

THE SHOFAR TEN

We sound the Shofar each weekday for an entire month (except Shabbat) in order to prepare ourselves for the Day of Judgment, Rosh Hashanah. Jews celebrate Rosh Hashanah as the Jewish New Year by the sounding of the Shofar. Be sure to hear the Shofar blown this year on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. Practice blowing your Shofar so that you can help others fulfill this important Mitzvah. Also, be prepared to answer questions regarding the Shofar by knowing these facts.

The ten messages of the Shofar as explained by Rav Saadiah Gaon

1.

When a new king begins to rule, a proclamation is issued, accompanied by trumpet blasts. Every year on that day his rule is again proclaimed with the sound of a trumpet. The creation of the world was completed on Rosh Hashanah, and Hashem's rule of the world began. Every year on that day we re proclaim His rule with the Shofar's blast.

2.

When a king issues a decree, the horns blow and a warning is issued. The Ten Days of Teshuvah (Repentance) begin on Rosh Hashanah. Improve your ways!—we are warned, and as this warning is issued, the Shofar blows.

3.

When we received the Torah on the slopes of Har Sinai, the sound of the Shofar filled the air. On Rosh Hashanah, we dedicate ourselves to Torah life again, as the sound of the Shofar fills the air as it did when we received the Torah on Mount Sinai.

4.

The words of our prophets of old rang out like a Shofar blast. We remind ourselves of their corrective words of reproof when we hear the Shofar blast.



5.

Our enemies blew on their trumpets when they destroyed our Holy Temple in Yerushalayim, - the Bet Hamikdash.

When we blow the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah, we pray the New Year will bring the rebuilding of the Bet Hamikdash.

6.

At the Akeidah, Yitzchak willingly offered himself as a sacrifice, as Hashem commanded, but at the last minute he was replaced by a ram.

On Rosh Hashanah we blow on a ram's horn to remind ourselves—and Hashem - of our forefathers' loyal devotion.

7.

Could a Shofar be blown in a city, and the people not tremble with fright? (Amos 3: 6)

The Shofar makes us tremble in fear of Hashem's judgment and awakens us to better our ways during the coming year.

8.

Near is the great day of (judgment by) Hashem; near and rapidly approaching — a day of the Shofar and shouting.

(Zefaniah 1 :14,16)

The Rosh Hashanah Shofar reminds us of the final day of judgment.

9.

And it will be on that day, the Great Shofar will be sounded, and the lost will come from the Land of Ashur, and the rejected from Egyptland.

(Yishayahu 27:13)

The sound of the Shofar reminds us of Mashiach's great horn—we hope and pray it be sounded this year to gather all the Jews scattered about the globe.

10.

The inhabitants of the dust will arise...when the Shofar will be heard..

(Yishayahu 18:3)

The Shofar reminds us of the day of *Techiyas Hameisim*, when the dead will arise from their sleep, and Mashiach will redeem us.

SHOFAR: How and Why?

Hold the shofar in your right hand facing upwards. Position it on the right side of your lips sealing the left side of your mouth with the middle and index fingers of your left hand. Take a breath, squeezing your lips tightly together. Then, blow to make a buzzing sound between your lips. Place the mouthpiece of the Shofar on your lips just over the spot where your lips are buzzing. The escaping air will vibrate against the Shofar, making it sound. When you can control the length of the blasts you are ready to sound it properly. Practice the notes below and you will be ready for Rosh Hashanah in no time. Remember the Shofar is blown only in the daytime, preferably in the morning after prayers. The Shofar is not sounded on Shabbat.



The notes blown on the Shofar are described in the Torah. They are, Tekiah, Shevarim, Teruah, Tekiah Gedolah. However, the Torah mentions the word Teruah three times in connection with sounding the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah.

From the passage in the Torah, *VeHaavarta*, we also learn that each *Teruah* is introduced with an even-sounding note called a *Tekiah*, and that it is also followed by a *Tekiah*.

This gives us: **Tekiah - Teruah - Tekiah -**

Why, then do we hear so many more Shofar sounds on Rosh Hashanah? Because we are not sure what a *Teruah* sound really is.

Some say it is three larger notes in a row -- each note equal to three of the short *Teruah sounds* mentioned later -- similar to the sound of a sick persons drawn out groans. These are called *Shevorim* (from the word 'shavur' - meaning broken):

SHEVARIM



Others say it means nine very short notes sounded one after the other, like a person sobbing. These are called *Teruah*.

TERUAH



Still others say it is a combination of the two, *Shevarim-Teruah* (like a baby's drawn out wails followed by sobbing). Some take a breath between the *Shevarim-Teruah*, while others do it in one breath.

SHEVARIM-TERUAH



To be on the safe side, we perform all three illustrated possibilities, with a *Tekiah* before and after.

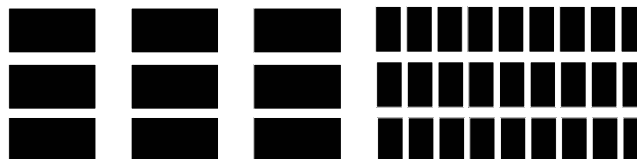
In fact, on Rosh Hashanah we blow many more sounds - as many as 100 - to show our desire to do the Mitzvot of Hashem. We draw out the final *Tekiah* longer than the rest; as if announcing the coming of Mashiach. May Hashem accept our prayers and may the blast of the Shofar announce the beginning of a new Era of Peace in the World.

The actual order of sounding the SHOFAR is as follows:

TEKIAH



SHEVARIM-TERUAH



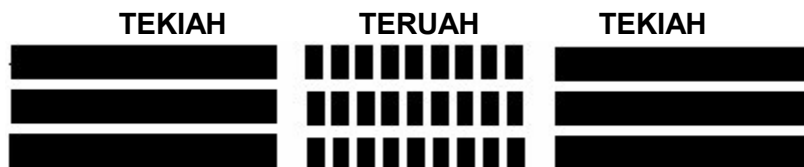
TEKIAH



TWELVE SEPARATE TYPES OF SOUNDS



NINE SEPARATE TYPES OF SOUNDS



NINE SEPARATE TYPES OF SOUNDS

TOTAL: THIRTY SEPARATE TYPES OF SOUNDS

NOTE: Every TEKIAH should be as lengthy as the TERUAH in between, whether we interpret the TERUAH as a SHEVARIM-TERUAH, a SHEVARIM, or a TERUAH.