

Fear vs. Awe

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The Torah describes [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html) as yom zichron teruah, a day to remember teruah, the sound of a [shofar](shofar.html).[[1]](#footnote-1)

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 23:24***[*Speak*](mashal.html) *unto the children of Israel, saying: In the seventh month, in the* [*first*](one.html) *day of the month, shall be a solemn rest unto you, a memorial proclaimed with the blast of horns, a holy convocation.*

The [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html), yom zichron teruah, musaf service is unique among our [festival](festival.html) services in that Chazal[[2]](#footnote-2) [taught](teacher.html) that it should be divided into [three](three.html) parts: **Malchuyot - מַלְכֻיּוֹת** (Kingship), **Zichronot - זִכְרוֹנוֹת** (Remembrance), and **Shofarot - שׁוֹפָרוֹת** ([Shofar](shofar.html) sounds).

[***Rosh HaShana***](teruah.html) ***34b*** *Our Rabbis* [*taught*](teacher.html)*: ‘[On most days][[3]](#footnote-3) the omission of* [*one*](one.html) *blast is no bar to another, and the omission of* [*one*](one.html) *blessing[[4]](#footnote-4) is no bar to another, but on* [*New*](new.html) *Year and the Day of* [*Atonement*](kippur.html) *the omission of* [*one*](one.html) *blast or* [*one*](one.html) *blessing is a bar to the others’.[[5]](#footnote-5) What is the reason? — Rabbah said: God proclaimed: Recite before Me on* [*New*](new.html) *Year kingship, remembrance and* [*shofar*](shofar.html) *verses;* ***kingship*** *verses to declare Me king over you;* ***remembrance*** *verses, that the remembrance of you may come before Me for good; and through what? Through the* [***shofar***](shofar.html)*.*

This division, of a single service, suggests that these [three](three.html) parts are really meant to accomplish a single goal. As we go through this [study](study.html) we should begin to see how these [three](three.html) parts join together to accomplish a single purpose.

Yom zichron teruah is what the Torah calls the feast on the [first](one.html) day of the seventh month. It is only later, in the [Talmud](orallaw.html), that our Sages will call yom zichron teruah – [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html). This [name](name.html) suggests that remembering the sound of a [shofar](shofar.html) is the most critical aspect that [HaShem](hashem.html) [wants](needs.html) us to perform on this day. So, it makes sense that [one](one.html) of the divisions of the musaf service, for this day, is **Zichronot** – Remembrance. Further, the **Teruah** part of the [name](name.html) of this day makes it quite obvious that we will be blowing a [shofar](shofar.html), which is the musical instrument which makes a teruah sound. But where does the **Malchuyot** idea fit into the [name](name.html)? To answer this question will require some background. Let’s begin this background by looking at the special powers of the [shofar](shofar.html).

[***Rosh HaShana***](teruah.html) ***16b*** *R.* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *said: Why do we sound the* [*horn*](shofar.html) *on* [*New*](new.html) *Year? — [You ask], why do we sound? The All-Merciful has told us to sound![[6]](#footnote-6) — What he means is, why do we sound a teruah?[[7]](#footnote-7) [You ask] why do we sound a teruah? The All-Merciful has proclaimed ‘a memorial of teruah![[8]](#footnote-8) — What he means is, why do we sound a Tekiah and teruah![[9]](#footnote-9) —* [*sitting*](mashal.html) *and then again sound a Tekiah and teruah* [*standing*](mashal.html)*? — It is so as to confuse the Accuser.[[10]](#footnote-10) R.* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *further said: If the* [*shofar*](shofar.html) *is not sounded[[11]](#footnote-11) at the beginning of the year, evil will befall at the end of it. Why so? Because the Accuser has not been confused.*

How does this work? Why should the [shofar](shofar.html) confuse him? Why doesn’t he figure it out from last year?

***Shulchan Aruch Chapter 596:****1. After the* [*prayer*](prayer.html) *we blow a long Teruah (תרועה גדולה) without any Tekiah.[[12]](#footnote-12) [There are places where the custom is to return and blow* [*thirty*](thirty.html)[*Shofar*](shofar.html) *blasts and afterwards to not blow again at all.  But a child, even if he reached חינוך (the training stage) it is permitted to tell him to blow (the long Teruah) and he may blow all day.][[13]](#footnote-13)*

Rashi adds an additional small detail.

Rashi (on RH 16b) writes: כשישמע ישראל מחבבין את המצוות-מסתתמין דבריו. 'When he hears that Israel so love the [mitzvot](cmds613.html)- his words are blocked.'

When we look through the words of Chazal we find another [time](time.html) when the satan is confused. This gives us a clue as to how the [shofar](shofar.html) confuses the satan.

***Shabbath 89a*** *R. Joshua b. Levi also said: Why is it written; And when the people, saw that Moses delayed [boshesh] [to come down from the mount]?[[14]](#footnote-14) ‘Read not boshesh’ [delayed] but ba'u shesh [the* [*sixth*](six.html) *hour had come]. When Moses ascended on high, he said to Israel, I will return at the end of* [*forty*](forty.html) *days, at the beginning of the* [*sixth*](six.html) *hour.[[15]](#footnote-15) At the end of* [*forty*](forty.html) *days Satan came and confused the* [*world*](worlds.html)*. Said he to them: ‘Where is your* [*teacher*](teacher.html) *Moses?’ ‘He has ascended on high,’ they answered him. ‘The* [*sixth*](six.html) *[hour] has come’, said he to them, but they disregarded him. ‘He is dead’ — but they disregarded him. [Thereupon] he showed them a vision of his bier, and this is what they said to Aaron, for this Moses, the man, etc.[[16]](#footnote-16)*

The above [Gemara](orallaw.html) is [speaking](mashal.html) about this Torah portion:

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 32:1*** *And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people* [*gathered*](gather.html) *themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.*

The above Torah pasuk suggests that the people were pointing to the bier of Moshe described in the above [Gemara](orallaw.html). This second story reiterates how the satan confuses the people, just as our [first](one.html) Chazal said. This suggests a [connection](connection.html). Let’s look more closely at this pasuk and ask: Why did the satan lie and try to entrap the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people? Wouldn’t this be a way to get acquitted? In the [first](one.html) Chazal the satan is confused and in the second Chazal the people are confused.

If remembering the [shofar](shofar.html) is a critical component of this feast, then we must go back in our memory and remember a [shofar](shofar.html) blast, a teruah, from a previous [event](feasts.html). What is this previous [event](feasts.html)?

The most famous [event](feasts.html) where we heard the sound of a [shofar](shofar.html), before yom zichron teruah, was on [Shavuot](shavuot.html), at [Sinai](stages.html), when [HaShem](hashem.html) gave us the Torah.

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 19:19****And when the* ***voice*** *of the* [*shofar*](shofar.html) *waxed louder and louder, Moses* [*spoke*](mashal.html)*, and God answered him by a voice.*

Notice that both of these pesukim, from Chazal, are related to the same [event](feasts.html). From the [name](name.html) “yom zichron teruah”, we see immediately that the confusion of the satan on “yom zichron teruah” is calling us to remember the prior [event](feasts.html), on [Shavuot](shavuot.html), where the [shofar](shofar.html) was blown. In other words, the *confusion of the people* [forty](forty.html) days after [Shavuot](shavuot.html), is related to the *confusion of the satan* on yom zichron teruah.

As an aside, to help us see how interconnected [Shavuot](shavuot.html) and [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html) (yom zichron teruah) are in the [eyes](body.html) of our Sages, consider the following from Hakham Moshe Shapiro:

“The Sages state,[[17]](#footnote-17) “In each month of the summer months, the Holy Blessed [One](one.html) wished to give to Israel a [festival](festival.html). In [Nisan](feasts.html) He gave to them [Passover](passover.html), in [Iyar](feasts.html) He gave to them [Passover](passover.html) Minor,” which we call [*Pesach*](passover.html) *Sheni,* “and in [Sivan](feasts.html) He gave to them [Shavuot](shavuot.html). In [Tammuz](feasts.html), He had in mind to give to them a great [festival](festival.html), but they made the Golden Calf, and it cancelled [Tammuz](feasts.html), [Av](feasts.html), and [Elul](elul.html). [Tishri](feasts.html) came, and it recompensed them with [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html)h, [Yom Kippur](kippur.html), and [Succoth](succoth.html). The Holy Blessed [One](one.html) said of it, “Shall it recompense others and not take its own? Give it its day: “On the [eighth](eight.html) day, it shall be Atzeret for you”.[[18]](#footnote-18)”[[19]](#footnote-19)

“The implication is that the great [festival](festival.html) of the Seventeenth of [Tammuz](feasts.html) was to be [Rosh Hashana](teruah.html)h, but due to what occurred, it became the fast of the Seventeenth of [Tammuz](feasts.html). The great [festival](festival.html) of the [Ninth](nine.html) of [Av](feasts.html) was to be [Yom Kippur](kippur.html), but again, due to what occurred, it became the bitter and evil day of destruction. At the beginning of [Elul](elul.html) was to be the [Festival](festival.html) of [Succoth](succoth.html), and it would conclude the [festivals](festivals.html) of summer. The [festival](festival.html) of [Tishri](feasts.html) itself was to be what we currently call [Shemini Atzeret](shemini.html); this [festival](festival.html) belongs to [Tishri](feasts.html) inherently.”

“In fact, [Shemini Atzeret](shemini.html), the Atzeres of [Succoth](succoth.html) was to arrive just as [Shavuot](shavuot.html), the Atzeret of [Passover](passover.html). There, we count [forty](forty.html)-[nine](nine.html) days from the day after the [first](one.html) of [Passover](passover.html), and the fiftieth day is [Shavuot](shavuot.html). Here, we were to count [forty](forty.html)-[nine](nine.html) days from the day after the [first](one.html) of [Succoth](succoth.html), meaning from the second day of [Elul](elul.html). This ends on [Hoshana Rabba](hoshana.html)h, and the fiftieth day is [Shemini Atzeret](shemini.html).”

“The sages ask this in actuality.[[20]](#footnote-20) Why do we not have the same custom regarding the Atzeret of [Succoth](succoth.html) as we have regarding the Atzeret of [Passover](passover.html)? Why do we not count fifty days from [Succoth](succoth.html) and then celebrate the Atzeret of [Succoth](succoth.html)?”

“They answer that the Creator did not wish to overburden the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) People to come to [Jerusalem](city.html) for the pilgrimage during the rainy season. Fifty days from the current date of [Succoth](succoth.html) would occur in the middle of the winter, and it is not conducive for [travel](mashal.html).”

“Clearly, it is befitting for there to be a counting of [forty](forty.html)-[nine](nine.html) days and then to celebrate the Atzeret of [Succoth](succoth.html). Thus, if [Succoth](succoth.html) were in [Elul](elul.html) that is how it would be.”

Thus, we can see that yom zichron teruah, [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html), should have been slightly more than a month after [Shavuot](shavuot.html), on [Tammuz](tamuz17.html) 17, the day of the incident with the golden calf; and it would have been except for the [sin](sin.html) of the golden calf which caused it to be delayed [one](one.html)-hundred [twenty](twenty.html) days. Now let’s return to our previous process.

In order to remember a previous [event](feasts.html), we can recall the music, the sound of that previous [event](feasts.html). Thus, the [shofar](shofar.html) helps us to remember and connect these [two](two.html) feasts. Why was the [shofar](shofar.html) at [Sinai](stages.html) so significant? Since yom zichron teruah is related to [Shavuot](shavuot.html), we can begin to understand why **Malchuyot** comes into play. There is no way to have a king without subjecting ourselves to His will, His [laws](law.html). This suggests that when we remember the teruah, the [shofar](shofar.html), we also recall that we agreed to [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [laws](law.html) at [Sinai](stages.html). [Four](four.html) months later we crown [HaShem](hashem.html) king by recalling the teruah of [Sinai](stages.html) which causes us to recall the acceptance of His Torah, His [laws](law.html). This begs the question: What was the function of the [shofar](shofar.html) blast at [Sinai](stages.html)? To answer this question, we need to [know](daat.html) who blew the [shofar](shofar.html) at [Sinai](stages.html)?

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 19:18-19*** *And mount* [*Sinai*](stages.html) *was altogether on a smoke, because* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *descended upon it in* [*fire*](fire.html)*: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a* [*furnace*](furnace.html)*, and the whole mount quaked greatly. 19 And when the voice of the* [*shofar*](shofar.html) *sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.*

Clearly, [HaShem](hashem.html) created the *voice* of the [shofar](shofar.html) at [Sinai](stages.html). Notice, however, that there was *no* [*shofar*](shofar.html), there was only the *voice* of the [shofar](shofar.html)!

In Debarim this idea of a voice is reiterated.

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 4:12*** *And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *spake unto you out of the midst of the* [*fire*](fire.html)*: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice.*

There was no image at [Sinai](stages.html). In fact, everything was setup so that it would be really hard, nay impossible, to see anything. This means that the ONLY way we connected with [HaShem](hashem.html) at [Sinai](stages.html) was through the *voice*! That makes the sounds very memorable because we were not distracted by the sights. No wonder we are called to zichron teruah, to remember the voice of the [shofar](shofar.html) on yom zichron teruah.

So, the revelation at [Sinai](stages.html) is remembered through the *voice* of the [shofar](shofar.html). Never the less, that memory would also be tempered, and call to mind, by the [sin](sin.html) of the golden calf, the great error of [Sinai](stages.html), which was the [time](time.html) when *the satan confused the people*. Since the [Sinai](stages.html) [event](feasts.html) is being recalled at yom zichron teruah we can immediately see that these [two](two.html) feasts are clearly linked and that the [shofar](shofar.html) must provide the antidote for the [sin](sin.html) of the golden calf. Thus, at yom zichron teruah we are going to use the voice of the [shofar](shofar.html) to *confuse the satan*. At [Sinai](stages.html) we heard the voice of a [shofar](shofar.html) that came from [HaShem](hashem.html) whereas at yom zichron teruah we are going to make the voice of the [shofar](shofar.html). It is the embracing of the voice of our [shofar](shofar.html) that will confuse the satan. How do we understand this? To understand this, we have to ask: Who exactly is the satan?

What the satan did at the incident of the golden calf where he entrapped us with his lies, does not seem fair. Why is that Chazal never bring up this argument? Because this was fair, it was perfectly fair! How can this be? Once we discover the identity of the satan, we will understand why this lie was completely fair.

The Akeida is read on [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html). The back story for the Akeida, found in [Midrash](orallaw.html) Tanchuma on Vaera 22, as related by Meam Loez is:

*As they walked along, they suddenly encountered an old man, who was actually the Satan in disguise. He asked* [*Abraham*](avraham.html)*, "Where are you going?"*

*"To worship," replied* [*Abraham*](avraham.html)*.*

*"And why are you bringing along wood and a slaughter knife?"*

*"We may have to stay there a day or* [*two*](two.html)*. It's best to have what we need in case we have to prepare* [*food*](food.html)*."*

*"Do you take me for an idiot?" asked the stranger. "Do you think that I do not* [*know*](daat.html) *what you are doing?" The Satan then began to scream, "You old fool! You idiot! You were given a son when you were a hundred years old, and now you are going to kill him! You think that God commanded you to do it. Ha! Don't you believe it. God does not tell* [*one*](one.html) *to do things that are so unthinkable. Maybe you just dreamed that God told you to* [*sacrifice*](korbanot.html) *your son. Are you stupid enough to give up your only son because of a* [*dream*](dreams.html)*? Tomorrow you will* [*dream*](dreams.html) *that God told you to jump in the lake! Will you run and do that too? Don't kill your dear son because of a stupid* [*dream*](dreams.html)*.*

*"Think it over well before you do anything. You say that you had a prophetic vision? Maybe you were mistaken. Who knows what the message really was? Prophecy is like a* [*dream*](dreams.html)*;* [*one*](one.html) *is not always certain of the message.*

*"You say that you were wide awake when God* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *to you, and that He clearly commanded you to slaughter your son? If you have any sense, you will ignore it. Tell God that if a person gives his friend a present, he cannot take it back. Although He gave you a son, He has no right to force you to kill him.*

*"Besides, if you kill the boy, God will punish you for taking an innocent life. If it was truly a mere* [*dream*](dreams.html)*, you will be nothing but a murderer!"*

[*Abraham*](avraham.html) *looked the stranger in the eye and said, "You unclean creature, be gone! I* [*know*](daat.html) *who you are, and I will not pay attention to you. My* [*heart*](body.html) *is bound to God, and I* [*know*](daat.html) *that all of your arguments are so much wind. I* [*know*](daat.html) *who God is; even if He commanded me to do much more than this, I would be compelled to obey."*

*Seeing that he could get nowhere with* [*Abraham*](avraham.html)*, the Satan disguised himself as a young man and drew* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *aside. Again he began by asking, "Where are you going?"*

*"To enroll in the academy," replied* [*Isaac*](isaac.html)*.*

*"Do you not* [*know*](daat.html) *that your father is going to bring you as a* [*human sacrifice*](korbanot.html)*?"*

*"I had an idea. If it is God's will, I am ready."*

*"I see that you want to be a saint like your father," mocked the stranger. "You are not afraid of death." His tone grew serious. "But what about your dear mother? Don't you have any pity on her? Don't you think you should spare her this ultimate sorrow? All her life she suffered, and she had just* [*one*](one.html)[*dream*](dreams.html) *that kept her going: she would have a son who would* [*pray*](prayer.html) *for her after she died. How many, many days did she fast, pleading with God to give her a son? And finally, when she was ninety years old, He gave her a son.*

*"Is this what you call being a saint? Killing your own mother? Don't you realize that this will be the end of her? When she hears what you have done, she will die of grief.*

*"Remember when Ishmael dared to play war with you. Remember your mother's concern; she was so worried that she made your father drive Ishmael out of the house. She also made him swear that he would give you all his possessions during his lifetime. If your father kills you, who do you think will get all his possessions? None other than Ishmael! This should be enough to stop you from this foolishness. How do you think your mother will feel?* [*First*](one.html) *she will lose her son, and then her worst enemy will take your place after she drove him away like a slave! You cannot even imagine her agony!"*

*Even the most outrageous slander has its effects, and the Satan's words touched* [*Isaac*](isaac.html)*. He became somewhat discouraged and began to ask his father to have pity on him. He said, "I am not that concerned about myself, but what about Ishmael? He has already boasted that he would* [*inherit*](inherit.html) *all your possessions. He is so* [*wicked*](wicked.html)*. How can you allow him to be your heir?*

*"You yourself once told me that God ordered you, 'Abide by everything that Sarah tells you;' that you should drive Ishmael away. What this young man now says is correct and logical. God obviously does not change His mind, especially after He put you through the ordeal of driving away Hagar and Ishmael, commanding you not to let him be your heir.*

*"You should not be so hasty to do this. Ask God again and make sure. If it is His will, then I am prepared and ready to obey."*

[*Abraham*](avraham.html) *gave a patient reply. "The 'young man' who* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *to you was none other than the Satan in disguise. His only intent is to make you* [*sin*](sin.html)*. Pay no attention to him whatsoever, and God will reward you amply. If I had even the least doubt about my prophecy, do you think that I would submit you to such an ordeal? Do I have any hope for another wonderful son like you? God's word to me was clear and unambiguous; we must do His will with great joy."*

*The road led through a narrow pass between the mountains. Seeing that he could not convince them, the Satan sat down in this pass and disguised himself as a raging river. Upon approaching the river,* [*Abraham*](avraham.html) *went in alone, wading up to his waist. Thinking that they would be able to ford the river, he summoned* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *and took his* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*. They had taken but a few steps, when the water reached up to their necks.* [*Abraham*](avraham.html) *looked all around and exclaimed with wonder, "I have come this way many times, and I never saw a river here. At* [*first*](one.html) *I thought it might have rained and that this was merely the runoff. But if that were the case, the water would not be so deep. This is the Satan's work; he is trying to stop me from obeying God's* [*command*](cmds613.html)*."*

*Addressing* [*Isaac*](isaac.html)*, he said, "My son, don't be afraid. I am positive that there is nothing here but solid ground." They continued into the "water" until it reached their* [*mouths*](body.html)*.* [*Abraham*](avraham.html) *then lifted his* [*eyes*](body.html) *on high, and saw the Satan fleeing.*

*His plan frustrated, the Satan then went to Sarah and asked, "Where is your husband?"*

*"He went on a* [*journey*](stages.html)*," replied Sarah, "and he took his son with him."*

*"But you never even let him out of the house. How could you let him go on such a long* [*journey*](stages.html)*?"*

*"He went to the academy to* [*study*](study.html)*. It's not that far from here."*

*The Satan's* [*eyes*](body.html) *grew cold. "You will never see your son again," he said.*

*"If that is God's will,'' replied Sarah, "so be it."*

In this story, we find the satan attempting to instill fear in [Avraham](avraham.html), [Isaac](isaac.html), and Sarah. When trying to scare [Avraham](avraham.html) the satan was disguised as an old man. When the satan attempted scare [Isaac](isaac.html) he appeared as a young man. Why did he change forms? This suggests that the satan reflects the [one](one.html) he is trying to scare. The satan is your own Yetzer HaRa, your own evil inclination. The satan is playing on your own doubts and fears. The doubts and fears that we all have are different, so he tailors his scare tactic to our most intimate fears and doubts.

When we translate our [knowledge](knowledge.html) of the satan, and who he is, to the [sin](sin.html) of the golden calf, we can see that he is just expressing their own fears. They were afraid that [HaShem](hashem.html)’s presence would kill Moshe just as it killed the, and revived them, [three](three.html) times. This is why this so-called entrapment was perfectly fair. We were afraid that Moshe would die, so our own Yetzer HaRa came to bring this fear to fruition.

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 20:14-16****And all the people perceived the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the voice of the* [*shofar*](shofar.html)*, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled, and stood afar off. 15 And they said unto Moses: '*[*Speak*](mashal.html) *thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God* [*speak*](mashal.html) *with us, lest we die.' 16 And Moses said unto the people: 'Fear not; for God is come to prove you, and that His fear may be before you, that ye* [*sin*](sin.html) *not.'*

The people were afraid that the revelation of [HaShem](hashem.html) would kill them. They doubted that they would live through the [experience](experience.html). [Forty](forty.html) days and [six](six.html) hours later, their fear showed them a dead Moshe, according to Chazal. Recall the Chazal we presented earlier:

***Shabbath 89a*** *R. Joshua b. Levi also said: Why is it written; And when the people, saw that Moses delayed [boshesh] [to come down from the mount]?[[21]](#footnote-21) ‘Read not boshesh’ [delayed] but ba'u shesh [the* [*sixth*](six.html) *hour had come]. When Moses ascended on high, he said to Israel, I will return at the end of* [*forty*](forty.html) *days, at the beginning of the* [*sixth*](six.html) *hour.[[22]](#footnote-22) At the end of* [*forty*](forty.html) *days Satan came and confused the* [*world*](worlds.html)*. Said he to them: ‘Where is your* [*teacher*](teacher.html) *Moses?’ ‘He has ascended on high,’ they answered him. ‘The* [*sixth*](six.html) *[hour] has come’, said he to them, but they disregarded him. ‘He is dead’ — but they disregarded him. [Thereupon] he showed them a vision of his bier, and this is what they said to Aaron, for this Moses, the man, etc.[[23]](#footnote-23)*

From this we learn that the satan brings confusion in addition to fear. It is our own Yetzer HaRa, our own evil inclination, which confuses us. If you are fearful, but not confused, it is possible to stand firm. However, if we are besieged by both fear and confusion, they our normal physiological response is an adrenalin rush with urge to either fight or run away. In this state we act irrationally.

Before you [know](daat.html) it, the [generation](toldot.html) of [knowledge](knowledge.html) who witnessed the [plagues](plagues.html) and the revelation at [Sinai](stages.html), will suddenly make a golden calf as though they had forgotten all that they had previously learned. If we find ourselves besieged by fear and confusion, what is the antidote? How do we avoid the [sin](sin.html) of the [generation](toldot.html) of [knowledge](knowledge.html)? To answer this question, we need to realize that the revelation at [Sinai](stages.html) was a unique [experience](experience.html) in the history of man. This was an overwhelming [experience](experience.html) which had no precedent. It is precisely this uniqueness that led to the [sin](sin.html) of the golden calf. It was an [experience](experience.html) tailor made to instill fear – purposely. So, what is the way out?

[HaShem](hashem.html) provided us with yom zichron teruah, a remembrance of the revelation at [Sinai](stages.html). On this day WE BLOW THE [SHOFAR](shofar.html). When we blow the [shofar](shofar.html), we can confuse the satan. We can confuse our Yetzer HaRa, our own evil inclination. There was a [time](time.html) when fear confused us (at [Sinai](stages.html)). But on yom zichron teruah we can confuse our own fears. This means that everything we do on [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html) is done to confuse our fear, though the [shofar](shofar.html). How does that work?

This takes us back to yom zichron teruah. A day where we remember the teruah of [Sinai](stages.html). At [Sinai](stages.html) the voice of the [shofar](shofar.html) was growing louder and louder *as* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *came nearer to us*.

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 19:19****And when the* ***voice******of the*** [***shofar***](shofar.html) ***waxed louder and louder****, Moses* [*spoke*](mashal.html)*, and God answered him by a voice.*

However, there was an even earlier [time](time.html) when we heard *The Voice* of [HaShem](hashem.html).

***Bereshit (Genesis) 3:8****And they heard the* ***voice*** *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *God* [*walking*](walking.html) *in the garden toward the cool of the day; and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *God amongst the trees of the garden.*

The people, [Adam](adam.html) and Chava, heard *The Voice* and hid themselves. The revelation of [HaShem](hashem.html), after we had [eaten](eating.html) of the fruit of the tree of the [knowledge](knowledge.html) of good and evil, saw man cowering and hiding in fear and confusion. They saw no form. They only heard a disembodied voice strolling through the garden. Since [HaShem](hashem.html) has no [physical](physical.html) form, and showed no [physical](physical.html) form at any [time](time.html), His presence is manifested by a *voice*.

***Bereshit (Genesis) 3:9-10****And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *God called unto the man, and said unto him: 'Where art thou?'* ***10****And he said: 'I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.'*

Because of their [sin](sin.html) they were afraid and confused. When [Adam](adam.html) sees his nakedness, he becomes confused. In this confused, fearful state they acted irrationally. They his from The [One](one.html) who sees everything, the [One](one.html) who knows everything. Was [HaShem](hashem.html) trying to determine [Adam](adam.html)’s location (aifo), or was he trying to determine where [Adam](adam.html) went (aiyay)? Clearly, he [knew](daat.html) [Adam](adam.html)’s precise location. [HaShem](hashem.html) trying to determine where [Adam](adam.html) went. I expected you to be here with Me. [HaShem](hashem.html) was inviting [Adam](adam.html) to [walk](walking.html) with him. [Adam](adam.html) had [eaten](eating.html) of the tree in order to become like [HaShem](hashem.html). When he saw his nakedness, he realized that he was not like [HaShem](hashem.html). He was just a man. Clearly, he was confused.

Fear tripped us up at [Sinai](stages.html) and fear tripped us up in the garden when we heard the voice of [HaShem](hashem.html).

What is the antidote? What could and should we do if we were in [Adam](adam.html)’s shoes, so to [speak](mashal.html)? As The Voice grows louder we are presented with a choice. We can hide and pretend, or we can stand our ground and answer Him with our voice, our [crying](mashal.html) sound. We can, in effect say, “I heard Your Voice and I wanted to connect with You in some way”. So I tried to connect with a voice. This is the antidote. This is the [HaShem](hashem.html)’s solution to our problem. This is yom zichron teruah! This is our voice through a [shofar](shofar.html). That voice will confuse the satan. That voice will confuse fear.

At the revelation, [HaShem](hashem.html) did not want us to fear Him. Moshe explicitly told us not to be afraid.

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 20:14-16****And all the people perceived the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the voice of the* [*shofar*](shofar.html)*, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled, and stood afar off. 15 And they said unto Moses: '*[*Speak*](mashal.html) *thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God* [*speak*](mashal.html) *with us, lest we die.' 16 And Moses said unto the people: 'Fear not; for God is come to prove you, and that His fear may be before you, that ye* [*sin*](sin.html) *not.'*

Yet, Moshe immediately turns around and tells the people that they are being tested to see if the fear of [HaShem](hashem.html) is before them. What a paradox!

***Debarim (Deuteronomy) 4:9*** *Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine* [*eyes*](body.html) *have seen, and lest they depart from thy* [*heart*](body.html) *all the days of thy life: but* [*teach*](teacher.html) *them thy sons, and thy sons’ sons; 10 Specially the day that thou stoodest before* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *thy God in Horeb, when* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *said unto me,* [*Gather*](gather.html) *me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may* [*teach*](teacher.html) *their children. 11 And ye came near and stood under the mountain; and the mountain burned with* [*fire*](fire.html) *unto the midst of* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness. 12 And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *spake unto you out of the midst of the* [*fire*](fire.html)*: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice.*

Moshe is telling us that we should be *afraid*, but we are being tested to see if we have *awe* of [HaShem](hashem.html).

There is only [one](one.html) way out of this conundrum. There *must* be [two](two.html) types of fear, despite the fact that they are the same [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word (ירָא). There is a fear that causes us to move away and a fear that causes us to draw near.

Fear, being afraid, brings us to fight or flight. It brings on adrenalin and brings on confusion which causes us to act irrationally.

Awe, on the other [hand](fourteen.html), causes us to draw near to become a part of that which is [awesome](awesome.html). With awe there is no confusion. This [teaches](teacher.html) us that to have awe we must [know](daat.html) who we are and what we are in awe of. We must [know](daat.html) both pieces.

If these [two](two.html) types of fear share the same [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word, then they must be, in some way, the same. What is their common [connection](connection.html)? Both of them are reactions to something that is much larger than me. Both of them bring on ‘butterflies’ in our stomach. The [one](one.html) causes us to move away, and the other causes us to draw near.

When [HaShem](hashem.html) draws near to us it is understandable that we feel fear, but don’t be afraid. God just [wants](needs.html) us to feel awe. **Awe can confuse fear**.

Moshe’s [command](cmds613.html) is that we should not have the fear that causes us to move away, but we should have the fear that causes us to draw near.

The Yamim Noraim, the days of awe are days when [HaShem](hashem.html) is revealing Himself to us. He is in the field. As He draws near to us, He [wants](needs.html) us to draw near to Him. What makes them [awesome](awesome.html) is that they are days when we re-enact the [experience](experience.html) of [Sinai](stages.html). The voice of the [shofar](shofar.html) growing louder tells us that [HaShem](hashem.html) is getting closer.

Most of us do not look forward to the Yamim Noraim. They are not our favorite days. We feel discomfited by fear. The fear of the judgment of [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html) and the fear of the sealing on [Yom Kippur](kippur.html)im. [HaShem](hashem.html) sympathizes with our fear and provided us relief through the [shofar](shofar.html). This is the tool to confuse our fear. This tool [teaches](teacher.html) us that we are not God. We are human and can accept this state. This tool [teaches](teacher.html) us that that [HaShem](hashem.html) is God and that He [wants](needs.html) to draw near to us. This [shofar](shofar.html) is our voice to answer [HaShem](hashem.html)’s voice.

We let fear go by tricking fear through the remembrance that [HaShem](hashem.html) [wants](needs.html) to draw near to us. We rationalize that the butterflies in our stomach are the result of awe. We just need to remember that we are dealing with a benevolent God who accepts us and [wants](needs.html) to be near with us.

Avinu malcheinu – **Our Father** our King!

Yom zichron teruah comes to remind us of [Sinai](stages.html) and [Gan Eden](eden.html) where [HaShem](hashem.html) drew near to us. To [walk](walking.html) with us in the garden.

**\* \* \***

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1. This paper is based on a shiur by Rabbi David Fohrman. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Chazal or Ḥazal (Hebrew: חז״ל‬), an acronym for the Hebrew "Ḥakhameinu Zikhronam Liv'rakha" (חכמינו זכרונם לברכה‬, "Our Sages, may their memory be blessed"), refers to all Jewish sages of the Mishna, Tosefta and Talmud eras, spanning from the times of the final 300 years of the Second Temple of Jerusalem until the 6th century CE, or c. 250 BCE – c. 625 CE. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. E.g., on fast days. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. In the ‘Amidah. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. I.e., a teruah cannot be blown without a Tekiah before it, nor can remembrance verses be said unless kingship verses have first been said. V. Tosafot. 33b, s.v. שיעור sub fin. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. In the verse Sound (tik'u) the horn on the New Moon, on the appointed day of our festival. Tehillim (Psalms) 81:4. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Because the word tik'u implies only the Tekiah sound. For teruah and Tekiah. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Vayikra (Leviticus) 23:24. E.V. ‘a memorial proclaimed with the blast of horns’. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Heb. ‘Satan’. The devotion of the Jews to the precepts nullifies Satan's accusation against them (Rashi). [The Shofar on New Year is blown twice: once at the close of the morning prayer and the reading of the Law when the congregation is seated, and again during the Musaf prayers while the people stand. According to J.R.H. IV,8 the Shofar was originally blown only at the morning service, whence it was transferred to a later hour in the Musaf because their enemies on one occasion took the Shofar blasts early in the morning as a call to arms, whereupon they attacked the Jews. The custom of blowing the Shofar at Musaf service was retained even after the rite had been restored to the morning service]. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. This does not apply where New Year falls on Sabbath, in which case the Shofar may not be blown, but where the rite was omitted through some other cause (Tosafot.). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. M.B.  This is to confuse Satan in order that he should not attack us after the prayer when we go eat, drink and be merry by saying that we don’t fear the impending judgement (when Mashiach will come, the Shofar will be blown and Satan will be killed according to tradition).  We don’t have the custom to do this, but instead blow a long Tekiah (תקיעה גדולה) as the last Tekiah blast concluding the 100 blasts we blow. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. The Mishna Brura writes that our custom is to blow 100 Shofar blasts:  30 alone/sitting/separate (not in the order of prayer), 30 according to the order of prayer, 30 after prayer plus ten extra. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Shemot (Exodus) 32:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. I.e., at midday. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Yalkut Shimoni chapter 782 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Bamidbar (Numbers) 29:35 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. This section is an excerpt from *Reflections & Introspections*, Elul – Rosh Hashanah – Yom Kippur – Sukkos, TORAH INSIGHTS OF HAGAON HAGADOL RavMoshe Shapiro. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Shir HaShirim Rabbah 7:4; cf. *Da’as Zekeinim* to Bamidbar 28:25 [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Shemot (Exodus) 32:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. I.e., at midday. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)