

*5781 CBAJ High Holy Day
Reader*





בס"ד

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Dear CBAJ Family,

Our High Holy Days will be very different this year. Some of us will pray indoors in an abbreviated service; some will pray outdoors. Some of us will pray at home. One of the great losses the Coronavirus pandemic has inflicted upon us is the loss of the synagogue as a second home for many of us, a house of prayer, a house of gathering (a *Beit Tefilah* and *Beit Kneset*). How can we maintain cohesion and inspiration during these times?

For these reasons, we have compiled a High Holy Day gift bag and reader for our Beth Abe family. In the gift bag, you will find some food and drink items (all *parve*), as well as games and activities. In this reader, you will find the important times for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, instructions for those praying at home, a challenge for the children, and sermons and other inspiring material from your Beth Abe family and some courtesy of the OU to read to offer some insight into these Days of Awe. Although we may be praying at different service options (and there is a place for every CBAJ Member who would like to attend our services), or at home, we hope this package will bring us together spiritually.

I would like to thank the volunteers who devoted so much of their time to make the gift bag, this reader, and the High Holy Day services we will be holding possible. Making everything possible has been a remarkable team effort. We thank Amanda, Josh, Leah, Max, Jacob, and Sophia Gurock, Chana Israel, and Dina and Malky Reznik for their work on the bag and its contents; Susannah Levin for designing the cover of this packet and our CBAJ Logo; Tom Kligerman for his work on the tents and making our outdoor services possible; Ra'anah Schwarzmer for leading services, Torah Reading, and blowing Shofar, and Chaim Schaffer for blowing the Shofar; Rachel Minkin for the children's program; our office manager, Seanan Herrick; and our CBAJ Executive Committee for their tireless work in all areas of our synagogue's life, from ritual to financial.

We hope you have a meaningful High Holy Day season, and wish you a happy, healthy, productive, and sweet new year: may next year be together.

Roy Feldman

ROY Y. FELDMAN
RABBI

ARTHUR BRENNER
PRESIDENT



Rosh Hashanah Times and Instructions for Prayer at Home

Friday

- Candle lighting: 6:42 pm; להדליק נר של שבת ושל יום טוב.
- Weekday Mincha before 7:00 pm
- Abridged *Kabbalat Shabbat* (Psalms 92 and 92)
- Ma'ariv for Rosh Hashana that falls on Shabbat. Remember to include all of the special insertions in the *Amidah*.
- Vayechulu is recited after the *Amidah* followed by *Aleinu*, and L'David.
- Kiddush for Rosh Hashanah with Shabbat insertions. *Shehechyanu*.
- After Hamotzi and Challah, the traditional symbolic foods (*simanim*) are eaten on the first night together with their *Yehi Ratzon*.

Saturday

- Psalm of the Day (Shabbat) and L'David, Morning Blessings, *Pesukei D'zimrah*
- Shacharit for Rosh Hashanah with insertions for Shabbat through silent *Amidah*.
- The Torah reading for the first day is Genesis 21:1-34, the maftir is Numbers 29:1-6 and the haftarah is 1 Samuel 1:1-2:10.
- The shofar is not blown on Shabbat; recite *Ashrei*
- Mussaf silent *Amidah* for Rosh Hashanah with insertions for Shabbat.
- No repetition, but one may read or study the various Piyutim to themselves, especially *Unetaneh Tokef*.
- Mincha for Rosh Hashanah with insertions for Shabbat should be recited between 1:20 pm and 6:58 pm.
- Candle lighting as well as any preparations for the second night: after 7:39 pm
- Ma'ariv for Rosh Hashana, including the special *Havdalah* paragraph for Saturday night.
- Kiddush for Rosh Hashanah including the additions for *Havdalah* (יקנה"ז). You may use the Yom Tov candles for the blessing on fire. The new fruit should be placed on the table before Kiddush and is eaten after Kiddush. If one does not have a new fruit or new clothing, one may still recite *Shehechyanu*.

Sunday

- Psalm of the Day (Sunday) and L'David, Morning Blessings, *Pesukei D'zimrah*
- Shacharit for Rosh Hashanah through silent *Amidah*.
- The Torah reading for the second day is Genesis 22:1-22:24, the maftir is Numbers 29:1-6 and the haftarah is Jeremiah 31:1- 31:19.
- For someone praying alone, only the first 30 Shofar blasts (the ones found after the Haftarah) are required. You may blow shofar on your own, or you may register for one of our Shofar options. If you have questions, please e-mail rfeldman@cbaj.org.
- *Ashrei*, Mussaf silent *Amidah*.
- No repetition, but one may read or study the various Piyutim to themselves, especially *Unetaneh Tokef*.
- Mincha for Rosh Hashanah should be recited between 1:20 pm and 6:56 pm.
- Yom Tov ends at 7:37 pm. Weekday Ma'ariv including the paragraph for after a festival, and the special insertions for the Ten Days of Repentance.
- Havdalah: Two blessings, wine and the Havdalah (no Spices or fire).

Yom Kippur Times and Instructions for Prayer at Home

Sunday

- Weekday Mincha includes Vidui which can be found in the Yom Kippur Machzor.
- The festive pre-fast meal should be eaten after Mincha.
- It is customary to bless one's children prior to Yom Kippur.
- There will be a live stream of Kol Nidrei prior to Yom Kippur available at 6:15 pm in the CBAJ Zoom Room. Those participating should wait to recite the beracha of Shehechyanu until the commencement of Yom Kippur.
- Light a 25 hour candle (Yizkor candle); this candle should also be used for Havdalah as the custom on Yom Kippur is to use a flame for Havdalah that was lit before.
- Candle lighting before 6:26 pm; *להדליק נר של יום הכפורים*. The fast begins at candle lighting.
- Ma'ariv through Silent Amidah and Vidui.
- You may recite some of the Selichot that follow, such as *Ya'aleh* and *Ki Hineh Kachomer*. If praying without a Minyan, do not recite the 13 attributes.
- Sh'ma Koleimnu, Avinu Malkeinu, Aleinu, L'David

Monday - Shacharit

- Psalm of the Day (Monday) and L'David, Morning Blessings, Pesukei D'zimrah
- Shacharit for Yom Kippur through silent Amidah. No repetition; recite Avinu Malkeinu.
- Avinu Malkeinu is recited at the conclusion of Shacharis.
- The Torah reading is Leviticus 16:1-34, the maftir is Numbers 29:7-11 and the haftarah is Isaiah 57:14-58:14.
- Yizkor (even without a minyan). If you are attending the outdoor "Highlights" service, we will recite Yizkor there together. Av Harachamim, Ashrei.

Mussaf

- Mussaf silent Amidah
- No repetition, but you may wish to recite some Piyutim, including *Unetaneh Tokef*, the *Avodah* (Temple Yom Kippur Service – without prostrating), the prayer of the Kohein Gadol after he emerged from the Holy of Holies, *Sh'ma Koleinu*

Mincha

- Mincha should be recited between 1:15 pm and 6:25 pm
- The Torah reading for Mincha is Leviticus 18:1-28 and the haftarah is the Book of Jonah.
- Mincha silent Amidah, Avinu Malkeinu.

Neilah

- Neilah must begin after 5:30 pm and before 6:30 pm.
- Ashrei, U'Va L'Tzion, silent Amidah. Please note the change in text of some of the insertions and the special text of Vidui.
- There is no repetition, but you may recite some of the Piyutim and Selichot. If praying without a Minyan, do not recite the 13 Attributes.
- Avinu Malkeinu,
- Sh'ma, Baruch Shem... (3 times) and HaShem Hu... (7 times). These will be broadcast in the CBAJ Zoom Room at 7:22 pm, which is when the fast also ends.
- Ma'ariv: Weekday Ma'ariv including the paragraph for after a festival, Aleinu, L'david; Havdalah with wine and a flame that was lit before Yom Kippur (if such a flame is not available, omit this blessing)



Rosh Hashanah Checklist

Ages 9 and Under- have a parent keep track of all the mitzvot that you complete for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur- Put a check next to the mitzvot you did and turn in both pages for a yummy treat when you pick up with Sukkot bag 😊

Help clean the house before the holiday _____

Lighting candles with a parent _____

Daven morning prayers _____

Eat a family meal together on Rosh Hashanah _____

Hear Kiddush _____

Say Hamozti and eat the Round Rosh Hashanah Challah _____

Wish someone a Happy Sweet New Year _____

Eat Apples and Honey _____

Eat a new Fruit _____

Hear the Shofar blasts _____

Wear a fancy outfit on Yom Tov _____

Learn with a parent _____

Go for a family walk _____

Read a story about Rosh Hashanah _____



Yom Kippur Checklist

Ages 9 and Under- have a parent keep track of all the mitzvot that you complete for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur- Put a check next to the mitzvot you did and turn in both pages for a yummy treat when you pick up with Sukkot bag 😊

Make a decoration for the Sukkah _____

Participate in Kapparos by giving Tzedakah _____

Help clean the house before the holiday _____

Skip one meal or snack on Yom Kippur _____

Learn the story of Jonah and the whale _____

Tell a parent something you will try to do better this year than you did last year _____

Daven morning prayers _____

Reading a story about Yom Kippur _____

Wear non-leather shoes _____

Wear white clothing _____

When Will Our Prayers Be Effective?

Rabbi Roy Feldman

They say that the *Aseret Yemei Teshuva*, the Ten Days of Penitence from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur, constitute an *Eit Ratzon*. It is a time of favor, a period during which God listens more carefully to our prayers.

The *Orchot Tzaddikim*, a 15th century German treatise on Jewish Ethics, states:

יתעורר האדם לשוב בתשובה שלמה בעשרת ימי תשובה, שהם עת רצון והתפילה
נשמעת בהם

One should awaken to repent fully during the Ten Days of Penitence, as they are a “time of favor” and prayer is listened to on those day.

The *Orchot Tzaddikim* goes on to explain that God’s disposition, so to speak, parallels that of humans. When we are happy, content, and generally in a good mood, we are more likely to be kind to others and accede to their requests; Similarly, when God is happier and in a good mood, he is more likely to answer the prayers of His people.

This theological position is not *suis generis*. A recent essay about *Asseret Yemei Teshuva* in *Mishpacha*, a popular orthodox magazine, writes:

They are an *Eis Ratzon* – a time of favor – in which the universe is imbued with a special potential for teshuvah, forgiveness and renewal. This is the time of year when we can count on Hashem’s help in ascending to our better selves – His powerful boost for our climb up the spiritual ladder.

While it is true that Hashem is always there, ready to receive our prayers, this is a time when G-d’s “ear,” so to speak, is far more inclined toward us.

The article goes on to list other times that are traditionally called *Eit Ratzon*—when the bride walks toward the *chupah*, after we recite *Birkat Hamazon* (Grace After Meals), and so on. You may have noticed that at some weddings, the guests pray while the bride proceeds down the aisle, and, indeed, after the four central blessings of *Birkat Bamazon*, we ask God for good health, financial success, and so on (the paragraphs beginning *Harachaman*).

However, we must ask: Really? Does this make any sense at all? God—the Infinite Almighty, Who transcends time and space, Whose knowledge is unlike our knowledge, Whose feelings are unlike our feelings. He arbitrarily chose certain times during which He works harder to listen to us? What does it even mean for the limitless, omnipotent God to work harder? Is it not within His power to listen to us the same way at all times, all year round?

We know that this concept exists in traditional sources. The Talmud mentions it, as does the Bible—when we open the ark on holidays we recite the verse from psalms, ואני תפילתי לך ה'

עת רצון, As for my prayers, may they be accepted by you, God, in a time of favor. Therefore, we cannot discount the idea. We must come to a better, clearer understanding of what our tradition means by “*Eit Ratzon*.”

In order to do that, we have to first take a step back to understand the meaning of *bakasha*, petitionary prayer, in general. What does it mean for us to make personal requests of God? How can we do that, and why should God listen? Then, we can come to understand why those requests are more effective during specific times.

Asking God regarding our private needs no doubt requires a great deal of *chutzpah*. We, finite beings, stand before the infinite Almighty and ask him such menial requests—our own self-interests—as a child might ask of her parents. Moreover, doesn't the omniscient God know what I need before I tell him? And not only does God know what we want, He also knows whether or not we ought to get what we want. If God has ordained that it is best that we not get what we want, isn't it wrong of us to attempt to change His judgment? Rabbi Yosef Albo in his *Sefer Ha-Ikarim* (15th century Spain) noted that many Jews have lost their faith over this very problem.

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, in his essay *Redemption, Prayer, and Talmud Torah*, offers one answer.

Prayer in Judaism, unlike the prayer of classical mysticism, is bound up with human needs, wants, drives and urges, which make man suffer. Prayer is the doctrine of human needs. Prayer tells the individual, as well as the community, what his, or its, genuine needs are, what he should, or should not, petition God about....In short, through prayer man finds himself. Prayer enlightens man about his needs. It tells man the story of his hidden hopes and expectations. It teaches him how to behold the vision and how to strive in order to realize this vision. when to be satisfied with what one possesses, when to reach out for more. In a word, man finds his need-awareness, himself, in prayer.

God knows the content of our prayers before they rise to our lips. Petitionary prayer endeavors, not to inform Him of our troubles, but to formulate them in His Presence. The gesture of prayerful petition affects us by redeeming from inside ourselves our hidden hopes and visions. In praying, we do not manipulate God. We strive to discover, in dialogue with God, through this special, unique institution of prayer, what our true needs are.

Petitionary prayer manifests our awareness of dependence on God. For us modern, powerful, self-sufficient individuals, prayer fosters within us real awareness of our dependence on God and gives us the opportunity to develop and a lively sense of God's concern for us.

Why, then, should this be any different some times than it is other times. We return to our question regarding the *Eit Ratzon*. To get to the bottom of this, we take a look at the primary sources of Judaism, the Talmud. There are two passages in the Talmud which discuss the *Eit Ratzon*, both early in tractate *Berakhot*, which deals with blessings and prayer.

The first is a passage (Berakhot 6b) that implies that Mincha is a precipitous time.

ואמר רבי חלבון, אמר רב הונא: לעולם יהא אדם זהיר בתפלת המנחה, שהרי אליהו לא נענה אלא בתפלת המנחה, שנאמר: "ויהי בעלות המנחה ויגש אליהו הנביא ויאמר וגו' ענני ה' ענני".

And Rabbi Helbo said that Rav Huna said: One must always be vigilant with regard to the afternoon prayer, as Elijah's prayer was only answered in the afternoon prayer, as it is stated: "And it was at the time of the afternoon offering that Elijah the Prophet came near, and he said: Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known on this day that You are God in Israel, and that I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word. Answer me, Lord, answer me, that this people will know that You, Lord, are God" (I Kings 18:36–37). Because Elijah was answered in the afternoon prayer, it has particular significance.

The Talmud implies that *Mincha*, the afternoon service, constitutes an *Eit Ratzon*. It derives this from the book of Kings, in which Elijah the prophet, during battle with idolaters, prays to god in the afternoon—the time of *Mincha*—and his prayers are answered immediately. Indeed, this the reason why we add the verse from Psalm 69, *ואני תפילתי לך ה' עת רצון* (But as for me, let my prayer be unto Thee, O Lord, in an *acceptable time*), to *Mincha* on Shabbat afternoon.

The second passage (Berakhot 7b-8a) consists of a short story:

כזאמר ליה רבי יצחק לרב נחמן: מאי טעמא לא אתי מר לבי כנישתא לצלוני? אמר ליה: לא יכילנא. אמר ליה: לפנפי למר עשרה וליצלי. אמר ליה: טריחא לי מלתא. ולימא ליה מר לשלוחא דצבורא, בעידנא דמצלי צבורא לימי ולודעיה למר. כחאמר ליה מאי כולי האי? אמר ליה דאמר רבי יוחנן משום רבי שמעון בן יוחי: מאי דכתיב "ואני תפילתי לך ה' עת רצון". אימתי עת רצון — בשעה שהצבור מתפללין.

The Gemara relates the following incident. **Rabbi Yitzhak said to Rav Nahman: Why did the Master not come to the synagogue to pray?** Rav Nahman **said to him: I was weak and unable to come.** Rabbi Yitzhak **said to him: Let the Master gather ten individuals, a prayer quorum, at your home and pray.** Rav Nahman **said to him: It is difficult for me to impose upon the members of the community to come to my home to pray with me (Sefer Mitzvot Gadol).** Rabbi Yitzhak suggested another option: **The Master should tell the congregation to send a messenger when the congregation is praying to come and inform the Master so you may pray at the same time.**

Rav Nahman saw that Rabbi Yitzhak was struggling to find a way for him to engage in communal prayer. **He asked: What is the reason for all this fuss?** Rabbi Yitzhak **said to him: As Rabbi**

Yohanan said in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Yoḥai: What is the meaning of that which is written: “But as for me, let my prayer be unto You, Lord, in a time of favor; O God, in the abundance of Your mercy, answer me with the truth of Your salvation” (Psalms 69:14)? It appears that the individual is praying that his prayers will coincide with a special time of Divine favor. **When is a time of favor?** It is **at the time when the congregation is praying.** It is beneficial to pray together with the congregation, for God does not fail to respond to the entreaties of the congregation.

So the Talmud labels two times that are an *Eit Ratzon*—*Mincha*, and the time during which the community is praying. What is the common thread that runs between these times? I suggest: the effort required for them.

Mincha is the most difficult of the three daily prayer services. *Shacharit* and *Maariv*, morning and evening services, sandwich the day. One is recited in the morning when we wake up, and another can be recited at night when we go to sleep. *Mincha* involves an active breaking up of our day. It’s in the middle of the work day, and we have to schedule special time in our day in order to pray *Mincha*. Although I have not conducted a survey, I hypothesize that of the three, *Mincha* is the most forgotten and most often missed service among people who generally pray three times daily. *Mincha* involves a serious effort—really going out of our way.

The congregation’s communal prayer also involves going out of our way. Praying with a Minyan involves a concerted effort on the part of the community. Maintenance of a synagogue, scheduling the prayer times, ascertaining Minyan commitments, finding someone to study the weekly Torah portion to read; these are just a few of the efforts that the community must make to make communal prayer happen. But there is also required effort on the part of each of the individual members of the community—scheduling the extra time necessary to travel and participate in communal prayers.

Building on our understanding of petitionary prayer, I suggest that an *Eit Ratzon* is a time during which our God consciousness is heightened in ways other than prayer itself. Times when we have made a real effort, gone out of our way, to do mitzvot, something Godly, or something Jewish. If petitionary prayer is about making us more aware of our needs and our dependence on God, how much more effective is that prayer if it takes place during a time of already heightened awareness of God. The petitions formulate the feelings we are sensing in a clear manner and raise our consciousness of our condition to soaring heights. Prayer is so much more special during such an *Eit Ratzon*.

The other examples of *Eit Ratzon* now make sense. The bride walking down the aisle—hundreds of people have driven hours, and set aside sometimes a whole day, to be *משמח חתן וכלה*, to bring joy to the bride and the groom. Their families have put in countless hours of hard work and invested a great deal of money to make the wedding beautiful. The bride and groom are preparing to take a great step in their lives. Everyone in the room feels that emotional and spiritual high. It is no surprise that this is an *Eit Ratzon*, that we feel like praying to God at this time.

Birkat Hamazon. Our tradition commands us to turn an ordinary, mundane bagel with cream cheese, tuna sandwich, or even just buttered toast, into a theological discourse thanking God for sustenance, for giving us the land of Israel, asking him to bring the messiah, to redeem us, and to return our people to Jerusalem. It was just a slice of toast. But we can see that *bentching* requires this special effort on our part, ritually washing our hands before we eat, and then spending an extra 3-5 minutes—which in our fast paced world is nothing to scoff at—thanking God. If we've done this, God is on our minds—through *bentching*, we directly thank God and acknowledge our dependence on Him, and surely, this is an *Eit Ratzon*.

Finally, עשרת ימי תשובה, the Ten Days of Penitence. The days open with, with Rosh Hashannah, the day on which we coronate God king over the universe. We spend the following week reciting *Selichot*, essentially adding an extra prayer service to the day, and adding new lines and phrases to our daily prayers, effectively forcing us to read the prayers more carefully. Furthermore, there is a widely observed custom to follow more stringent opinions in Jewish law during this time. For example, while most Jews are not particular about *Pat Yisrael*, eating only bread made by Jews, year round—and the Talmud already notes that this stringency is unnecessary—many commentaries record the custom to be stringent in this regard during 10 yemei teshuva. All of this together certainly increases awareness of God in our lives in a very practical way. These are days we specifically dedicate to seeking closeness with God, and they are the days on which the greatest number of Jews do so: Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are two of the most widely observed of all Jewish holidays. They most certainly constitute an *Eit Ratzon* – a period during which a great many people make extra, concerted efforts at coming closer to God.

Over the last several months, many of us have made efforts at coming closer to God and to each other. The frameworks and structures we had been accustomed to – for our rituals, events, social gatherings, visiting the sick, welcoming guests, volunteering to help others, prayers—were all broken or turned upside down. Each one of us had to develop completely new ways of operating, interacting, living, working, socializing, praying, learning, and helping others. Individuals, families, and community organizations all worked very hard to rethink age-old practices and previously time-tested procedures. And it is fitting that we prayed so much over the last months – our extraordinary additional efforts in doing what we used to consider banal activities have turned this entire months-long period into an *Eit Ratzon* in itself.

As we observe these High Holy Days, this *Eit Ratzon*, let us hope they inspire us to continue increasing our efforts in our *Mitzvot*, in our *Tefilah*, in our *Chessed*. May these actions make our prayer meaningful and effective. And may our prayers for a happy, healthy, and sweet new year all be answered.

Teshuvah, Tefilah, and Tzedakah, Oh My!

Steven Gotlib, Rabbinic Intern

ותשובה ותפילה וצדקה מעבירין את רוע הגזירה:

But repentance, prayer, and charity remove the evil of the decree.

This deceptively simple line is one of the most iconic in all of the High Holy Days liturgy. On the surface, it's a very simple formula which needs no commentary. Even the *machzor* itself doesn't offer much aside from associating repentance with fasting, prayer with the voice, and charity with money. *Artscroll* editions of the *machzor* comment that this is "to indicate that sincere repentance includes fasting, prayer recited in a loud voice, and donations to charity."

I'd like to offer a slightly different understanding of these three powerful words. Let's start with *teshuvah*. Although many people tend to associate *teshuvah* with fasting, this association is not inherent. The most oft-quoted definition of *teshuvah* in the Jewish tradition, offered by Maimonides, says nothing about the need to fast:

ומה היא התשובה. הוא שיעזב החוטא חטאו ויסירו ממחשבתו ויגמר בלבו שלא יעשהו עוד

What constitutes Teshuvah? That a sinner should abandon his sins and remove them from his thoughts, resolving in his heart, never to commit them again.

Rabbi Shlomo Zalman of Liady, the founding Rebbe of Chabad Chasidism also writes this clearly in his *Iggeret Ha-Teshuvah*:

והנה מצות התשובה מן התורה היא עזיבת החטא בלבד דהיינו שיגמור בלבו בלב שלם לבל ישוב עוד לכסלה, למרוד במלכותו יתברך ולא יעבור עוד מצות המלך, חס ושלום, הן במצות עשה הן במצות לא תעשה וזהו עיקר פירוש לשון תשובה: לשוב אל ה' בכל לבו ובכל נפשו, לעבדו ולשמור כל מצותיו... ולא כדעת ההמון שהתשובה היא התענית

Now the mitzvah of repentance as required by the Torah is simply the abandonment of sin. This means that he must resolve in perfect sincerity never again to revert to folly, to rebel against G-d's rule; he will never again violate the King's command, G-d forbid, neither a positive command nor a prohibition. This is the basic meaning of the term *teshuvah* ("repentance") — to return to G-d with all one's heart and soul, to serve Him, and to observe all His commandments... This differs from the popular conception that repentance is synonymous with fasting on account of one's sins.

In other words, although fasting has for many become an integral part of feeling like they have repented and has always been incredibly popular, Maimonides and the Alter Rebbe reminds us that the core aspect of *teshuvah* is not any physical action, but the internal resolution to improve ourselves. *Teshuvah* is not an act, but a thought.

On the other hand, many of us associate prayer as something we do internally, that needs a physical outlet in order to be efficacious. The *Shulchan Aruch*, however, codifies that prayer must be done loud enough for yourself to hear it:

ולא יתפלל בלבו לבד אלא מחתך הדברים בשפתיו ומשמיע לאזניו בלחש ולא ישמיע קולו ואם אינו יכול לכוין בלחש מותר להגביה קולו וה"מ בינו לבין עצמו אבל בצבור אסור דאתי למטרד ציבורא:

One should not merely think about the words of prayer in one's heart, but he must actually pronounce the words with his lips and cause them to be heard in a whisper tone in his own ears, however others should not hear his voice.

Tefillah, understood in this way, is all about speech.

Finally, we come to *Tzedakah*; charity. Giving charity is a concrete action that one performs. Together with *teshuvah* and *tefillah*, we now have examples of thought, speech, and action. Kabbalistic sources, quoted famously by the *Tanya* describe these three paradigms as garments of the soul:

יש לכל נפש אלקית שלשה לבושים שהם מחשבה דבור ומעשה

Each Divine Soul has three garments; Thought, Speech, and Action

The elucidation of R. Yosef Wineberg adds that “just as garments give expression to their wearer’s beauty and importance, so, too, when the soul dons and utilizes these “garments”, its intellect and emotion find expression.”

These three requirements are not necessarily meant to specifically avert a negative decree during the season of the High Holidays alone. Rather, I would suggest that exclaiming them just before our fates are written on *Rosh Ha-Shana* or sealed on *Yom Kippur* is really about setting ourselves up for the future. Repenting, praying, and fasting during this season are wonderful ways of demonstrating our desire to grow, but New Years’ Resolutions are meant to continue into the New Year for longer than just a week and a half. Our thoughts, words, and actions are how our souls, intellects, and emotions find expression in the world. Whether those expressions are positive or negative, good or evil, is up to us. When we take the time to ponder them, and use them as a vehicle to transport holiness rather than profanity into our lives throughout the year, we prove that we have truly internalized our commitments to ourselves, our world, and our Creator. Let us use these High Holy Days to fuel us into redemption not only in the present, but in the future as well.

May we all have a happy and sweet New Year.

Memories of the High Holy Days

The CBAJ Family shares reflections of the Days of Awe from childhood

From Rabbi Moshe E. Bomzer

זְכוֹר יָמֵי עוֹלָם בְּיַמֵּי שָׁנוֹת דֵּר-נִדָּר שְׁאַל אֲבוֹתֶיךָ וְיַגִּדְךָ זְקֵנֶיךָ וְיֹאמְרוּ לְךָ

“Remember the days of the world! Understand the years of generation and generation! Ask your father and he will tell you; (ask) your elders and they will say (it) to you!”

How are we to engage with history? Should by-gones be by-gones; just a hodgepodge of chronological events? Or is History precise? I have learned to see it as precise and pristine. The entirety of history is the “Bigger picture”, but in order to see this picture, we need much assistance. We have amnesia. We forget very quickly. History is a bridge of past, present and future, all showing the hand of G-d as he brings us to the pinnacle of Creation. But it is incumbent upon us to do that bridging.

In order for us to bridge these gaps, Moshe Rabbeinu implores us to turn to our elders. “Remember!” How can we possibly remember that which we have never seen? We are indeed “remembering” through our national memory. Our combined understanding of Hashem’s plan is unified and linear when we can combine the generations.

After the destruction of European Jewry, we almost lost that eternal chain. We seemed to have lost connection with our previous generations. Blessedly, there were a few prescient and talented rabbis who stepped up and became the leaders that successfully connected the pre-World War II and post-war Jewish generations and protected the legacy of our combined national memory. My father, Rabbi Herbert Bomzer, Z”L, was among these *giants* that led the post-war generation from the brink of extinction into sustained Jewish history.

We in Albany were blessed to have my father join us regularly in our Shul. With his nobility and sagacity, he would stand at the pulpit and entertain and educate us. We sat spell-bound as he used the timeless Torah thoughts to bridge the gaps in our own lives. When we had doubts or hardships, we need to know that history is with purpose and direction. And only through the connection of generations, do we learn to understand that it is all part of His unified plan.

When I first came to Albany in 1984, it was important to make sure to maintain the mesora of the community. We turned to the elders of the shul to understand where the shul had come from, and where it ought to be headed. Among others, Meir Kagan, of blessed memory, would often share his recollections of how things used to be, and this reminded us all to be humble in our “youthful” efforts to adjust tradition. Mr. Noah Losice, of blessed memory, was our Baal Tokeah for many, many years. His sweet and soft shofar blowing was direct and flawless. These elder statesmen were the pillars of our community because they sustained our connection between the past and the future. When Rabbi Sam Shor Shlita became the Baal Tokeah, he took on this mantle knowing that he was continuing the legacy of his teacher, Mr. Losice, and was essentially perpetuating this mission of bridging generations. This was highlighted when my father would ascend the bima and stand next to Rabbi Shor and guide him in the precision of each note in accordance with the halachic mandates and traditions of his

teachers, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein and Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik. Our bima contains generations and legacies.

When Rabbi Feldman recently asked me to share the gift of my parents as they impacted our community, it struck me that it has already been 10 years since my father stood beside me in Congregation Beth Abraham Jacob. In that time, both of my parents have passed away, but their impact remains, as long as we perpetuate the connection they shared.

My father would often daven for the amud. When he expressed the words of Unesaneh Tokef, the most riveting element of the repetition of the Amida, I would shudder from the pathos he exuded. We have lived in times of uncertainty, and unfailingly, the words of the davening, when uttered with meaning and understanding, transcend our fears. The words themselves are a bridge to the members of the Anshei Kineset Hagedola from over 2500 years ago, and we can feel them most, when we have not forgotten where we come from. Our davening together is the bridging of 185 years of this community, which is subsumed in the fabric of history.

We are still connected to Moshe Rabbeinu. Connected to the shofar of Mount Sinai! But only if we keep connected to our Golden Generation; our elders hold the key. Let us remember my father, and all of our fathers. Let us remember ourselves as children. When we sat with our fathers listening to the humbling and enlivening sounds of the shofar.

My dear friends- to lead, guide and care for each other and for this shul requires extraordinary strength and the guidance of our role models. I was blessed to have the guidance and wisdom of my esteemed father and stalwart mother. They even guide me today as I try to impart their wisdom and vision. Our past, filled with joy and successes, trials and tribulations, comes to a crescendo when we successfully internalize the messages of our history. The sounds of the timeless Shofar were never more important – piercing and projecting – Am Yisroel Chai. Let us encourage our friends and neighbors to join us this Rosh Hashana, together with Rabbi Feldman and the shul leadership, to sustain and eternalize our destiny within the entirety of HISTORY.

From Nanette Brenner

It was the only time of year when EVERYONE would go to shul: All the women, all the children, all my friends. A once a year gathering of the whole community.

We girls and women would sit in the balcony far from the action – so...a good view of the men's section, ...and lots of schmoozing.

My father in his kittel – it looked to me like he had a special appointment with G-d.

What a wonderful Chazzan! He had a great voice and came every year so the whole congregation knew all his melodies.

But the high point was *Neilah* reserved for our dignified, charismatic, dramatic, intimidating rabbi (as a child, I was outright scared of him!) who through brilliant interpretations of the Torah and the rabbis, admonished us all year to be better people. He didn't just sing the words. He

CRIED as he called out three times "ה' הוא האלקים" – the meaning of the words penetrating deeply into our hearts.

For the rest of my life, when I heard other chazanim do the High Holiday tefilot, they all seemed to be doing it wrong, because they weren't doing it in what always felt to me like the real way, the way they were meant to be.

We were fortunate also to have a traditional home, so the holiday continued around the table. My mother was always home before my father to make sure that the meal was ready for his arrival. My father ate the fish head. No one else got it other than him, but my mother made it taste so good that he would share it. And I remember my mother's deliciously light honey cake.

From Marty Goldman

Growing up in the Flatbush section of Brooklyn, I have many memories of my pre-teen and adolescent years. I remember vividly the Shul where my family were members for many years – The Talmud Torah of Flatbush on Coney Island Avenue near Avenue J where Rabbi Max J. Mintz was the Shul Rabbi for many years. My father was a VP of the Shul and advisor to the post-Bar Mitzvah age youth group, my mother was Sisterhood President and my three older brothers and I were active in the Shul's youth groups. Although I have many wonderful memories of my years at the Talmud Torah on Shabbat, on Jewish Holidays and during the events and activities of our youth groups, my most memorable times with my family centered around the High Holidays.

Each year, as time grew closer to the High Holidays, the Talmud Torah, like many orthodox Shuls, was busy with many preparations. One of which was recruiting "world class" Hazzanim for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Each August, the Shul advertised its Hazzan for the High Holidays in the bulletin and in the local Jewish newspapers. It seemed many orthodox Shuls would compete and try to attract people to come to their Shul for the High Holidays claiming they had the most renown Hazzan. I remember one or two years at the Talmud Torah there was a Hazzan with a choir. I was perhaps ten years old and I remember their singing of various prayers was exceptionally beautiful. However, I recall several men approaching my father after davening to complain since the Rosh Hashanah services ended past 2:30 PM!

On Yom Kippur, the leadership of the Talmud Torah decided to conduct all the synagogue appeals, five in all. Three separate Talmud Torah appeals, one for the UJA (forerunner of today's United Jewish Federation) and one for Israel Bonds. The appeals started on Kol Nidre night and went right through just before N'eilah. Perhaps because of the unpopularity to the congregants of multiple appeals on one day and also the time it took to publicly announce all the donations, the synagogue leadership decided that the synagogue youth—kids a little younger than Bar Mitzvah age—would be tasked with placing the final

appeal cards during the break figuring they would save time and more importantly assuming that no adult member would complain to kids. Again, I was maybe ten or eleven and my friends and I were placing the appeal cards according to seat numbers. As was common then, members had to purchase their seats for the Yomim Noraim and the card had their name with their associated seat number. One year, just prior to Yom Kippur Mincha following the break, I remember we had just finished placing the cards on seats in the men's section of the balcony, when three older disgruntled members picked up the cards and complained to us while exclaiming: "What is this? Yet another appeal! How many appeals is the Shul going to have?" Of course, we did not respond. I did tell my father when he asked how it went and he had an annoyed look on his face when I told him several men complained to us.

During N'eilah as the end of Yom Kippur drew closer, it seemed each year unfortunately someone in the upstairs balcony fainted and had to be revived. B'H, they were OK after a few minutes. Once or twice, I recall, someone dropped a Mahzor from the balcony but fortunately it did not hit anyone!

I remember that during the services, I would occasionally leave my father and brothers in the main sanctuary and go downstairs to visit my maternal grandfather who davened with a minyan in the downstairs social hall, one of three Shul locations for the High Holiday services. The others being the small sanctuary downstairs and, of course, the main sanctuary including the balcony with men's and women's' sections, upstairs.

One of my fondest memories was that after my Bar Mitzvah, I could join my three older brothers and my father on the Bimah for the Birchat Kohanim. It was a memorable experience that I still keenly remember to this day.

From Mark Leifer

Being the son of a Rabbi always has upsides and downsides. The downsides are having to chat with every congregant at kiddush and the upsides are always being allowed on the bimah, being able to run around the shul unchecked, and knowing where all the good snacks are kept. My father, Meyer Leifer, was the Rabbi of the Chelsea Jewish Center in New York City for 50 years. The Shabbatot and High Holidays of my formative years were spent at my father's side. I distinctly remember Rosh Hashana in this shul. It was adjacent to the Chelsea Hotel which attracted many a character and famous person, which was another highlight of this grand shul. I vividly remember that everything was made of red velvet and the Chagall windows in the endless vaulted ceiling twinkled with the sunlight. The bimah towered over the pews and the big ornamental Rabbi and President's chairs seemed like thrones to a little kid like me.

The shul was so popular on the High Holidays that there would be standing room only and people spilled into the streets. I would sit on the bimah next to my father and listen as he sang all the nigunim from his Chasidish upbringing . He would also blow the shofar blasts and after Tekiah Gedolah he would blow the shofar to the tune of Hatikva. The Tekiah Gedolah was so loud and so long that the hairs on the back of your neck tingled . Something unique about this Orthodox shul is that it had a mens' choir. The sound of all those voices singing the Rosh Hashana tefillot together was a very moving experience.

Davening would last until well into the afternoon and as usual Mr. Kolker would be sleeping in the lobby or in a chair out on the sidewalk so he wouldn't have to go home and come back for mincha. Michael Litwin would visit different pews to show off his Rolex. Yaakov Feinstein would swing me by arms and show me magic tricks. I always got special treatment as Rabbi Leifer's oldest son.

Walking home from shul my lipstick covered cheeks would ache from all the pinches and kisses from the old ladies who told me I had a shayna punim.

These are memories that I will cherish forever and I can only hope that I can create equally memorable moments for my children.

From the Rockwood's (Stephanie Kugler and Marta Koblenz)

Holiday time at the Rockwood house was always full of excitement. Lots of cooking and lots of family! Growing up in a large family we all became accustomed to large gatherings and cooking in large quantities. We learned from our mom that at our table one extra person - or even five or six - didn't matter. The fuller the table the better, and somehow there was always enough food and warmth for those who gathered.

The holidays were always about tradition. Special dishes, special recipes and using a special bowl or two at the meals that was our great grandmothers. It was always fun as kids walking into our grandmothers home that smelled of Rosh Hashanna: chicken soup, her famous stuffed cabbage, chopped liver and more. Hearing the chatter and laughter at a holiday table in our family was one of the most comforting memories from our childhood.

As time went on our mom created that special feeling of the holidays in her kitchen. Our children loved to gather at Bubbe and Zaydee's to be with their cousins. Our parents taught us and our children how to appreciate the holidays and the special time with family. Now we carry on those same traditions in our homes. Nothing feels more comforting than sharing these traditions and stories with the next generation. The memories of gathering and watching the family grow was both about enjoying in the moment and honoring those that came before us and instilled in us the values of tradition and family.

We feel so blessed to have these traditions to ground us in the world today. This year will be so different, our mom is no longer physically with us, and we won't be able to have a large gathering. However, our family traditions are so ingrained in us that when we are able to gather again, those traditions will again comfort and guide us forward.

From Faye Silton

My parents were survivor refugees of the Shoah. They studied, worked hard and struggled to raise an Orthodox Jewish family in the then wasteland of South Bend, Indiana. We lived our observant lives in the tiny society that was our nuclear family.

My father, who spoke rarely and never about himself, once revealed that since his Hebrew Birthday fell out on Rosh Hashana, his mother, our Oma, would always bake him *Phlaumkuchen* (Plum Cake), because it was his favorite.

This was a thrilling, unbelievable piece of news, because we finally had a peek into his childhood and because he almost never allowed us or himself to eat sweet confections. Since our Oma then resided in Chicago, spoke only German and did not live long enough for us to consult her, we (my mom, sisters and I), embarked on a search and spy mission to find a worthy recipe and a large bag of Italian Plums (also called Damsons) that would be available for only a short time in that season.

The closest match for our experiment was a recipe for *Apfelkuchen*, Apple Cake. We would simply substitute plums for apples. To make it, we assembled and mixed the batter*. Then we cut the oval, purple plums in half, lengthwise (removing the pits) and neatly placed them in the batter, skin side up. The fragrance in our tiny kitchen was heavenly and, as we removed the pan from the oven, we noticed that the batter had plumped up around the plum halves. They looked like gems set in velvety gold.

I didn't think of it then, but we had crafted a version of a *hoshen*, 4 rows of 3 plums in each row. Could we have consulted our *hoshen* for more details about our serious, quiet father or is that blasphemous to even think about?

We did, though, want to know whether our cake measured up, whether he liked it as much as his mother's. Our mom served him a square piece, and, with bated breath, we waited for his reaction as he bit into that lusciousness.

“Well?” we asked. He smiled and nodded.

“Even better!” And that was how we launched our sweet year every Rosh Hashana.

**recipe available upon request*

Forgiveness

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

I don't know whether you ever noticed, but teshuvah, the whole cycle of repentance and forgiveness, plays no part in the early dramas of humankind. It doesn't in the story of Adam and Eve. As for Cain, God mitigates his punishment but he doesn't forgive him for his crime. There is no call to repentance to the generation of the Flood, or the builders of Babel, or the people of Sodom and the cities of the plain.

The first time God forgives is after the sin of the golden calf. He hears Moses prayer and agrees. "Although this is a stiff-necked people," he said, "forgive our wickedness and our sin, and take us as your inheritance." And God did. Moses pleaded again after the sin of the spies: "Forgive the sin of these people, just as you have pardoned them from the time they left Egypt until now." And God replied, "I have forgiven them, as you asked."

Why the change? Why does God forgive in the book of Exodus but not in the book of Genesis? The answer, I think, is extraordinary and it made a huge difference to me when I realised it.

The first recorded instance of forgiveness in all of literature is the moment when Joseph, by then

viceroys of Egypt, revealed his identity to his brothers, who had long before sold him as a slave. He forgives them. He says, it wasn't you, it was God. He said: "Don't be distressed or angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you." And it wasn't only then that Joseph forgave them. After their father Jacob had died, the brothers were anxious that now Joseph would take revenge. Once again Joseph forgave. And on that note the book of Genesis ends.

God did not forgive human beings until human beings learned to forgive. It took Joseph to bring forgiveness into the world. That is what God was waiting for. Had God forgiven first, He would have made the human situation worse, not better. People would have said, 'Why shouldn't I harm others? After all, God forgives.' We have to forgive others before God can forgive us.

So, before Yom Kippur, take time to apologise to others you may have offended. Forgive others who have offended you. Resentment is a heavy load to bear. Let go of it and you will travel more lightly. Now is the time to heal the wounds of the past. Then you will have more energy for the future.

“And though the holes were rather small...”

Rabbi Ari Kahn

In a daring and optimistic passage, the rabbis describe the Divine assistance¹ received by those who make even the smallest gesture of repentance:

Yassa said: The Holy One, blessed be He, said to Israel: My children, make for Me an opening of repentance no bigger than the point of a needle, and I will widen it for you into openings through which wagons and carriages can pass. (Shir HaShirim Rabbah 5:3)

The Gaon of Vilna² focused on the odd language of this passage, which seems to be built upon a mixed metaphor: When referring to the eye of a needle, it would be more appropriate to use any of the words that denote a small gap, crack or hole. Instead, the word used is *petach* (opening), which is most commonly associated with an architectural gap such as a door or window. Alternatively, the contrast might have been drawn between the hole a pin leaves in a garment, rather than the eye of the needle, as compared to the wide gap created when a door is opened. The Gaon learned a very deep and significant lesson regarding repentance from the peculiar wording of this passage:

Sometimes, a small hole is of no significance. For example, when dough is left to rise, one may poke a hole in it that causes the dough to collapse, but the retreat is only temporary; soon enough, the dough will rise even higher than before. On the other hand, if one makes a hole in a garment – the hole is clear and permanent. The Gaon taught, based on this difference, that although God recognizes even the smallest gesture of repentance and responds with great largess, man’s gesture must be real, and not

merely a fleeting, halfhearted gesture that leaves no impression on our own inner world.

The examples used by the Vilna Gaon to illustrate this teaching seem far from haphazard or coincidental. The first image, of dough as it rises, is an image familiar to readers of the Talmud as a metaphor for the evil inclination.³ As dough becomes leavened, it expands and rises in a manner analogous to the human ego. Like the yeast in the mixture, sin draws all the other ingredients that comprise the human personality into the inflated sense of self-importance and self-sufficiency upon which the evil inclination feeds. Sticking a needle into the evil inclination, like poking a finger into a batch of rising dough, is a futile gesture; it makes a very temporary impression. This, the Gaon teaches us, is not the sort of repentant gesture that will stir God to come to our aid, to meet us along our path to repentance and guide us toward the light. Simply poking at the growing, festering mixture as it expands and rises actually helps the yeast work more effectively; this is not real *teshuva*.

On the other hand, a hole made in a garment is qualitatively unlike a hole in rising dough; it is permanent, discernible – a proper *petach* or opening. This second image employed by the Gaon refers to a “*begeid*,” a word rooted in the Hebrew verb *begidah*, betrayal: The first clothing appeared after Adam and Eve ate from the forbidden tree and became suddenly aware of their nakedness. The clothing worn to cover their innocence is, therefore, both a consequence of sin and a sign of their rebellion, their betrayal of the trust God had placed in them, and their loss of innocence.

The fight against sin is a difficult battle, and the message the Vilna Gaon hoped to convey in this

teaching is that we must be sincere, and make a real and discernible effort to change. Lip service or a bland poke at our own puffed-up egos will not suffice to convince God to come to our aid. Only when we feel the consequences of our own sin upon our shoulders, only when we become aware of how we have clothed ourselves in self-justification and continue to glorify our own rebellion – only when we make a hole in the garments of sin with which we cloak ourselves will we be capable of breaking through and tapping into God’s mercy. In a way, we may compare this hole to the tear a mourner makes in his or her garment, expressing a sense of loss and irreparable damage. And just as the torn garment cannot truly express the grief and pain of losing a loved one, the hole we make in our “clothing of sin” cannot fully express the remorse and shame that is the core of *teshuva*. Even so, just as the smallest tear is a permanent sign of mourning, so too the smallest hole in our tightly-woven web of ego and self-deception is guaranteed to arouse God’s Mercy. Even a hole the size of a pinhead becomes the starting point for a new relationship with God. Through that small but permanent *petach*, a world of *teshuva* is born.

[1] Also see Shabbat 104a.

[2] *Liqutei HaGra m’Vilna, Moadim* p. 252f.

[3] Talmud Bavli, Brachot 17a.

The Shofar: Where Do These Sounds Come From?

Join me as we explore the origins of the sounds of the Shofar on Rosh HaShana- our shared journey will take us from the foot of Sinai to the Talmudic Academies as we touch the core of this dramatic mitzva with which we begin our year. Along the way, our understanding of the significance of the Shofar sounds will deepen significantly.



I. Returning to the Sources

A. The Journey Begins: The Last Commandment at Sinai – Trumpets

במדבר י': א-

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying:

וידבר יהוה אל־משה לאמר

Have two silver trumpets made; make them of hammered work. They shall serve you to summon the community and to set the divisions in motion.

עשה לך שתי חצוצרות כסף מקשה
תעשה אתם והיו לך למקרא
העדה ולמסע את־המחנות

When both are blown in long blasts, the whole community shall assemble before you at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting;

ותקעו בהן ונועדו אליך כל־העדה
אל־פתח אהל מועד

and if only one is blown, the chieftains, heads of Israel's contingents, shall assemble before you.

ואם־באחת יתקעו ונועדו אליך
הנשיאים ראשי אלפי ישראל

But when you sound short blasts, the divisions encamped on the east shall move forward;

ותקעתם תרועה ונסעו המחנות
החנים קדמה

and when you sound short blasts a second time, those encamped on the south shall move forward. Thus, short blasts shall be blown for setting them in motion,

ותקעתם תרועה שנית ונסעו
המחנות החנים תימנה תרועה
יתקעו למסעיהם

while to convoke the congregation, you shall blow long blasts, not short ones.

ובהקיל את־הקהל תתקעו ולא
תריעו

The trumpets shall be blown by Aaron's sons, the priests; they shall be for you an institution for all time throughout the ages.

ובני אהרן הכהנים יתקעו
בחצוצרות והיו לכם לחקת עולם
לדרתיכם

When you are at war in your land against an aggressor who attacks you, you shall sound short blasts on the trumpets, that you may be remembered before the LORD your God and be delivered from your enemies.

וכי־תבאו מלחמה בארצכם על־
הצר הצר אתכם והרעתם
בחצוצרות ונזכרתם לפני יהוה
אלהיכם ונושעתם מאיביכם

And on your joyous occasions—your fixed festivals and new moon days—you shall sound the trumpets over your burnt offerings and your sacrifices of well-being. They shall be a reminder of you before your God: I, the LORD, am your God.

In the second year, on the twentieth day of the second month, the cloud lifted from the Tabernacle of the Pact

and the Israelites set out on their journeys from the wilderness of Sinai. The cloud came to rest in the wilderness of Paran.

וביום שמחתכם ובמועדיכם
ובראשי חדשיכם ותקעתם
בחצצרת על עלתיכם ועל זבחי
שלמיכם והיו לכם לזכרון לפני
אלהיכם אני יהוה אלהיכם (פ)

ויהי בשנה השנית בחדש השני
בעשרים בחדש נעלה הענן מעל
משכן העדת

ויסעו בני ישראל למסעיהם
ממדבר סיני וישכן הענן במדבר
פארן



HaShem's final commandment at the end of two years at Sinai- as the Israelites begin their national journey in earnest- deals with the Hatzotzrot, Trumpets, and their sounding.

These instructions seem utilitarian in nature. Why are they recorded in the Torah at all? Even more, is this the best way to close Revelation and begin Jewish National journey?

B. A Closer Look...

When both are blown in long blasts, the whole community shall assemble before you at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting;

and if only one is blown, the chieftains, heads of Israel's contingents, shall assemble before you.

But when you sound short blasts, the divisions encamped on the east shall move forward;

and when you sound short blasts a second time, those encamped on the south shall move forward. Thus, short blasts shall be blown for setting them in motion,

while to convoke the congregation, you shall blow long blasts, not short ones.

ותקעו בהן ונועדו אליך
כלהעדה אלפתח אהל
מועד

ואםבאחת יתקעו
ונועדו אליך הנשיאים
ראשי אלפי ישראל

ותקעתם תרועה ונסעו
המחנות החנים קדמה

ותקעתם תרועה שנית
ונסעו המחנות החנים
תימנה תרועה יתקעו
למסעיהם

ובהקליל אתהקהל תתקעו
ולא תריעו



 Clue 1: Look carefully at the two different sounds recorded in the text: Terua, a broken sound, Tekia, an unbroken sound. Do they represent different situations, emotions, etc.? Why are the specific sounds sounded when they are? What does this tell us about the Hatzotzrot?



C. An Even Closer Look...

When you are at war in your land against an aggressor who attacks you, you shall sound short blasts on the trumpets, that you may be remembered before the LORD your God and be delivered from your enemies. And on your joyous occasions—your fixed festivals and new moon days—you shall sound the trumpets over your burnt offerings and your sacrifices of well-being. They shall be a reminder of you before your God: I, the LORD, am your God.

וכיִתְּבֹאוּ מִלְחָמָה בְּאַרְצְכֶם עַל־
הַצָּר הַצָּרִיר אֶתְכֶם וְהִרְעַתֶם
בְּחִצְצוֹת וּנְזִכְרֹתֶיךָ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְנוֹשַׁעְתֶם מֵאִיְבֵיכֶם
וּבְיוֹם שְׂמִחְתְּכֶם וּבְמוֹעֲדֵיכֶם
וּבְרֵאשֵׁי חֲדָשֵׁיכֶם וּתְקַעְתֶם
בְּחִצְצוֹת עַל עֲלֹתֵיכֶם וְעַל זְבָחֵי
שְׁלָמֵיכֶם וְהָיוּ לָכֶם לְזִכְרוֹן לִפְנֵי
אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם (פ)



 Clue 2: Why are the *Hatzotzrot* sounded on these occasions? What connects them?

D. An Exception

“Make for yourself” For yourself you create them... You may use them but none other.

מִדְּרַשׁ תְּנַחֲמָא שָׁם
עֲשֵׂה לָךְ, לָךְ אֶתְּהָ עוֹשֶׂה וְאִין אֶתְּהָ עוֹשֶׂה
לְאַחַר, אֶתְּהָ מִשְׁתַּמֵּשׁ בֵּהּ וְאִין אַחַר מִשְׁתַּמֵּשׁ
בֵּהּ

 Clue 3: While all the other utensils created in the desert were passed down intergenerationally, the *Hatzotzrot* were not. Moshe’s *Hatzotzrot* could not be used in Yehoshua’s generation—they had to be fashioned anew...



 Putting all the clues together: were the *Hatzotzrot* only for utilitarian purposes, or were they created to summon the one last ingredient needed for the success of our national journey, the human spirit of each individual in each generation?

II. The Sounds of Rosh HaShana

A. The Central Sound

ויקרא כג:כד

And in the seventh month on the first day of the month a Holy Convocation shall be for you; all laborious work you shall not do; a day of *Terua* it shall be for you.

ובחדש השביעי באחד לחדש
מקרא־קדש יהיה לכם כל־מלאכת
עבודה לא תעשו יום תרועה יהיה
לכם

Speak to the Children of Israel saying: In the seventh month on the first day of the month you shall mark a Shabbat, a remembrance of *Terua*, a Holy Convocation.

דבר אל־בני ישראל לאמר בחדש
השביעי באחד לחדש יהיה לכם
שבתון זכרון תרועה מקרא־קדש

🗨️ Which of the *Hatzotzrot* sounds becomes the central sound of Rosh HaShana? Why?



B. Tekiot

Back to the *Hatzotzrot*: From the phrases “*Ut’katem Terua*” and “*Terua Titkau*” - that use the verb emanating from *Tekia* to command the sounding of a *Terua* - the Talmudists determine that, unless otherwise specified, each *Terua* must be surrounded by accompanying Tekiot.

ותקעתם תרועה ונסעו המחנות
החנים קדמה

ותקעתם תרועה שנית ונסעו
המחנות החנים תימנה תרועה
יתקעו למסעיהם

🗨️ What philosophical lessons might be learned from the fact that each broken sound must be surrounded by unbroken sounds. (Suggestions: optimism even at times of uncertainty; Jewish past and ultimate future certain, present uncertain...) Can you think of other ideas?



C. Shevarim

Onkelos translates *Terua* as “yevava. From the fact that (the evil general) Sisera’s mother is “*meyabev*” as she waits in vain for her son’s return from battle against the Israelites, we learn the a “*yevava*” is an anguished sound.

יום תרועה יהיה לכם ומתרגמינן יום
יבבא יהא לכון וכתוב באימיה
דסיסרא בעד החלו ן נשקפה ותיבב
אם סיסרא מר סבר גנוחי גנח ומר
סבר ילולי יליל

The rabbis debate, however: should the sound be a “sobbing” or a “sighing” sound? Thus, two sounds developed to fulfill the biblical *Terua*:

“Our *Terua*” - a broken sound of 9 staccato blasts-sobbing.

“Our *Shevarim*” - a broken sound of three short blasts-sighing.



D. The Final Step

אתקין רבי אבהו בקסרי... ..

Ultimately, Rabbi Avahu mandates a universal practice to fulfill all possibilities:

The sounding of: *Terua*-sobbing; *Shevarim*-sighing; *Shevarim Terua*-sighing leading to sobbing (He did not mandate *Terua-Shevarim* because he felt that sobbing does not lead to sighing).

🗨️ Review Questions for Further Discussion:

- Why does HaShem close the encounter at Sinai with the creation of the *CHatzotzrot*?
- What do the sounds of the *Hatzotzrot* signify?
- What is the central sound of Rosh HaShana? Why?
- How did the variations of this central sound develop?
- Why must every broken sound of the Shofar be surrounded by unbroken sounds?
- Where do these sounds really come from? (An answer, perhaps, to this last question - they are emanating from- and are meant to awaken- the human heart!)



Shanah Tovah שנה טובה