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**The Significance of the Shofar (שופר)**

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In this [study](study.html) I would like to examine the significance of the shofar and the sounds that it makes. I want to examine how it is used, when it is used, why it is used, and what will the sounds accomplish.

# I. Definition

Let’s start by seeing what the Encyclopedia Britannica uses as a definition for the word “shofar”:

שופר **- shofar**, also spelled SHOPHAR, plural SHOFROTH, SHOPHROTH, or SHOFROT, a ritual musical instrument, made from the horn of a ram or other animal, used on important [Jewish](gen-jew.html) public and religious occasions. In biblical times the shofar sounded the [Sabbath](sabbath.html), announced the [New](new.html) [Moon](chodesh.html), and proclaimed the anointing of a [new](new.html)king. This latter custom has been preserved in modern Israel at the swearing in of the president of the state.

The most important modern use of the shofar in religious ceremonies takes place on [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html), when it is sounded in the [synagogue](synagog.html) to call the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people to a [spiritual](physical.html) reawakening as the religious [New](teruah.html)Year begins on [Tishri](feasts.html) 1. The shofar can be made to produce sobbing, wailing, and sustained sounds in sequences that are varied strictly according to [halacha](walking.html). The shofar is also sounded on [Yom Kippur](kippur.html), the Day of [Atonement](kippur.html), as a call for repentance and [sacrifice](korbanot.html) and for love of the Torah.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Now let’s look at the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) meaning of the shofar: *A sense of incising; a cornet or curved horn; cornet or trumpet.*

Shofar is a [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word that comes from a root meaning beauty. The word shofar, however, through tradition came to mean almost solely “ram’s horn”. The shofar was used in biblical times for various occasions ranging from calling the armies together to signaling death. Which brings up the curious point that shofar is also literally translated as a “sense of incising”. Incising means to cut or burn into. Obviously the sound of the shofar was more than a mere horn blast to the ancient [Hebrews](bereans.html), to earn a [name](name.html) that signified a cutting or burning into the [heart](body.html) and soul of the people. Strong’s confirms this understanding with his definition:

7782 showphar, sho-far’; or shophar, sho-far’; from 8231 in the orig. sense of incising; a cornet (as giving a clear sound) or curved horn:-cornet, shofar.

------------------ Dictionary Trace --------------

8231 shaphar, shaw-far’; a prim. root; to glisten, i.e. ([fig](bethphag.html).) be (caus. make) fair:-X goodly.

According to the [Talmud](orallaw.html) the shofar can be made of the horns of various animals including the sheep, both domestic and wild goats, the antelope, the gazelle, and of course the ram:

[***Rosh HaShana***](teruah.html) ***26a***[*MISHNA*](orallaw.html)*. ALL KINDS OF SHOFAR MAY BE USED EXCEPT [*[*ONE*](one.html) *MADE FROM THE HORN] OF A COW, BECAUSE IT IS [PROPERLY] KEREN. SAID R. JOSE: ARE NOT ALL SHOFARS CALLED ‘KEREN’ AS IT SAYS, WHEN THEY MAKE A LONG BLAST WITH THE RAM’S KEREN [HORN]?*

[*GEMARA*](orallaw.html)*. R. Jose was surely quite right. What can the Rabbis reply? — That all shofars are called both shofar and keren, whereas that of a cow is called keren but is not called shofar, as it is written, His firstling bullock, majesty is his, and his horns [karnaw] are as the horns of a re’em. What says R. Jose to this? — He can reply that that of a cow is also called shofar as it is written, And it shall please the Lord better than a bullock [shor par] that hath horns and hoofs. Now if ‘shor’ is mentioned here why ‘par’, and if ‘par’ why ‘shor’? The fact is that shor par is equivalent to shofar. And the Rabbis? — They adopt the explanation of R. Mattenah; for R. Mattenah said: What is meant by shor par? A shor which is as full-grown as a par.*

Of course, the horn of a ram is preferred, as the shofar is strongly linked with the story of [Abraham](avraham.html) binding [Isaac](isaac.html) to [sacrifice](korbanot.html) him to [HaShem](hashem.html). As we all [know](daat.html), an [angel](angels.html) stopped [Abraham](avraham.html), and [HaShem](hashem.html) provided a ram in [Isaac](isaac.html)’s place.

Now, while a ram is preferred, a cow’s horn is forbidden. The reason being that the Hakhamim believe that if a cow’s horn is used, it will remind the Satan to continue to accuse Israel for the “Golden Calf“ incident, and [HaShem](hashem.html) will then be biased in His dealings with Israel.

Along with the harp, the shofar is the most spoken of musical instrument in the Bible. While the harp is used to calm and soothe the spirit and soul, the shofar is constantly used to grab hold of the attention and spirit of the people. The harp is a consoler while the shofar is a preparer.

The [Gemara](orallaw.html) records an argument that I believe is revealing:

[***Rosh Hashana***](teruah.html)***h 26b***[*MISHNA*](orallaw.html)*. THE SHOFAR USED ON* [*NEW*](teruah.html) *YEAR WAS OF AN ANTELOPE’S HORN AND STRAIGHT, AND ITS* [*MOUTH*](body.html) *WAS OVERLAID WITH GOLD. THERE WERE* [*TWO*](two.html) *TRUMPETS,* [*ONE*](one.html) *ON EACH SIDE OF IT. THE SHOFAR GAVE A LONG BLAST AND THE TRUMPETS A SHORT* [*ONE*](one.html)*, SINCE THE PROPER CEREMONY OF THE DAY WAS WITH THE SHOFAR. ON [COMMUNAL] FAST DAYS THEY USED [*[*TWO*](two.html)*] CURVED SHOFARS OF RAMS, THE* [*MOUTHS*](body.html) *OF WHICH WERE OVERLAID WITH SILVER. THERE WERE* [*TWO*](two.html) *TRUMPETS BETWEEN THEM; A SHORT BLAST WAS MADE WITH THE SHOFARS AND A LONG* [*ONE*](one.html) *WITH THE TRUMPETS, BECAUSE THE RELIGIOUS DUTY OF THE DAY WAS [TO BE PERFORMED] WITH THE TRUMPETS. THE* [*JUBILEE*](yovel.html) *IS ON A PAR WITH* [*NEW*](teruah.html) *YEAR FOR BLOWING THE HORN AND FOR BLESSINGS. R. JUDAH SAYS: ON* [*NEW*](teruah.html) *YEAR THE BLAST IS MADE WITH A SHOFAR OF RAMS AND ON JUBILEES WITH* [*ONE*](one.html) *OF ANTELOPES.*

[*GEMARA*](orallaw.html)*. R. Levi said: The religious duty of* [*New*](teruah.html) *Year and of the Day of* [*Atonement*](kippur.html) *is performed with a curved shofar, and on other days in the year with a straight shofar. But we learn, THE SHOFAR OF* [*NEW*](teruah.html) *YEAR WAS A STRAIGHT* [*ONE*](one.html) *OF ANTELOPE’S HORN? — Levi followed the view of the following Tanna, as it has been* [*taught*](teacher.html)*: ‘R. Judah says, On* [*New*](teruah.html) *Year they used to blow with curved shofars of rams’ horns and on jubilees with shofars of antelopes’ horns’. Why then did not he [Levi] say that the* [*law*](law.html) *follows the view of R. Judah? — If you were to say that the* [*law*](law.html) *follows R. Judah, I should say that in the case of the* [*Jubilee*](yovel.html) *also he was of the same opinion as R. Judah. Now we* [*know*](daat.html) *[that this is not so]. What is the ground of the difference [between R. Judah and the* [*First*](one.html) *Tanna]? —* [*One*](one.html)[*authority*](authority.html) *[R. Judah] holds that on* [*New*](teruah.html) *Year the more a man [so to* [*speak*](mashal.html)*] bends his mind the more effective [is his* [*prayer*](prayer.html)*], while on the Day of* [*Atonement*](kippur.html) *[of the* [*Jubilee*](yovel.html)*] the more a man elevates his mind the better is the effect. The other* [*authority*](authority.html) *holds that on* [*New*](teruah.html) *Year the more a man elevates his mind the better the effect, and on fast days the more he bends his mind the better the effect.*

The [Mishna](orallaw.html) states that the shofar to be used on [Rosh Hashana](teruah.html)h should be of an antelope and should be straight. The [Gemara](orallaw.html) states: Rav Levi says that the [mitzva](cmds613.html) of [Rosh Hashana](teruah.html)h is fulfilled with a bent-over shofar. The [Gemara](orallaw.html) then brings a Baraitha in the [name](name.html) of Rav Yehuda who says that on [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html)h we use a bent rams horn and on [Yom Kippur](kippur.html) (for the [Jubilee](yovel.html)) we use a straight horn. After stating that the [halacha](walking.html) is like Rav Yehuda, the [Gemara](orallaw.html) explains that the more bent over we are, the more effective is our [Rosh Hashana](teruah.html)h, while the straighter we are on [Yom Kippur](kippur.html) the better. Rashi explains that being bent over is the correct posture for the [prayers](prayer.html) of Yom HaDin.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Thus we see that there is more to this simple musical instrument than meets the eye.

# II. The Shofar Sounds

The shofar produces some very mystical sounds, which have some very unusual properties. [One](one.html) of its properties is the ability to stir a [heart](body.html) to repentance.

What is it about the sound of the shofar that calls us to return to [HaShem](hashem.html)? To answer this question we must return to [Gan Eden](eden.html), that garden wherein we have the beginnings of everything.

## A sound that walks

After the [first](one.html) [sin](sin.html) we find:

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

Exactly how does a “voice”, a kol, go “[walking](walking.html)”?

This particular [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for sound or voice, kol, resonates with another kol, the sound (kol) of the shofar:

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 19:16*** *And it came to pass on the* [*third*](three.html) *day in the morning, that there were thunders (kol) and lightnings, and a thick* [*cloud*](important.html) *upon the mount, and the voice (kol) of the shofar exceeding loud; so that all the people that [was] in the* [*camp*](stages.html) *trembled.*

This kol that we hear at [Sinai](stages.html) is the same kol that went [walking](walking.html) in [Gan Eden](eden.html) right after the [first](one.html) [sin](sin.html). The kol that walked had a question:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 3:9*** *And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *God called unto* [*Adam*](adam.html)*, and said unto him, Where are you?*

This question: “Where are you (Ayekah)?” was obviously not concerned with [Adam](adam.html)’s [physical](physical.html) location. After all, how can [one](one.html) hide from The [One](one.html) who is everywhere? This question must be asking a more profound question: ‘Ayekah?’ Where are you, where do you stand morally and [spiritually](physical.html), to what place are you directing your efforts?

The kol of [HaShem](hashem.html) in [Gan Eden](eden.html) looms significant because the shofar blessing on [Rosh Hashana](teruah.html)h, which reasonably could have stressed the “blowing” of the shofar, stresses the sound or voice, “lishmoah kol hashofar,” to hear (or internalize) the sound of the shofar.

The Rambam is quite explicit in altering the definition of the [mitzva](cmds613.html). He consistently defines the [mitzva](cmds613.html) as [one](one.html) of HEARING the shofar rather than BLOWING.

This then is the kol that walks. This kol comes seeking the state of the soul of His beloved. This same kol approaches us at this [time](time.html) of judgment. This kol from the shofar “walks” to us, His beloved, and asks: Where are you?

## The sound of the neshama

Another mystical property of the sounds of the shofar, is the ability to express the human neshama.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Our Sages [teach](teacher.html) us that the sound made by the shofar is the sound of the human neshama, the soul. This is a sound without corruption, the raw sound of the neshama. The bend of the shofar is said by the mystics to be the transition between this [world](worlds.html) and the next.

In the [Prayer](prayer.html) of Remembrance we say, “Remember us with a favorable remembrance from before You, and, from the highest [heavens](heaven.html) of old, consider us with a consideration for deliverance and compassion”. We ask that He remember us favorably, and the shofar, whose entire purpose in [creation](bara.html) is to remind, as the [Talmud](orallaw.html) states,[[4]](#footnote-4) is what causes us to be remembered. Of this, the [Talmud](orallaw.html) states,[[5]](#footnote-5) “God said..., recite before Me... verses of Remembrance so that your remembrance will arise before Me for goodness. And with what? With the shofar”.[[6]](#footnote-6)

The shofar is the depth or root of speech. Teshuva means to go back to the moment of [creation](bara.html), to go back into the [womb](thebirth.html) to the moment of conception. We return to our fetal state, our moment of [creation](bara.html). This return is what Chazal meant by zichronot – memory or remembering as a function of [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html). We return to the moment when the memories (sperm), or [seeds](flower.html), of the father are given to us. Chazal use this same concept to [teach](teacher.html) us that the sound [Adam](adam.html) HaRishon heard on wakening from his [creation](bara.html), was the sound of a shofar, the sound made by his neshama as it entered him. This suggests that the shofar can take us back to the very moment when our neshama entered us.

This same concept will help us to understand why a ram was found at the very moment that [Isaac](isaac.html) expired and was resurrected. At that moment a shofar became available.

## The sound that dissipates harsh judgment

Another mystical property of the sounds of the shofar, is the ability to cause [HaShem](hashem.html) to move from the seat of judgment to the seat of mercy. The [Zohar](orallaw.html) describes this reaction:

***Soncino*** [***Zohar***](orallaw.html)***, Vayikra, Section 3, Page 100b*** *Thus when Israel produce the blasts of the shofar with proper devotion, the supernal Shofar returns and crowns* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *so that all is properly arranged. Another throne is set up and joy is universally diffused and God has mercy on the* [*world*](worlds.html)*. Happy are Israel who* [*know*](daat.html) *how to divert their Master from justice to mercy and to be the instruments for establishing all* [*worlds*](worlds.html)*. Corresponding to the* [*three*](three.html) *series of blasts* [*three*](three.html) *books are opened above on this day, and just as mercy is awakened and punishments are restrained and put back in their place above, so below in the same way harsh punishments are kept back and removed from the* [*world*](worlds.html)*. And what are these? These are the irremediably* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *who are inscribed at once for death.’ Said R. Abba: ‘Assuredly this is the true explanation of the matter. Blessed be God that I asked for and obtained this instruction.’ R. Judah said: ‘It is written, A MEMORIAL OF BLOWING OF TRUMPETS. We make a memorial by the concentration of our mind and thought. Israel make a memorial below by an appropriate ceremony, so as to arouse a corresponding reaction above.’*

The mekubalim[[7]](#footnote-7) [teach](teacher.html) that the shofar has the ability to create a sound called the ‘Voice of [Yaaqov](jacob.html)’. This is the sound that causes [HaShem](hashem.html) to move to the mercy seat.

# III. Saadia Gaon’s Reasons[[8]](#footnote-8)

A [Ninth](nine.html) century [Babylonian](bavel.html) [teacher](teacher.html), Saadia Gaon, [taught](teacher.html) that there were [ten](ten.html) reasons that the Holy [One](one.html) commanded us to blow the shofar on [Yom Teruah](teruah.html):

1. Just as earthly kings have horns and shofarot blown to celebrate the anniversary of their coronation, so [HaShem](hashem.html) [wants](needs.html) the shofar blown on the anniversary of the [Creation](bara.html) - when there came to be a [world](worlds.html) that [HaShem](hashem.html) could rule over, as it is said:

***Tehillim (***[***Psalms***](psalms1.html)***) 98:6*** *With shofarot and the blast of the ram’s horn--shout for joy before* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, the King.*

2. Just as earthly kings have horns and shofarot blown to announce their decrees - and only after this warning actually enforce the decree, so [HaShem](hashem.html) [wants](needs.html) the shofar blown to announce the beginning of the [Ten](ten.html) Days of Return, when all are commanded to turn their lives around.

3. Just as the shofar blew when [HaShem](hashem.html) gave the Torah at Mount [Sinai](stages.html), so it blows to remind us each year to do as our forebears said at [Sinai](stages.html):

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 24:7*** *Then he took the Book of the* [*Covenant*](covenant.html) *and read it to the people. They responded, “We will do everything* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *has said; we will obey.”*

4. Just as Yehezekel (Ezekiel) compared the words of the Prophets, calling for the people to change their ways, to a shofar, so we must [know](daat.html) that those who hear the shofar and do not take warning and change their lives will be responsible for their own destruction, as it is said:

***Yehezekel (Ezekiel) 33:2-9*** *“Ben* [*Adam*](adam.html)*,* [*speak*](mashal.html) *to your countrymen and say to them: ‘When I bring the sword against a land, and the people of the land choose* [*one*](one.html) *of their men and make him their watchman, And he sees the sword* [*coming*](coming.html) *against the land and blows the shofar to warn the people, Then if anyone hears the shofar but does not take warning and the sword comes and takes his life, his* [*blood*](body.html) *will be on his own* [*head*](body.html)*. Since he heard the sound of the shofar but did not take warning, his* [*blood*](body.html) *will be on his own* [*head*](body.html)*. If he had taken warning, he would have saved himself. But if the watchman sees the sword* [*coming*](coming.html) *and does not blow the shofar to warn the people and the sword comes and takes the life of* [*one*](one.html) *of them, that man will be taken away because of his* [*sin*](sin.html)*, but I will hold the watchman accountable for his* [*blood*](body.html)*.’ “Ben* [*Adam*](adam.html)*, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; so hear the word I* [*speak*](mashal.html) *and give them warning from me. When I say to the* [*wicked*](wicked.html)*, ‘O* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *man, you will surely die,’ and you do not* [*speak*](mashal.html) *out to dissuade him from his ways, that* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *man will die for his* [*sin*](sin.html)*, and I will hold you accountable for his* [*blood*](body.html)*. But if you do warn the* [*wicked*](wicked.html) *man to turn from his ways and he does not do so, he will die for his* [*sin*](sin.html)*, but you will have saved yourself.*

5. Because the shofar was blown as a war-alarm when the [Temple](temple.html) was destroyed, it should remind us of the destruction of the [Temple](temple.html), the disaster that we brought upon ourselves, and thus should warn us to abandon our misdeeds in order to avert disaster, as it is said:

***Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 4:19-20*** *Oh, my anguish, my anguish! I writhe in pain. Oh, the agony of my* [*heart*](body.html)*! My* [*heart*](body.html) *pounds within me, I cannot keep silent. For I have heard the Teruah of the shofar; I have heard the battle* [*cry*](mashal.html)*. Disaster follows disaster; the whole land lies in ruins. In an instant my tents are destroyed, my shelter in a moment.*

6. Because [HaShem](hashem.html) used a ram as a substitute [sacrifice](korbanot.html) for [Isaac](isaac.html), the ram’s horn should remind us how [Isaac](isaac.html) and [Abraham](avraham.html) were prepared to give up all their hopes and [dreams](dreams.html) for [HaShem](hashem.html)’s sake. Bereshit (Genesis) 22.

7. Since the blowing of a horn causes cities to tremble, so the shofar will make us tremble and [fear](fear.html) our Creator, as it is said:

***Amos 3:6*** *When a shofar sounds in a* [*city*](city.html)*, do not the people tremble? When disaster comes to a* [*city*](city.html)*, has not* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *caused it?*

8. Since the shofar will be blown on the great [day of HaShem](hashem.html).

***Zephaniah 1:14-16*** *“The great* [*day of HaShem*](hashem.html) *is near--near and* [*coming*](coming.html) *quickly. Listen! The* [*cry*](mashal.html) *on the* [*day of HaShem*](hashem.html) *will be bitter, the shouting of the warrior there. That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of trouble and ruin, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness, A day of shofar and battle* [*cry*](mashal.html) *against the fortified cities and against the corner towers.*

Daniel speaks of this judgment day in: (seated for judgment)

***Daniel 7:9-14*** *“As I looked, “thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the* [*hair*](hair.html) *of his* [*head*](body.html) *was white like wool. His throne was flaming with* [*fire*](fire.html)*, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of* [*fire*](fire.html) *was flowing,* [*coming*](coming.html) *out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him;* [*ten*](ten.html) *thousand times* [*ten*](ten.html) *thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened. “Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was* [*speaking*](mashal.html)*. I kept looking until the beast was slain and its* [*body*](body.html) *destroyed and thrown into the blazing* [*fire*](fire.html)*. (The other beasts had been stripped of their* [*authority*](authority.html)*, but were allowed to live for a period of* [*time*](time.html)*.) “In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was* [*one*](one.html) *like a son of man,* [*coming*](coming.html) *with the clouds of* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given* [*authority*](authority.html)*, glory and sovereign power; all peoples,* [*nations*](nations.html) *and men of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is* [*one*](one.html) *that will never be destroyed.*

We can also see in the above passage the coronation of the King of kings.

***Revelation 20:4-6*** *I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given* [*authority*](authority.html) *to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for* [*Yeshua*](yeshua.html) *and because of the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their* [*hands*](fourteen.html)*. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the* [*first*](one.html)[*resurrection*](techiyat.html)*. Blessed and holy are those who have part in the* [*first*](one.html)[*resurrection*](techiyat.html)*. The second death has no power over them, but they will be* [*priests*](priests.html) *of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.*

9. Since the shofar will be blown when the tempest-tossed of [HaShem](hashem.html)’s people are [gathered](gather.html) in harmony to the [Land of Israel](city.html), we should hear the shofar to stir our longings for that day, as it is said:

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 27:12-13*** *In that day* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *will thresh from the flowing Euphrates to the Wadi of Egypt, and you, O Israelites, will be* [*gathered*](gather.html) *up* [*one*](one.html) *by* [*one*](one.html)*. And in that day a shofar gadol will sound. Those who were perishing in Assyria and those who were* [*exiled*](galuyot.html) *in Egypt will come and worship* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *on the holy mountain in* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*.*

This reminds me of:

***Matityahu (Matthew) 24:29-31*** *“Immediately after the distress of those days ‘the* [*sun*](hachama.html) *will be darkened, and the* [*moon*](chodesh.html) *will not give its light; the* [*stars*](mazaroth.html) *will fall from the sky, and the heavenly* [*bodies*](body.html) *will be shaken.’ “At that* [*time*](time.html) *the* [*sign*](signs.html) *of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the* [*nations*](nations.html) *of the earth will* [*mourn*](mourning.html)*. They will see the Son of Man* [*coming*](coming.html) *on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. And he will send his* [*angels*](angels.html) *with a loud shofar call, and they will* [*gather*](gather.html) *his elect from the* [*four*](four.html) *winds, from* [*one*](one.html) *end of the* [*heavens*](heaven.html) *to the other.*

10. Since the shofar will be blown when [Mashiach](mashiach.html) revives the dead, we hear the shofar in order to revive our faith in that supernatural transformation, the final victory of life and [freedom](freedom.html) over death, the ultimate oppressor, as it is said:

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 18:3*** *All you people of the* [*world*](worlds.html)*, you who live on the earth, when a banner is raised on the mountains, you will see it, and when a shofar sounds, you will hear it.*

This reminds me of another [Yom Teruah](teruah.html) [event](feasts.html):

***Yehezekel (Ezekiel) 37:1-14*** *The* [*hand*](fourteen.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *was upon me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. He asked me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” I said, “O Sovereign* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, you alone* [*know*](daat.html)*.” Then he said to me, “Prophesy to these bones and say to them, ‘Dry bones, hear the word of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*! This is what the Sovereign* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life. I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will* [*know*](daat.html) *that I am* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*.’” So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, “Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to it, ‘This is what the Sovereign* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *says: Come from the* [*four*](four.html) *winds, O breath, and breathe into these slain, that they may live.’” So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their* [*feet*](heel.html)*--a vast army. Then he said to me: “ Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.’ Therefore prophesy and say to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *says: O my people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the* [*land of Israel*](city.html)*. Then you, my people, will* [*know*](daat.html) *that I am* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, when I open your graves and bring you up from them. I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will* [*know*](daat.html) *that I* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *have spoken, and I have done it, declares* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*.’”*

In this passage we see the [resurrection](techiyat.html) of the righteous (the whole house of Israel), and the [ingathering](gather.html) of the [exile](galuyot.html) back to Israel. The word translated ‘breath’ is the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word: Ruach. [Yom Teruah](teruah.html) literally means a day for breathing, and by implication a day for blowing. I believe that this is an intentional play on words in order to make room for both thoughts.

# IV. Verses with the word “shofar”

The [first](one.html) use of the word “shofar” is found in:

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 19:16-19*** *And it came to pass on the* [*third*](three.html) *day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick* [*cloud*](important.html) *upon the mount, and the voice of the shofar exceeding loud; so that all the people that [was] in the* [*camp*](stages.html) *trembled. Then Moses led the people out of the* [*camp*](stages.html) *to meet with God, and they stood at the* [*foot*](heel.html) *of the mountain. Mount* [*Sinai*](stages.html) *was covered with smoke, because* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *descended on it in* [*fire*](fire.html)*. The smoke billowed up from it like smoke from a* [*furnace*](furnace.html)*, the whole mountain trembled violently, And the sound of the shofar grew louder and louder. Then Moses* [*spoke*](mashal.html) *and the voice of God answered him.*

From this [first](one.html) use of the word “shofar”, we find that the shofar is a signal of the presence of [HaShem](hashem.html) that causes the people to tremble, this is their emotional response. After the emotional response, we see that there is an action response. The action is the drawing near to [HaShem](hashem.html). **These** [**two**](two.html) **responses should always flow from the sound of the shofar**.

Now let’s look at the rest of the shofar verses. Take the [time](time.html) to notice the responses:

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 20:18-21*** *When the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the shofar and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with* [*fear*](fear.html)*. They stayed at a distance And said to Moses, “*[*Speak*](mashal.html) *to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God* [*speak*](mashal.html) *to us or we will die.” Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid. God has come to test you, so that the* [*fear*](fear.html) *of God will be with you to keep you from sinning.” The people remained at a distance, while Moses approached the thick darkness where God was.*

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 25:8-10*** *“‘Count off* [*seven*](seven.html) *sabbaths of years--*[*seven*](seven.html) *times* [*seven*](seven.html) *years--so that the* [*seven*](seven.html) *sabbaths of years amount to a period of* [*forty*](forty.html)*-*[*nine*](nine.html) *years. Then have the shofar sounded everywhere on the tenth day of the* [*seventh*](seven.html) *month; on the Day of* [*Atonement*](kippur.html) *sound the shofar throughout your land. Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a* [*jubilee*](yovel.html) *for you; each* [*one*](one.html) *of you is to return to his family property and each to his own clan.*



Another use of the shofar is to bring about the will of [HaShem](hashem.html). This instrument is capable of breaking down the greatest of barriers:

***Yehoshua (Joshua) 6:4-9*** *And* [*seven*](seven.html)[*priests*](priests.html) *shall bear before the* [*ark*](ark.html)[*seven*](seven.html) *shofarot of rams’ horns: and the* [*seventh*](seven.html) *day ye shall compass the* [*city*](city.html)[*seven*](seven.html) *times, and the* [*priests*](priests.html) *shall blow with the shofarot. And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long [blast] with the ram’s horn, [and] when ye hear the sound of the shofar, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the* [*city*](city.html) *shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him. And Yehoshua (Joshua) the son of Nun called the* [*priests*](priests.html)*, and said unto them, Take up the* [*ark*](ark.html) *of the* [*covenant*](covenant.html)*, and let* [*seven*](seven.html)[*priests*](priests.html) *bear* [*seven*](seven.html) *shofarot of rams’ horns before the* [*ark*](ark.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the* [*seven*](seven.html)[*priests*](priests.html) *bearing the* [*seven*](seven.html) *shofarot of rams’ horns passed on before* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, and blew with the shofarot: and the* [*ark*](ark.html) *of the* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *followed them. And the armed men went before the* [*priests*](priests.html) *that blew with the shofarot, and the reward came after the* [*ark*](ark.html)*, [the* [*priests*](priests.html)*] going on, and blowing with the shofarot.*

***Yehoshua (Joshua) 6:13*** *And* [*seven*](seven.html)[*priests*](priests.html) *bearing* [*seven*](seven.html) *shofarot of rams’ horns before the* [*ark*](ark.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *went on continually, and blew with the shofarot: and the armed men went before them; but the reward came after the* [*ark*](ark.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, [the* [*priests*](priests.html)*] going on, and blowing with the shofarot.*

***Yehoshua (Joshua) 6:16*** *And it came to pass at the* [*seventh*](seven.html)[*time*](time.html)*, when the* [*priests*](priests.html) *blew with the shofarot, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *hath given you the* [*city*](city.html)*.*

***Yehoshua (Joshua) 6:20*** *So the people shouted when [the* [*priests*](priests.html)*] blew with the shofarot: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the shofar, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the* [*city*](city.html)*, every man straight before him, and they took the* [*city*](city.html)*.*

The shofar is used to [gather](gather.html) the people:

***Shoftim (Judges) 3:27*** *And it came to pass, when he was come, that he blew a shofar in the mountain of Ephraim, and the children of Israel went down with him from the mount, and he before them.*

***Shoftim (Judges) 6:34*** *But the spirit of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *came upon Gideon, and he blew a shofar; and Abi-ezer was* [*gathered*](gather.html) *after him.*

***Shoftim (Judges) 7:8*** *So the people took victuals in their* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, and their shofarot: and he sent all [the rest of] Israel every man unto his tent, and retained those* [*three*](three.html) *hundred men: and the host of Midian was beneath him in the valley.*

The shofar is capable of bringing [fear](fear.html) to the [heart](body.html) of even the most hardened man:

***Shoftim (Judges) 7:16*** *And he divided the* [*three*](three.html) *hundred men [into]* [*three*](three.html) *companies, and he put a shofar in every man’s* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers.*

***Shoftim (Judges) 7:18-20*** *When I blow with a shofar, I and all that [are] with me, then blow ye the shofarot also on every side of all the* [*camp*](stages.html)*, and say, [The sword] of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, and of Gideon. So Gideon, and the hundred men that [were] with him, came unto the outside of the* [*camp*](stages.html) *in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the shofarot, and brake the pitchers that [were] in their* [*hands*](fourteen.html)*. And the* [*three*](three.html) *companies blew the shofarot, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left* [*hands*](mashal.html)*, and the shofarot in their right* [*hands*](mashal.html) *to blow [withal]: and they cried, The sword of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, and of Gideon.*

***Shoftim (Judges) 7:22*** *And the* [*three*](three.html) *hundred blew the shofarot, and* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *set every man’s sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host: and the host fled to Beth-shittah in Zererath, [and] to the border of Abel-meholah, unto Tabbath.*

***1 Shmuel (Samuel) 13:3*** *And Jonathan smote the garrison of the Philistines that [was] in Geba, and the Philistines heard [of it]. And Saul blew the shofar throughout all the land, saying, Let the* [*Hebrews*](bereans.html) *hear.*

The shofar can be used to halt actions that are not helpful:

***2 Shmuel (Samuel) 2:28*** *So Joab blew a shofar, and all the people stood still, and pursued after Israel no more, neither fought they any more.*

In this next verse we see, again, that the shofar is used to indicate the presence of [HaShem](hashem.html):

***2 Shmuel (Samuel) 6:15*** *So David and all the house of Israel brought up the* [*ark*](ark.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *with shouting, and with the sound of the shofar.*

***2 Shmuel (Samuel) 15:10*** *But Absalom sent spies throughout all the* [*tribes*](tribes.html) *of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the shofar, then ye shall say, Absalom reigneth in* [*Hebron*](city.html)*.*

***2 Shmuel (Samuel) 18:16*** *And Joab blew the shofar, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel: for Joab held back the people.*

***2 Shmuel (Samuel) 20:1*** *And there happened to be there a man of Belial, whose* [*name*](name.html) *[was] Sheba, the son of Bichri, a Benjamite: and he blew a shofar, and said, We have no part in David, neither have we* [*inheritance*](inherit.html) *in the son of Jesse: every man to his tents, O Israel.*

***2 Shmuel (Samuel) 20:22*** *Then the woman went unto all the people in her wisdom. And they cut off the* [*head*](body.html) *of Sheba the son of Bichri, and cast [it] out to Joab. And he blew a shofar, and they retired from the* [*city*](city.html)*, every man to his tent. And Joab returned to* [*Jerusalem*](city.html) *unto the king.*

***1 Melachim (Kings) 1:34*** *And let Zadok the* [*priest*](priests.html) *and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel: and blow ye with the shofar, and say, God* [*save*](salvation.html) *king Solomon.*

***1 Melachim (Kings) 1:39*** *And Zadok the* [*priest*](priests.html) *took an horn of oil out of the* [*tabernacle*](mikdash.html)*, and anointed Solomon. And they blew the shofar; and all the people said, God* [*save*](salvation.html) *king Solomon.*

***1 Melachim (Kings) 1:41*** *And Adonijah and all the guests that [were] with him heard [it] as they had made an end of* [*eating*](eating.html)*. And when Joab heard the sound of the shofar, he said, Wherefore [is this] noise of the* [*city*](city.html) *being in an uproar?*

***1 Divrei HaYamim (Chronicles) 15:28*** *Thus all Israel brought up the* [*ark*](ark.html) *of the* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with shofarot, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps.*

***2 Divrei HaYamim (Chronicles) 15:14*** *And they sware unto* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *with a loud voice, and with shouting, and with shofarot, and with cornets.*

***2 Melachim (Kings) 9:13*** *Then they hasted, and took every man his garment, and put [it] under him on the top of the stairs, and blew with shofarot, saying, Jehu is king.*

The shofar is also used to alert us and to call us to battle against our enemies:

***Ezra-Nechemiah 4:18*** *For the builders, every* [*one*](one.html) *had his sword girded by his side, and [so] builded. And he that sounded the shofar [was] by me.*

***Ezra-Nechemiah 4:20*** *In what place [therefore] ye hear the sound of the shofar, resort ye thither unto us: our God shall fight for us.*

***Iyov (Job) 39:24-25*** *He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: neither believeth he that [it is] the sound of the shofar. He saith among the shofarot, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.*

***Tehillim (***[***Psalm***](psalms1.html)***) 47:5*** *God is gone up with a shout,* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *with the sound of a shofar.*

The shofar is used to call all of [HaShem](hashem.html)’s people to repentance on [Yom Teruah](teruah.html) ([Rosh HaShana](teruah.html)h)

***Tehillim (***[***Psalm***](psalms1.html)***) 81:3*** *Blow the shofar in the* [*new*](new.html)[*moon*](chodesh.html)*, in the* [*time*](time.html)[*appointed*](settimes.html)*, on our solemn feast day.*

***Tehillim (***[***Psalm***](psalms1.html)***) 98:6*** *With shofarot and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, the King.*

***Tehillim (***[***Psalm***](psalms1.html)***) 150:3*** *Praise him with the sound of the shofar: praise him with the psaltery and harp.*

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 18:3*** *All ye inhabitants of the* [*world*](worlds.html)*, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth a shofar, hear ye.*

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 27:13*** *And it shall come to pass in that day, [that] the great shofar shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *in the holy mount at* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*.*

As a call to return in repentance before [HaShem](hashem.html), the shofar has no equal:

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 58:1***[*Cry*](mashal.html) *aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a shofar, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *their* [*sins*](sin.html)*.*

The shofar was used to call the people to assemble before [HaShem](hashem.html). This call to assemble is required before we can understand the rest of the message:

***Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 4:5*** *Declare ye in Judah, and publish in* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*; and say, Blow ye the shofar in the land:* [*cry*](mashal.html)*,* [*gather*](gather.html) *together, and say, Assemble yourselves, and let us go into the defenced cities.*

***Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 4:19*** *My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very* [*heart*](body.html)*; my* [*heart*](body.html) *maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the shofar, the alarm of war.*

***Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 4:21*** *How long shall I see the standard, [and] hear the sound of the shofar?*

***Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 6:1*** *O ye children of* [*Benjamin*](benyamin.html)*,* [*gather*](gather.html) *yourselves to flee out of the midst of* [*Jerusalem*](city.html)*, and blow the shofar in Tekoa, and set up a* [*sign*](signs.html) *of* [*fire*](fire.html) *in Beth-haccerem: for evil appeareth out of the north, and great destruction.*

***Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah)*** *6:17 Also I set watchmen over you, [saying], Hearken to the sound of the shofar. But they said, We will not hearken.*

***Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah)*** *42:14 Saying, No; but we will go into the land of Egypt, where we shall see no war, nor hear the sound of the shofar, nor have hunger of bread; and there will we* [*dwell*](dwelling.html)*:*

***Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah)*** *51:27 Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the shofar among the* [*nations*](nations.html)*, prepare the* [*nations*](nations.html) *against her, call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz; appoint a captain against her; cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillars.*

***Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 33:3*** *If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the shofar, and warn the people;*

***Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 33:4*** *Then whosoever heareth the sound of the shofar, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his* [*blood*](body.html) *shall be upon his own* [*head*](body.html)*.*

***Yechezkel (Ezekiel)******33:5*** *He heard the sound of the shofar, and took not warning; his* [*blood*](body.html) *shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul.*

***Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 33:6*** *But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the shofar, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take [any] person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his* [*blood*](body.html) *will I require at the watchman’s* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*.*

***Hoshea (Hosea) 5:8*** *Blow ye the cornet in Gibeah, [and] the shofar in Ramah:* [*cry*](mashal.html) *aloud [at] Beth-aven, after thee, O* [*Benjamin*](benyamin.html)*.*

***Hoshea (Hosea) 8:1*** *[Set] the shofar to thy* [*mouth*](body.html)*. [He shall come] as an eagle against the house of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, because they have transgressed my* [*covenant*](covenant.html)*, and trespassed against my* [*law*](law.html)*.*

***Yoel (Joel) 2:1*** *Blow ye the shofar in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the* [*day of HaShem*](hashem.html) *cometh, for [it is] nigh at* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*;*

***Yoel (Joel) 2:15*** *Blow the shofar in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a* [*solemn assembly*](rehearse.html)*:*

***Amos 2:2*** *But I will send a* [*fire*](fire.html) *upon* [*Moab*](stages.html)*, and it shall devour the palaces of Kirioth: and* [*Moab*](stages.html) *shall die with tumult, with shouting, [and] with the sound of the shofar:*

***Amos 3:6*** *Shall a shofar be blown in the* [*city*](city.html)*, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a* [*city*](city.html)*, and* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *hath not done [it]?*

***Tzefaniah (Zephaniah) 1:16*** *A day of the shofar and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers.*

***Zechariah 9:14*** *And* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *shall blow the shofar, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south.*

In the Nazarean Codicil, we find, from the Septuagint, that there is a Greek word used to translate “shofar”. This word is used in the following places:

***Matityahu (Matthew) 24:31*** *And he shall send his* [*angels*](angels.html) *with a great sound of a shofar, and they shall* [*gather*](gather.html) *together his elect from the* [*four*](four.html) *winds, from* [*one*](one.html) *end of* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *to the other.*

***1 Corinthians 14:8*** *For if the shofar give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?*

***1 Corinthians 15:52*** *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the shofar shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

[***Bereans***](bereans.html) ***(***[***Hebrews***](bereans.html)***) 12:19*** *And the sound of a shofar, and the voice of words; which [voice] they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:*

***Revelation 1:10*** *I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a shofar,*

***Revelation 4:1*** *After this I looked, and, behold, a door [was] opened in* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*: and the* [*first*](one.html) *voice which I heard [was] as it were of a shofar talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.*

***Revelation 8:2*** *And I saw the* [*seven*](seven.html)[*angels*](angels.html) *which stood before God; and to them were given* [*seven*](seven.html) *shofarot.*

***Revelation 8:6*** *And the* [*seven*](seven.html)[*angels*](angels.html) *which had the* [*seven*](seven.html) *shofarot prepared themselves to sound.*

***Revelation 8:13*** *And I beheld, and heard an* [*angel*](angels.html) *flying through the midst of* [*heaven*](heaven.html)*, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth by reason of the other voices of the shofar of the* [*three*](three.html)[*angels*](angels.html)*, which are yet to sound!*

***Revelation 9:14*** *Saying to the* [*sixth*](six.html)[*angel*](angels.html) *which had the shofar, Loose the* [*four*](four.html)[*angels*](angels.html) *which are bound in the great river Euphrates.*

***Revelation 10:7*** *But in the days of the voice of the* [*seventh*](seven.html)[*angel*](angels.html)*, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.*

# V. The shofar in the [Midrash](orallaw.html)

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah - Bereshit (Genesis) LVI:9*** *AND* [*ABRAHAM*](avraham.html) *LIFTED UP HIS* [*EYES*](body.html)*, AND LOOKED, AND BEHOLD BEHIND HIM (AHAR) A RAM (XXII, 13). What does A H A R mean? Said R. Judan: After all that happened,[[9]](#footnote-9) Israel still fall into the clutches of* [*sin*](sin.html) *and [in consequence] become the victims of persecution; yet they will be ultimately* [*redeemed*](redemption.html) *by the ram’s horn, as it says, And the Lord God will blow the horn, etc. (Zech. IX, 14). R. Judah b. R. Simon interpreted: At the end of [after] all* [*generations*](toldot.html) *Israel will fall into the clutches of* [*sin*](sin.html) *and be the victims of persecution; yet eventually they will be* [*redeemed*](redemption.html) *by the ram’s horn, as it says, ‘And the Lord God will blow the horn,’ etc.[[10]](#footnote-10) R. Hanina b. R.* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *said: Throughout the year Israel are in* [*sin*](sin.html)*’s clutches and led astray by their troubles, but on* [*New*](teruah.html) *Year they take the shofar and blow on it, and eventually they will be* [*redeemed*](redemption.html) *by the ram’s horn, as it says, ‘ And the Lord God will blow the horn.’ R. Abba b. R. Pappi and R. Joshua of Siknin in R. Levi’s* [*name*](name.html) *said: Because the Patriarch* [*Abraham*](avraham.html) *saw the ram extricate himself from* [*one*](one.html) *thicket and go and become entangled in another, the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, said to him: ‘ So will thy children be entangled in countries, changing from* [*Babylon*](bavel.html) *to Media, from Media to Greece, and from Greece to* [*Edom*](edom.html)*; yet they will eventually be* [*redeemed*](redemption.html) *by the ram’s horn,’ as it is written, And the Lord God will blow the horn... the Lord of hosts will defend them (ib. 14 f.). AND* [*ABRAHAM*](avraham.html) *WENT AND TOOK THE RAM, AND OFFERED HIM UP FOR A BURNT-*[*OFFERING*](korbanot) *IN THE STEAD OF HIS SON (ib.). R. Judan said in R. Banai’s* [*name*](name.html)*: He* [*prayed*](prayer.html) *to him: ‘Sovereign of the Universe! Look upon the* [*blood*](body.html) *of this ram as though it were the* [*blood*](body.html) *of my son* [*Isaac*](isaac.html)*; its emurim as though they were my son’s emurim,’ even as we learned[[11]](#footnote-11): When a man declares: This animal be instead of this* [*one*](one.html)*, in exchange for that, or a substitute for this, it is a valid exchange[[12]](#footnote-12)*

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah - Bereshit (Genesis) XCVIII:17*** *GIVETH GOODLY WORDS (SHAFER) means words of a shofar, for they embellish (meshapperin) the words which were uttered with the shofar and teru’ah.[[13]](#footnote-13)*

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah - Vayikra (Leviticus) XXIX:1*** *IN THE* [*SEVENTH*](seven.html) *MONTH, IN THE* [*FIRST*](one.html) *DAY OF THE MONTH SHALL BE A SOLEMN REST (XXIII, 24).[[14]](#footnote-14) This bears on what is written in Scripture: For ever, O Lord, Thy word standeth fast in* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *(Ps. CXIX, 89).[[15]](#footnote-15) It was* [*taught*](teacher.html) *in the* [*name*](name.html) *of R. Eliezer: The* [*world*](worlds.html) *was created on the* [*twenty*](twenty.html)*-*[*fifth*](five.html) *of* [*Elul*](elul.html)*. The view of Rab agrees with the* [*teaching*](teacher.html) *of R. Eliezer. For we have learned in the Shofar Benediction[[16]](#footnote-16) composed by Rab: ‘ This day, on which was the beginning of work, is a memorial of the* [*first*](one.html) *day, for it is a statute for Israel, a decree of the God of* [*Jacob*](israelja.html)*. Thereon also sentence is pronounced upon countries, which of them is destined to the sword and which to peace, which to* [*famine*](famine.html) *and which to plenty; and each separate creature is visited thereon, and recorded for life or for death.’[[17]](#footnote-17) Thus you are left to conclude[[18]](#footnote-18) that on* [*New*](teruah.html) *Year’s Day, in the* [*first*](one.html) *hour the idea of creating man entered His mind, in the second He took counsel with the Ministering* [*Angels*](angels.html)*, in the* [*third*](three.html) *He assembled* [*Adam*](adam.html)*’s* [*dust*](rock.html)*, in the* [*fourth*](four.html) *He kneaded it, in the* [*fifth*](five.html) *He shaped him, in the* [*sixth*](six.html) *He made him into a lifeless* [*body*](body.html)*, in the* [*seventh*](seven.html) *He breathed a soul into him, in the* [*eighth*](eight.html) *He brought him into the* [*Garden of Eden*](eden.html)*, in the* [*ninth*](nine.html) *he was commanded [against* [*eating*](eating.html) *of the fruit of the tree of* [*knowledge*](thetree.html)*], in the tenth he transgressed, in the eleventh he was judged, in the* [*twelfth*](twelve.html) *he was pardoned. ‘This,’ said the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, to* [*Adam*](adam.html)*, ‘will be a* [*sign*](signs.html) *to your children. As you stood in judgment before Me this day and came out with a free pardon, so will your children in the* [*future*](future.html) *stand in judgment before Me on this day and will come out from My presence with a free pardon.’ When will that be? IN THE* [*SEVENTH*](seven.html) *MONTH, IN THE* [*FIRST*](one.html) *DAY OF THE MONTH.*

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah - Vayikra (Leviticus) XXIX:6*** *R. Berekiah opened his discourse with the text, Blow the horn at the* [*new*](new.html)[*moon*](chodesh.html) *when it is concealed for our feast-day (Ps. LXXXI, 4).[[19]](#footnote-19) But is there not* [*new*](new.html)[*moon*](chodesh.html) *every month? Or will you answer, ‘When it is concealed’? And are not all* [*new*](new.html) *moons concealed? Or will you answer, ‘For our feast-day’? Is not* [*Nisan*](feasts.html) *a month in which the* [*moon*](chodesh.html) *is concealed and has a* [*festival*](festival.html) *of its own?[[20]](#footnote-20) The meaning can only be as follows: which month is it where the* [*moon*](chodesh.html) *is concealed and has a* [*festival*](festival.html)*, and the* [*festival*](festival.html) *falls on that very day [of* [*new*](new.html)[*moon*](chodesh.html)*]? You will not find any other except the month of* [*Tishri*](feasts.html)*. In this month then you shall turn over a* [*new*](new.html) *leaf[[21]](#footnote-21) with the blowing of the horn (shofar). In this month you shall amend (shapperu) your deeds. The Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, said to Israel: ‘If you will amend (shippartem) your deeds I shall become unto you like a horn (shofar). As the horn takes in [the breath] at* [*one*](one.html) *end and sends out at the other,[[22]](#footnote-22) so will I rise from the Throne of Judgment and sit upon the Throne of Mercy and will change for you the Attribute of Justice into the Attribute of Mercy. When? IN THE* [*SEVENTH*](seven.html) *MONTH.*

[***Midrash***](orallaw.html) ***Rabbah -*** [***Esther***](esther.html) ***VII:11*** *IN THE* [*FIRST*](one.html) *MONTH, WHICH IS THE MONTH* [*NISAN*](feasts.html) *(III, 7). It was* [*taught*](teacher.html)*: When the* [*wicked*](wicked.html)[*Haman*](esther.html) *determined to destroy Israel, he said: ‘How shall I prevail over them? The best way is to cast lots.’ The Holy Spirit thereupon cried out, ‘ And they have cast lots for My people ‘ (Yoel (Joel) IV, 3). Said the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, to him: ‘ Villain son of villain, your lot is drawn to be hanged. HE CAST PUR, THAT IS, THE LOT: the lot fell upon himself. Why? For the* [*rod*](staff.html) *of* [*wickedness*](wicked.html) *shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous (Ps. CXXV, 3).* [*First*](one.html) *he cast lots for the day of the week, as it says, FROM DAY TO DAY. He drew a lot for the* [*first*](one.html) *day of the week, whereupon the Prince[[23]](#footnote-23) of that day rose before the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, and said: ‘Sovereign of the Universe, on me the* [*heavens*](heaven.html) *and the earth were created, and Thou hast said, Were it not for My* [*covenant*](covenant.html)*, day and night [and] the ordinances of* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *and earth I had not set (Jer. XXXIII, 25).[[24]](#footnote-24) There is a* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *on their flesh, as it says, And as for thee, thou shalt keep My* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *(Gen. XVII, 9), and it is written, And My* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *shall be in your flesh (ib. 13). There is also a* [*covenant*](covenant.html) *in their* [*mouth*](body.html)*, namely, the Torah, as it is written, This book of the* [*law*](law.html)*[[25]](#footnote-25) shall not depart out of thy* [*mouth*](body.html) *(Josh. I, 8), and I have said, If* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, then will I also cast off all the* [*seed*](flower.html) *of Israel (Jer. XXXI, 37), and it is written, Then the* [*seed*](flower.html) *of Israel also will cease from being a* [*nation*](nations.html) *before Me for ever (ib. 36), and this wretch seeks to destroy them!* [*First*](one.html) *uproot* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *and earth and then Thou canst consume them!’ He drew a lot for the second day, and its Prince thereupon rose before the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, and said: ‘Sovereign of the Universe, on the second day Thou didst separate the upper from the lower waters, and similarly Israel are separated from the other* [*nations*](nations.html)*, as it is written, I have set you apart from the peoples, that ye should be Mine (Lev. XX, 26), and this wretch seeks to destroy them. Reverse the upper and lower spheres, and then consume them! ‘ He drew a lot for the* [*third*](three.html) *day, whereupon its Prince stood before the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, and said: ‘ Sovereign of the Universe, on the* [*third*](three.html) *day* [*seeds*](flower.html) *were created, and from them Israel set aside heave- offerings and tithes; trees were created thereon and with them Israel extol thee, as it says, And ye shall take you on the* [*first*](one.html) *day the fruit of goodly trees, etc. (ib. XXIII, 40). On it too the waters were* [*gathered*](gather.html) *together to form the sea, and* [*twelve*](twelve.html) *passages were cut in the sea for Israel. Now therefore if Israel vanish, how shall we endure?’ He drew a lot for the* [*fourth*](four.html) *day and its Prince stood before the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, and said: ‘Sovereign of the Universe, on the* [*fourth*](four.html) *day the luminaries were created to serve as the light of Israel,[[26]](#footnote-26)‘ as it says, And* [*nations*](nations.html) *shall* [*walk*](walking.html) *at thy light, and kings at the brightness of thy rising (Isa. LX, 3), and on it were the* [*stars*](mazaroth.html) *created, and Thy sons are likened to the* [*stars*](mazaroth.html)*. If Thou destroyest them, how shall we endure?’ He drew a lot for the* [*fifth*](five.html) *day, and its Prince stood before the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, and said: ‘ Sovereign of the Universe, on the* [*fifth*](five.html) *day were created the birds,[[27]](#footnote-27) from which Thou didst* [*command*](cmds613.html) *to be brought offerings through which Thou forgivest and becomest reconciled with Thy creatures, and if they vanish who will bring an* [*offering*](korbanot)*?’ He drew a lot for the* [*sixth*](six.html) *day, and its Prince stood before the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, and said before Him: ‘Sovereign of the Universe, on the* [*sixth*](six.html) *day was created man, by whose* [*name*](name.html) *Thou didst call Thy sons, as it is written, And ye My sheep, the sheep of My pasture, are man (Ezek. XXXIV, 31); if therefore Thou meanest to uproot them, uproot the whole of mankind, and then let him have sway over them.’ He drew a lot for the* [*Sabbath*](sabbath.html) *day, and its Prince stood before the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, and said: ‘ Sovereign of the Universe, on the* [*Sabbath*](sabbath.html) *day all Thy works were finished and completed, as it says, And on the* [*seventh*](seven.html) *day God finished His work (Gen. II, 2), and it is also written, It is a* [*sign*](signs.html) *between Me and the children of Israel for ever (Ex. XXXI, 17). If therefore Thou art minded to uproot them, uproot the* [*Sabbath*](sabbath.html) *and abolish it, and then Thou canst consume them.’ When that miscreant saw that the lot would not help him to the right day, he tried months. He began with* [*Nisan*](feasts.html)*, and the* [*merit*](merit.html) *of* [*Passover*](passover.html) *appeared in it. In* [*Iyar*](feasts.html) *appeared the* [*merit*](merit.html) *of the lesser* [*Passover*](passover.html)*[[28]](#footnote-28) and of the manna which was given to Israel on the* [*fifteenth*](fifteen.html) *of this month. In* [*Sivan*](feasts.html) *there was the* [*merit*](merit.html) *of the Torah[[29]](#footnote-29); in* [*Tammuz*](feasts.html) *the* [*merit*](merit.html) *of the land.[[30]](#footnote-30) Another reason why the lot did not fall on* [*Tammuz*](feasts.html) *or Ab was because these months said before the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He: ‘ Sovereign of the Universe, sufficient calamities have already happened in us to Thy sons,* [*five*](five.html) *in* [*Tammuz*](feasts.html) *and* [*five*](five.html) *in Ab.’[[31]](#footnote-31) With* [*Elul*](elul.html) *came up the* [*merit*](merit.html) *of the completion of the wall of* [*Jerusalem*](city.html) *[by Ezra] which took place in that month, as it says, So the wall was finished in the* [*twenty*](twenty.html) *and* [*fifth*](five.html) *day of the month* [*Elul*](elul.html) *(Neh. VI, 15),[[32]](#footnote-32) and also the* [*merit*](merit.html) *of the tithe of cattle, as we have learnt[[33]](#footnote-33): On the* [*first*](one.html) *of* [*Elul*](elul.html) *is the* [*new*](teruah.html) *year for the tithe of cattle. With* [*Tishri*](feasts.html) *came up the* [*merit*](merit.html) *of the shofar and the Day of* [*Atonement*](kippur.html) *and the* [*Festival*](festival.html) *[of* [*Tabernacles*](succoth.html)*]. With Marheshvan came up the* [*merit*](merit.html) *of Sarah our mother who died in that month.[[34]](#footnote-34) With* [*Kislev*](feasts.html) *came the* [*merit*](merit.html) *of* [*Chanukah*](chanukah.html)*,[[35]](#footnote-35) with* [*Tebet*](feasts.html) *the* [*merit*](merit.html) *of Ezra, as it says, And the children of the captivity did so. And Ezra the* [*priest*](priests.html)*... were separated... in the* [*first*](one.html) *day of the tenth month... and they were finished with all the men that had married foreign women, etc. Nehemiah X, 16 f). With Shebat came up the* [*merit*](merit.html) *of the Men of the Great* [*Synagogue*](synagog.html)*; for on the* [*twenty*](twenty.html)*-*[*third*](three.html) *of that month all Israel* [*gathered*](gather.html) *together to take counsel about the concubine of Gibeah and the graven image of Micah.[[36]](#footnote-36) When the month of* [*Adar*](feasts.html) *came up, he found no* [*merit*](merit.html) *in it and he began to rejoice. He then turned to examining the* [*signs*](signs.html) *of the Zodiac. In the* [*sign*](signs.html) *of the Lamb[[37]](#footnote-37) he found the* [*merit*](merit.html) *of* [*Passover*](passover.html)*, as it says, Every man a lamb, according to their* [*fathers*](fathers.html)*’ houses (Ex. XII, 3). In that of Taurus (ox) was found the* [*merit*](merit.html) *of* [*Joseph*](joseph.html) *who was called ox, as it says, His firstling bullock, majesty is his (Deut. XXXIII, 17); and also the* [*merit*](merit.html) *of the* [*offering*](korbanot)*, as it says, When a bullock, or a sheep, or a goat is brought forth, etc. (Lev. XXII, 27). In Gemini (twins) was found the* [*merit*](merit.html) *of Peretz and Zerach[[38]](#footnote-38) who were called twins, as it says, Behold, twins were in her* [*womb*](thebirth.html) *(Gen. XXXVIII, 27). In Leo (lion) was found the* [*merit*](merit.html) *of Daniel who was from the* [*tribe*](tribes.html) *of Judah which is called lion, as it says, Judah is a lion’s whelp (ib. XLIX, 9). In Virgo (*[*virgin*](virgin.html)*) there was the* [*merit*](merit.html) *of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, who were like a maiden that knows no man except her husband; so they did not change their God or their* [*law*](law.html) *and clung to their Judaism. Libra (scales) is Iyov (Job), as it says, O that my vexation we weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances (Iyov (Job) VI, 2). Scorpio is Ezekiel, as it says, Thou dost* [*dwell*](dwelling.html) *among scorpions (Ezek., 6).[[39]](#footnote-39) Sagittarius (bowman) is* [*Joseph*](joseph.html)*, as it says, But his bow abode firm (Gen. XLIX, 24). Capricornus (kid) is* [*Jacob*](israelja.html)*, as it says, And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his* [*hands*](fourteen.html) *(ib. XXVII, 16). Aquarius (water-carrier) is Moses, as it says, And moreover he drew water for us (Ex. II, 19).[[40]](#footnote-40) On reaching the* [*sign*](signs.html) *of Pisces (fishes) which shines in the month of* [*Adar*](feasts.html)*, he found no* [*merit*](merit.html) *in it and rejoiced saying, ‘*[*Adar*](feasts.html) *has no* [*merit*](merit.html)*, its* [*sign*](signs.html) *has no* [*merit*](merit.html)*, and what is more, in* [*Adar*](feasts.html) *Moses their master died.’ He, however, did not* [*know*](daat.html) *that on the* [*first*](one.html)*[[41]](#footnote-41) of* [*Adar*](feasts.html) *Moses died and on the* [*first*](one.html)*[[42]](#footnote-42) of* [*Adar*](feasts.html) *he was born. He said: ‘Just as fishes swallow* [*one*](one.html) *another, so I will swallow them.’ Said the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, to him: ‘ Wretch!* *Fishes sometimes swallow and sometimes are swallowed, and now it is you who will be swallowed.’ Said R. Hanan: The same thing is intimated by the verse, Whereas it was turned to the contrary, that the* [*Jews*](gen-jew.html) *had rule over them that hated them (Est. IX, 1). R. Tanhuma said: And the Lord said not that He would blot out the* [*name*](name.html) *of Israel (II Melachim (Kings) XIV, 27), but what He said was, For I will utterly blot out the remembrance of* [*Amalek*](amalek.html) *(Ex. XVII, 14)*

# VI. [Laws](law.html) of Shofar Blowing

The [commandment](cmds613.html) to hear the shofar blowing requires conscious intent to fulfill the [mitzva](cmds613.html). Because this is a legal action, it must take place during day light hours, from [sun](hachama.html) up till [sun](hachama.html) down. Those who hurry to fulfill the [mitzva](cmds613.html) are praise worthy.

The shofar blower recites [two](two.html) blessings; the [community](community.html) must listen to the blessings and respond, “Amen”; to each [one](one.html). ([One](one.html) should not say “Baruch hu uvaruch sh’mo”; to these blessings.)

[One](one.html) should stand during the recitation of the blessings and for all of the shofar blasts.

It is forbidden to [speak](mashal.html) from the beginning of the [first](one.html) blessing until after the final shofar blast (at the end of Musaf).

There are [four](four.html) different sounds associated with the blowing of the shofar during the [Yom Teruah](teruah.html) service. These sounds are interpreted as follows:

1. תקיעה – TEKIAH - A pure unbroken sound that calls man to search his [heart](body.html), forsake his wrong ways, and seek [forgiveness](forgive.html) through repentance. The tekiah is a long blast.

The object of [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html) is to crown [HaShem](hashem.html) as our King. Tekiah, the long, straight shofar blast, is the sound of the King’s coronation. In the [Garden of Eden](eden.html), [Adam](adam.html)’s [first](one.html) act was to proclaim [HaShem](hashem.html) as King. And now, the shofar proclaims to ourselves and to the [world](worlds.html): [HaShem](hashem.html) is our King. We set our values straight and return to the reality of [HaShem](hashem.html) as the [One](one.html) Who runs the [world](worlds.html), guiding history, moving mountains, and caring for each and every human being individually and personally.

2. שברים - SHEBARIM- A broken, staccato, trembling sound. It typifies the sorrow that comes to man when he realizes his misconduct and [desires](needs.html) to change his ways. The shebarim is [three](three.html) shorter blasts. The Kabbalists say that Shebarim is the sobbing [cry](mashal.html) of a [Jewish](gen-jew.html) [heart](body.html) yearning to connect, to grow, to achieve.

3. תרועה – TERUAH - A wave-like sound of alarm calling upon man to stand by the banner of [HaShem](hashem.html). The teruah is [ten](ten.html) very quick abbreviated blasts. The Teruah sound resembles an alarm clock, arousing us from our [spiritual](physical.html) slumber. This shofar sound brings clarity, alertness, and focus. fix what’s broken, eye’s open.

4. תקיעה גדולה - TEKIAH GEDOLAH - The prolonged, unbroken sound typifying a final appeal to sincere repentance and [atonement](atonemen.html). This note concludes each set of blowing during the [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html) ceremony. The Hakhamim described it as a [sign](signs.html) of “divine withdrawal”, based on the verse: “When the Shofar sounds long, they [the people] shall come up to the mountain...” (Shemot 19:13).

HaGaon Levush states that the tekiah blast represents joy whereas the blasts of the shebarim-teruah represent pain and affliction. Because they are opposites, the shofar blower should not blast both types using the same breath.

The following section is a quote from “The Pentateuch” by S.R Hirsch[[43]](#footnote-43):

In Bamidbar ([Numbers](nchart.html)) 10:7, [two](two.html) notes are specifically differentiated. There it says: ובהקהיל את הקהל תתקעו ולא תריעו by which ת**ק**ועis differentiated from הריע**.** תקיעה Tekiah is accordingly a different note to תרועה teruah and they have different meanings for the purpose of giving signals. תקיעה is the signal for gathering about Moses, תרועה teruah the signal to strike [camp](stages.html). It nevertheless, in verses 5 and 6 the order for the signal to strike [camp](stages.html) does not run: והרעותם תרועה תרועה ירעו but: the breaking up signal is described as a combination of teruah and tekiah, the teruah is to be introduced by a tekiah, (תקיעה), and concluded by [one](one.html) (תקיעה). There by the assembling signal is differentiated from the breaking up signal by תתקעו ולא תריעו that the tekiah is blown without a following teruah[[44]](#footnote-44). The word תקע means to bring something energetically into something else: to ram home, to thrust into, to sink, to plunge into. Hence also the term used for the symbolic binding by a handshake as a [sign](signs.html) of assurance and emphasis on the transaction to be made. By it, the [one](one.html) party thrusts his [hand](fourteen.html) to remain (symbolically) permanently in the [hand](fourteen.html) of the other. Here, at a wind instrument it designates the sustained unbroken note produced by a prolonged blowing of air into the shofar. It is the calling note, calling your attention and holding you.

The word תרועה (teruah) from רעע, רוע, to break, designates the broken note interrupted by shorter or longer quavers (shebarim or teruah). It is the note for bustling, speeded activity, the signal for breaking up. The combined notes of tekiah and teruah as a signal for decampment and moving on worked as follows: the tekiah called the people to attention to Moses. If no teruah were to follow, they had to hurry to him to receive his orders. But the teruah following immediately, informed them at once that it was a signal for striking tents and breaking up [camp](stages.html). And then the final tekiah after packing up, called them forward thither to where [HaShem](hashem.html) had indicated their [new](new.html) resting place. Quite in this way, with every teruah consisting of the threefold note introduced by, and concluding with, a tekiah does tradition [teach](teacher.html) the procedure for blowing the prescribed teruah on the shofar on [Yom Teruah](teruah.html) and תקיעה.... The preparatory tekiah would be the summons in general to listen to [HaShem](hashem.html), to receive from Him the orders for the day. Then the teruah would then give His order to be breaking off and away from every attachment that estranges us from [HaShem](hashem.html), and from consciousness of having the power of moral [freedom](freedom.html) of will, and leaving everything worthless behind, in short in giving up everything in our present mode of life which is displeasing to [HaShem](hashem.html). The tekiah which then follows, calls [one](one.html) to the [new](new.html) standpoint, to the [new](new.html) attitude to life, to faithfully giving oneself up to following the road set out by [HaShem](hashem.html), which alone is the path of [freedom](freedom.html), and which is blessed by the favor of [HaShem](hashem.html).[[45]](#footnote-45)

Before the shofar is sounded, the Ba’al Tokea (the shofar blower) prepares himself for his task of blowing the shofar for the congregation and says:

“I am prepared to fulfill [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [commandment](cmds613.html) to blow the shofar, as it is prescribed in the Torah, ‘a day of blowing unto you.’”

The Ba’al Tokea then recites the following [two](two.html) blessings:

Baruch ata [HaShem](hashem.html) Eloheinu melech ha-olam, asher kidishanu bemitzvotav vetzvivanu leshemoa kol shofar.

Blessed are You, [HaShem](hashem.html), our God, King of the universe, Who has sanctified us with your [commandments](cmds613.html) and has instructed us to hear the shofar.

Baruch ata [HaShem](hashem.html) Eloheinu melech ha-olam, asher kidishanu bemitzvotav vetzivanu lazman hazeh.

Blessed are You, [HaShem](hashem.html), our God, King of the universe, Who has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to this season.

**TEKIAH**, **SHEBARIM**, **TERUAH,** **TEKIAH GEDOLAH,** Combinations of [one](one.html) hundred of these sounds are arranged in [three](three.html) sets of blasts:

1. “tashrat”

TEKIAH, SHEBARIM, TERUAH, TEKIAH

TEKIAH, SHEBARIM, TERUAH, TEKIAH

TEKIAH, SHEBARIM, TERUAH, TEKIAH

2. “tashat”

TEKIAH, SHEBARIM, and TEKIAH

TEKIAH, SHEBARIM, and TEKIAH

TEKIAH, SHEBARIM, and TEKIAH

3. “tarat”

TEKIAH, TERUAH, and TEKIAH

TEKIAH, TERUAH, and TEKIAH

TEKIAH, TERUAH, and TEKIAH GEDOLAH

([Rosh HaShana](teruah.html)h Machzor, Mesorah Publications)

The [Talmud](orallaw.html), in [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html)h 34a, explains that the [nine](nine.html) blasts are derived from a combination of [three](three.html) separate verses dealing with the shofar (Vayikra (Leviticus) 25:9, 23:24; Bamidbar ([Numbers](nchart.html)) 29:1). Taking all [three](three.html) verses together, we find the word TERUAH mentioned [three](three.html) times; this accounts for the [three](three.html) TERUOT. The TEKIAH before each TERUAH is derived from the verse: And you shall sound the shofar, a TERUAH...(Vayikra (Leviticus) 25:9). Here we see that preceding the TERUAH there is a simple sounding of the shofar, i.e., extended and unvaried, for it is referred to simply by the word shofar. After the TERUAH we again find that there is to be a simple sounding of the shofar, for the verse continues: You shall sound the shofar. Thus there are [nine](nine.html) blasts in all - TEKIAH, TERUAH, TEKIAH, sounded [three](three.html) times. These, then, are the blasts of the scriptural order.

On the Rabbinic level, there are more shofar blasts - the extra ones necessitated by doubt as to the nature of the Biblical TERUAH. [One](one.html) possibility is that when the Torah calls for TERUAH, it means a sound similar to the sound of groaning, the [type](types.html) of blast now called SHEBARIM, literally broken. Another possibility is that the Biblical TERUAH is the sound of whimpering, the intermittent quavering blast that we refer to as TERUAH. A [third](three.html) possibility is that what the Torah meant by TERUAH is a combination of both of these sounds. In order to fulfill all possible meanings, R. Abahu in Caesarea enacted a Rabbinic decree that the blowing should consist as outlined above.

R. Hai Gaon was asked, how it is possible that doubt could arise as to the nature of a [mitzva](cmds613.html) (the Biblical TERUAH) which is performed every year? The gist of his reply is: From earliest times there were [two](two.html) customs in Israel. Some blew light short blasts (those called TERUAH today), and others blew heavy short blasts, that is, SHEVARIM. Either manner of blowing was sufficient to fulfill the obligation. R’Abahu decreed that all Israel should follow a single practice so that there should not be among them anything that might be misconstrued as a division.

[***Psalm***](psalms1.html) ***89:15*** *Blessed [is] the people that* [*know*](daat.html) *the joyful TERUAH: they shall* [*walk*](walking.html)*,* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, in the light of thy countenance.*

In the [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html)h Machzor ([prayer](prayer.html) book), on both days, we read the following:

“May it be Your will that the tekiah-shebarim-Teruah-tekiah blasts that we sound be embroidered into the [heavenly] curtain by the [appointed](settimes.html) [angel](angels.html) ([name](name.html) deleted), just as You accepted [prayers](prayer.html) through Elijah, who is remembered for good; [Yeshua](yeshua.html) (the [Kohen](kohen.html) Gadol - [High Priest](priests.html)), minister of the inner chamber, and the ministering [angel](angels.html) ([name](name.html) deleted); and may You be filled with mercy upon us. Blessed are You Master of Mercies.” [[46]](#footnote-46)

Here is the [first](one.html) place I have found, in an orthodox [Jewish](gen-jew.html) publication, the mention of the [name](name.html) of a [High Priest](priests.html) named [Yeshua](yeshua.html). Clearly this [High Priest](priests.html) served in the days of Ezra HaNavi (The Prophet). His service is associated with the service of [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html) ([Yom Teruah](teruah.html)) by the [connection](connection.html) to the shofar. This is the service where we crown [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben David as King. Thus we have a [connection](connection.html) between the [High Priest](priests.html) of Ezra’s day and the [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html) who was also called [Yeshua](yeshua.html). Further, we expect [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben [Yosef](joseph.html) to return as [Mashiach](mashiach.html) ben David, presumably with the same [name](name.html): [Yeshua](yeshua.html).

**\* \* \***

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 28:10*** *And all the* [*nations*](nations.html) *of the land will see that the* [*name*](name.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *is called on you and they will* [*fear*](fear.html) *you.*

During the [prayers](prayer.html) on each day of [Rosh Hashana](teruah.html)h we blow 100 Tekiot. These 100 Tekiot contain 300 different sounds:

The Tekiah is 1.

The Shebarim is 3.

The Teruah is 9.

There are [ten](ten.html) different sets of Tekiot.

Each set contains the following:

**4 Tekiah, Shebarim, Teruah, Tekiah**

**3 Tekiah, Shebarim, Tekiah**

**3 Tekiah, Teruah, Tekiah**

**10 Tekiot**

There are 10 of these sets throughout the [prayers](prayer.html).

6 Tekiot

6 Shebarim

18 Teruot

30 sounds x 10 sets = 300 sounds throughout the day.

The Pasuk says Ki Shem [HaShem](hashem.html) Nekrah. The Roshei Teivot of the words Shem [HaShem](hashem.html) Nekra are Shin, Yud, Nun which spells the word Shin, whose gematria is 300, a [remez](remez.html) (hint) to the 300 sounds. The last [letters](letters.html) of the same words are Mem, Hey, Alef, which spell the word Meah, whose gematria is 100, a [remez](remez.html) (hint) to the 100 Tekiot.

This Parsha discusses the yoke of Kingship, of accepting the Kingship of the Master of the [World](worlds.html). We do this when we blow Shofar.[[47]](#footnote-47)

\* \* \*

When we see the following [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word in the Tanakh, our Sages indicate that it is always an allusion to [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html): היום

# VII. Point of Origin

In the Musaf service of [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html), after each sequence of shofar blasts, we will say:

היום הרת עולם

*Hayom harat olam*

Today is [thebirth](thebirth.html)dayofthe[world](worlds.html)!

Why is [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html) called [the birth](thebirth.html)day of the [world](worlds.html)?

Our Sages tell us that this life is a corridor to the next life. Death is a [birth](birth.html) to a [new](new.html) existence. Just as emergence from the [womb](thebirth.html) constitutes corporeal [birth](birth.html), detachment from the [body](body.html) is the [birth](thebirth.html) of the soul. Just as the [eight](eight.html) or [nine](nine.html) months in the [womb](thebirth.html) are the period of [gestation](thebirth.html) preceding earthly [birth](birth.html), the 70 or 80 years on earth are the [gestation](thebirth.html) period preceding heavenly [birth](birth.html).

[Rosh HaShana](teruah.html), [one](one.html) could say, is the [new](teruah.html) year’s [birth](birth.html) canal.

Curious, isn’t it, that a shofar with its narrow mouthpiece and wider opening resembles a [birth](birth.html) canal? In fact, the Bible mentions a great woman with a [name](name.html) of the same etymology: Shifrah. She was the midwife of the ancient [Hebrews](bereans.html) who left Egypt. Rashi tells us that the [name](name.html) Shifra comes from a [Hebrew](hebrew.html) root that means, “the capacity to make something better, or to improve its quality”, and that is what she did: In keeping with this characteristic, and contrary to Pharaoh’s orders, Shifrah ensured that the babies would emerge healthy and viable, then swaddled and massaged them to foster their strength and beauty.

The shofar is loaded with [birth](birth.html) imagery: It can be viewed as the [birth](thebirth.html) canal, the air rushing through it to create a plaintive [cry](mashal.html) is the breath of life, and the sound that we hear recalls the cries of labor. Traditionally, we hear 100 blasts of the shofar during [Rosh Hashana](teruah.html)h. A [Midrash](orallaw.html) [teaches](teacher.html) that the [first](one.html) 99 are the cries of a woman in labor, and the final [one](one.html), the tekiah gedolah, is the responding [cry](mashal.html) of the newborn child.

Today is [the birth](thebirth.html)day of the [world](worlds.html), or more accurately, today is the pregnancy of the [world](worlds.html). On [Rosh Hashana](teruah.html)h our [world](worlds.html) becomes pregnant with [HaShem](hashem.html), and [HaShem](hashem.html) is pregnant with us. It is a [time](time.html) of mutual awareness and understanding. It is the [time](time.html) when we enter the inner [world](worlds.html), the [world](worlds.html) of the [womb](thebirth.html), in order to be reborn into change. [HaShem](hashem.html) intervened in the wombs of the matriarchs Sarah, Rachel, and Hannah and made them pregnant[[48]](#footnote-48). On [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html)h, we read the stories of Sarah, Hannah, and Rachel[[49]](#footnote-49) to remind us of the hope for [new](new.html) life. There is an understanding that Sarah, the mother of the [Jewish](gen-jew.html) people, herself was born on this day. We also read the story of the Akedah, the binding of [Isaac](isaac.html), when [Isaac](isaac.html) is nearly sacrificed by his father [Abraham](avraham.html), to let us [know](daat.html) that this [time](time.html) of year also signals radical change, a part of us must die in order to be reborn.

We are the ones who inscribe ourselves for life or death by living our lives throughout the year the way we do. We are the ones who give [birth](birth.html) to ourselves. In the next [world](worlds.html) our [birth](birth.html) and the nature of our [experience](experience.html) will reflect the choices we, and we alone, made. In this life we were born into circumstances beyond our control, but in the next life we will emerge from the “[womb](thebirth.html)” of circumstances we shaped with our daily life choices and actions. If we are true to our soul here, then our soul will [experience](experience.html) a happy [birth](birth.html) in the next [world](worlds.html). If we succumb to the low impulses of the material [body](body.html) we will be confused and dismayed when we emerge into the wide space of eternity.

The Torah readings of [Rosh Hashana](teruah.html)h are Bereshit (Genesis) chapter 21 on the [first](one.html) day and Bereshit (Genesis) chapter 22 on the second day. The Rabbis have associated the [first](one.html) day of the [seventh](seven.html) month as [the birth](thebirth.html)day of both [Yitzchak](isaac.html) and Shmuel. This association (of the root “z.k.r.” and of the idea to remember) hint towards the choice of the [first](one.html) day’s Torah and Haftarah reading (the [first](one.html) day’s Torah reading describes the [birth](thebirth.html) of [Yitzchak](isaac.html) and the Haftarah of the [first](one.html) day describes the [birth](thebirth.html) of Shmuel and the [Prayer](prayer.html) of Hannah (1 Samuel 1:1-2:10)).The Torah reading of the second day describes the binding of [Yitzchak](isaac.html). The reason for the choice of this chapter is explained in the [Talmud](orallaw.html): R. Abbahu said, “why is a ram’s horn blown? The Holy [One](one.html), Blessed be He, said: Blow the ram’s horn in order that I will remember the binding of [Yitzchak](isaac.html), son of [Abraham](avraham.html) and so that I will consider it as if you yourselves had bound yourselves to me.[[50]](#footnote-50)

[Adam](adam.html) and Eve are created, it is the [sixth](six.html) day.[[51]](#footnote-51)

Noah’s birthday. 1st day of the 1st month.[[52]](#footnote-52) ***Bereshit (Genesis) 8:13***

The shofar sounds like a child wailing.

The Ramban in his discourse on [Rosh Hashana](teruah.html)h links the word shofar to the verse:

***Iyov (Job) 26:13*** *“By His breath the* [*Heavens*](heaven.html) *are spread (shifra).”*

This verse refers to the dispersing of the clouds to reveal the clear blue sky. That which was clouded over and concealed becomes revealed. The root of the word shifra also means to beautify, for true beauty is to see the essence of something, the purpose for which it was created. Shifra is also the root of the word shofar.

The shofar gives us a clarity to see beyond the clouds, to see to the blue sky beyond. It is this clarity that results in [fear](fear.html) and trembling:

***Amos 3:6*** *“Can the shofar be sounded in the* [*city*](city.html) *and the people not tremble?”*

The shofar is the midwife of the [new](teruah.html) year. Into its piercing [cry](mashal.html) we squeeze all our heartfelt [prayers](prayer.html), all our [tears](mashal.html). All of our being resonates with its call until it reaches the very beginning, the cosmic [womb](thebirth.html). And there it touches a switch: The Divine Presence shifts from the strict judgment of Din to the compassion of Rachamim. In the language of the [Zohar](orallaw.html):

[***Zohar***](orallaw.html)***, Vayikra, Section 3, Page 99b*** *“The shofar below awakens the shofar above and the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, rises from His throne of judgment and sits in His throne of compassion.”*

Why is [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html) called [the birth](thebirth.html)day of the [world](worlds.html)?

And the classic response is: because we are not celebrating an anniversary; “Today is [thebirth](thebirth.html)day of the [world](worlds.html)” means today, now. Today the [world](worlds.html) is born again. This day is “the beginning of your works”, reminiscent of the very [first](one.html) [time](time.html) the [world](worlds.html) was made. Only that the [first](one.html) [time](time.html) the [world](worlds.html) was born, it was a free gift. Since then, it depends on us, the [Adam](adam.html). And so, it occurs on our birthday, [Rosh Hashana](teruah.html)h. We are reborn, and within us, the entire cosmos.

\* \* \*

**Shafir** in [Hebrew](hebrew.html) means ‘fine’, but ‘mey shafir’ means the amniotic fluid that surrounds the fetus (‘ubbar’) in the [womb](thebirth.html).

שופר : In the original sense of incising. From the root שפר to be pleasing, be beautiful, be fair, be comely, be bright, glisten, to be beautiful. To improve to develop.

שפור - Shipur means to elevate to a [new](new.html) level,

# Messianic implications

Notice in the following verses that [Gabriel](angels.html) is dispatched in [Elul](elul.html) (the [sixth](six.html) month). I suspect that this is [Elul](elul.html) 29 and that Miryam will be remembered on [Rosh HaShana](teruah.html), the [first](one.html) day of the [seventh](seven.html) month:

***Luqas (***[***Luke***](luke.html)***) 1:26*** *And in the* [*sixth*](six.html) *month the* [*angel*](angels.html)[*Gabriel*](angels.html) *was sent from God unto a* [*city*](city.html) *of Galilee, named Nazareth, 27 To a* [*virgin*](virgin.html) *espoused to a man whose* [*name*](name.html) *was* [*Joseph*](joseph.html)*, of the house of David; and the* [*virgin*](virgin.html)*’s* [*name*](name.html) *was Mary. 28 And the* [*angel*](angels.html) *came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. 29 And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. 30 And the* [*angel*](angels.html) *said unto her,* [*Fear*](fear.html) *not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy* [*womb*](thebirth.html)*, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his* [*name*](name.html)[*Yeshua*](yeshua.html)*. 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: 33 And he shall reign over the house of* [*Jacob*](israelja.html) *for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. 34 Then said Mary unto the* [*angel*](angels.html)*, How shall this be, seeing I* [*know*](daat.html) *not a man? 35 And the* [*angel*](angels.html) *answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. 36 And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the* [*sixth*](six.html) *month with her, who was called barren.*

# VIII. The [Akeida](human.html)

Rav Zadok HaCohen Lublin alludes to the famous idea that the ram sacrificed by [Avraham](avraham.html) Avinu at the [Akeida](human.html) had [two](two.html) unequal horns. The smaller horn was blown at Har [Sinai](stages.html), and the larger will be used to usher in the [Mashiach](mashiach.html) and the final [redemption](redemption.html). What is the significance of the larger horn? Rav Zadok says the larger horn symbolizes the power to permeate (hitpashtut). [Redemption](redemption.html) is the message of the shofar permeating completely. The complete [redemption](redemption.html) comes when the universe is filled with the sound, and personal [redemption](redemption.html) when I am immersed in it.

SHANA TOVA

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1. Copyright (c) 1996 Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc. All Rights Reserved [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This is another name for Rosh HaShanah [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The neshama is the third of [five](file:///F%3A%5CWord%5CTERUAH%5Cfive.html) parts of the soul. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Rosh Hashanah 26a [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Rosh Hashanah 16a [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. *Reflexions & Introspection Elul, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkos*, Torah Insights of Hagon HaGadol Rav Moshe Shapiro, by Moshe Antebi [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Mekubalim are the masters of the sod level of Torah hermeneutics. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. From “Seasons of our joy” [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. E.J.- After all that God has done for Israel, redeeming than from Egypt. etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. They understand ahar (lit. ‘ after ‘) and ‘ ram ‘ to hint at the Messianic [future](file:///F%3A%5CWord%5CTERUAH%5Cfutures.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Tem. 26b [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. ‘It is a valid exchange’ is a technical expression denoting that both are holy; v. Lev. XXVII, 23 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Sc. the Torah. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. New Year’s Day; the day on which God sits in judgment upon the [world](file:///F%3A%5CWord%5CTERUAH%5Cworlds.html). The exposition that follows is intended to explain why the first day of the year was chosen as the day of judgment. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. The bearing is not clear. In Pes. R. XL, 2 this verse is expounded as showing that mercy governs God’s attitude in His judgment of man and that this was so in the case of Adam who was judged on the first day of the year. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. I.e. in the second of the special passages inserted in the Additional Service on New Year’s Day. This second benediction is now known as Zikronoth, remembrance. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. V. A.P.B., p. 250. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. The conclusion is only that Adam was created on New Year’s Day, the first of Tishri, this being the sixth day from the twenty-fifth of Elul. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. So lit., E.V. ‘At the full moon’. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. So how do we know which [new moon](file:///F%3A%5CWord%5CTERUAH%5Cchodesh.html) is meant? [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Lit. ‘start your deeds afresh’. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. The narrow end is compared to imprisonment and the broad end to liberation (Radal). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. I.e. celestial guardian. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. E.V. ‘If My covenant be not with day and night, if I have not appointed, etc. The [Midrash](file:///F%3A%5CWord%5CTERUAH%5Corallaw.html) interprets: I would not have created day and night and the ordinances of heaven and earth but for the sake of My covenant. By ‘covenant’ they understood [circumcision](file:///F%3A%5CWord%5CTERUAH%5Ccircumcz.html) and the Torah, and Israel alone had accepted both. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. And the Torah is called a covenant [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. We might also translate, ‘ to derive their light from Israel.’ Y.’A. emends:... ‘the luminaries were created, while Israel are likened to the luminaries, since the other nations will one day seek the light of Israel.’ This reading is preferable. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Cur. ed. adds ‘and beasts’, which is deleted by the commentators. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. For persons unclean or on a journey at the time of the real Passover. V. Num. IX, 9 seq. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Which was given at Sinai in this month. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. The allusion is obscure; it is variously referred to the passage of Caleb and Joshua through the land with the spies, or to the return of Ezra (Ezra VII, 8). [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. V. Ta’an. 26a. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. For Haman this event was still in the [future](file:///F%3A%5CWord%5CTERUAH%5Cfutures.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. R.H. 2a. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. According to the Rabbis (Gen. R. LVIII, 5) she died through the shock of thinking that Isaac had been sacrificed, and so probably a few weeks after the [Akedah](file:///F%3A%5CWord%5CTERUAH%5Cmerit.html), which was on Tishri 1st. V. Radal. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. This also was in the future. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Judg. XX. The date of the twenty-third of Shebat is given in Megillath Ta’anith. Radal emends: ‘With Tebet came up the merit of Ezra and the men of the great [Synagogue](file:///F%3A%5CWord%5CTERUAH%5Csynagog.html), etc.; with Shebat came up the merit of the twenty-third day thereof on which all Israel, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. I.e. Aries. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Sons of [Judah and Tamar](file:///F%3A%5CWord%5CTERUAH%5Cruth.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. I.e. wardest off the evil from the [constellation Scorpio](file:///F%3A%5CWord%5CTERUAH%5Cmazaroth.html) (Mah.). [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. The sign of Cancer is omitted. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Y.’A. corrects to ‘seventh’, in accordance with the Rabbinical tradition, Kid. 38a. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Y.’A. corrects to ‘seventh’, in accordance with the Rabbinical tradition, Kid. 38a. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Found in “The Pentateuch” by S.R. Hirsh, in book two of Leviticus, page 674. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. see Rosh HaShana 34a [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. “The Pentateuch”, translation and commentary by Samson Raphael Hirsch. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. The Complete ArtScroll Machzor for [Rosh Hashanah](file:///F%3A%5CWord%5CTERUAH%5Cteruah.html) (Ashkenaz), page 436 and 437, Mesorah Publications [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. This vort was said on the 27th day of [Elul](file:///F%3A%5CWord%5CTERUAH%5Celul.html) 5750, for the 56th Yarzheit of Rebbetzin Nechama Taub, z”l, the Moditzer Rebbetzin. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. [Babylonian Talmud](file:///F%3A%5CWord%5CTERUAH%5Corallaw.html), Yevamot 64b, Rosh HaShanah 10b; Genesis Rabbah 73:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Genesis 12-23; I Sam. 1-2; Genesis 29-35. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Rosh Hashanah 16a [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Sanhedrin 38b [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Seder Olam; Radak [↑](#footnote-ref-52)