

Just a Story...

The Shofar Shows Up

by Rabbi Mendel Weinbach zt"l



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.

[Source: Ohr Somayach Institutions www.ohr.edu . Printed with permission]

Hints & Answers* **SHMIRAS SHABBOS:** In *halacha*, only after Shabbos there is a mitzva to have a special meal, to “escort” Shabbos in an honorable way. However, it’s praiseworthy to honor Yom Tov as well by arranging a *seuda* after Yom Tov to “escort” Yom Tov in an honorable way. Such was the custom of the Chazon Ish [source: Taame Dekra, quoted by Dirshu edition of the Mishna Berura, siman 300, note 3]. **RHYME:** “heart” **TRIVIA: 1:** Nowhere. We learn it from a *mesorah* that was passed down to us through the Oral Torah. [Rambam, Laws of Shofar, 1:1] 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]. *Note: The answers are based only on the sources quoted and might not reflect opinions of other halachic authorities. As such, Menucha’s answer are not to be taken as final decisions in halacha, but rather as a springboard for discussions, questions to a Moreh Hora’ah, and further study.

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Menucha

A Shabbos table companion
for the whole family

לע"נ ר' ברוך חיים בן שלמון ז"ל

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Halacha Challenge



Melave Malka After Rosh Hashana



“Sari - what are you looking for?” asked her sister Chavi as she noticed Sari looking in the shelves of the towels and tablecloths closet on motzei Rosh Hashanah.

“I am looking for a clean tablecloth,” answered Sari.

“Why?” asked Chavi.

“So that I can set the table for Melave Malka!” explained Sari.

“But it’s not motzei Shabbos!” said Chavi.

“But it’s motzei Yom Tov! We honor Shabbos by having a special *seuda* after Shabbos, to escort it out in a *kavodik* way. Are we not going to escort Yom Tov out in a *kavodik* way, after such a special Rosh Hashana?”

“Hmm...I hear your logic!” said Chavi.

Question: Is there a mitzva to have “Melave Malka” after Rosh Hashana?

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

Dedicated anonymously for yeshuos and refuos to all Klal Yisroel

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...וּבְחַרְתָּ בְּחַיִּים לַמַּעַן תַּחֲיֶה אִתָּהּ וְנָרְעָה.

... *And you should choose life in order that you and your children should live.* (parshas Nitzovim, Devorim 30:19).

The above words of the Torah “and you should choose life” are known to many, and will be powerfully inspiring when heard before Rosh HaShana during Krias HaTorah on this Shabbos. Interestingly though, the Torah writes וּבְחַרְתָּ בְּחַיִּים which literally means “and you should choose *the* life”

Q. But what exactly is “*the* life”?

A. The verse next verse says:

לְאַהֲבָה אֶת־ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשָׁמַע בְּקוֹלוֹ וּלְדַבְּקָהּ־בּוֹ כִּי הוּא חַיִּיךָ וְאַרְךָ יָמֶיךָ לְשִׁבְתָּ
עַל־הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נָשָׁבַע ה' לַאֲבֹתֶיךָ...

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 you days, to live on the land that Hashem had sworn to your forefathers... Commenting on this verse, the Ohr HaChaim explains that the Torah in this verse teaches that being attached to Hashem is the life itself. In other words, for a Jew, what is life worth, if not being attached to the Ribbono Shel Olam?

When you feel connected to your Abba in Shamayim with your thoughts and emotions, you're living “הַחַיִּים” - *the* life.

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 you 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 מִצְוַה כּוֹלֶלֶת כָּל הַתּוֹרָה” “Living in Eretz Yisroel is a mitzva that includes in it the entire Torah.”



Rhymes for Kids



Dip the apple in the honey
Make a bracha loud and clear,
Leshana Tovah u'mesuka
Have a happy sweet new year!

If for a year of sweetness sweet things we employ
What should be a *siman* for a year of joy?
Well, here is the answer that's easy and smart:
Rosh Hashana is a day for you to have a happy _____!

והנה כל אלו הענינים עושין הכל לסימן טוב ולכן פשיטא שיזהר מאד שלא יכעוס בימים האלו מלבד גודל האיסור כדי שיהיה לסימן טוב רק יהיה שמח לבו ובטוח בד' עם התשובה ומעשים טובים [משנה ברורה סימן תקפג ס"ק ה']

“Now all these things [apple in honey, etc] we do for a *siman tov* for the upcoming year. Therefore, it is obvious that a person should be very careful not to get angry during these days, because [by not getting angry on Rosh Hashana] besides avoiding a great transgression, it will be for a *siman tov* for him for the upcoming year. On Rosh Hashana, a person should just have a happy heart and trust Hashem, while doing teshuva and performing good deeds.” [Mishna Berura 583:5]



Rosh Hashana Trivia



1. Where in the Torah does it say that we need to blow/hear a shofar on Rosh Hashana?
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.)