



A Bent Shofar on Rosh Hashanah

The *Mishnah* discusses the ideal *shofar* for *Rosh Hashanah*. The first opinion is that it should be the straight horn from a *yael* (wild goat) (3:3). *R' Yehuda* however argues that it should be a bent ram's horn (3:5). Since the *Mishnah* earlier (3:2) stated that any *shofar* may be used (with the exclusion of a bull's horn) presumably the debate regarding the type of horn for *Rosh Hashanah* is referring only to ideal circumstances; given a choice.

The following *Rambam* is therefore surprising (*Shofar* 1:1): "The *Shofar* that is blown on *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yovel* is the ram's horn that is bent..." The *Magid Mishneh* explains that the *Rambam* is siding with some of the commentators (explaining the position of *R' Levi*, *Rosh Hashanah* 26b) that on *Rosh Hashanah* only a bent *shofar* can be used. Indeed the *Raavad* argues that the requirement of a bent *shofar* is only for an added *mitzvah*, yet one would still fulfill the *mitzvah* of *shofar* if a straight *shofar* was used. We shall try to understand the position of the *Rambam*.

Let us first return the debate in our *Mishnah*. The *Gemara* explains that *R' Yehuda*, who requires a bent *shofar*, maintains that it is better that one bends one's thoughts and is humble before *Hashem*. *Rashi* explains that in one's *tefillah* his eyes are turned down, based on the *pasuk* "My eyes and heart will always be there" (*Melachim* I 9:3). The *Tana Kama* however argues that straightness in thought is preferred. *Rashi* explains that this position is based on the *pasuk*, "We will lift our hearts to our hands..." (*Eicha* 3:41) and so on *Rosh Hashanah* a straight *shofar* should be use "for it is *tefillah*". Clear?

Rav Soloveitchik (*Harerei Kedeim* 7) explains that the *pesukim* cited by *Rashi* are those used in the debate

regarding the direction that one's eyes should be turned during prayer (*Yevamot* 105b). The first *pasuk* used to support the position that one should look downward, while the later supporting the position that one should look up. Consequently *Rashi* understands that the debate here is tied to the debate there. Put simply, *shofar* is considered like prayer.

With this in mind *Rav Soloveitchik* continues to explain that the *Rambam*, who maintains that a bent *shofar* must be used on *Rosh Hashanah*, does not view the aspect of prayer in *shofar* as a simple adage or *hiddur*. Rather prayer is the *mitzvah* of *shofar*. Putting it together, if one's eyes must be turned downward during prayer, then one must use a bent *shofar* on *Rosh Hashanah*.

The *Rav* raises an issue with this understanding. The *Gemara* (28a) explains that if one blows a *shofar* for musical reasons, he still fulfills the *mitzvah* of *shofar* because the fulfillment of *mitzvot* do not require *kavana* (intent). The *Rav* however adds that the exception to this rule is prayer, where one minimally requires *kavana* that he is praying. If *shofar* is equated with *tefillah* then one should not have fulfilled his obligation of *shofar* if he played it for music.

The *Rav* answers by differentiating between the person blowing the *shofar* and the *shofar* itself. The *shofar* itself must be fit for prayer. The fulfillment of prayer however does not prevent the *mitzvah* of *shofar*. He explains that we find something similar with respect to *lulav*. While a *lulav* must be large enough for shaking, holding but neglecting to shake the four species does not prevent the fulfillment of the *mitzvah*.

Yisrael Yitzchak Bankier

Revision Questions

ראש השנה ב' ט' ד' ה'

- Describe the event that occurred following *R' Yehoshua's* dispute of the ruling of *Rabban Gamliel* to sanctify the month based on apparently questionable testimony. (ב' ט')
- What is the law if the entire nation saw the new moon, yet *Beit Din* did not have enough time to say "mekudash" before nightfall? (א' ג')
- How would *Beit Din* proceed if they alone saw the new moon? (א' ג')
- What qualifies as a *shofar*? (ב' ג')
- Describe the ideal *shofar*. (ג' ג')
- Explain how the *shofar* would coordinate with the *chatzotzrot* in the *Beit Ha'Mikdash* on *Rosh Hashanah*. (ג' ג')
- Explain how the *shofar* would coordinate with the *chatzotzrot* in the *Beit Ha'Mikdash* on a *ta'anit*. (ג' ד')
- In what respects was the *tekiyot* on *yovel* similar to those on *Rosh Hashanah*? (ג' ה')
- Can a *shofar* that cracked and was glued together be used? (ג' ו')
- If a *shofar* had a hole in it and was filled in, may it be used? (ג' ו')
- Can someone fulfil their obligation by hearing the echo produced from a *shofar*? (ג' ז')
- If someone walked past a *shul* and heard the sound of the *shofar* has he fulfilled his obligation? (ג' ז')
- How does the *Mishnah* explain the following *pasuk*: (ג' ח')
"והיה כאשר ירים משה ידו וגבר ישראל..." (שמות י"ז: י"א)
- Which other *pasuk* does the *Mishnah* explain in a similar manner? (ג' ח')
- When was the *mitzvah* of *shofar* different inside and outside the *Beit Ha'Mikdash*? (א' י')
- What decree did *R' Yochanan ben Zakkai* enact after the destruction of the *Beit Ha'Mikdash*? (Include both opinions.) (א' י')
- What was the difference between *Yavneh* and the *Beit Ha'Mikdash* with respect to the *halachot* of *shofar*? (ד' ב')
- What other *mitzvah* also has distinct laws between the inside and outside the *Beit Ha'Mikdash* like *shofar*? (ג' י')
- What decree did *R' Yochanan ben Zakkai* enact after the destruction of the *Beit Ha'Mikdash* with respect to *Kiddush HaChodesh*? (ד' י')
- List the two opinions regarding the order of the *brachot* of *mussaf* on *Rosh Hashanah* and the location of the *tekiyot*. (ד' ה')

Local Shiurim

Melbourne, Australia

Sunday -Thursday

10 minutes before *Mincha*
Mizrachi Shul
Melbourne, Australia

Friday & Shabbat

10 minutes before *Mincha*
Beit Ha'Roeh
Melbourne, Australia

Efrat, Israel

Shiur in English

Sunday -Thursday

Rabbi Mordechai Scharf
9:00am
Kollel Magen Avraham
Reemon Neighbourhood

ONLINE SHIURIM

Rabbi Chaim Brown
www.shemayisrael.com/mishna/

Rav Meir Pogrow
613.org/mishnah.html

Rabbi E. Kornfeld
Rabbi C. Brown
<http://www.dafyomi.co.il/calendars/myomi/myomi-thisweek.htm>

SHIUR ON KOL HALOSHON

Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss
In US dial: 718 906 6400
Then select: 1 – 2 – 4

Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
4 th March י"א אדר	5 th March י"ב אדר	6 th March י"ג אדר	7 th March י"ד אדר	8 th March ט"ו אדר	9 th March ט"ז אדר	10 th March ט"ח אדר
Rosh Hashanah 4:6-7	Rosh Hashanah 4:8-9	Taanit 1:1-2	Taanit 1:3-4	Taanit 1:5-6	Taanit 1:7-2:1	Taanit 2:2-3

