



ראש השנה תשפ"ו September 22-24, 2025



בְּנֵי דִּיּוּקָא • The Calendar

The Torah tells us to keep Rosh Hashanah in two different pesukim, and it doesn't call it "Rosh Hashanah" in either one! Check it out.

Vayikra 23:24

Speak to Benei Yisrael and tell them: On the first day of the seventh month you will have a holiday like Shabbat: **Remembrance of the Teru'ah**.

ויקרא כג:כד

דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר בַּחֹדֶשׁ
הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּאַחַד לַחֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם
שַׁבָּתוֹן זִכְרוֹן תְּרוּעָה מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ:

Bemidbar 29:1

On the first day of the seventh month, you will have a holiday. Do not do any work. It will be the **Day of Teru'ah** for you.

במדבר כט:א

וּבַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּאַחַד לַחֹדֶשׁ מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ
יִהְיֶה לָכֶם כָּל מְלָאכָתָא עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ
יוֹם תְּרוּעָה יִהְיֶה לָכֶם:

In both pesukim, the holiday is described as a time for **תְּרוּעָה (teru'ah)**, which is the main sound of the shofar. This is how we know that there is a mitzvah to hear the shofar on Rosh Hashanah.



- Did you know the Torah says the shofar is the main part of Rosh Hashanah? What does that teach us about Rosh Hashanah?



בואו נדבר על זה • Tell Me More About This!

When you go to shul on Rosh Hashanah, you'll hear many different sounds coming from the shofar:

תְּקִיעָה (tekiah)



One long blast



שְׁבָרִים (shevarim)



Three medium blasts



תְּרוּעָה (teru'ah)



Nine extremely short blasts



Plus, you'll hear **shevarim-teru'ah**, which is a combo note of the last two!



But in the Torah, Rosh Hashanah is only called a day of תְּרוּעָה (teru'ah). So why do we blow all these other sounds?

The answer is: We aren't quite sure what teru'ah is supposed to sound like.

According to ancient Aramaic translations of the Torah, called Targumim, "teru'ah" in the Torah means a crying sound.

In the Gemara, Abaye notices that a crying sound comes up in Sefer Shoftim, in a story about a big battle where בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (Benei Yisrael, the Israelites) defeated Sisera, the Canaanite general. Sisera's mother, who didn't realize her son was dead, is described as waiting for him to come home:



Shoftim 5:28

שופטים ה:כח

Sisera's mother looked out the window and cried.

בַּעַד הַחֲלוֹן נִשְׁקָפָה וַתִּיבֹב אִם סִסְרָא

But, as you probably know, crying can sound like a lot of different things.

Abaye explains that there are different opinions about what Sisera's mother's cries sounded like:

Talmud Bavli Rosh Hashanah 33b

תלמוד בבלי ראש השנה לג:

One opinion is that they were groans.

מָר סָבַר גְּנוּחֵי גִנָּח.

And one opinion is that they were hysterical cries.

וַיִּמָּר סָבַר יִלּוּלֵי יִלִּיל.

These different cries create two different shofar notes:



Shevarim = groans



Teru'ah = hysterical cries (the fancy English word for this is "ululating," which sounds just like the Hebrew word, yalil)

Notice that one of these sounds is called "teru'ah," but that's just what WE call it. When the Torah says that Rosh Hashanah is a day of teru'ah, it could mean either one of these sounds, or even both combined (Rosh Hashanah 34a)!

From other pesukim, the Gemara learns that all these sounds need to have a tekiah before them and a tekiah after them. That's why we have so many different shofar sounds!

- ◆ When have you cried in a groaning way and when in a hysterical way? What do different cries mean about what a person is feeling?
- ◆ Sisera was the enemy of Benei Yisrael! What can we learn from the idea that our shofar blasts are modeled after his mother's pain?
- ◆ In other midrashim, the shofar's crying sounds are connected to the crying sounds that Sarah made when she heard about her son Yitzhak being offered as a sacrifice (Pirkei de-Rabbi Eliezer, Sefer Ha-Minhagim). When you listen to the shofar, what could the memory of Sarah and the memory of Sisera's mother add to the experience?
- ◆ According to both midrashim, the shofar's cries remind us of mothers crying for their children. What could that teach us about the shofar?



• Custom

Many families begin Rosh Hashanah by eating some special foods that represent our hopes and dreams for the year ahead. These foods are called **סימנים** (simanim, symbols).

In some **מחזורים** (mahzorim, prayer books) for Rosh Hashanah, there are short prayers that go with each of the simanim. These words give us an opportunity to make prayer part of the very first bites of food that we take in the new year!

Here are a few of the simanim for Rosh Hashanah and the prayers that go with them.

APPLE IN HONEY



May it be Your will, God our Lord and Lord of our ancestors: that our year will be good and **sweet**.

FISH HEAD



May it be Your will, God our Lord and Lord of our ancestors: that we will be like **a head** and not like a tail.

DATE



This one is a pun because the word **תמו** (tamar, date) sounds like the word **יתמו** (vitamu, stop).

May it be Your will, God our Lord and Lord of our ancestors: that our enemies and haters **will be stopped**.

POMEGRANATE



May it be Your will, God our Lord and Lord of our ancestors: that our mitzvot will be as numerous as the seeds in a **pomegranate**.

- ♦ How does it feel to turn your eating into praying? How can this change the way you eat?