



# Holy Horn

It is written *ובחרת בחיים*, choose life (Devarim 30:19). Who would choose death? Continues the Pasuk- *למען תחיה*, so that you will live. These words seem to be unnecessary?

An authentic life is that which contains spirituality. Just as we need food to satiate our physical body, we need spirituality to satiate our soul.

The Shofar awakens us to this reality as the Rambam (Hilchos Teshuva 3:4) writes *עורו ישנים משינתכם*, awaken those who are sleeping. In fact, the word *שופר* is related to *שפיר*, improve, beautify (See Vayikra Rabba 29:6 *שפרה* was the name given to Yocheved because she beautified the child [Shemos 1:15, Rashi]). It therefore comes as no surprise that the first letters of the words *ראש ולענה פרה שרש*, a root flourishing with gall and wormwood, spell *שופר* because the Shofar helps us rid ourselves of impurity (Mayana Shel Torah, Devarim 29:17). Indeed, the initials of *שופר* are *ש* (no adversary and no misfortune), *פ* (form the word *שופר* (Melachim 1, 5:18, Tur, Orach Chaim, 585:5).

A man named Yaakov that was doing Kiruv in Kfar Vardim brought his Shofar on the morning of Rosh Hashana there. Seeing one walking his dog, he approached and asked if he would like to hear the Shofar blown. He agreed and it was blown. Fast forward 15 years when Yaakov was now the rabbi in Kfar Vardim after having built a Shul and Mikva in this area. A man approaches and

thanks him for who he is today. The rabbi asked if he is new in town since he didn't recognize him. He told the rabbi that he owns a house here but he has been away for 15 years as he became a Baal Teshuva. The rabbi exclaimed, "you are the one with the dog that I blew Shofar for." The man told him, "that wasn't me, rather I was sitting on my porch with my coffee that Rosh Hashana morning when you blew the Shofar. I was completely unaware that it was Rosh Hashana. I was stuck and confused in life. When you blew the Shofar, I decided to discover my roots which eventually led me to become a Baal Teshuva."

Rosh Hashana is called *יום תרועה*, the day of the Shofar (Bamidbar 29:1). *תרועה* is a term that means friendship - *ריעות* (As in Bamidbar 23:21). This is because the purpose of the Shofar is to improve our relationship with Hashem who is called *ריע*, friend (Mishlei 27:10, Shabbos 31a, Rashi s.v. *דעלך*). In fact, if we break up the word *תרועה* we get *ה ריעות*.

The Pasuk states *ה' לפני המלך הריעו וקול שופר*, with the Shofar, call out before Hashem (Tehillim 98:6). This can be understood to mean the blowing of the Shofar is to get us close to Hashem. In fact, the initials of *שערים ראשיכם*, raise up your heads...so that the King of Glory may enter (Tehillim 24:7. Also 24:9.), spell *שופר*. After the Shofar is sounded at Shacharis we recite *לדוד ה' אורי* (Tehillim 27). What does it speak of? Closeness

to Hashem (Among the Pesukim there is ... *אחת שאלתי ה' ; שבת בבית ה' ; I ask that I dwell in the house of Hashem all the days of my life...*).

The *תרועה* is a broken sound. The Sefer Hachinuch tells us this alludes to breaking the Yetzer Hara (Sefer Hachinuch, Mitzva 311. Also 405.). Rosh Hashana is referred to as *יום תרועה* (Bamidbar 29:1, See Tur 591), a day to break the Yetzer Hara, Satan.

The Satan is known as the *סס*. Adding up these two letters we arrive at a total of 100. On Rosh Hashana we blow 100 Shofar blasts (Rosh Hashana, Tosafos, 33b, Tur, 592). In fact, before Tekias Shofar we say *תקעו כף*, sound the Shofar (Tehillim 47:2). This alludes to the 100 Shofar blasts, as *כף* has a Gematria of 100. Another hint is found in *תקעו בחדש שופר*, blow the Shofar... (Tehillim 81:4), as the sum of *תקעו* - 576 - is the same as 100, *מאה קלת* Shofar blasts. These 100 blasts are to overcome the power of Satan. In this light we can grasp the words of the gemara *כדי לערבב השטן*, in order to confuse Satan (Rosh Hashana 16b).

The purpose of the 100 Shofar blasts is to get us closer to Hashem, to live a more spiritual life. The Gematria of *שופר* is 586. Tallying another 100 to this (for the 100 Shofar blasts), we arrive at 686, the precise sum of *ובחרת בחיים*! This is telling us that through the Shofar, we are empowered to choose real life- spirituality. In this light we can grasp the continuation of the Pasuk - *למען תחיה*, in order to live a true existence.

## Rabbi Yehoshua Alt

*To join the thousands of recipients and receive these insights free on a weekly email, obtain previous articles, feedback, comments, suggestions (on how to spread the insights of this publication further, make it more appealing or anything else), to support or dedicate this publication which has been in six continents and more than forty countries, or if you know anyone who is interested in receiving these insights weekly, please contact the author, Rabbi Yehoshua Alt, at [yalt3285@gmail.com](mailto:yalt3285@gmail.com). Thank you.*

*Listen to the NEW, short Fascinating Insights podcast at <https://jewishpodcasts.fm/fascinating-insights>, where it can also be downloaded!*

*Coming Soon Bez"H  
The book  
Extraordinary Insights*

*For Dedication Opportunities (which can be given from Maiseer money)—L'Ilui Nishmas, in memory of a loved one, L'Refuah Shleima, Hatzlacha, or for any reason, in addition to sharing in the merit of the Torah learned by each reader—please send an email to [yalt3285@gmail.com](mailto:yalt3285@gmail.com). Donations can also be given via credit card by clicking "Donate" at <https://thechesedfund.com/fascinatinginsights/extraordinaryinsights>. Any amount is welcome.*