

ראש השנה

Unquestionably, the most complicated obligatory davening during the year is the Musaf that we recite on Rosh Hashanah. It is true that the *piyutim* that are said during Selichos and other times have far more challenging vocabularies, unusual syntax and innovative word forms¹, but they are not a basic and fundamental requirement like the Amida that was established by the *Anshei Knesses HaGedolah* and that is fully required.

Not only is the Musaf of Rosh Hashanah distinguished by having nine b'rachos instead of the 18/19 blessings of the weekday Sh'moneh Esrei and the seven of all of the other *tefilos* of all of the other Chagim and Rosh Chodesh, but the requirements of those added blessings are legion.

Chazal have told us of the requirements of reciting *Malchuyos* – the coronation of Hashem, *Zichronos* – recalling the covenant that He made with Israel, and *Shofros* – noting the Shofar of Sinai and the Shofar of Moshiach. We read in Masseches Rosh Hashanah (16 a):

ואמרו לפני בראש השנה מלכיות זכרונות ושופרות. מלכיות - כדי שתמליכוני עליכם, זכרונות - כדי שיעלה זכרונכם לפני לטובה, ובמה - בשופר.

[Hashem says,] 'Say before Me on Rosh Hashanah malchuyos, zichronos and shofros. Malchuyos – you should make Me the King over you. Zichronos – So that your remembrances should arise before Me favourably, and with what? With the Shofar.'

We read in Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim Siman 591/s'if 4):

אומרים עשרה פסוקים של מלכיות, ועשרה של זכרונות ועשרה של שופרות בכל ברכה שלשה מהם של תורה, שלשה של כתובים, שלשה של נביאים ואחד של תורה...

In the Bracha of *Malchuyos* we say 10² verses of *malchus*-royalty. In *Zichronos*, 10 verses of remembrance and in *Shofros* – 10 related to Shofar.

¹ See Ibn Ezra to the beginning of the fifth Perek of Koheles regarding those unusual word forms and syntaxes.

² Mishnah Brurah writes in s'if koton 7:

In each of them 3 P'sukim are from the Torah, 3 from Kesuvim and 3 from *Nevi'im* and one [concluding verse] from the Torah.

In Siman 593, Shulchan Aruch teaches us a further Halachah regarding the Musaf of Rosh Hashanah:

ברכות של ראש השנה מעכבות זו את זו, שאם אינו יודע כולם לא יאמר מה שיודע מהם, אלא לא יאמר כלום.

The Brachos of the Amida of Rosh Hashanah are mutually indispensable. If one does not know all of them, he should not say any of them.

As Mishnah Brurah clarifies in s'if koton 1:

ברכות של ראש השנה וכו' - היינו של מוסף שיש בו מלכיות זכרונות ושופרות:

Brachos of Rosh Hashana etc. – that is referring to the Musaf where there are Malchuyos, Zichronos and Shofros.

What is the source of this Halachah? At the end of Masseches Rosh Hashanah (34 b) the Gemara again brings the Gemara from that Masseches that we cited above and writes:

...ברכות של ראש השנה...מעכבות. מאי טעמא? - אמר רבה, אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא: אמרו לפני בראש השנה מלכיות זכרונות ושופרות. מלכיות - כדי שתמליכוני עליכם, זכרונות - כדי שיבא לפני זכרוניכם לטובה, ובמה - בשופר.

The Blessings of Rosh Hashanah are mutually indispensable. What is the reason? Rabba said, 'G-d said, Say before Me on Rosh Hashanah malchuyos, zichronos and shofros. Malchuyos – you should make Me the King over you. Zichronos – So that your remembrances should arise before Me favourably, and with what? With the Shofar.'

אומרים עשרה וכו' - כנגד עשרה פסוקים של הללו א...ל בקדשו וכנגד עשרת הדברות וכנגד עשרה מאמרות שבהם נברא העולם [גמרא]:

We say ten – for the ten verses in Tehillim 150 and for the Ten Commandments and for the ten sayings in which the world was created – as the Gemara teaches.

That is, the various Brachos of the Musaf of Rosh Hashanah form an interlocking apparatus so that if one of its parts is missing, the entire apparatus fails.

The curious learner may wish to raise an interesting point. Shulchan Aruch writes in Siman 589/s'if 3:

אשה פטורה משום דהוי מצות עשה שהזמן גרמא.

Women are exempt [from the Mitzvah of Shofar] since it is a time-bound positive commandment.

Perhaps, the curious student may wonder, women should also be exempt from davening Musaf on Rosh Hashanah since an indispensable part of Musaf is *Shofros* and women have no obligation to hear the Shofar. If they have no obligation to hear the Shofar, then shouldn't the recitation of *Shofros* also be non-obligatory and therefore they should be exempt from the entire Musaf.

To answer this question, it is necessary to examine the Bracha of Shofros and see its intent.

If we examine the P'sukim that Anshei Knesses HaGedolah affixed to this Amida, we may be surprised. Certainly, I would expect that the P'sukim from the Torah that refer to the Mitzvah of Shofar should be at the very beginning of those citations.

Two verses in the Torah refer to the Mitzvah of sounding the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah. One verse is in Parshas Emor in Sefer Vayikro and the other in Parshas Pinchos in Sefer B'midbar.

The former verse reads (Perek 23/Posuk 24):

דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ יְהִי לָכֶם שַׁבָּתוֹן זְכוֹרֹן תְּרוּעָה
מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ:

Speak to B'nei Yisroel saying, 'In the seventh month on the first of the month, it shall be a day of Shabbos for you, a remembrance of the *t'ruah* sound; a holy convocation.

The latter verse reads (Perek 29/Posuk 1):

וּבַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ יְהִי לָכֶם כָּל מְלֶאכֶת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ יוֹם
תְּרוּעָה יְהִי לָכֶם:

In the seventh month on the first of the month it will be a holy convocation for you; do not do any *melachah* of work; it shall be a day of sounding the *t'ruah* sound for you.

I search the Bracha of *Shofros* and these verses are nowhere to be found.

What verses does the *Shofros* section of Musaf prayer bring from the Torah?

At *Mattan Torah*, the presence of the *Shofar* was profound and it is those verses that teach of the presence of the *Shofar* that are three P'sukim from the Torah that begin that section.

We read them in the order in which they appear in the Chumash and in the Machzor (Sh'mos Perek 19/P'sukim 16, 19; Perek 20/Posuk 15):

וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי בַּהֵיטֵב הַבִּקֹּר וַיְהִי קֹלֵת וּבְרָקִים וְעָנָן כָּבֵד עַל הָהָר וְקוֹל שֹׁפָר חֲזָק
מְאֹד וַיִּחַרְדוּ כָּל הָעָם אֲשֶׁר בַּמַּחֲנֶה:

וַיְהִי קוֹל הַשֹּׁפָר הוֹלֵךְ וְחֲזָק מְאֹד מִשָּׁה יְדַבֵּר וְהָאֵל... לְקִיּוֹם יַעֲנֵנוּ בְּקוֹל:

וְכָל הָעָם רָאִים אֶת הַקּוֹלֹת וְאֶת הַלְפִידִם וְאֶת קוֹל הַשֹּׁפָר וְאֶת הָהָר עֹשֵׂן וַיִּרְא הָעָם
וַיִּנְעוּ וַיַּעֲמְדוּ מֵרָחֵק:

On the third day, when it became morning, there was thunder and lightning and a heavy cloud on the mountain; the sound of the *Shofar* was very strong and the all the people in the encampment trembled.

The sound of the *Shofar* was increasingly strong; Moshe spoke and Hashem answered him loudly.

All the people saw the thunder and the torches and the sound of the *Shofar* and the mountain smoking; the people saw and they were moved and they stood from afar.

But since we are attentive, we remember that the finale of the 10 P'sukim is a verse from the Torah. Perhaps a Posuk regarding the Mitzvah of *Shofar* is recited then? Let us see what is written (B'midbar Perek 10/Posuk 10):

וּבַיּוֹם שִׁמְחַתְּכֶם וּבְמוֹעֲדֵיכֶם וּבְרֵאשֵׁי חֲדָשֵׁיכֶם וּתְקַעְתֶּם בַּחֲצֹצְרוֹת עַל עֲלֵתֵיכֶם וְעַל
זְבָחֵי שְׁלָמֵיכֶם וְהָיוּ לָכֶם לְזִכְרוֹן לְפָנַי אֶל־קִיּוֹם אֲנִי ה' אֶל־לְקִיּוֹם:

On the day of your rejoicing and on your holidays and on your Rosh Chodesh, you shall sound the *Chatzotzros*-trumpets when you bring your burnt-offerings and the *Shlomim*-offerings; it shall be for you as a memory before your G-d; I am Hashem your G-d.

The choice of this verse is particularly surprising. If this was not the choice of the Anshei K'nesses HaGedolah I would have asked, 'Were they were desperate to find a verse that they chose this one because they had none to choose from?'

This Posuk is found in Parshas B'ha'alosecha when the Torah introduces the use of the trumpets by Moshe Rabbenu for various administrative purposes and the Torah adds there that the trumpets were also used for celebrations.

There is no mention of Rosh Hashanah in that verse at all, and the word Shofar is not found there either. The only 'redeeming' factor in that verse seems to be the word ותקעתם – you shall sound a *tekia*. We have suggested two verses dealing with the Mitzvah of Shofar on Rosh Hashanah – why are they both absent from the Bracha of Shofros and why is this verse an appropriate choice in their stead?

And now, something even stranger. We have said that the P'sukim of the Torah that command the Mitzvah of Shofar do not appear in the Bracha of Shofros. We did not write that they do not appear in the Musaf of Rosh Hashanah, just not in *Shofros*? Why?

The reason is that one of those verses does appear in the Musaf of Rosh Hashanah but not in *Shofros*. What is written and where does it appear?

The first of the three special Brachos of Musaf of Rosh Hashanah has two functions. It is *Malchuyos*, the coronation of HaKodosh Boruch Hu as our King, but it is also *Kedushas HaYom*, the bracha in which we state the sanctity of the day.

Every Amida of Shabbos and Yom Tov, as well as the Musaf of Rosh Chodesh, has a middle Bracha of *Kedushas HaYom*.

On Shabbos, the conclusion of that Bracha is:

ברוך אתה ה' מקדש השבת:

We bless Hashem Who sanctifies the Shabbos.

On the Shlosh Regolim it is:

ברוך אתה ה' מקדש ישראל והזמנים:

We bless Hashem Who sanctifies Israel and the Holy Times.

On Yom HaKippurim that middle blessing of the Amida has the basic formula of sanctification with an elaboration appropriate for that unique day:

ברוך אתה ה' מוחל וסולח לעונותינו ולעונות עמו בית ישראל ומעביר אשמותינו בכל שנה ושנה מלך על כל הארץ מקדש ישראל ויום הכיפורים:

We bless Hashem Who forgives and pardons our sins and the sins of His People the House of Israel and passes away our guilt in every year; King over the entire land Who sanctifies Israel and Yom HaKippurim.

On Rosh Hashanah as well, the conclusion of that combined bracha of *Kedushas HaYom* and *Malchuyos* as its own special conclusion:

ברוך אתה ה' מלך על כל הארץ מקדש ישראל ויום הזכרון:

We bless Hashem Who is the King over the entire land; Who sanctifies Israel and the Day of Remembrance.

We note His Kingship as a vital expression of *Malchuyos* and His sanctification of Rosh Hashanah as a vital expression of *Kedushas HaYom*.

As in every Bracha of the Musaf of those special days, the Tefila includes P'sukim from Parshas Pinchos that are relevant for that particular time. And thus we read on Rosh Hashanah in that combined bracha of *Kedushas HaYom* and *Malchuyos* (B'midbar Perek 29/P'sukim 1-2):

וּבַחֲדָשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּאֶחָד לַחֲדָשׁ מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ יְהִיֶה לָכֶם כָּל מְלֹאכֶת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ יוֹם תְּרוּעָה יְהִיֶה לָכֶם: וַעֲשִׂיתֶם עֹלָה לְרִיחַ נִיחֹחַ לַה' פָּר בֶּן בָּקָר אֶחָד אֵיל אֶחָד כִּבְשִׂים בְּנֵי שָׁנָה שִׁבְעָה תְּמִימִם:

In the seventh month on the first day of the month it will be a holy convocation for you; do not do any *melachah* of work; it is the day of the *t'ruah* for you. You shall make a burnt-offering for a pleasant fragrance for Hashem, one bullock of cattle, one ram, seven sheep in their first year, without blemish.

If the Machzor knows that this verse of Shofar exists, why is it not found in *Shofros*?

Perhaps, one would suggest that since it appears once, and it is appropriate for it to appear in *Kedushas HaYom* because the sanctity of Rosh Hashanah is emphasized by its special Korbonos, perhaps it isn't in Shofros so as not to be repetitive.

That suggestion is not valid because the prayers of וקרב פזורינו which are found in *Kedushas HaYom*, as they are in all of the Tefilos of Yomim Tovim, are repeated at the end of *Shofros*. So the fact that a section is repeated indicates that there is not reason why the Mitzvah of Shofar cannot be restated in the Bracha of *Shofros*.

Thus, we are called upon to understand the meaning of *Shofros*, and with it, and all of the special Brachos.

Earlier we noted the Gemara that teaches us regarding these three blessings. We read:

אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא: אמרו לפני בראש השנה מלכיות זכרונות ושופרות. מלכיות - כדי שתמליכוני עליכם, זכרונות - כדי שיבא לפני זכרוניכם לטובה, ובמה - בשופר.

G-d said, Say before Me on Rosh Hashanah malchuyos, zichronos and shofros. Malchuyos – you should make Me the King over you. Zichronos – So that your remembrances should arise before Me favorably, and with what? With the Shofar.'

If we attend to this passage we see that the Shofar that is discussed here is not an end in and of itself. Rather, the Shofar that is described here is a means.

The Shofar of the Bracha of Shofros is a means of announcing the coronation of HaKodosh Boruch Hu and, after that coronation is established, 'reminding' Him of *Akeidas Yitzchak*.

We know that the 'reminder' refers to *Akeidas Yitzchak* because the Gemara in Masseches Rosh Hashanah (16 a) immediately continues and writes:

אמר רבי אבהו: למה תוקעין בשופר של איל? - אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא: תקעו לפני בשופר של איל, כדי שאזכור לכם עקידת יצחק בן אברהם, ומעלה אני עליכם כאילו עקדתם עצמכם לפני.

Rabi Avahu said, Why do we use a ram's horn for the Shofar? Hashem said, 'Sound before Me with a Shofar from a ram's horn so that I will remember

the binding of Yitzchak ben Avraham and I will consider it as if you have bound yourself up before Me.

And now we can understand why the Mitzvah of Shofar is not included in the selection of the Torah's P'sukim in *Shofros*.

The two verses that command the sounding of the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah are not directly related to the Bracha of Shofros. Those verses teach us regarding the sounding of the Shofar as an end, in and of itself. There is a Torah Mitzvah to sound the Shofar on Yom HaKippurim that is independent of the intent of Shofros which discusses the Shofar as a means.

In the Bracha of *Kedushas HaYom*, we must read regarding the Mitzvah of sounding the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah because that is one of the components of the day's sanctity.

In the Bracha of Shofros we pointedly omit that verse, because the theme of Rosh Hashanah, and the entire *Aseres Y'mei Teshuva* is *Malchus*. That is why if we err and recite the standard:

ברוך אתה ה' הא...ל הקדוש

we bless G-d Who is the Holy G-d

instead of the special:

ברוך אתה ה' המלך הקדוש

we bless G-d Who is the Holy King

during *Aseres Y'mei Teshuva*, our Amida is invalid³.

³ According to Shulchan Aruch, and such is the practice of *Eidos HaMizrach*, if one recites:

ברוך אתה ה' מלך אוהב צדקה ומשפט

We bless Hashem Who is the King Who loves charity and justice
instead of

ברוך אתה ה' המלך המשפט

We bless Hashem Who is the King of Judgment
the Amida is invalid as well.

Ashkenazim do not hold that that error invalidates the Amida.

The *Shofar* that is noted in *Shofros* is a vehicle by which we pronounce G-d's Kingship. That *Shofar* serves as a means of 'reminding' Hashem to remember us uniquely as the heirs of the unwavering dedication of Avraham and Yitzchak⁴ to Hashem's Word and command.

If we look at the P'sukim that are used in *Shofros*, we note that they have three main themes:

1. The Shofar of *Mattan Torah*;
2. The Shofar has a means of praising G-d⁵;

See Shulchan Aruch Simanim 582 and 117.

⁴ It is worthwhile to note that in the passage from the Gemara in Rosh Hashanah, Rabi Avahu writes

עקידת יצחק בן אברהם

The binding of Yitzchak son of Avraham.

Perhaps his intent is to note that the *Akeida* was a test of both son and father, each in his own sphere.

If that is so, Rabi Avahu is preempting the question that is frequently asked as to why the *Akeida* is referred to as *Akeidas Yitzchak* when the Torah writes clearly (B'reishis Perek 22/Posuk 1) that Hashem tested *Avraham*.

Rabi Avahua teaches that Chazal saw them both, Yitzchak and Avraham, as subjects of the Divine test.

⁵ Among the three P'sukim from Kesuvim that are found in the Bracha of Shofros, we find (Tehillim Perek 81/P'sukim 4-5):

תקעו בחֹדֶשׁ שׁוֹפָר בַּכֶּסֶה לְיוֹם חַגְנוּ: כִּי חֶק לְיִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא מִשְׁפָּט לֹא...לִקִּי יַעֲקֹב:

Sound the Shofar on Rosh Chodesh (Tishrei), sound it on the day of the covering [of the moon] for the day of our holiday. It is a statute for Israel; a law for the G-d of Yaakov.

Certainly this verse is referring to the Mitzvah of Shofar on Rosh Hashanah and though it is not the verse from the Torah, it nonetheless seems to relate to the Shofar as an end, not a means.

See the Radak to this verse who writes:

...ונראה כי זהו טעם מצות התרועה בראש השנה, לפי שבטלו אבותינו מעבודתם ונחו מיגיעתם ביום זה, והתרועה הוא סימן שילוח עבדים, כמו שצוה הקדוש ברוך הוא תקיעת שופר ביום הכפורים של יובל שהיה סימן לשילוח עבדים וצאתם מרשות אדוניהם, כן צוה הקדוש ברוך הוא לתקוע בראש השנה לזכר כי ביום זה בטלה העבודה והיתה התחלת חרותנו...

3. The Shofar that will herald the coming of Moshiach and the Geulah Shleima.

Let us see a verse that heralds that final theme of *Shofros*. The Novi Yirmiyahu writes, and we read it in the Haftarah of the Second Day of Rosh Hashanah:

וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יִתְקַע בְּשׁוֹפָר גָּדוֹל וּבָאוּ הָאֲבָדִים בְּאֶרֶץ אַשּׁוּר וְהַנְּדָחִים בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לֵה' בְּהַר הַקֹּדֶשׁ בִּירוּשָׁלַם:

And it will be on that day, that the great Shofar will be sounded and those who are lost in the Land of Assyria and those who were oppressed in the Land of Egypt will come and prostrate themselves before Hashem on the Holy Mountain in Yerushalayim.

Thus, the Shofar of Rosh Hashanah presents us with two aspects: its Mitzvah and its service as a means of proclaiming G-d as King on Rosh Hashanah and announcing the impending redemption.

The Bracha of Shofros is independent of the Mitzvah of Shofar. It is relevant to women and men alike because we all share the obligation of the coronation of Hashem as King and the aspirations and hope for the speedy arrival of Moshiach and of the *Geulah Shleima*.

Thus, woman's obligation of prayer on Rosh Hashanah⁶ is not impacted by her exemption from the Mitzvah of Shofar.

This seems to be the reason for the Mitzvah of Shofar on Rosh Hashanah because on Rosh Hashanah the slavery of our ancestors in Egypt was voided and they were able to have a respite from their slavery on that day. The Shofar sound is an indication of the freeing of slaves, just like the sounding of the Shofar on Yom HaKippurim of Yovel that was the indication of sending slaves out from their servitude and their leaving the control of their masters. So Hashem commanded to sound the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah as a remembrance that on that day the servitude was voided and it became the beginning of our freedom.

Thus, according to Radak at least, we can understand that these verses, too, indicates that the Shofar serves as a means and not only an end.

⁶ We are not relating here to the general obligation of prayer for women. The emphasis here is to show the need for the Bracha of Shofros, its purpose and that, unlike the *Mitzvah* of Shofar, it is directly related to all.

The Amida of Musaf of Rosh Hashanah is the most lengthy of our yearly *Amidos*. It contains within it an elaboration of our constant sense of our year-long obligation to G-d and the hopes and aspirations that we have as we serve Him.

As the commentators teach, the very first blessing of each Amida, *Ovos*, is inherently a blessing of *Malchus*, even though the word *melech* does not appear that at all⁷.

And in the weekday Amida, we read the B'racha of

תקע בשופר גדול לחרותנו...ברוך אתה ה' מקבץ נדחי עמו ישראל:

Hashem, sound the great Shofar for our freedom. We bless Hashem Who gathers the oppressed of His People Israel.

In a few short hours, and for the following two days the People of Israel will gather wherever they are: in Eretz Yisroel, in whatever Assyria they may find themselves, or in their personal Land of Egypt and together attend to the sound of the Shofar of Rosh Hashanah.

We will do so with the dual *kavanah* of fulfilling G-d's commandment to hear the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah together with our prayer that as we remember and heed His commandments, the sound of the Shofar should ascend with our remembrance before Him Yisborach and allow the sound of our Shofar to arouse the sound of His Shofar bringing us the salvation that we truly seek.

K'siva Vachasima Tova

Rabbi Pollock

⁷ If there would be no *malchus* in that B'racha then the entire Amida would not have the status of a Bracha which requires:

Noting Hashem's Name and His Kingship.

שם ומלכות