



The first “session” of Shofar blowing, which consists of 30 blasts and constitutes the fulfillment of the Torah’s mitzva of Shofar, is done after the reading of the Torah and Haftara (and Drasha) and before the Torahs are returned to the Aron. This session is known as תקיעות דמיושב (the "sitting-down" blasts, as opposed to the Shofar blasts during the Amida - although we stand for this set too).

It is the minhag to say T'hilim 47 seven times before Shofar blowing:

לְמַנְצַח לְבַנֵי קִרַח מְזֻמָּוֹר: כָּל הָעַמִּים תִּקְעוּ כָף, הָרִיעוּ לְאֱלֹהִים בְּקוֹל רִנָּה: כִּי ה' עָלִיוֹן נוֹרָא, מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ: יְדַבֵּר עַמִּים תַּחְתִּינוּ, וְלְאֲמִים תַּחַת רַגְלֵנוּ: יִבְחַר לָנוּ אֶת נַחֲלָתֵנוּ, אֶת גְּאוֹן יַעֲקֹב אֲשֶׁר אָהַב סֵלָה: עָלָה אֱלֹהִים בְּתִרְוַעָה, ה' בְּקוֹל שׁוֹפָר: זָמְרוּ אֱלֹהִים זָמְרוּ, זָמְרוּ לְמַלְכֵנוּ זָמְרוּ: כִּי מֶלֶךְ כָּל הָאָרֶץ אֱלֹהִים זָמְרוּ מִשְׁכִּיל: מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹהִים עַל גּוֹיִם, אֱלֹהִים יֹשֵׁב עַל כִּסֵּא קֹדְשׁוֹ: נְדִיבֵי עַמִּים נֶאֱסָפוּ עִם אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם כִּי לְאֱלֹהִים מִגְּנֵי אָרֶץ מָאֵד נִעְלָה:

The following p'sukim are said responsively - Shofar-blower - KAHAL:

תהלים קיח:ה	מִן הַמִּצֵּר קָרָאתִי יְיָ עֲנֵנִי בְּמִרְחַב יְיָ:
איכה ג:נו	קוֹלִי שָׁמַעְתָּ אֵל תַּעֲלֵם אֶזְנֶךָ לְרוּחֹתַי לְשׁוֹעַתִּי:
תהלים קיט:קס	רֹאשׁ דְּבָרְךָ אֱמֶת וְלַעוֹלָם כָּל מִשְׁפַּט צְדָקָךָ:
תהלים קיט:קכב	עֲרֹב עַבְדְּךָ לְטוֹב אֵל יַעֲשֶׂה קוֹנֵי יָדַיִם:
תהלים קיט:קסב	שָׁשׁ אָנֹכִי עַל אִמְרֹתֶיךָ כְּמוֹצֵא שָׁלָל רָב:
תהלים קיט:סו	טוֹב טַעַם וְדַעַת לִמְדַנִּי כִּי בְּמִצּוֹתֶיךָ הֶאֱמַנְתִּי:
תהלים קיט:קח	נְדָבוֹת פִּי רָצָה נָא ה' וּמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ לִמְדַנִּי:

Some say the following before Shofar-blowing:

הַרִינִי מוֹכֵן וּמְזַמֵּן לְקִיּוֹם מִצְוֹת עֲשֵׂה שְׁצוֹנֵי הַבוֹרָא יְתַבְרַךְ שְׁמוֹ לְשִׁמְעַע קוֹל שׁוֹפָר כְּמוֹ שְׁכַתּוֹב בְּתוֹרָה – יוֹם תִּרְוַעָה יִהְיֶה לָכֶם:

This pasuk is said by the Shofar-blower before the brachot (in some congregations, it is repeated by the KAHAL)

עָלָה אֱלֹהִים בְּתִרְוַעָה, ה' בְּקוֹל שׁוֹפָר:

The Shofar-blower AND each person listening to the Shofar should have KAVANA during the BRACHOT to fulfill the mitzva of Shofar, both the Torah requirements and those of our Sages. One must be careful to hear the entire BRACHOT without interruption, and to answer AMEN to each.

It is proper not to talk (other than davening and what is necessary for davening and Shofar) from the BRACHOT through the last of the blasts (after the repetition of the Musaf Amida), but especially until the first set of 30 KOLOT is completed. Although there are Machzorim that have passages for the KAHAL to say after each trio of sounds, it is widely accepted for the KAHAL to remain silent throughout the set of 30 blasts.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לְשִׁמּוֹעַ קוֹל שׁוֹפָר:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
שֶׁהֲחִינוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְן הַזֶּה:



תקיעה. שברים-תרועה. תקיעה:
תקיעה. שברים-תרועה. תקיעה:
תקיעה. שברים-תרועה. תקיעה:
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תקיעה. תרועה. תקיעה:
תקיעה. תרועה. תקיעה:
תקיעה. תרועה. תקיעה (גדולה):

After the T'KI'OT D'M'YUSHAV, the following p'sukim are said responsively -
Shofar-blower then KAHAL, as an introduction to ASHREI

תהלים פט:טז אֲשֶׁר־י הָעַם יוֹדְעֵי תְרוּעָה, ה' בְּאוֹר פְּנֵיךָ יִהְיֶה כּוֹן:

תהלים פט:יז בְּשִׁמְךָ יִגִּילוּן כָּל הַיּוֹם, וּבְצִדְקָתְךָ יִרוּמוּ:

תהלים פט:יח כִּי תִפְאֶרֶת עֲזָמוֹ אַתָּה, וּבְרִצּוֹנְךָ תָרוּם קַרְנֵנוּ:

אֲשֶׁר־י יוֹשְׁבֵי בֵיתְךָ, עוֹד יִהְיֶה לְלוֹף סְלָה: Back to the Machzor for ASHREI...

The Mitzva to Hear Shofar

First and foremost, before any of the themes, symbolisms, and reminders mentioned in the paragraphs that follow, is the main reason and kavana for doing ANY mitzva - because G-d commands it. The phrase **L'SHEIM MITZVAT SHOFAR** should be on our minds from the Brachot of the shofar-blower to last blast.

The Torah says that the first day of the seventh month shall be a T'RU'A DAY. We are taught by the Oral Law that this means that we are to hear the sound called T'RU'A, which is to be produced by the Shofar. AND, we are to hear the T'RU'A three times. AND that each T'RU'A is to be preceded and followed by a P'SHUTA, a plain, long blast, the one we call T'KI'A.

We do not know exactly what our Sages meant the T'RU'A to sound like. It is to be like crying, wailing, sobbing, moaning, sighing, or some combination thereof. To satisfy different opinions, we have two sounds, called SH'VARIM and T'RU'A, and the combination of the two, known as the SH'VARIM-T'RU'A. Therefore, to fulfill the Torah's requirement of hearing the Shofar on Rosh HaShana, we must hear 3 each of the following combinations:

T'KI'A / SH'VARIM-T'RU'A / T'KI'A

T'KI'A / SH'VARIM / T'KI'A

T'KI'A / T'RU'A / T'KI'A

Let's refer to this as a Large Set of Blasts (a.k.a. 30 KOLOT). One of each make a Small Set (a.k.a. 10 KOLOT).

The Torah's requirement is satisfied with 30 KOLOT (sounds or blasts); the Sages instituted Shofar-blowing during the Amida, thereby linking the Shofar-sounds with each of the 3 main brachot of Musaf - MALCHİYOT (Kingship), ZICHRONOT (Remembrances), and SHOFAROT (Shofars). Some shuls blow during the repetition of the Amida only; others blow during the silent Amida as well.

And, as is well-known, the custom is to blow additional blasts (10 or 40, as the case may be) after the Amida, to bring the total number of blasts to 100. 100 conveys completeness and fullness. On RH, we don't just blow the Shofar, we are fully saturated with the Shofar sounds. This fulfills the sense of "YOM T'RU'A there shall be for you". (There is also another reason given for the 100 blasts, having to do with the lament of the mother of Sisra, as recorded in the Book of Sho'f'tim.)

Symbolisms and Kavanot

(R' Yoel Schwartz, from Menorat HaMa'or)

G-d's Kingship Rosh HaShana corresponds to the 6th day of creation, the day human beings were created. Since it is the day that G-d's subjects, so to speak, came into existence, it follows that He became our King on that very same day. We therefore

consider Rosh HaShana to be the Coronation Day of the Supreme King. To herald that event, we sound the royal trumpet - the Shofar. This concept of G-d's Kingship is one of the major themes of Rosh HaShana. One of the three central brachot of the Rosh HaShana Musaf is MALCHIYOT - Kingship. In that bracha, we quote ten p'sukim from Tanach that deal with this theme. The T'KI'A (the long monotonic, unbroken blast, P'SHUTA) specifically is associated with this aspect of Rosh HaShana. The T'KI'A is a happy and proud sound. Although other emotions claim our attention, one should be happy and proud on Rosh HaShana as we reaffirm our loyalty to the King of Kings.

Call to Repentance The Shofar is the alarm that (hopefully) wakes people up to the challenge of doing T'shuva and asking G-d for forgiveness. This is one of the major aspects of Shofar (and the main reason for having blown the Shofar throughout Elul). It is the broken sounds of the SH'VARIM and T'RU'A that most fit this aspect of Shofar. Shofar is associated with embarking on the road to Spiritual Return.

Akeidat Yitzchak One of the most prominent aspects of RH is the Binding of Isaac. The choice of a ram's horn as Shofar, the Torah readings, the main focus of the Zichronot bracha, and Tashlich, all point to the

AKEIDA as a major theme of the day. When we stand in judgment before G-d, we are not isolated individuals but are the spiritual heirs of the AVOT and IMAHOT whose commitment to G-d is exemplified by the Akeida. The Chafetz Chayim points out that most of the promises of blessing in the Torah are conditional upon our good behavior. The exception is G-d's promise to Avraham Avinu at the Akeida, which is unconditional. If our sincerity and commitment to G-d and His Mitzvot ever comes into question, we need only realize that we are descendants of Avraham and Yitzchak (and Yaakov) and have inherited their absolute and complete dedication to G-d's Word, the Torah.

Matan Torah The Torah describes the events of Sinai as being accompanied by the "sound of the Shofar ever increasing". When we hear the Shofar (specifically the T'KI'A), we should be motivated to rededicate ourselves to Torah and mitzvot. In essence, this is the foundation of T'shuva. The Shofar reminds us of our commitment to the Torah; repentance is G-d's gift to us when we fail in that commitment.

The words of the Prophets are likened to the sound of the Shofar. This reminder should inspire greater commitment to faithful observance of Judaism. Our deal with G-d, when we asked not to hear His voice directly,

was our promise to listen to the prophets, starting with Moshe and continuing through the generations. This aspect of Shofar, then, expands on the previous item - Matan Torah.

Instills Fear "If a Shofar sounds in the city, will not the people tremble?" Think of the sound of a siren - the feelings of apprehension that it filled us with. That's a Shofar - our spiritual siren, helping us to get serious about Torah and T'shuva.

Churban Beit HaMikdash should be kept in mind while hearing the Shofar. The Prophets mention the Shofar in their description of the Churban. One should think of the "ups and downs" of Jewish history as part of the Rosh HaShana challenge that we all face. Furthermore, the destruction of the Temples resulted from our not keeping faith with G-d. These thoughts then, should also lead us to think of repentance as the way to reverse the devastating effects of the Churban.

The Ingathering of the Exiles is described by Yeshayahu as being accompanied by the sound of a Great Shofar. We are witness to the beginning of that process; may we be privileged to see its continuation and culmination. This too is in the realm of the T'KI'A and is one of the promises to keep in mind so that we can put "things in proper perspective".

The Great Judgment Day is associated with the Shofar. Understand that we stand in judgment before G-d on every Rosh HaShana, but that we we will also do so on a different scale "after 120 years" and "at the end of days".

T'chiyat HaMeitim is also associated with Shofar. Thinking of this gives us a broader perspective on what G-d expects of us and what is in store.