



Back in Moscow under oppressive Czarist rule, the community was faced with an entirely different situation preventing it from fulfilling this mitzvah on a weekday Rosh Hashana – there was no kosher shofar to be found. A disqualifying crack had been discovered in the only shofar it had, and bringing one from outside the city meant risking death at the hands of the anti-Semitic authorities.

The rav of the community, Rabbi Chaim Berlin, was greatly pained by this situation and decided to do something symbolic. He stayed up all night reviewing the laws of shofar and then set out early in the morning to the synagogue for the services which would be marred with the sadness of missing the shofar blowing. On his way he came across a gentile wagon driver who had decorated his wagon with all sorts of horns. Amongst them he was surprised to see a beautiful kosher shofar and he approached the driver to ask him where he had gotten such a shofar. He was even more surprised when the fellow came running towards him with this shofar and begged him to take it. It turned out that this driver had stolen the shofar from a local synagogue and was afraid that this was its rabbi who would report him to the police. Never was the sound of the shofar so appreciated in that town as on that Rosh Hashana.

Hints & Answers* **HALACHA CHALLENGE:** *The Mishna Berura* writes: “The Achronim wrote that *b’diavad*, if one said on a weekday “*zichron teruah*” and completed the bracha, he does not go back...Similarly, if one said on Shabbos “*Yom teruah*” (and completed the bracha), he does not go back. **TRIVIA: 1.** Nowhere in the Torah does it say that on Rosh Hashana we need to hear (or blow) the shofar! (The Torah only says that it is a day of *teruah* sounds. But the Torah does not indicate that those sounds need to be produced specifically by the shofar). The Rambam [Laws of Shofar, 1:1] teaches that the mitzva of blowing shofar on Rosh Hashana is *mesorah* that was passed down to us through the Oral Torah. How incredible! As we begin the year, we use the object of mitzva that shows our adherence to the Oral Torah! **2:** It should be long enough that if an average size man will grasp it in his hand, a small part of the shofar will protrude on each side of his hand [Nidda 26a]. | *Menucha answers are not to be taken as final decisions in *halacha*.

Halacha Challenge



Zichron Teruah



When Moishy reached the *Retzei* bracha of his tefilla on Rosh Hashana morning he was full of tears and joy, because he had great concentration and beautiful emotions during the middle bracha.

But then...he realized that he made a mistake!

He said to himself in his mind, “Every time I mentioned Rosh Hashana in the middle bracha, I said *yom teruah*. But today is Shabbos! I should have said *yom zichron teruah!*”

He did not know what to do. “Should I repeat the middle bracha and say the correct version? After all, I said something not true, because we don’t blow shofar today, since it is Shabbos. Or maybe, since the prohibition of blowing the shofar on Shabbos is *m’derabannan*, it’s okay that I said *yom teruah*, since *m’deoraisa* it’s permitted to blow shofar today.”

Question: Should Moishy repeat the middle bracha?

(The “Hints & Answers” section is on page 4)

Dedicated anonymously for yeshuos and refuos to all Klal Yisroel



Parsha Pearls

The Shulchan Aruch tells us that one should not walk out of shul after davening in a rushing manner (for exceptions, see Shulchan Aruch and commentaries *ibid.*) This applies on any day of the year. Matteh Efrayim teaches that one should be extra careful to fulfill this halacha on Rosh Hashana, because on this day we are judged, and if one is rushing out of a shul, the *kitrugim* (prosecuting forces) will use this against him. But what exactly is a person doing wrong by rushing out of shul? Matteh Efrayim explains that by rushing out of shul, a person is showing that Avodas Hashem is difficult for him. Matteh Efrayim says that the source which teaches us that Avodas Hashem should not feel like a heavy burden for a person is a verse in Yeshayahu (43:22):

וְלֹא אָתִי קָרָאתָ יַעֲקֹב כִּי יַגְעֶתָ בִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל

”But you did not call out to Me, O Yaakov; because you toiled with burden for Me, O Yisroel.”

Hence, based on the words of Yeshayahu, we learn a fundamental life lesson in Avodas Hashem: Even when Avodas Hashem requires toil, it should feel light and enjoyable for you. This can be achieved by internalizing in your heart that what you are doing now is the most important and productive thing in the world that you can do at this time.



*To love Hashem your G-d, to listen to His voice and to attach yourself to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days, **to live on the land** that Hashem had sworn to your forefathers...* [Devorim 30:20]

The mitzva of living in Eretz Yisroel is listed in this verse along with the *ahavas* Hashem, *yiras* Shamayim and *deveikus*. Commenting on this verse, the Ohr HaChaim writes: “כִּי יְשִׁיבַת הָאָרֶץ הִיא מִצְוָה כּוֹלֶלֶת כָּל הַתּוֹרָה” “Living in Eretz Yisroel is a mitzva that includes in it the entire Torah.”

DID YOU KNOW THAT

You probably know that on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur we daven from a “*machzor*”. But do you know why it is called that way?

The word *machzor* means a “cycle” (the root חזר means “to repeat”), since the prayers that we say cycle continually. What’s interesting is that originally, *machzor* referred to a *siddur* containing prayers for the entire year, including weekdays, Shabbos, and *chagim*. A classic example of this is the Machzor Vitry, composed by R. Simcha ben Shmuel of Vitry in the 11th century.

But with time, a distinction developed between the *siddur* which included weekday and Shabbos prayers, and the *machzor* which included only the festival prayers. And eventually, *machzor* became the name of a *siddur* for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. It’s interesting to note, that the root of “*machzor*” (namely, חזר) also means “to return”, and it’s on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur is when we return in *teshuva*!



Rosh Hashana Trivia



1. Where in the Torah does it say that we need to hear (or blow) shofar on Rosh Hashana? [Hint: If you’ll be looking for a verse to answer this question, you’ll get nowhere.]
2. What is the minimum size of the shofar that may be used on Rosh Hashana?
3. What/who/why/where_____? (Have participants at your Shabbos/Yom Tov *seuda* create their own Rosh Hashana trivia questions and ask them to the people around the table.)