



Blowing Chatzatrot Today

During the week, we learnt that during a time of *atzirat geshamim* – when the rainy season has arrived, but it has not yet rained – sets of fasts are observed that increase in severity. We learnt that the final set of fasts are accompanied with the blowing of *shofarot*. With the beginning of the third *perek* we learnt that for certain calamities, we blow *shofarot* immediately.

The *Rambam* explains that is a *mitzvah* from the *Torah* to pray and blow trumpets in the event of a calamity, as it states: "[And if you go to war in your land] against the enemy (*tzar*) that oppresses you then you shall blow an alarm with your trumpets..." (*Bamidar* 10:9).

The *Magen Avraham* (575:1) however asks, since it is a biblical obligation, why is the *mitzvah* not observed nowadays in time of trouble? He continues, that granted that we do not decree a public fast day outside Israel, nevertheless this does not explain why the biblical *mitzvah* is not observed.

The *Netiv Chaim* explains that the *mitzvah* only applies in *Eretz Yisrael* as suggested by the beginning of the verse. This explains why we have not historically blown *shofarot* outside Israel.

The *Mishnah Berura* (576:1) cites two more answer. The first, restricts the scope of the *mitzvah* further to only apply when *Eretz Yisrael* is under our control. Alternatively, the *mitzvah* only applies to a calamity that befalls a majority of Israel.

The common method in the above answers is reducing the scope of the *mitzvah*.

The *Aruch HaShulchan* however provide a technical reason why we do not blow *shofarot*. He explains that we hold like *Rashi* and the *Tur* that the *shofarot* are sounded after each of the six *berachot* that are added to the *shemona esrei* on a public fast day. Since we do not decree a public fast day

outside Israel, we do not recite these additional *berachot*. He notes that while it is true that the *berachot* are rabbinic while the *tekiyot* are biblical, since the *Chachamim* decreed that the location to blow *shofarot* is during those *berachot* only, one is not allowed to blow the *shofarot*. This then would be another example where the *Chachamim* have the capacity to institute a decree that requires one to passively refrain from performing a biblical *mitzvah*.

The *Beit Meshulam* however provides an answer by probing the function of the *shofar* on a fast day, based on the *pasuk* "awaken (*ura*), why do you slumber". Recall that at the end of *masechet Maaser Sheni* (5:15) we learnt that *Yochanan Kohen Gadol* put an end to the *me'orerim*. The *Bartenura* explains that this means he stopped people saying the above *pasuk*. By extension, this means he stopped the blowing of *shofarot*. Why so?

The *Beit Meshulam* explains that in the past *Am Yisrael* had strong *emumah*. Even when it appeared that their prayers were not being answered they would not challenge it. In the times of *Yochanan*, he saw that the people's faith began to weaken and stopped the recitation of the *pasuk*. Consequently, according to the *Beit Meshulam*, the *shofarot* were stopped along with it. He directs our attention the *Tosfot Yom Tov* in *Maaser Sheni* to explain. The *Gemara* (*Sotah* 48a) asks how the *Leviim* could sing, "awaken, why do you slumber?" when there is another *pasuk* "The Guardian of Yisrael does not sleep". The *Gemara* explains that our *pasuk* refer to when *Am Yisrael* are in distress and that nations are serene, because at that it appears as if *Hashem* is sleeping. The *Tosfot Yom Tov* explains, citing the *Rambam*, that *Yochanan Kohen Gadol* stopped the practice as they began reciting the *pasuk* as if they were shouting at *Hashem* to wake up, which is inappropriate. By extension, we can understand that according to the *Beit Meshulam* the practice of blowing *shofar* was also stopped because as the nation's faith began to weaken it was being used with the similar inappropriate intension.

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Revision Questions

טעניט א' ה' – ג' א'

- By which date does *beit din* decree fast days on the public if rain has still not fallen? (א' ה')
- How many fast days does the *Beit Din* institute? (א' ה')
- If it still has not rained how many more fast days does the *Beit Din* institute and how do these differ from the previous ones? (א' ה')
- If yet again it still has not rained how many more fast days does the *Beit Din* institute and how do these differ from the previous ones? (א' ה')
- If it still has not rained, what else would everyone take upon themselves? (א' ה')
- Did anyone still fast during this period? (א' ה')
- If it eventually rained in *Nissan* was it considered positive? (א' ה')
- For the final set of fasts, where would they all gather? (א' ב')
- What would they put on their heads? (א' ב')
- According to the *Mishnah* what was the most vital component of the fast days? (א' ב')
- Who would they elect to lead them in the *tefillot*? (א' ב')
- How many *brachot* would they add to *sh'monah esrei*? (א' ב')
- What were these additional *brachot*? (א' ב' ג' ד')
- How did *R' Chalafta* and *R' Chananya ben Teradyon* end each of the additional *brachot* and how did the *kehillah* respond? (א' ב' ה')
- What else did they do differently? (א' ב' ה')
- Who were exempt from the first three fast days? (א' ב' ה')
- Was anyone exempt from the second set of fast days? (א' ב' ה')
- What other difference is mentioned between the *anshei mishmar* and *anshei beit av*? (א' ב' ה')
- What was prohibited for the *anshei mishmar* until Thursday and why? (א' ב' ה')
- With respect to a day mentioned in the *megillat ha'ta'anit* as being prohibited from fasting, are the days prior to and proceeding it prohibited from fasting as well? (א' ב' ח')
- On which day of the week do we not begin the set of fast days and why? (א' ב' ט')
- On which days during the year do we not begin the set of fast days and why? (א' ב' י')
- What is the law where a fast day (out of a set of already decreed fast days) coincides with one of the days described in the previous question? (א' ב' י')
- Meteorologically, what is an indication of a *betzoret*? (א' ג')
- How do we respond differently to the phenomenon described in the previous question as apposed to the way we respond to the lack of rain (as described through the first two *perakim*)? (א' ג')

Melbourne, Australia

Sunday -Thursday
10 minutes before *Mincha*
Mizrachi Shul
Melbourne, Australia

Friday & Shabbat
10 minutes before *Mincha*
Mizrachi Shul
Melbourne, Australia

Efrat, Israel
Shiur in English

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

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Yisrael Bankier
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Rabbi Chaim Brown
www.shemayisrael.com/mishna/

Rabbi E. Kornfeld
Rabbi C. Brown
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SHIUR ON KOL HALOSHON

Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss
In US dial: 718 906 6400
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Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
10 December כ"ב כסלו	11 December כ"ג כסלו	12 December כ"ד כסלו	13 December כ"ה כסלו	14 December כ"ו כסלו	15 December כ"ז כסלו	16 December כ"ח כסלו
Taanit 3:2-3	Taanit 3:4-5	Taanit 3:6-7	Taanit 3:8-9	Taanit 4:1-2	Taanit 4:3-4	Taanit 4:5-6

