

PARSHA WITH

Rabbi Shmuel Brazil



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תשפ"ו RAV BRAZIL PARSHAS YISRO

THE REVELATION OF THE TERUAH NATION

Question of interest. What made its smashing debut appearance in the world only after 2448 years of earth's existence? (Even Ezra Shmos 19,13). It wasn't something that you could touch feel or even see. It wasn't brought about by man or animal, only Hashem alone made the presentation. Although this demonstration was only directed to one of the five senses its impact nevertheless made the entire audience's body tremble and shake with deep fear. By now you probably guessed the answer from the title of this *mamar* – the answer is the sound of the Sinai Shofar. As the *passuk* says (Shmos 19.16) וקול שופר חזק מאד ויחרד כל העם אשר במחנה. Further on the *passuk* describes another characteristic of this shofar in that it was הולך וחזק מאד increasingly with a louder pitch over time.

Besides these two descriptions of this once in nearly 2500 year revelation, the Torah doesn't give us too many more details about it. For instance whether the source of sound came from a real shofar or spiritual? In Pirkei Drabi Elazar 31 it says that the sound of the Sinai Shofar came from the horns of the ram that Avraham brought as a korban instead of Yitzchak his son. The Ramban also seems to agree to this opinion because he asks how this could be a physical shofar when the entire ram was burnt as a sacrifice. He suggests the answer that Hashem restored the horns similar to *Techiyas Hamaisim*. In contrast there are other opinions such as the Gur Aryeh and Pnei Yehoshua who opine that there was no physical shofar and only the same sound of a real shofar was heard coming from the heavens.

Another question asked concerning the shofar sound of Sinai is what was the nature of the sound that it made, a *tekiah* sound, *shevarim* or *teruah*? Rashi Taanis 21b writes it was the sound of a *tekiah*. The Zohar says it was the sound of a *teruah* since the word of תרועה spells תורה which translates the Torah that was given in 70 languages (Devarim 27,8). Secondly, the purpose of the shofar blowing at Sinai was for the nation to experience a state of fear with the revelation of Hashem's *Shechina*. A broken sound like a *teruah* will achieve such a goal in contrast to a *tekiah* sound.

In the Sefer הנבחר מעמד the author brings a proof from a remarkable story brought in the Ma'amar Loez that at *Matan Torah Am Yisrael* heard the sounds of *teruah*. There was Yid who was formerly a בעל תוקע before he became a *meshumad* (Christian) who's job was to play in the King's band. One day the king asked his orchestra if anyone knew how to blow the Jewish Shofar. He happily told the king he has a shofar in his house and he will bring it back to the palace in a jiffy. He returned to the palace and started to blow shofar *tekiah* followed by a *shevarim* however when it came to the *teruah* no sound came out. He kept trying over and over again from the beginning and all he could blow was a *tekiah* and *shevarim*. He started to get depressed, how could it be that I cannot blow a *tekiah*? He finally got the courage to visit Rav Avraham Heikini and told him this crazy story. "What's the explanation", he begged from the Rav. The Rav said it is very simple. The *passuk* says יודעי תרועה Happy are Yisrael who knows how to blow the *teruah* who walk in the light of Hashem. Only a Yid has that power to blow the *teruah* properly not a *goy*. You have chosen a life to live by acting like a *goy* so why would you think you have the capability and know how to blow it now and achieve the desired results.

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Secondly, the Rav told him, our *sefarim* tell us that the sound of *tekiah* parallels Avraham who had a descendant Yishmael of the *derech*. The sound of *shevarim* symbolizes Yitzchak who had a son Aisav who left Hashem's ways. The *teruah* aligns its sound with Yaakov whose descendants were religious *Yidden* and goyim have no connection to him and to his *teruah*. Upon hearing the Rav's explanation, he was filled with remorse over his severance from Hashem and he was aroused to do *teshuva*. He moved from his present dwelling and found a new place to start again to live as a true member of *Am Yisrael*. After his *teshuvah*, the day came when he decided to pick up his shofar which he hadn't blown since the episode with the king. He started blowing with trepidation and hesitancy, *tekiah*, *shevarim*, and then the long awaited *teruah* which came **bursting** out of his shofar crystal clear, echoing in his room the warm comforting sounds that were now dancing off the walls. The only sound that remained heard after his blowing of the shofar was **his** personal sobbing and burst of immense emotional joyous tears that freely flowed with the validating knowledge that his *teshuva* had been fully accepted before the *Kisay Hakavod*. Now we can confidentially say that the sound of the *teruah* was sounded by the Shofar of *Matan Torah*. It was at this *mamad* that Hashem openly separated *Am Yisrael* from all the nations of earth by broadcasting the sound of *teruah* אשרי העם יודעי תרועה.

The *passuk* says (Yeshaya 58, 1,2) בשופר הרם קולך, קרבת אלקים יחפצון. Lift up your voice like the shofar. Which shofar is the *Navi* referring to? We venture to say it is referring to the first time that the sounds of the shofar were introduced to the world, on the day of *Matan Torah*. The blast of that shofar was a *teruah*. This *passuk* is therefore instructing with the life lesson that our mouths and speech must possess the characteristic of *teruah* which separates the Jewish Nation from any other nationality, past, present, and future. It is *Klal Yisrael* who had earned the title of *אדם* who represents the highest category of *מדבר* (medabeir) in creation. עם זו יצרתי לי תהלתי. Our mission in the world is to sing praises to our creator, to learn Torah and *daven* to Him, to discipline our speech that it will not communicate any negativity or idleness at all even between man and man. On the contrary, one must use his speech for *chesed*, compliments, corrective instruction such as *mussar* if done properly, greetings with a smile, *chizzuk*, and to put someone in a good mood by making him laugh etc.

The *Teruah* characteristic that enveloped *Am Yisrael* at *Matan Torah* directed Yisrael that their verbal communications to one another must remain separate from the word usage of the Seventy Nations that only came about because of their rebellion against Hashem. We were given by Hashem *Lashon Hakodesh* a holy language because we are a holy people. This is how Yosef proved his identity to his brothers in that he spoke *Lashon Hakodesh* (Bereishis 45,12 Rashi). It is the language by which Hashem created the universe. To use vulgar rude profanity in order to express offensive words for a variety of purposes including to demonstrate disrespect or negativity, to relieve or express anger surprise or pain is acting like a goy. A **Teruah** Yid separates himself from herd conformity of the **Gentile** world whose profane usage of language is far from **gentle**.

In Devarim 4, 9-10 there is a mitzvah to remember the Revelation of Hashem's giving us the Torah. Included in this is the *mamad* Har Sinai which is all the miraculous occurrences that were present at that time. Part of this is hearing the *Teruah* sounds that took place and its meaning which must become part of our daily lives. We suggest that this concept is reflected in the words

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of the *passuk* above אשרי העם יודעי תרועה. The word יודעי translates as having a deep intimate connection to, as we find this word in the *passuk* והאדם ידע את חוה אשתו. At Sinai we were chosen from amongst all the nations and we **heard** the *Teruah*. It is incumbent on us every day to **live** the *Teruah* that was designated and gifted to us.

Bilam said לא הביט און ביעקב לא ראה עמל בישראל ה' אלקיו עמו ותרועת מלך בו

This *passuk* is relating to the world through their prophet that the essence of a Yid is his neshama which is called תרועת מלך. Hashem blew באפיו into Man's body (from the lashon תרועה) a *neshamah*. This *neshama* was not defiled by the sin of Adam eating from the *Aitz Hadaas*. The word תרועה is rooted in the word רע which means friend and connection. A Yid is always bound with Hashem through his *neshama* which is rooted in the *Aitz Hachayim*. When Shabbos comes which is also above the *Aitz Hadaas* טוב ורע (מהעץ הדעת טוב) the *neshama* has the power to control the body which is in contrast to the rest of the six days in the week when the body could and does take over the *neshamah*. (See Sfas Emes Balak תרסג).

לא יהא דבורך של שבת כדבורך של חול This is the reason why on Shabbos our *dibbur* must be upgraded – for Shabbos is also the day that Torah was given to *Am Yisrael* and then we are יודעי. On your (ויקרא בו לה) בשבתתיכם = תרועת מלך בו. There are many hinting to this. The word תרועה. On your *Shabbosos* the presence of the *Melech Haolam* is felt. The *gematriah* of כשופר קולך is 762 equals ביום שבת with two words. Shabbos is the time of *Matan Torah* ושני לוחות אבנים הוריד בידו time of *teruah* קולך כשופר that is why the following *passuk* קרבת אלוקים חפצך the word קרבת adds up to שבת. On Shabbos we have כשופר קולך that through the power of *teruah dibbur* on Shabbos we get closer to Hashem.

Gut Shabbos

Rav Brazil