

KOL HASHOFAR



Being examples of the correctly rendered Shofar calls; also the Scriptural Cantillations and benedictions for the whole year, recorded by David M. Hausdorff.

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קול השופר

זגם טעמי הקריאה לשיבת זכל השנה

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MUSIC LP

“KOL HA'SHOFAR”
(The Call of the Shofar)

by
David M. Hausdorff

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The “Tekiah” (variant)
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by
David M. Hausdorff

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

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The Call of the Shofar

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Kol Ha'Shofar

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Tekiah

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שברים
Sh'vahrim

Teruah

תרועה
Teruah

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Lamentations (Fast of the
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Ruth (Feast of Weeks)

Esther (Feast of Lots)

Ecclesiastes (Feast of
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THE CALL OF THE SHOFAR

BY
DAVID M. HAUSDORFF

One of the integral parts of the "Rosh Hashanah" (New Year's) Synagogue service is the blowing of the "Shofar" (ram's horn), as The Bible proclaims New Year's Day as "The Day of Sounding the Shofar".

The Shofar is a natural horn whose tip has been removed, and a roughly cylindrical bore of very narrow section is gouged down to the natural hollow. The exterior is smoothened by scraping, and the horn is softened by soaking in hot water and then brought to the desired shape. The length is usually around fourteen or fifteen inches. The mouthpiece is formed by expanding the heated cut edge of the narrow tip. A split in the Shofar invalidates it.

Because of its rough, natural character, it is difficult to obtain the same sound at all times. In fact, even the most skillful executant can sound some of these horns only in certain positions, and then only with particular lip-tension. The Shofar must be held obliquely to the lips, with its mouth pointed upward, and traditionally extended to the right.

There are three basic calls:

TEKIAH
SH'VAHRIM
TERUAH

and also a combination of SH'VAHRIM-TERUAH.

Traditionally, any full clear sound of the Shofar is ritually acceptable. Yet there are definite rules governing their length.

The "Shulchan Aruch" (Code of Jewish Law) specifies that primarily the "Teruah" consists of nine short sounds or signals. The "Sh'vahrin" are three notes sounded in rapid succession, and each should be as long as three "Teruahs". The three "Sh'vahrin", therefore, should be as long as the nine "Teruahs". Care must be taken not to prolong any of the individual "Sh'vahrin" to the length of the nine "Teruahs" as this is distinctly incorrect.

The "Tekiah" is a simple sound. It is always blown before and after each of the other notes, but its length varies. In the series, "Tekiah, Sh'vahrin-Teruah, Tekiah", each "Tekiah" should be as long as the "Sh'vahrin-Teruah" combination - i.e., eighteen beats. In the "Tekiah, Sh'vahrin, Tekiah" and in the "Tekiah, Teruah, Tekiah" series, each "Tekiah" should be as long as each "Sh'vahrin" or "Teruah" - nine beats.

In the "Tekiah, Sh'vahrin-Teruah, Tekiah" series preceding the Additional Service, the "Sh'vahrin-Teruah" should be sounded in one breath. But in the series sounded during the repetition of the Service, the "Sh'vahrin-Teruah" should be sounded as two separate sounds, but with no pause between them.

When the benedictions are pronounced before the blowing of the Shofar, the congregation should not respond with the "Blessed is He and blessed is His Name" when The Almighty's Name is mentioned, but should listen attentively and say "Amen" at their conclusion; and it is forbidden to speak from that time on until after the completion of the Shofar-blowing at the end of the Service, except for the prayers themselves.

The Shofar service begins with the chanting of Psalm 47 seven times:

To the Chief Musician - a Psalm of the sons of Korach:

All ye peoples, clap your hands,
Shout unto God with a glad voice!
For The Lord, most high, is awe-inspiring,
A great King over all the earth.
He will subdue peoples under us,
And nations under our feet.
He will choose for us our inheritance,
The excellence of Jacob whom He loveth, Selah.
God ascendeth amidst shouting,
The Lord with the sound of the Shofar.
Sing praises to God, sing praises;
Sing praises to our King, sing praises!
For God is King over the whole earth --
Sing praises with understanding!
God reigneth over the nations,
God sitteth upon His holy throne.
The nobles of the peoples are assembled
With the people of the God of Abraham.
For the shields of the earth belong to God --
He is highly exalted.

The following seven sentences, quotations from The Psalms and Lamentations, are then chanted by the Reader and repeated by the congregation:

"In distress I called upon The Lord, He answered me by setting me free."

"Thou dost hear my cry; close not Thine ear to my supplication, to my cry."

"The sum of Thy Word is truth; and all Thy righteous judgments are everlasting."

"Pledge me Thy Word for good; let not the arrogant oppress me."

"I delight in Thy promise, like one who finds abundant spoil."

"Teach me good judgment and knowledge, for I have trusted in Thy commands."

"Accept now, O Lord, the voluntary offerings of my mouth, and teach me Thine ordinances."

One reason advanced for the recitation of Psalm 47 seven times, and the choice of seven quotations, is that the sounds of the Shofar may penetrate through each of the seven Heavens to reach The Almighty.

The two benedictions pronounced before the blowing of the Shofar are:

"Blessed art Thou, Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to hear the sound of the Shofar."

"Blessed art Thou, Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast granted us life and sustenance and permitted us to reach this season."

The first series of Shofar-notes, consisting of thirty calls, is then sounded, as follows:

TEKIAH	SH'VAHRIM-TERUAH	TEKIAH
TEKIAH	SH'VAHRIM-TERUAH	TEKIAH
TEKIAH	SH'VAHRIM-TERUAH	TEKIAH

TEKIAH	SH'VAHRIM	TEKIAH
TEKIAH	SH'VAHRIM	TEKIAH
TEKIAH	SH'VAHRIM	TEKIAH

TEKIAH	TERUAH	TEKIAH
TEKIAH	TERUAH	TEKIAH
TEKIAH	TERUAH	TEKIAH-GEDOLAH (Long Tekiah)

During the repetition of the "Eighteen Benedictions", the Shofar is sounded after the completion of each of three main divisions of the prayer - the divisions of "Malchiot" (The Lord's Sovereignty); "Zichronot" (Remembrances); and "Shofrot" (Sounding of the Shofar). The quotations on our record have been taken from the latter division - referring to the sounding of the Shofar at Mount Sinai when the Torah was given to Israel through Moses; to quotations from the Psalms concerning the Shofar; to quotations in the Books of Isaiah and Zechariah.

After each prayer-division, ten calls of the Shofar are sounded in the following series of notes:

TEKIAH	SH'VAHRIM-TERUAH	TEKIAH
TEKIAH	SH'VAHRIM	TEKIAH
TEKIAH	TERUAH	TEKIAH

Moses Maimonides ("Rambam" - twelfth century scholar, philosopher, law-interpreter, physician, scientist) declares in his "Mishne Torah" that the reason we blow Shofar on "Rosh Hashanah" is that it is a mandatory commandment - "A day of the blowing of the Shofar shall it be unto you" (Number 29, 1). He points out that only the ram's horn is suitable; and that although the Shofar is not specifically mentioned in the commandments, it is specified for the proclamation of the Jubilee Year, and this implies that since it is required for the Jubilee, it is required for "Rosh Hashanah". He continues with various laws concerning its sounding, and stresses the fact that although in the Holy Temple the Shofar was sounded even on the Sabbath, in the Diaspora if the first day of "Rosh Hashanah" occurs on the Sabbath, the Shofar is sounded on the second day only.

Saadia ben Joseph, known as "Saadia Gaon", scholar and philosopher of the 9th-10th century, cites the following ten reasons for the sounding of the Shofar on "Rosh Hashanah":

1. It is the anniversary of the world's creation, and just as mortal kings proclaim the beginning of their sovereignty with the blowing of trumpets and cornets, so on this day when The Lord's rule is acknowledged we do likewise.
2. "Rosh Hashanah" is the first of the Ten Days of Penitence, and the Shofar is sounded to remind us of our obligation ... to proclaim: All who wish to repent, repent.
3. To remind us of the giving of The Law at Mount Sinai, when "the call of the Shofar was exceedingly loud".
4. To remind us of the words of the Prophets echoed in the sound of the Shofar as mentioned in their Books.
5. To remind us of the destruction of The Temple in Jerusalem and the clamor of the bugles of the enemy.

6. To remind us of the binding by Abraham of Isaac upon the altar, and their faith in The Almighty.

7. That we may be in awe and trembling, and bare our souls to The Almighty, for the sound of the Shofar is awe-inspiring and terrifying.

8. To commemorate the great Day of Judgment, when the Shofar will be sounded for all mankind.

9. To remind us of the gathering of the scattered remnants of our people throughout the world, which will be heralded by the call of the Shofar.

10. To remind us of Resurrection and to believe in it - when the Shofar will awaken the slumberers.

When the "Eighteen Benedictions" repetition has been completed, a total of sixty calls has been sounded (30 in the first series, 10, 10, and 10 during the repetition). It is traditional to hear 100 calls on "Rosh Hashanah". When the "Eighteen Benedictions" are finished, therefore, another series of 30 calls is sounded, as in the original cycle; and before the Service is concluded, an additional 10 are sounded in the order utilized during the repetition:

TEKIAH	SH'VAHRIM-TERUAH	TEKIAH
TEKIAH	SH'VAHRIM	TEKIAH
TEKIAH	TERUAH	TEKIAH-GEDOLAH

making a total of the required 100.

David M. Hausdorff is a recognized authority on Jewish religious laws, customs, and traditions; author of "The Story of Judaism", "Customs and Traditions of Israel", "Tales and Legends of Israel", "The Illustrated Jewish Manual", "The Biblical Picture Gallery", "Handbook of Jewish Information", "Ye That Thirst" (summaries and lectures on the weekly Biblical portion), "A Book of Jewish Curiosities", and articles and essays in various publications.

Former associate-chairman of the Education Committee of the National Council of Young Israel; former secretary of the Board of Secular Education of the United Yeshivos Foundation; former co-chairman of the Board of Education of Yeshivah Ohel Moshe; Jewish education chairman of Bensonhurst-Mapleton Lodge of B'nai B'rith.

SCRIPTURAL CANTILLATION

by
David M. Hausdorff

Historically, vocalization was in use long before the vowel-signs were invented. Similarly, the mode of intonation used in the public recital of Holy Scripture and prayer must have been in existence long before the musical notes ("Neginot" -- or "T'ahmin" -- "tropes"). These musical notations to Scripture give not only the melody, but also serve as grammatical accents, so that the meaning of the text as well as its rhythm receives emphasis and illustration from the chant.

Identical notes are utilized throughout Holy Scripture (in the Schools themselves, however, there are neither notes nor vowels). Yet the melody varies depending upon the text to which it is applied.

Each Sabbath and Holiday, as well as on Monday and Thursday mornings, a section of The Bible (Five Books of Moses) is read in the Synagogue. In each case, each individual "called up" ("Aliyah") for his "portion" recites a benediction before and after the reading:

(BEFORE)

"Bless ye The Lord Who is to be blessed.

Blessed is The Lord, Who is to be blessed, forever and ever.

Blessed are Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast chosen us from all peoples and hast given us Thy Torah. Blessed are Thou, O Lord, Giver of The Torah."

(AFTER)

"Blessed are Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who hast given us The Torah of truth, and hast planted everlasting life in our midst. Blessed are Thou, O Lord, Giver of The Torah."

The Sabbath, Holiday, and weekday readings are all chanted according to traditional notes, varying from country to country. As indicated, these are not included in the Scroll, which contains merely the handwritten words without vowels or notes. (These latter are available in printed books). The selections given in this record are what may be termed "modern Western Hemisphere Ashkenazic".

The portion of the regular reading included on this record to indicate the tune, is from the 10th chapter of Exodus.

A different tune is used for the High Holy Day reading - on "Rosh Hashanah" (New Year's) and "Yom Kippur" (Day of Atonement). The selection included is from that of the first day of "Rosh Hashanah", from the 21st chapter of Genesis.

On Sabbaths, Holidays, and fast-days, a section of the Prophets is appended. This is preceded and followed by special benedictions:

(BEFORE)

"Blessed are Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast chosen good prophets and hast found pleasure in their words which were spoken in truth. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, Who hast chosen The Torah, and Moses Thy servant, and Israel Thy people, and prophets of truth and righteousness."

(AFTER)

This benediction consists of four paragraphs, referring to The Almighty's fulfillment of His words of truth and righteousness; a plea for mercy upon Zion; and appeal for the restoration of the house of David through the coming of Elijah the Prophet; a prayer of thanksgiving.

The section from the Prophets included in this record - with its traditional melody - is from the 12th and 13th chapters of Hosea.

When the Song at the Crossing of the Red Sea is chanted (Exodus 15), a special tune is utilized. This is included on this record, as well as the special cantillations for the

"Song of Songs" (chanted on the Intermediate Sabbath of Passover);

"Lamentations" (Fast of the Ninth of Ab);

"Ruth" (on "Shavuoth" - Feast of Weeks);

"Esther" ("Purim" - Feast of Lots);

"Ecclesiastes" (Intermediate Sabbath of "Succoth" - Feast of Tabernacles).

The excerpts chosen for this record are all from the first chapters of these Books.

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