of ‘tohu vavohu’ also symbolizes the 4 golius.

We know that the Yidden would have to go through the 4 Galius and everyone was hoping that the Holocaust would be the end of our suffering, but we see that is not the case. Could there be a 5th galus, asks Suri?

In the first golus, when Nevuchadnazer conquered Eretz Yisroel, he took the prophet Daniel back with him to Bovel. One night, he had a horrible dream that he did not understand. There was an idol, whose head was made out of gold, the middle out of silver, the bottom out of copper and the toes out of iron. And out of nowhere comes a stone and shatters the idol. Nevuchadnazer called Daniel to the palace to explain this dream. Daniel told him the following: that these 4 parts of the idol symbolize the 4 golius o the Jews and the stone is Melech HaMoshiach that will come and shatter the idol.

The gold is the Roman golus, the silver is the Greek golus, the copper is golus Edom and the iron is the golus of Yishmael.

Rav Sadia Gaon says that the iron at the bottom of the idol, which was the 10 toes of the idol are the combination of golus Edom and golus Yishmael. At the end of times, they will be together, 5 toes from golus Eisav and 5 toes from golus Yishmael. We now are at the bottom of the dream.

If we look back at history, the worst periods for the Jews were under the Christians. During the Spanish Inquisition, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella knew that Spain would suffer if the Jews were expelled, but for the cause of their religion they were willing to sacrifice the Jews.

Under the Arabs, the Jews lived well. The Golden Era of the Jews in Spain was under Arab rule. Under the Catholics, there were always publications coming out blaming the Jews for everything. Now this phenomenon is happening under the Arabs. Now the Arabs are publishing writings against the Jews and stirring up the masses. This has never before happened in history.

When Yaakov was waiting for Eisav, he was afraid. He was afraid of Eisav at that actual period and afraid of Eisav in the future. Yaakov also knew what was in store for his descendants. What did Yaakov do? He divided up his family, symbolic of his descendants that some would be ruled under Eisav and some under Yishmael. And he taught us then, how to deal with these people: the ones under Eisav have to deal with him with chochma, smartness, but the ones under Yishmael have to deal with him with money, and presents. Yaakov taught us that with Yishmael, they only understand bribery and that is how we have to deal with them.

But now Yishmael is turning into Eisav. Now it is the Arabs who are spear heading anti-Semitism. This is a new thing, never happened in history before.

In the past Eisav used swords, which are a weapon of courage and Yishmael used bow and arrows-which is a weapon of cowardness (it is shot from far), but now Yishamel is using both. Now they are using swords-i.e. knives.

So who exactly is Yishmael? Suri said, to find out, we have to go back to when he is first mentioned in the Torah. When Hagar was pregnant the angel came to her and told her that she will have a boy and to call him “yishmael’. Rav Eliezer HaGodol explains that Yishmael is one of the very few people whose name was given to him before he was born. Any why was he called Yishmael? “Because Hashem will hear the crying of Bnei Yisroel when they will be oppressed by Yishmael.” The victims of what Yishmael will do, will cry out to Hashem and Hashem will hear them. The angel planted an escape route in Yishmael’s own name.

The Baal Haturim explains there are 4 times in the Torah where the posuk starts off, “V’koroso” and ‘you will call’. The first time, “V’koroso Shimo Yishmael” and you should call his name Yishmael. The other times when it is written is to teach us that Yidden will realize that we have no one else to turn to in our time of need but Hashem and the 4th time is “V’koroso Chomosacho Yeshua” which means that we have to daven and that will bring the Geula.

Even Bilam knew about the 4 golius and about the last one he said, “oy me ichya misuma kale” “oy for the one who will live in that time.

Once Yishmael had a bris mila at the age of 13, he got a merit for that which was that the Arabs are destined to rule Eretz Yisroel when the land is desolate. And we know that the Arabs did rule Eretz Yisroel for centuries. Because he has zchusim, Hashem has to help us be saved which he will. Because Yishmael has zchusim, this will make golus Yishmael very difficult for the Jews, it will be a hard golus, and Klal Yisroel will cry out in pain and Hashem will help us.

Eisav’s weapon of destruction is ‘fire’. In the Holocaust they burned the Jews in the crematoriums. Yishmael’s weapon is water and so it is the Arabs who said they want ‘to push the Jews into the sea’.

The toes on the idol of Nevuchadnazer were 5 of iron, 5 of clay. This is to symbolize that at the end of times, before Moshiach comes, Eisav and Yishmael will fuse their forces together and become one against the Yidden.

Eisav was married to the bnos Canaan. He saw his father was unhappy with this. The torah tells us that Eisav married Machlis, from Yishmael. And from this union, Amalek was born. Amalek pursued the Yidden like bees. When a bit stings a person, the bee dies. This is like a suicide bomber. Amalek were the first suicide bombers. The latent potential of ‘Amalek’ is suicide.

The “Aish HaKodesh’ (a big Rav who was killed in the Holocaust) why is it that during the Holocaust the Jews were killed just for being Jews. In past conflicts, the goyim wanted the Jews to convert. If they didn’t convert, then they would be killed. But in World War 2, if you were born Jewish, you were killed.

He explains that ‘akeidas yitzchok’was in thought only. It never actually happened. There was the thought to perform the akeida but it never came to fruition. The Aish Hakodesh explains that anytime a Jew is killed, just because he is a Jew and for no other reason, this is the completion of the akeidah. This is the completion of that thought.

Suri went into greater detail about all these things and about the Arabs in general.

Where does all this leave us? Chazal asks thousands of years ago, how can the Yidden be saved from ‘chavlei Moshiach’ and the answer is that the Yidden should busy themselves with Torah, avoda and gemilus chasodim. That we have to strengthen ourselves in our mitzvos. Tefila, Torah, chesed, tzinus are our weapons says Suri and we have to use them.

WE have the power of tefila, but so does Yishmael. But from Yishmael’s cruelty, it will cause the Yidden to daven so much better that Hashem will surely hear us and save us-as is hinted to in Yishmael’s own name.

May we be zocha for the final Geula, speedily.