



We Blow the Shofar to Receive the Illumination of the Living King's Countenance

We Blow the Shofar on Rosh HaShanah to Arouse the Midah of "ואמת" on Shabbas We Do Not Blow Shofar since the Midah of "ואמת" Is Revealed

In honor of the two days of Rosh HaShanah 5781 that approach us auspiciously, it is fitting that we focus on the significantly different characteristics of the two days this year. The first day this year falls on Shabbas; therefore, in keeping with the ruling of Chazal, we do not blow shofar, in order to prevent a possible desecration of the Shabbas. The Gemara (R.H. 29b) explains that this decree was instituted to prevent someone who is not an expert from carrying a shofar four amot in the public domain to go seek guidance and instruction from an expert shofar-blower. Yet, since the second day of Rosh HaShanah this year falls on Sunday, we do blow shofar, as we are commanded to do by HKB"H (Bamidbar 29, 1): "יום תרועה יהיה לכם"—it shall be a day of shofar-blowing for you.

We will begin our discussion by investigating the question raised in our sacred sefarim: How did our blessed sages dare annul such an important Torah-ordained mitzvah due to the concern of the possibility of "chilul-Shabbas"? This is truly surprising! This is especially intriguing and surprising in light of the fact that in the merit of the mitzvah of blowing shofar, HKB"H rises from the throne of "din" and occupies the throne of "rachamim." Here is the pertinent Midrash (V.R. 29, 3):

"יהודה ברבי נחמן פתח עלה אלקים בתרועה ה' בקול שופר, בשעה שהקב"ה יושב ועולה על כסא דין בדין הוא עולה. מאי טעם, עלה אלקים בתרועה, ובשעה שישראל נוטלין את שופריהן ותוקעין לפני

הקב"ה, עומד מכסא הדין ויושב בכסא רחמים, דכתיב ה' בקול שופר, ומתמלא עליהם רחמים ומרחם עליהם, והופך עליהם מדת הדין לרחמים, אימתי, בחודש השביעי."

Rabbi Yehudah the son of Rabbi Nachman opened with the following passuk (Tehillim 47, 6): "Elokim has ascended with the sound of 'teruah'; Havaya with the sound of the shofar." At first, HKB"H occupies His throne of justice, embodying the attribute of "din"; hence, the passuk initially employs the name "Elokim"—the name of "din." Yet, when Yisrael take their shofars in hand and blow, He vacates the throne of "din" and occupies the throne of "rachamim" (divine mercy); hence, the passuk changes to the name Havaya—the name of "rachamim." Full of mercy, He treats them mercifully, transforming the attribute of "din" into the attribute of "rachamim." When? During the seventh month.

Thus, it is difficult to fathom why our blessed sages abolished the mitzvah of shofar on a Rosh HaShanah that falls on Shabbas. Their concerns could have been allayed easily by requiring that only an expert be permitted to blow shofar.

After analyzing the matter, all of the sefarim conclude that the sages annulled the mitzvah of blowing shofar on Shabbas for another more significant reason. As pointed out, the purpose of sounding the shofar is to stimulate HKB"H to rise from the throne of "din" and occupy the throne

of “rachamim.” The kedushah of Shabbas accomplishes this feat by itself, transforming “midas hadin” into “midas harachamim.” Therefore, it is not necessary to blow shofar on Shabbas. This aspect of the Shabbas is mentioned in the passage of the Zohar hakadosh that we recite on Shabbas Eve (Terumah 135b):

When the Shabbas enters, she unifies and separates herself from the external (impure, evil) forces; all the forces of “din” leave her . . . All the powers of wrath and the powers of “din,” they all flee from her and abandon her.

The Redness of the Face of the Shofar-blower Arouses the Light of the Divine Face the Attribute "ואמת"

I would like to share a wonderful idea with our royal audience concerning the upcoming two days of Rosh HaShanah. It is a novel explanation regarding the rationale for annulling the mitzvah of shofar on Shabbas. To begin with, we will explore in depth the underlying reason for the command to blow the shofar on Rosh HaShanah. HKB”H said: **“It shall be a day of shofar-blowing for you”**—a day of **“teruah.”**

Let us refer to what the Bnei Yissaschar (Tishrei 3, 6) brings down in the name of our master, the Arizal, in Sha’ar HaKavanos (Rosh HaShanah Drush 7). The shofar-blower should have in mind, when his face is red from blowing the shofar, that he is performing an act of awakening below to stimulate an awakening above—to extend the redness of the illumination of the face of HKB”H, so to speak, from above—in keeping with the passuk (Bamidbar 6, 25): **“יאר ה’ פניו אליך: ”ואמת**—**may Hashem shine His countenance upon you and find favor with you.** This alludes to the seventh midah of the “thirteen attributes of rachamim”--**“ואמת”**.

Before delving into the words of the Bnei Yissaschar, let us provide a brief clarification of what the Arizal explains regarding the midah of **“ואמת”** that emanates from the illumination of the countenance of HKB”H. As we know, HKB”H relates to Yisrael according to the “thirteen midos of rachamim” that He revealed to Moshe Rabeinu in parshas Ki Sisa (Shemos 34, 6): **“ויעבור ה’ על פניו ויקרא, ה’ ה’ אל רחום**

והחונן ארך אפים ורב חסד ואמת נוצר חסד לאלפים נושא עון ופושע וחטאה. ונקה” וגו’. Hashem passed before him and proclaimed: “Hashem, Hashem, G-d, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in kindness and truth. He preserves of kindness for thousands of generations, forgiving iniquity and willful transgression and sin; He absolves, etc.”

Our early scholars and sources suggest numerous ways of counting and dividing up the thirteen midos. Eventually, the Arizal, via his divine inspiration, settled the matter (Eitz HaChaim, Sha’ar 13, Chapter 11). He explains that the first two names—Hashem, Hashem—are merely the foundation and source of the “thirteen midos harachamim”; the actual thirteen midos begin after that. Their order is: **“אל, רחום, ורחום, ארך, אפים, ורב חסד, ואמת, נוצר חסד, לאלפים, נושא עון, ופושע, וחטאה, ונקה.”**

Now, the Zohar hakadosh (Nasso 131b) refers to the “thirteen midos harachamim” as: **“תליסר תקונין דדיקנא עלאה”**—**thirteen tikunim of the supreme, holy beard.** To explain the matter, let us refer to Rashi’s commentary on the passuk (Shemos 20, 2): **“אנכי ה’ אלקיך”**—**I am Hashem, your G-d.** Citing the Mechilta, he explains that at the time of Matan Torah, HKB”H appeared to Yisrael **as an elderly gentleman full of mercy.** In other words, HKB”H revealed to Yisrael a bright, illuminated countenance resembling that of a merciful, elderly man, with a majestic face, adorned with a white beard. In this manner, He extended the “thirteen midos of rachamim” to them emanating from the beard of His face, so to speak.

The Midah of "ואמת" Is the Brilliant Light of HKB”H’s Countenance

Thus, the Arizal teaches us that the seventh midah—the midah of **“ואמת”**—is the central midah and focal point of the “thirteen midos harachamim.” After all, it has six midos preceding it and six midos following it. Furthermore, it is located on the brilliant face of HKB”H, on the right and left cheeks, which are hairless and are totally surrounded by the white beard. All the other twelve midos are located within the holy beard surrounding the countenance.

With this introduction, we can begin to comprehend the Arizal's insight concerning the sounding of the shofar. While blowing the shofar, the blower should have in mind that the redness of his face represents an awakening below aimed at drawing the midah of "ואמת" from above, from the countenance of HKB"H. As explained, that is the central midah, which encompasses all of the other twelve midos surrounding it.

At this point, it is imperative that we warn against attributing any physical properties to HKB"H, chas v'chalilah. For, one of the foundations of our emunah is that HKB"H is not a physical being and cannot be perceived by physical beings. Nevertheless, regarding this point, the passuk says (Iyov 19, 26): "ומבשרי אחזה אלוק"—**and from my flesh, I see G-d.** The Sefas Emes explains (Vayeira 5656): **For, it is written** (Bereishis 1, 26): **"Let us make man in our image. If so, man can gain an awareness of his Creator from his own being.**

Additionally, he brings down the commentaries related to the Mishnah (Avos 2, 1): "דע מיה למעלה ממך"—**know what is above you.** This implies that we can know how HKB"H manages and controls the world from His heavenly vantage point above "ממך"—from our very selves. After all, HKB"H created us in His image and His likeness, so that we might begin to comprehend His actions. This is also included in the implication of the passuk: **"From my flesh, I see G-d."** Just like an elderly man full of mercy radiates his countenance to his children and grandchildren; so, too, HKB"H radiates to Yisrael the "thirteen midos of rachamim," like an elderly man full of mercy. As explained, the thirteen midos emanate from the holy, white beard of His countenance, in keeping with the passuk: **"May Hashem shine His countenance upon you."**

Life Comes from the Illumination of His Countenance

It is now with great pleasure that we will delight in the comments of the Bnei Yissaschar. He explains why it is necessary to draw upon the light of HKB"H's countenance on Rosh HaShanah. We have learned in the Mishnah (R.H. 32b) that on Rosh HaShanah: **מלך יושב על כסא דין וספרי חיים**

—the King sits on the throne of "din" and the books of the living and the books of the dead lie open before Him.

Now, it is explicitly written (Mishlei 16, 15): **באור פני מלך—חיים—in the light of the king's countenance is life.** In other words, when the light of the King's countenance is revealed, life is granted. Therefore, on Rosh HaShanah, we pray: **מלך חפץ בחיים, וכתבנו בספר החיים, למענך—remember us for life, O King Who desires life, and inscribe us in the Book of Life, for Your sake, O living G-d.** It is of vital importance to draw from the light of HKB"H's countenance, if we wish to draw life, in keeping with: **"In the light of the king's countenance is life."**

As a loyal servant in the presence of his master, I would like to add a spicy tidbit to the comments of the Bnei Yissaschar. We explained above that the midah of "ואמת" emanates from the light of the divine countenance. Citing the Arizal, the Degel Machaneh Ephraim (Korach) asserts that the midah of «ואמת» is a "segulah"—a propitious device—for halting a plague. For, the decree that brings the plague to the world is the three letters **מו"ת (death)**. So, to bring a halt to the plague, we need to draw upon the letter **"aleph"** and insert it within the letters of **מו"ת**. Thus, they can be transformed into the combination of letters **ואמ"ת**.

We have now gained a better understanding of the comments of the Bnei Yissaschar. The one blowing the shofar must have in mind to use the redness of his face to draw upon the redness of the light of the countenance of the King, HKB"H, in order to draw life, in keeping with the passuk: **"In the light of the king's countenance is life."** As explained, this is attributable to the midah of **ואמ"ת**, the seventh midah, which emanates from the cheeks of the divine countenance. By interposing the **"aleph"** of **ואמ"ת** within the letters **מו"ת**, death is averted and the result is life.

Clarifying the True Meaning of the Torah Reveals the Midah of "ואמת"

Let us return to the words of the Bnei Yissaschar. He explains in his own inimitable way how we manage to draw upon the light of the divine countenance, the midah of

«ואמת», through the mitzvah of blowing shofar. He teaches us a valuable, fundamental principle. When Yisrael engage in Torah-study and clarify the proper way to perform and fulfill the mitzvos, according to the halachah, they are revealing the genuine “אמת” of the Torah. Consequently, “midah k’neged midah,” they successfully connect with the midah of “ואמת” emanating from the light of the divine countenance of the Heavenly King.

He proceeds to explain how the mitzvah of blowing shofar reveals the midah of “ואמת”. The Torah states succinctly: **יום יום**—“**it shall be a day of “teruah” for you.** It does not specify if we are to blow on a shofar or a trumpet or some other instrument. Yet, our blessed sages expound in the Gemara (R.H. 34a) using a “gezeirah shavah.” With regards to Rosh HaShanah, it says: **“בחדש השביעי”**—**in the seventh month.** Similarly, with regards to the “yovel”—the jubilee year—it says (Vayikra 25, 9): **«בחדש השביעי»**—**in the seventh month.** So, they draw a parallel between these two events. With regards to the “yovel,” it specifies (ibid.): **“והעברת שופר תרועה”**—**you shall sound a “teruah” on the shofar.** Hence, they conclude that the sounding of the “teruah” on Rosh HaShanah also requires a shofar. Thus, it turns out that by blowing a shofar, even though the Torah does not specify the use of a shofar, we are clarifying the true meaning and intent of the Torah concerning the mitzvah of blowing shofar. As a result, we merit, “midah k’neged midah,” drawing upon the midah of “ואמת” from the light of the divine countenance of HKB”H.

With this understanding, the Bnei Yissaschar explains the significance of the praise extolled by David HaMelech concerning the mitzvah of blowing shofar (Tehillim 89, 16): **«אשרי העם יודעי תרועה ה באור פניך יהלכון»**—**praiseworthy is the people who recognize the power of the “teruah”;** **Hashem, by the light of Your countenance they walk.** In other words, praiseworthy is the people who recognize the true meaning of the passuk: **“It shall be a day of ‘teruah’ for you.”** For, in the merit of clarifying the true meaning of the passuk: **“Hashem, by the light of Your countenance they walk”**—they are able to successfully draw upon the midah of “ואמת” emanating from Your divine, heavenly countenance. This is the gist of his sacred remarks.

It gives me great pleasure to apply this idea to explain the assertion of the Arizal cited above. He said that the tikun for a plague is to interpose the letter **“aleph”** among the letters of מו”ת to generate the combination of ואמ”ת. In keeping with our current discussion, we can suggest that this is accomplished through Torah-study, which is referred to as **“aleph.”** We learn this from the following Gemara (Shabbas 104a): **“אל”ף בי”ת, אלף בינה”**—**the letters “aleph” and “beis” stand for “alaph binah.”** Rashi explains: **“אלף בינה, למוד תורה”**—these first two letters of the Hebrew alphabet allude to the study of Torah.

Thus, by engaging in Torah-study, which is called **“aleph,”** and clarifying a halachah according to the true intent of the Torah, we are able to interpose the letter **“aleph”** within the letters of מו”ת and generate the arrangement ואמ”ת, which nullifies death. This is conveyed by the berachah recited after one is called up to the Torah: **אשר נתן לנו תורת**—**אמת וחיי עולם נטע בתוכנו**—by studying the Torah of אמ”ת, we annul the decree of death and are granted long life.

This provides us with a very nice interpretation of a pronouncement made by the wisest of men, Shlomo HaMelech (Koheles 8, 1): **“חכמת אדם תאיר פניו”**—**a man’s wisdom illuminates his face.** We can suggest that this alludes to the teaching of the Arizal that the one blowing shofar should have in mind that the redness of his face stimulates the light of the divine countenance above. Now, we learn in the Gemara (R.H. 29b) that the sounding of the shofar is **a type of wisdom and not a type of labor--“חכמה ואינה מלאכה”.** Thus, Shlomo HaMelech says: **“A man’s wisdom”—alluding to the wisdom of the shofar-blower—“illuminates his face”—its redness draws from the light of the countenance of HKB”H, in the sense of: “Hashem, by the light of Your countenance they walk.”**

It appears that we can embellish the idea of the Bnei Yissaschar by explaining why HKB”H added the letter **“vav”** to the midah of “ואמת”. As we know, it is impossible to perform the mitzvos enumerated in Torah she’b’chsav properly without the clarification provided by Torah she’b’al peh, which is expounded by means of the “thirteen hermeneutical principles.” For instance, we saw above that

the sages deduced that the mitzvah of sounding on Rosh HaShanah must be performed with a shofar based on a “gezeirah shavah” from “yovel.”

Furthermore, we know that the basis of Torah she'b'al peh is the six orders of the Mishnah; both the Talmud Bavli and Talmud Yerushalmi are based on them. Hence, we can propose that this is why the central midah of the “thirteen midos of rachamim” is “ואמת” with a “vav.” Because the letters “אמת”, without the “vav,” represent Torah she'b'chsav, as evident from the berachah: **“אשר נתן לנו תורת אמת—Who gave us the Torah of “emes.”** Whereas, the letter “vav” of “ואמת”, which possesses a numerical value of six, represents Torah she'b'al peh, which contains six orders, which we use to clarify the nature and details of the mitzvos of the Torah.

The Midah of «ואמת» Is Revealed on Shabbas Kodesh

Following this glorious path, we will now proceed to explain why our blessed sages annulled the blowing of the shofar on Rosh HaShanah that falls on Shabbas. We will refer to the passuk (Bereishis 2, 3): **“ויברך אלקים את יום השביעי ויקדש אותו—and G-d blessed the seventh day and sanctified it.** They expound on this passuk in the Midrash (B.R. 11, 2): **He blessed it with the light of man’s face; He sanctified it with the light of man’s face. The light of man’s face throughout the week isn’t comparable to his face on Shabbas.**

The Bnei Yissaschar (Shabbasos 3, 6) explains the meaning of the Midrash and teaches us a tremendous chiddush. On Shabbas kodesh, the seventh day, the seventh of the “thirteen midos harachamim”—“ואמת”—is revealed from the light of the divine countenance of HKB”H. He brings a proof from the following Mishnah (Demai 4, 1): **“הלוקח פירות ממי שאינו נאמן על המעשרות ושכח לעשרן, ושואלו בשבת יאכל על פיו, חשכה מוצאי שבת, לא יאכל עד שיעשר.”** **If one buys fruit from a person who is not trustworthy concerning ma’asrot, and he forgot to tithe them, and he asked him on the Shabbas, he may eat based on his word. After nightfall, on motzaei Shabbas, he may not eat until he tithes.**

The Yerushalmi explains the rationale for this ruling (Demai 16b): **“אימת שבת עליו והוא אומר אמת”—he is in awe of the Shabbas, and he tells the truth.** In other words, even a boor and ignoramus does not lie on Shabbas. Yet, after Shabbas, we are concerned that he might lie. The Bnei Yissaschar proves from this ruling that the midah of “ואמת” prevails on Shabbas; hence, even an uneducated person is afraid to lie.

This then is the message of the Midrash: **“G-d blessed the seventh day”—He blessed it with the light of man’s face.** HKB”H blessed Yisrael on Shabbas such that their faces radiate with the light of His divine face above, with the midah of «ואמת». With the illumination of this midah, He sanctified Yisrael in such a manner that they would not lie on Shabbas. Therefore, the word of even a simple, uneducated Jew is trusted on Shabbas. This concludes his sacred remarks.

Accordingly, let us interpret the Midrash: **“G-d blessed the seventh day”—He blessed it with the light of man’s face.** Since Shabbas is the seventh day, G-d blessed it by having the seventh midah—“ואמת”—prevail on it. **He blessed it with the light of man’s face:** On Shabbas kodesh, the redness of the midah of «ואמת» radiates on man’s face just like the midah of «ואמת» radiates on the face of the shofar-blower on Rosh HaShanah.

The Midah of «ואמת» Corresponds to Yaakov Avinu

It is with great pleasure and delight that we will provide further substantiation for the chiddush of the Bnei Yissaschar—that «ואמת», the seventh midah, prevails on the seventh day, Shabbas kodesh. Let us refer to what the Maor V’Shemesh writes in parshas Vayechi. He provides a wonderful interpretation of the passuk concerning Yaakov Avinu prior to his passing away (Bereishis 49, 28): **“כל אלה שבטי ישראל שנים עשר, וזאת אשר דיבר להם אביהם ויברך אותם, איש שבטי ישראל שנים עשר, וזאת אשר דיבר להם אביהם ויברך אותם.”** **All these are the tribes of Yisrael, twelve; and this is what their father spoke to them and he blessed them; each according to his blessing, he blessed them.**

He asserts that Yaakov Avinu together with the twelve shevatim correspond to the “thirteen midos harachamim.” Therefore, prior to passing away, he united with his twelve sons to arouse the “thirteen midos harachamim.” He bestowed a berachah on each of them from each son’s corresponding midah. That is the implication of the words: **“Each according to his blessing, he blessed them.”** Thus, all “thirteen midos harachamim” were represented.

Additionally, the Zohar hakadosh (Pinchas 244b) teaches us that Yaakov corresponds to the letter “vav.” The Megaleh Amukos (Vayeishev) explains that this is alluded to by the following spelling of the name of the letter “vav”- וואו. The “aleph” in the middle represents Yaakov; the “vav” on the right represents the six sons of Leah; the “vav” on the left represents the other six sons, including the sons of Rachel.

In keeping with our current discussion, we can begin to comprehend why HKB”H chose to make the midah of “ואמת” the central midah of the “thirteen midos harachamim.” This midah corresponds to Yaakov whose is the embodiment of “emes,” as it is written (Michah 7, 20): “תתן אמת ליעקב”—grant “emes” to Yaakov. He employed his character trait of “emes” to bestow an appropriate berachah on each of his twelve sons, as indicated by the passuk: **“Each according to his blessing, he blessed them.”** Then, the letter “vav,” which can be spelled וואו, was added to “emes” to form “ואמת”. As explained, this spelling alludes to Yaakov and his

twelve sons—the midos of the six (“vav”) shevatim to the right, the midos of the six (“vav”) shevatim to the left, and the midah of Yaakov in the middle (the “aleph”).

Now, we know that Shabbas is the heritage of Yaakov Avinu. In the words of the Gemara (Shabbas 118a): **כל המענג את השבת נותנין לו נחלה בלי מצרים, שנאמר אז תתענג על ה' והרכבתך על ה'.** **Whoever delights in the Shabbas is rewarded with a portion without boundaries, as it states (Yeshayah 58, 14): “Then you will delight in Hashem, and I will mount you astride the heights of the world; I will provide you the heritage of your forefather Yaakov.”** So, since Yaakov Avinu is associated with the midah of “ואמת”, and Shabbas is the heritage of Yaakov, HKB”H illuminates Yisrael with this midah from the light of His countenance on every Shabbas.

Now, we have cause to rejoice. We can now comprehend why our blessed sages annulled the blowing of the shofar on Shabbas kodesh. Shabbas kodesh is the portion and heritage of Yaakov, whose midah is “emes”; hence, the light of the divine countenance associated with the midah of “ואמת” shines and prevails on Shabbas. In the words of the Midrash: **“G-d blessed the seventh day”—He blessed it with the light of man’s face.** Accordingly, the redness of the face of every Jew radiates on Shabbas kodesh. Therefore, it is unnecessary to blow the shofar on Shabbas to elicit this midah; it is an inherent part of the kedushah of Shabbas.

Our thanks and blessings are given to those who donated for the publication of our weekly dvar Torah for the merit of אחינו בני ישראל

Special blessings to Arthur & Randy Luxenberg for their generous support and for being an integral part of spreading the weekly Shvilei Pinchas

<p>Arthur & Randi Luxenberg לזכות of their wonderfull parents, children and grandson לעילוי נשמת His Father ר' יצחק יהודה בן ר' אברהם ע"ה</p>
<p>Family Madeb - לעילוי נשמת their dear mother Lea bat Virgini ע"ה</p>

To receive the mamarim by email: mamarim@shvileipinchas.com