

## **Why Do We Blow the Shofar on Yom Teruah?**

### **First and foremost because Scripture Commands us to**

What better reason, what further rationale do we need? The Torah clearly states:

*“Now in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall also have a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work. It will be to you a day for the blowing of the shofar”* (Numbers 29:1)

*“Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘In the seventh month on the first of the month you shall have a rest, a reminder by the blowing of the shofar, a holy convocation’”* (Lev 23:24)

### **For the Good of Israel**

In the writings of the Rabbis we find: “The *shofar* was not created except for the good of Israel. The Torah was given to Israel with the blowing of the *shofar* - as it is written in Ex. 19:19: “*The sound of the shofar continually increased...*” The walls of Jericho collapsed with the blowing of the *shofar* - as it is written in Jos. 6:20: “*And it was when the people heard the sound of the shofar...that the wall collapsed in its place...*” The advent of the Messiah will be announced with the *shofar* - as it is written in Zech. 9:14: “*Then YHVH will appear upon them (Israel), and His arrow will go forth as the lightning; YHVH, will blow the shofar...*” The ingathering of the exiles will be accompanied by the *shofar* in Isa. 27:13. And in Isa. 58:1: “*Call out from the throat, do not withhold, like the shofar raise your voice...*”

### **Awake O Sleepers**

Rambam (*Hilchos Teshuvah* 3:4) writes: ‘*Although the blowing of the shofar on Rosh Hashanah is a Scriptural decree [and must therefore be observed whether or not one knows the reason behind it], there is an allusion in it. Namely: ‘Awake, O sleepers, from your sleep! Arouse yourselves, O slumberers, from your slumber! Scrutinize your deeds! Return with contrition! Remember your Creator! Those of you who forget the truth in the futilities of the times and let all your years elapse in futility and emptiness ... peer into your souls, improve your ways and your deeds. Each of you should abandon his evil way and his bad thoughts.’*

### **Redemption from Egypt**

Still another reason offered for the sounding of the *shofar* on Rosh Hashanah is related to the Exodus from Egypt. Since it is with the sound of the *shofar* that slaves are set free (*see Leviticus 25:9-10*), then the *shofar* is another in a long series of *mitzvot*, each of which is a memorial of the Exodus from Egypt (*Psalms 81:4*):-

### **Confound Satan**

The Talmud (*Rosh Hashanah* 16a-b) explains the reason for blowing the *shofar* both before and during the *Amidah* of *Mussaf*. “*Rabbi Yitzchak asked ... Why do they blow tekiah and teruah when they are seated [i.e., before the Amidah when it is permissible to sit] and again blow tekiah and teruah when they are standing [i.e., during the Amidah which must be recited while standing]? - In order to confound Satan [i.e., the Accuser]. He further stated: Any year in which they do not blow the shofar at its onset they will cry at its conclusion. Why is this so? - Because they did not confound Satan.*” It is the repetition of the *shofar* blasts that confounds the Accuser.

*Tosafos* cites an alternative interpretation offered by R' Nassan of Rome in his *Aruch*. The prophet *Isaiah* (25:8) proclaimed that with the advent of the Messiah, *He will consume death forever*. Moreover: *On that day He will blow on a great shofar...* When Satan hears the first series of *shofar* blasts he hastens in confusion [to prepare his accusations]. But when he hears the second series, he says, ‘*This must certainly be the blast of the great shofar. The time has come to be consumed.*’ Thus he becomes confounded and [when he finally realizes his mistake] does not have sufficient time to properly arrange his accusations.

## **Messianic Themes**

### **The Coronation of the King**

In Jewish writings we read: “*The recognition of G-d as King is vividly pictured in the Jewish view of Adam's understanding of his Divine Creator being King over all the Universe. It was late on the sixth day since G-d began the Creation of the world, when Adam opened his eyes and saw the beautiful world around him. And he knew at once that G-d created the world, and him too. Adam's first words were: "The L-rd is King forever and ever!" and the echo of his voice rang*

throughout the world. "Now the whole world will know that I am King," G-d said, and He was very pleased. This is the first Rosh HaShanah! The first New Year. It was the birthday of Man, and the Coronation Day of the King of Kings!"

A theme and term associated with *Yom Teruah/Rosh HaShanah* in Hebrew is *HaMelech* (the King). The *shofar* blown on *Rosh HaShanah* is known as the last trump, which the apostle Paul mentions in 1 Thes. 4:16-17. One of the events that will take place is the coronation of Messiah *Yeshua* as King. *Yeshua*, who had come to earth during His **first** coming to play **the** role of the suffering Messiah, that is, Messiah Ben *Yosef*, will be crowned as King over all the earth to reign as King Messiah (Messiah Ben David) during the Messianic age, the Millennium, or in Hebrew eschatology, the *Athid Lavo* (Rev. 19:16; 20:4).

*"I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit... the judgment was set, and the books were opened. [This is Rosh HaShanah, Yom HaDin, the Day of Judgment. The books are the book of the righteous, the book of the wicked, and the book of remembrance]... one like the Son of man [this is understood to be the Messiah Yeshua (Matt. 24:30; 26:64)] came with the clouds of heaven [the clouds are the believers in the Messiah (Heb. 12:1; Rev. 1:7)]... And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed"* (Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14).

### **The Enthronement Ceremony of a King**

There are four parts to the enthronement of a Jewish king.

1. **The giving of the decree.** Associated with this is a declaration. This can be seen in Psalm 2:6-7, as it is written, "Yet have I set my king upon My holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree..." Next, a rod/scepter is given, which is an emblem of a king. Scriptures that refer to the scepter include Gen. 49:17; Nu. 24:17; Est. 4:11; 5:2; 8:4; Ps. 45:6; and Heb. 1:8. Scriptures that refer to a rod are in Ps. 2:9; Isa. 11: 1, 4; and Rev. 2:27; 12:5; 19:16. The scepter is an emblem of a king or royal office and a rod refers to the king ruling and reigning righteously in all matters (Isa. 11:1, 4-5). *Yeshua* is the King Messiah (Isa. 11:1, 4-5; Jer. 23:5-6; Zech. 9:9; Luke 1:32-33; John 1:47-49).
2. **The ceremony of the taking of the throne** (Revelation 5). The king sits on the throne and is anointed as king. *Mashiach*, means *the anointed one*. *Yeshua* came as a prophet during His first coming (Deut. 18:15), was resurrected as the priest (John 20:9, 17), and is coming back to earth again as King. Kings in Israel were anointed (2 Sam. 5:3-4; 1 Kings 1:39-40, 45-46; 2 Kings 9:1-6).
3. **The acclamation.** During the acclamation, all the people shout, "Long live the king!" (1 Kings 1:28-31) Next, all the people clap (Ps. 47:1-2). Ps. 47 is a coronation psalm. Verse 5 is the shout and trumpet of *Rosh HaShanah*. Verse 6 is the shouting and praising of the king. Verse 8 is the ceremony of the throne. In verse 9, the believers in the Messiah *Yeshua* are gathered in His presence.
4. **Each of the subjects comes to visit the king after he has taken the throne.** In this, they will acknowledge their allegiance to him and receive their commissioning from him as to what their job will be in the kingdom (*Isa. 66:22-23; Zech. 14:16-17; Matt. 2:2*).'

### **Yom HaZikaron: The Day of Remembrance**

*Yom Teruah* is known as *Yom HaZikaron*, the Day of Remembrance. Lev. 23:24 calls the day "a memorial" (*zikaron*). Remembrance is a major theme in the Bible. We can see by examining the following Scriptures that God remembers us and that we are to remember God in all of our ways. There are two elements of remembrance: **G-d remembers us** (Gen. 8:1; 9:1,15-16; 19:29; 30:22; Ex. 2:24-25; 3:1; 6:2,5; 32:1-3,7,11,13-14; Lev. 26:14,31-33,38-45; Nu. 10: 1-2,9; Ps. 105:7-8, 42-23-1 112:6). In fact, God has a book of remembrance (Malachi 3:16-18; Ex. 32:32-33; Rev. 3:5; 20:11-15; 21:1,27). **We must remember G-d** (Ex. 13:3; 20:8; Deut. 7:17-19; 8:18; 16:3; Nu. 15:37-41). In Dan. 7:9-10 since the court was seated and the books were opened, it is understood to be *Rosh HaShanah*. The books are the book of the righteous, the book of the wicked, and the book of remembrance. The third book that will be opened is the book of remembrance (*zikaron*). This is why the common greeting during *Rosh HaShanah* is, "May you be inscribed in the Book of Life," "L'Shanah Tovah Tikatev."