

The Sounding of the Shofar

According to Rabbah, the Holy One said: “On Rosh HaShanah, recite before Me words of *Malchuyot* (sovereignty), *Zichronot* (remembrance), and *Shofarot*.

“Sovereignty”—so that you may acknowledge Me as Ruler over you.

“Remembrance”—so that remembrances of you may rise up favorably before Me.

And how shall all of this be accomplished? Through the sounds of the shofar.

—Talmud *Rosh HaShanah* 34b

Uvachodesh hash'vi-i
b'echad lachodesh
mikra kodesh yih'yeh lachem
kol malechet avodah lo
taasu Yom T'ruah yih'yeh lahem.

וּבַחֲדָשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי,
בְּאֶחָד לַחֲדָשׁ,
מִקְרָא־קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם;
כָּל־מְלָאכֶת עֲבוּדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ;
יוֹם תְּרוּעָה יִהְיֶה לָהֶם.

In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, there shall be a sacred assembly, a cessation from work, a day of commemoration proclaimed by the sound of the Shofar.
[Numbers 29]

Malchuyot: God's Power- and Ours

Awake, you sleepers, from your sleep!
Rouse yourselves from your slumber!

Awake, like Israel at the sea, to the joyful song of Miriam and Moses:
Sing to the Eternal, for God has surged in triumph.
The Eternal shall reign forever and ever!

Awake, like Israel at Sinai, to the dignity of being God's partners:
You shall be for Me a holy nation, a sovereign community of priests.

Examine your deeds and return to God.
Remember your Creator — you who are caught up in the daily routine,
losing sight of eternal truth;
you who waste your years in vain pursuits that neither profit nor save.

Hear the rousing call to repentance:

*With trumpets and the blast of shofar,
Praise a shout before the Eternal, the Sovereign.*

Hear and know the truth of a Higher Power:

*God is sovereign, robed in majesty.
God is clothed with strength — so the world stands firm and cannot be shaken.*

Return to God by pursuing justice and right:

*Majestic One who loves justice,
You who established equity,
You worked righteous judgment for Jacob.*

Look to your souls; improve your ways and your deeds.

Let each of you abandon your evil ways, forsake your unworthy schemes.

Arise and see the glory of all being; open yourselves to the light of God:

*Awake, awake, O Zion!
Clothe yourself in splendor;
put on your robes of majesty.*

Listen well: in silence and stillness is the voice of God:

*There was a great and mighty wind, splitting mountains and shattering rocks . . .
but the Eternal was not in the wind.
After the wind — an earthquake; but the Eternal was not in the earthquake.
After the earthquake — fire; but the Eternal was not in the fire.
And after the fire — a soft murmuring sound.*

Through worthy deeds,

bring near the day of unity and goodness — a glimpse of perfection:

*Adonai shall reign over all the earth!
On that day, God shall be one; and God's name shall be one.
Listen, Israel: Adonai is our God, Adonai is One!¹*

Baruch atah, Adonai,
Eloheinu melech haolam,
asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav,
v'tzivanu lishmoa kol shofar.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי,
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתַיִךְ,
וְצִוָּנוּ לְשִׁמּוֹעַ קוֹל שׁוֹפָר.

Source of blessing, Eternal our God, You fill the universe with majestic might
— summoning us to hear the sound of the shofar.

¹ *Mishkan HaNefesh*, pg. 203-204.

Baruch atah, Adonai,
Eloheinu melech haolam,
shehecheyanu v'kiy'manu
v'higianu laz'man hazeh.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי,
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
שֶׁהַחַיָּנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ
וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה.

Source of blessing, Eternal our God, You fill the universe with majestic might
— giving us life, upholding the life within us, and bringing us to this time.

The shofar is sounded.

Please rise.

T'kiah sh'varim-T'ruah T'kiah
T'kiah Sh'varim T'kiah
T'kiah T'ruah T'kiah

תְּקִיעָה שְׁבָרִים-תְּרוּעָה תְּקִיעָה
תְּקִיעָה שְׁבָרִים תְּקִיעָה
תְּקִיעָה תְּרוּעָה תְּקִיעָה

All are seated.

Areshet s'fateinu ye'erav
l'fanecha, El ram v'nisa —
meivin umaazin,
mabit umakshiv
l'kol t'kiateinu.
Utkabeil b'rachamim
uvratzon seder
malchuyoteinu.

אַרְשֶׁת שְׁפָתֵינוּ
יַעֲרֹב לְפָנֶיךָ,
אֵל רָם וְנֹשֵׂא,
מִבֵּין וּמֵאָזִין,
מִבֵּיט וּמִמְקַשֵּׁב
לְקוֹל תְּקִיעֹתֶינוּ.
וְתִקְבַּל בְּרַחֲמִים
וּבְרָצוֹן סֵדֶר מַלְכוּתֵינוּ.

Let the wishes of our lips — our heart's desire — be pleasing before You,
God Most High. You are knowing and attentive, watchful and aware when
we call out: *T'kiab!* Lovingly, favorably receive our prayers of *Malchuyot!*



Zichronot: The Voice of Remembrance

What is the relationship between memory and the shofar? *Zichronot* (remembrances)—the second motif for sounding the shofar—is the center of the traditional triad of shofar prayers, as memory and remembrance are central to our spiritual lives. Woven deeply into the character of the Jewish New Year, this theme lends an additional name to the holy day: *Yom HaZikaron*—the Day of Remembrance.²



The Divine awakens within us — a sudden awareness of Your presence:

When we feel our kinship with all creatures of earth, we say “God, remember” —
I will remember My covenant between Me and you and all living creatures.

When we long to be forgiven, we say “God, remember” —
*Adonai, remember Your compassion and Your faithfulness; they are old as time.
Remember not the wrongs of my youth and my defiance.*

The Divine awakens within us — a sudden awareness of Your presence:

Overcome by awe in places of grandeur, we say “God remembers” —
God sustains the reverent; God remembers the covenant forever.

When memories of the Exodus are renewed, we say “God remembers” —
*Thus said Adonai:
I remember the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride —
how you followed Me in the wilderness, a land unsown.*

When we remember who we are, we say “God will remember” —
*I will remember for their sake the covenant of the ancients, whom I freed from the land of
Egypt — in the sight of the nations — to be their God: I, Adonai.³*

God of Remembrance, remember the covenant of our ancestors; we reaffirm it today.
Remember, we are a people of noble ideals; help us attain them.
Remember all Your people, all the nations on the road to peace; bless their efforts.
Remember, with mercy, the binding of Isaac; the sorrow of Sarah; Abraham’s words:
“Here I am.”

*Our memory fades, but You remember all that we have forgotten.
Your Presence is a throne where all things matter and nothing is lost.⁴*

² Ibid. pg. 262

³ Ibid. pg. 264-266, abridged.

Baruch atah, Adonai, zocheir hab'rit.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי, זֹכֵר הַבְּרִית.

Blessed are You, Adonai —

You remember the covenant. You remember us.

The shofar is sounded.

Please rise.

T'kiah sh'varim-T'ruah T'kiah
T'kiah Sh'varim T'kiah
T'kiah T'ruah T'kiah

תְּקִיעָה שְׁבָרִים-תְּרוּעָה תְּקִיעָה
תְּקִיעָה שְׁבָרִים תְּקִיעָה
תְּקִיעָה תְּרוּעָה תְּקִיעָה

All are seated.

Areshet s'fateinu ye'erav
l'fanecha, El ram v'nisa —
meivin umaazin,
mabit umakshiv
l'kol t'kiateinu.
Utkabeil b'rachamim
uvratzon seder
zichronoteinu.

אַרְשֶׁת שְׁפָתֵינוּ יַעֲרֹב
לְפָנֶיךָ, אֵל רָם וְנֹשֵׂא,
מִבֵּין וּמֵאֲזוּי,
מִבֵּיט וּמִקְשִׁיב
לְקוֹל תְּקִיעַתְנוּ.
וּתְקַבֵּל בְּרַחֲמִים
וּבְרָצוֹן סֵדֶר
זְכוֹרוֹתֵינוּ.

Let the wishes of our lips — our heart's desire — be pleasing before You,
God Most High. You are knowing and attentive, watchful and aware when we
call out: *T'kiab!* Lovingly, favorably receive our prayers of *Zichronot!*



⁴Ibid. p. 267

Shofarot: The Voice of Hope

Prayers for the third and final sounding of the shofar evoke the Revelation at Mount Sinai, when the people experienced God amidst “thunder and lightning, and a dense cloud upon the mountain, and a very loud blast of the horn” (Exodus 19:16). The shofar’s blast—a sound conveying warning, triumph, and celebration—here marks a moment of intense spiritual elevation, when a band of newly liberated slaves entered a sacred covenant with the Divine.... In the Jewish imagination, the shofar blast remains a symbol of the here-and-now redemption for which Jews have prayed since we first stood at the shore of the Sea of Reeds. In our own time, as well, we pray for freedom from violence, persecution, and injustice.⁵



You revealed Your glory, a Presence in a cloud,
and a people became holy when You spoke with them.

Amid thunder and lightning You made Yourself known; with blasting shofar You appeared.

God —revealed to us and to our fathers and mothers before us —
God of revelation:

Play the song of our freedom on the Great Shofar.

Let Your banner fly over the gathering of our exiles.

Bring back the dispersed. Let those who are scattered find their way home.

Let joyful songs of Zion greet us in Jerusalem, Your holy city, the place of our
people’s eternal happiness.⁶

Baruch atah, Adonai,
Shomei’a kol t’ruat
amo Yisrael b’rachamim.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי,
שׁוֹמֵעַ קוֹל תְּרוּעַת
עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרַחֲמִים.

Blessed are You in our lives, Adonai, You hear, with love, the shofar —
true voice of Your people Israel.

⁵ Ibid. pg. 278

⁶ Ibid. pg. 282

The shofar is sounded.

Please rise.

T'kiah Sh'varim-T'ruah T'kiah
T'kiah Sh'varim T'kiah
T'kiah T'ruah
T'kiah g'dolah

תְּקִיעָה שְׁבָרִים-תְּרוּעָה תְּקִיעָה
תְּקִיעָה שְׁבָרִים תְּקִיעָה
תְּקִיעָה תְּרוּעָה תְּקִיעָה גְּדוּלָה

All are seated.

Areshet s'fateinu ye'erav
l'fanecha, El ram v'nisa —
meivin umaazin,
mabit umakshiv
l'kol t'kiateinu.
Utkabeil b'rachamim
uvratzon seder
shofroteinu.

אַרְשֶׁת שְׁפָתֵינוּ
יַעֲרֹב לְפָנֶיךָ,
אֵל רָם וְנֹשֵׂא,
מִבֵּין וּמֵאֲזִין,
מִבֵּיט וּמִמְקַשֵּׁב
לְקוֹל תְּקִיעֹתֵינוּ.
וּתְקַבֵּל בְּרַחֲמִים
וּבְרָצוֹן סֵדֶר
שׁוֹפְרוֹתֵינוּ.

Let the wishes of our lips — our heart's desire — be pleasing before You,
God Most High. You are knowing and attentive, watchful and aware when we
call out: *T'kiah!* Lovingly, favorably receive our prayers of *Shofarot!*

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