

The Great Squeeze

By: Yanki Tauber

What do a garden hose nozzle, a rocket, a hydraulic power plant, a *shofar*, and this article have in common? They all operate on the Pinch Principle.

Simply stated, the Pinch Principle works like this: take something with potential that is currently not doing much, confine it in a narrow space, squeeze it through an even narrower passage, and presto! you can send a spray of water clear across your lawn or a missile to the moon, light up a small city in California, or transform a mouthful of air into a piercing note.

(As for this article, it's being written three hours before deadline, though whether the Pinch Principle will work in this case remains to be seen.)

We currently find ourselves in a stretch of the Jewish calendar which the prophet calls "Between the Narrows" (*Bein Hametzarim*). On the 17th of Tammuz, the walls of Jerusalem were breached by the Roman legions besieging the city; twenty-one days later, on the 9th of Av, the Holy Temple was set aflame. These two events spawned twenty centuries of *galut* -- of physical persecution and spiritual alienation for our people. Today, these two dates stand as markers of national tragedy, with all the pain and frustration of our *galut* compressed into "The Three Weeks" they enclose.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe would always say that we cannot, must not, dare not, explain the *galut*. G-d does not need our help as "defense lawyers" to justify His ways; we do Him a greater service by pleading and clamoring for an end to His and our exile, which is far more painful to Him than it is to us. Nevertheless, even as we refuse to accept the travesty of *galut*, we should still exploit its positive dividends.

The Jewish soul, a divine expanse of goodness and light, has been squeezed into the narrow straits of *galut*. Imagine what will come out at the other end! Already, this cosmic pinch has wrung from the Jewish soul wells of talent and creativity, and depths of faith and commitment, that in the good old broad days were only implicit in its potential.

May we soon merit the great *shofar* blast of [Moshiach](#), and the great moment of the soul's bursting free of the strictures of *galut*.

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5 August | 6th Av

Devarim

Shabbat Begins: 8:28 pm

Shabbat Ends: 9:35 pm