

ROSH HASHANAH

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The Sound of the Shofar

מלכיות וזכרונות ושופרות

On Rosh Hashana, the conclusion of the ברכה of שופרות in our מוסף שמונה עשרה is: השומע קול: תרועת עמו ישראל ברחמים. We do not request רחמים when we perform any other *mitzvah*. Why need we request that Hashem should listen to our shofar ברחמים?

The sound of the shofar is a prayer; a prayer for the revelation of מלכות שמים, and a prayer that our remembrance be brought before Hashem. *How [do we accomplish these twin functions]? With the shofar.* Indeed, the Gemara² states: *The shofar effects remembrance, and is therefore regarded as though it were sounded in the inner chambers of the Bais Hamikdosh.* When K'lal Yisroel sounds the shofar, thereby proclaiming His Sovereignty, their remembrance – their having accepted His Dominion – is brought before Him.

In addition to the sounding of the shofar, we recite *b'rachos* of זכרונות ושופרות, each accompanied by ten pesukim. These *b'rachos* are not independent of the shofar. The Ritva³ writes that they are indeed the *b'rachos* recited upon the תקיעות דמעומד, similar to קריאת שמע ברכות קריאת שמע which are the *b'rachos* of קריאת שמע. Rather than instituting a *b'racha* upon the *mitzvah* of קריאת שמע, we incorporate קריאת שמע into a *b'racha*⁴. Each *b'racha* of קריאת שמע is a *b'racha* on one of its פרשיות. *פרשיות* is recited upon the פרשה of קבלת מלכות שמים; *אהבה רבה*, which is a *b'racha* upon the Torah, incorporates within it the פרשה of קבלת עול מצוות; *גאל ישראל*, which is a *b'racha* recited upon the third פרשה of קריאת שמע, that of זכירת יציאת מצרים. Similarly, each of the *b'rachos* of מלכיות incorporates the sounds of the shofar into a *b'racha*.

Indeed, although Rambam⁵ states that the מצות היום of Rosh Hashana is to sound nine

1 ראש השנה דף טז.

2 ראש השנה דף כו.

3 ריטב"א ראש השנה דף לד: ד"ה כתב הרי"ף

4 נועם שיח להגאון מוה"ר יוסף חיים שניאור קוטלר זצ"ל

5 רמב"ם פרק ג משופר הלכה א

shofar sounds, Rashi⁶ writes that the first three sounds are for מלכיות, the next three are for זכרונות, and the final three are for שופרות. In his commentary on the Torah⁷, Rashi indeed elucidates that the *pasukim* make reference to מלכיות וזכרונות ושופרות, for each set of תקיעות represents one of these concepts. Thus, according to Rashi, the מצות היום is to blow תקיעה תרועה, and to repeat the מצוה three times; once for מלכיות, once for זכרונות, and once for שופרות.

Perhaps, a practical difference between Rambam's and Rashi's interpretations can be seen regarding if one is מפסיק between the sounds. Must he re-blow only three sounds, or must he re-blow the entire nine⁸? Also, concerning one who has the strength to blow only three sounds, does he sound the shofar, or is he similar to one who can only blow either a תקיעה or a תרועה who does not blow at all⁹? Is one set of תקיעה תרועה תקיעה a מצוה, or is the מצוה sounding all three sets?

Rashi¹⁰ states that one who did not obtain a shofar until after he already recited *mussaf*, blasts three sets of shofar sounds; one for מלכיות, one for זכרונות, and one for שופרות. Accordingly, although one who prays without a מנין does not sound the shofar during his rendition of the quiet Sh'mone Esrei¹¹, he should nevertheless sound it immediately after reciting the Sh'mone Esrei¹², so that the תקיעות should revert to the תפילות he had just recited. Possibly, the thirty sounds that many Ashkenazim blow after חזרת השי"ץ are a second set of תקיעות דמעומד, and revert to the Sh'mone Esrei that had just been recited.

The *minhag* of the Mechaber¹³, however, was to sound three sets of שברים תרועה after מלכיות, three sets of שברים after זכרונות, and three sets of תרועה after שופרות. This is consistent with the *shitah* of the Rambam¹⁴. The mitzvah of shofar is to sound nine sounds. Therefore nine were sounded after מלכיות, nine after זכרונות, and nine after שופרות.

The mishna¹⁵ quotes an opinion that מלכיות is recited together with קדושת השם, which indeed concludes with the words המלך הקדוש. The shofar is nevertheless only sounded by קדושת היום. Although מלכיות may indeed be mentioned together with קדושת השם, the shofar, through which K'lal Yisroel accepts upon themselves עול מלכות שמים, can only be sounded together with קדושת היום, both of which are dependent upon קדושת ישראל. Moreover, the sounding of the shofar, which is a prayer for the revelation of מלכות שמים, may only be recited during the middle *b'rachos* of Sh'mona Esrei, which are *b'rachos* of בקשה, and not in the introductory *b'rachos* of

6 ראש השנה דף לג: ד"ה תוקע ומריע ותוקע

7 ויקרא כג כד, במדבר י י. ועי' רמב"ן ויקרא כג כד שהק' דהברכות חיובן מדרבנן

8 טור אורח חיים סוף סימן תקצ הביא מחלוקת בזה

9 וכן פסק שו"ע הרב או"ח סימן תקצג סעיף ג

10 ראש השנה דף לג: ד"ה תוקע ומריע ותוקע

11 אורח חיים סימן תקצב סעיף ב

12 ביאור הגר"א שם

13 אורח חיים סימן תקצב סעיף א ועי"ש בביאור הגר"א

14 וכן פירש לחם משנה בדברי הרמב"ם פרק ג משופר הלכה יב. וצ"ע מדברי הרמב"ם שם הלכה ז

15 ראש השנה דף לב.

praise.

Interestingly, the Yerushalmi¹⁶ states that although מלכיות was recited in the Yehudah region together with קדושת היום, as is our custom, in the Galil region מלכיות was recited in the third *b'racha* of Sh'mone Esrei together with קדושת השם. Possibly, our lengthened *nusach* of קדושת השם that we recite on the ימים נוראים was the *nusach* of מלכיות that was recited in Galil prior to המלך הקדוש, without the accompanying פסוקים.

The Bavli,¹⁷ however, refutes this opinion, because if one is not sounding the shofar, the tenth *pasuk* should be omitted. The Gemara is thus differentiating between the first nine pesukim and the tenth *pasuk*. Only the tenth *pasuk* is associated with the sound of the shofar. What is unique about the tenth *pasuk*?

I merited to hear from my father-in-law ע"ה, his Rebbe's¹⁸ ז"ל observation that the tenth *pasuk* is a component of the בקשה associated with the blessing. By זכרונות and שופרות we indeed mention the final *pasuk* in the prayer sections. But the final *pasuk* of מלכיות, which is שמע ישראל, precedes the prayer of מלכיות. Possibly, rather than *praying* for מלכיות, we *execute it* by proclaiming our acceptance of עול מלכות שמים. While only Hashem can bring about זכרונות and שופרות, we can realize מלכיות ourselves, through our proclamation of שמע ישראל.

Therein lies the uniqueness of the tenth *pasuk*. It is not merely a *mention* of מלכיות זכרונות ושופרות, as are the initial nine, but rather a plea for their fulfillment. It is therefore associated with the sound of the shofar, because both are prayers. Moreover, the sound of the shofar itself achieves מלכיות זכרונות ושופרות; the Jewish people are favorably remembered, in the merit of their declaring the Kingdom of Hashem.

תקיעה שברים תרועה תקיעה

The מצות היום on Rosh Hashana is to sound a תקיעה and a תרועה. A תקיעה is unlike a תרועה. A תקיעה is an announcement of joy, and is sounded at joyous occasions, such as when we offer קרבנות on Yom Tov¹⁹. תרועה, however, is translated by the Targum as יבבה²⁰ - a cry. It is sounded when Israel wages war against its enemies²¹. Indeed, the Rosh Hayeshiva²² זצ"ל insisted that each שבר sound like a cry, and not like a short תקיעה.

Similarly, in the desert, the Torah commanded Bnei Yisroel to sound a תרועה on the occasion of their travels, for they were then in a situation of danger, as stated in the *pasuk*: ויהי

¹⁶ ירושלמי ראש השנה פרק ד הלכה ו

¹⁷ ראש השנה דף לב.

¹⁸ הגר"ד סאלאוויציק ז"ל

¹⁹ במדבר י י

²⁰ ראש השנה דף לג:

²¹ במדבר י ט

²² מו"ר בעל אגרות משה, ראה דברינו ב'תורת המנהג' על ר"ה (בענין השברים)

תקיעה On an occasion of the ingathering of the congregation, a was sounded, for that is a peaceful occasion, as stated in the *pasuk*: ובנוחה יאמר שובה ה' רבבות אלפי ישראל.²³

The Gemara²⁴ states that we are in doubt regarding the definition of תרועה. It is either שברים - a groan known as שברים, a יללה - a wail known as תרועה, or a combination of both. However, although the תרועה of the Torah may consist both of our שברים and תרועה, the שברים precedes the תרועה, because when misfortune occurs one first groans and afterwards wails.

It is evident from the order of שברים תרועה that there is a clear distinction between a שברים and a תרועה. The cry of a שברים is a groan of worry sounded by one who anticipates disaster. The cry of a תרועה is the wail of a mourner who has already experienced tragedy. The cry of worry is one of long groans. The cry of mourning is a wail consisting of short cries.

We unite the תרועה and the תקיעה, because both good and bad emanate from Hashem. כל תרועות של חדש שביעי זה כזה - *The shofar of both Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur of Yovel are identical*. Although Rosh Hashana's תקיעות commemorate Judgement²⁷, as stated: תקעו בחדש שופר ... כי חק לישראל הוא משפט לאלוקי יעקב, and the shofar of Yom Kippur, a merciful day of forgiveness²⁸, joyfully announces the freedom of slaves²⁹, we do not differentiate between the shofar sounds. The תרועה is sandwiched between the merciful sounds of the תקיעה, for the sounding of the shofar is our prayer that we should not experience any misfortune³⁰. כל שנה שאין תוקעין לה בתחילתה מריעין לה בסופה - *If one does not hear the merciful sound of year's end*. on Rosh Hashana, he will hear the wail of תרועה by year's end.

The תרועה is the cry to combat the Prosecutor³². The תקיעה is the call announcing our acquittal. The תרועה is our cry of repentance³³. The תקיעה is the announcement of our forgiveness.

The Gemara compares the תרועה to the wailing of the mother of Sisra, the General of C'na'an, upon his failure to return from waging war with the Israelites³⁴. Indeed, it is customary to sound one-hundred shofar blasts on Rosh Hashana, to parallel the one-hundred cries of Sisra's mother³⁵. What is the significance of equating our shofar sounds to her cries?

23 רמב"ן ויקרא כג כד

24 ראש השנה דף לד.

25 ראש השנה דף לד. רמב"ם ה' שופר פרק ג הלכה א

26 ראש השנה דף לג: לד.

27 ספורנו ויקרא כג כד

28 רמב"ן ויקרא כג כד

29 תרגום יונתן וספורנו ויקרא כה ט

30 ע' רמב"ן ויקרא כג כד

31 ראש השנה דף טז:

32 חנוך מצוה תה

33 רמב"ם פרק ג מתשובה הלכה ד

34 ראש השנה דף לג:

35 טור אורח חיים סימן תקצב

With the sounding of our shofar we are supplicating that any misfortune that has been destined upon mankind should be brought upon the wicked, and not upon the Jewish people. Devorah indeed said regarding Sisra: כִּן יֵאבְדוּ כָל אוֹיְבֶיךָ ה' ³⁶. Sisra's mother and her ilk should cry cries of worry and mourning, and not our brethren.

לערבב את השטן

We fulfill the *mitzvah* of shofar in a two-step process. We initially fulfill the Torah requirement, and subsequently fulfill the *mitzvah* as was proscribed by Chazal, together with מלכיות וזכרונות ושופרות.

Many other *mitzvos* are fulfilled in such a fashion. We read the Sh'ma prior to תפילת שחרית, and subsequently repeat it together with its *b'rachos*.³⁷ We take the lulav before Hallel, and then shake it again while reciting Hallel. We eat matzoh before the Seder meal, and eat it again, על השובע, as the אפיקומן³⁸. One who does not have another vegetable for כרפס eats maror for כרפס, and then eats it again after reciting the הגדה³⁹. We say מקדש השבת during the ma'ariv prayer, and repeat it when reciting קידוש על היין⁴⁰.

However, only with regard to שופר תקיעת does the Gemara⁴¹ ask: למה תוקעין ומריעין כשהן יושבין ותוקעין ומריעין כשהן עמדין - *Why do we hear the shofar before musaf, and then listen to it again during musaf together with זכרונות ושופרות*? The Gemara thereupon answers: כדי לערבב את השטן - *To bewilder the Satan*. Why does repeating the תקיעות confuse the Satan, whereas duplicating the aforementioned *mitzvos* does not affect the Satan?

The shofar is our facing up to the Satan, the Prosecutor in the Heavenly Court. We therefore do not sound the shofar during the early morning hours, for that is a period of strict justice⁴². The convention is for the prosecutor to summon the defendant to appear before the court. It is anticipated that the shofar will be sounded, for its sound is our only recourse and our primary line of defense. However, to sound the shofar a second time, voluntarily, is paramount to summoning the Prosecutor to stand in front of the Court. Why is the defendant summoning the Prosecutor?

The Jewish Nation cherishes the *mitzvos* of Hashem. They duplicate the *mitzvah* of shofar even if on its account they may face the Heavenly Court a second time. *This* is what baffles the Satan. He is being summoned before the Court to witness Israel's love of Torah and mitzvos!

36 שופטים ה לא

37 טור אורח חיים סימן מו

38 רשב"ם פסחים דף קיט: ד"ה אין מפטירין כתב דמצה שאנו אוכלין באחרונה היא לשם חובה

39 אורח חיים סימן תעה סעיף ב

40 מגן אברהם סימן רעא ס"ק א

41 ראש השנה דף טז.

42 משנה ברורה סי' תקצא ס"ק טו

Chazal abolished the *mitzvah* of shofar when Rosh Hashana falls out on Shabbos. Without the sound of the shofar, what is our defense before the Heavenly Court?

The shofar is the Court Appointed Defender. When the Defender is not obtainable, the Prosecutor cannot litigate⁴³. Israel's observance of the dictates of Chazal silences the Satan.

אוכלין ושותין ושמחים בראש השנה

The Tur quotes a Medrash: *It is customary for one who is facing a court appearance to dress as a mourner and not to trim his hair and his nails, for he does not know the outcome of his verdict. But Israel, on Rosh Hashana, dresses in white and trims hair and nails, and eats happily, for they know that Hashem will perform for them a miracle.* If the Israelites are relying on a miracle, they are presuming their guilt, but are nevertheless certain of an acquittal. Why are they sure that Hashem will perform for them a miracle?

We do not pray for our welfare on Rosh Hashana. We only pray for the arrival of Mashiach and for the revelation of the Kingdom of Heaven. We thus ready ourselves to be the dwelling for the Sh'chinah, and to fulfill the purpose of creation. Rosh Hashana is the day of creation, and Israel stands to fulfill its purpose. Indeed, the sounding of the shofar is Israel's proclamation of מלכות שמים. Hashem will surely perform miracles to ensure the survival of Israel, for only through them will His Dominion ultimately be revealed throughout the entire world.

ע' טור או"ח סוף סימן תקפה 43

The Ten Days of Teshuvah

Although year-round Hashem is primarily receptive to the prayers of a congregation, during the ten days between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, Hashem is accessible even to the private petitioner. What is unique about these days?

The period between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur is when the Kingdom of Heaven descends upon the Earth and passes judgement upon its inhabitants. *עיקר שכינה בתחתונים - The primary dwelling of the Sh'china is in our lower world.* During the rest of the year our task is to bring the Sh'china down to us. This can only be achieved by a congregation of ten. When ten men gather for prayer, the sh'china dwells amongst them. During these ten days, however, the sh'china is present. Each individual can therefore present his request.

The uniqueness of these ten days are further defined in the *t'filos* that are added during this period.

זכרנו לחיים - The addendum that we add to the Sh'mone Esrei are directly associated with the *b'racha* into which each is incorporated

וזוהר חסדי אבות correlates to זכרנו לחיים.

ומביא גואל לבני בניהם correlates to כתבינו בספר החיים.

למען שמו באהבה correlates to למען אלקים חיים.

מי כמוך אב הרחמים - This statement is apparently an expression of Mercy. Why was this instituted to be added into the *b'racha* describing Hashem's Power?

Who is like You, Compassionate Father. Every father is compassionate, and desires only life for his children. However, fathers are not empowered to shower their children with life. You are an Almighty Compassionate Father who has the Power to grant His children their aspirations, and does so by bestowing them with life; for You are the All Powerful One, Who bestows life and death.

וכתוב לחיים טובים - In the introductory *b'rachos* we praised Hashem for granting us life. We now supplicate Hashem to grant us *good* life. This is the blessing of thanksgiving. Although we bless and praise Hashem for the bad as well as for the good, we *thank* Hashem only for the good. The *b'racha* indeed closes with the words: הטוב שמך ולך נאה להודות - Your Name is Good,

and therefore it is proper to praise You. וכל החיים יודוך סלה - We therefore pray to be inscribed with *good* life, so that all living beings shall offer praises unto You.

בספר חיים ברכה ושלו - The Sh'mone Esrei begins with praise, followed by prayer, and should seemingly end with thanksgiving. But we add a final prayer, requesting the Blessings of Hashem. Hashem's blessings exceed all our expectations. After petitioning Hashem with our needs, we ask that He bless us with His infinite blessings. This *b'racha* is a prayer for peace, for without harmony and serenity one cannot enjoy his blessings. *The vessel that holds all blessings is Peace*⁴⁴. Similarly on the ימים נוראים we conclude with a prayer that we should merit to be inscribed with the myriad Blessings of Hashem, which surpass all our prior supplications; the vessel retaining all those blessings being Peace.

המלך הקדוש - During the rest of the year, we close the *b'racha* of השם קדוש with הקל הקדוש. During the Ten Days of T'shuva we end with המלך הקדוש.

The *b'racha* opens by stating: אתה קדוש ושמן קדוש וקדושים בכל יום יהללוך סלה. Who are these קדושים? During קדושה we state: נקדש את שמך בעולם כשם שמקדישים אותך בשמי מרום. We include ourselves among the קדושים that praise Him, through the קדושה recital!

A *b'racha* is always ended with the same thought with which it began. Throughout the year, when His presence is not apparent, we close the *b'racha* with the concept of אתה קדוש. During the עשרת ימי תשובה, when His presence is apparent, we close the *b'racha* with the concept of ושמך קדוש. ושמך קדוש implies that He is Holy, although His קדושה may not be manifest amongst His creations. קדוש implies that His קדושה has become manifest. When His קדושה will have become manifest, His Dominion will have been accepted by all people of the world.

קדושה and משפט are generally adverse concepts. Charity is associated with קדושה, but has no function with respect to justice. However, Hashem has the attributes of both Justice and Holiness. He is elevated with Justice, and sanctified with צדקה. He is thus properly described as המלך הקדוש.

How do we define צדקה? Is it justice and righteousness, or charity and benevolence? Two contradicting ideas are stated in a single word. Because before Hashem, justice and charity do not pose conflict. Avrohom was chosen due to them. כי ידעתיו למען אשר יצוה את בניו ואת ביתו אחריו. לעשות צדקה ומשפט. And the Geulah will come about in their merit בצדקה.

אתה בחרתנו - How does the *yom tov* of Rosh Hashana demonstrate that we are the chosen nation? The Shalosh Regalim are the anniversaries of our selection. Yom Kippur, the day of atonement, demonstrates that we are beloved by our Creator. But what is the correlation

עוקצין פרק ג משנה יב 44

between Rosh Hashana and our distinction from all the nations of the world?

Rosh Hashana is תחילת מעשיך - the anniversary of creation. It should be celebrated by the entire human race. Why is it only celebrated by Israel? Because only we have accepted the Rule of the Creator. This is the greatest demonstration of the specialness of Israel; that of all the nations of the world, Hashem is only our King.

מלכיות - Why was the *b'racha* of מלכיות instituted to be recited together with קדושת היום? This is answered in the prayer which introduces מלכיות⁴⁵. We, alone among all the nations of the world, have accepted upon ourselves the Yoke of Heaven. This ברכה includes קדושת ישראל. We stand testimony to His Dominion. His מלכות is announced and accepted by K'lal Yisroel.

זכרונות - The Gemara⁴⁶ quotes a מחלוקת with regard to the *p'sukim* of פקידה, as to whether they may be reckoned as זכרונות. What is the distinction between פקידה and זכירה?

The *t'filah* of זכרונות singles out Noach, introducing his pasuk of זכירה, whereas we make no introduction to the זכירה of the Avos. What is unique regarding the זכירה of Noach?

We utilize both זכירה and פקידה with regard to Noach. Noach was rescued from the Mabul, and commanded to build a Teiva because he found favor in the eyes of Hashem. At the Mabul's close, why was it necessary to "remember" his righteousness? Was he not brought into the Teiva originally *because* of his righteousness?

Noach was originally rescued because he was נפקד and found unworthy of the punishment destined to be meted onto humanity. על כן זכרונו בא לפניך להרבות זרעו. - But his future offspring were not worthy of being rescued. The זכירה of Noach maintained his זכותים for his future offspring. It was an inverted remembrance. Whereas Hashem preserved for the later generations the זכותים of the Avos, Hashem preserved Noach's זכותים for all his *future* generations.

זכירה is thus distinct from פקידה. It is not an historical remembrance, but rather a judgement of one's own standing at a particular juncture, such as וְהָיָה פֶקֶד אֶת שְׂרָה. But a זכירה is a memorial that remains from prior generations. The remembrance of the Avos requires no introduction. It is a memorial to the past. But the remembrance of Noach is unique. It is a memorial that stands for the future.

⁴⁵ My father-in-law ז"ל told me that his Rebbe ז"ל explained that מלכיות begins with נקוה, and not with עלינו. The chazan therefore says אוחילה, in which he asks רשות to recite מלכיות, after עלינו and before נקוה. על כן נקוה. ומצאתי כן מפורש בחי' הריטב"א (ר"ה לד : ד"ה מתני' מי שברך) שכתב "תקנו שיהא ש"צ מסדר בתפילתו. על כן נקוה. אוחילה לקל' כו' ותקנוהו בתחילת מלכיות" כו' ראש השנה דף לב :

⁴⁶ ראש השנה דף לב :

שופרות - The primary task of Rosh Hashana is for the Jewish people to accept upon themselves עול מלכות שמים. How do we accomplish this task? With the shofar. How does the shofar accomplish this?

The Torah was introduced with the sound of the shofar. Acceptance of His Dominion means acceptance of the yoke of His mitzvos. The Days of Mashiach will be introduced with the sound of the shofar. והשתחוּוּ לַיהוָה בְּהַר הַקֹּדֶשׁ בִּירוּשָׁלַם - The goal of Mashiach will be to enable Israel to perform all the mitzvos of Hashem without any hindrance.

מלך מוחל וסולח לעוונותינו - Yom Kippur is a day of mercy and forgiveness. What is the manifestation of מלכות on Yom Kippur?

A judge cannot pardon. It is a function of the Executive Branch of government. Only the Head of State can pardon. To pardon is the greatest revelation of מלכות. Only our King can pardon us for our misdeeds. Not the police, not the attorneys, and not the judge. They are unable to pardon. We are being pardoned because we have found favor before the King of Kings. We are thereby ensured to be inscribed into the Book of Life, and to be granted a sweet new year, with חיים ברכה ושלוש, *Amen*.