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The *Shofar* Liturgy of Rosh Hashanah

Its Themes and Development From Biblical Times to the Modern Era

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of the requirements for ordination

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Digest

This thesis seeks to trace the development of the themes and structure of the *shofar* liturgy from its earliest biblical roots through to its treatment in modern day Reform and Reconstructionist prayerbooks. The biblical treatment of the *shofar* as it pertains to Rosh Hashanah is sparse, which allows the Rabbis to infuse their own understandings of the meaning of the *shofar* in the context of the festival and create a liturgical structure to convey those themes (mostly in the context of the *mussaf amidah*). These themes include the theme of divine judgment of the world and all living creatures on Rosh Hashanah, the binding of Isaac (in the context of the merits of the fathers and God forgiving us for our sins because of them), and the three themes of *Malkhiyot* (God's Sovereignty), *Zikhronot* (Remembrance) and *Shofarot* (Shofar Blasts). In the rabbinic context, these themes are largely directed to God and the *shofar* is understood as the method of acclaiming our recognition of God's sovereignty and calling on his aspect of mercy in this time of judgment.

In the Middle Ages these basic themes are expanded upon and re-interpreted, often in ways that redirect the themes inward to the community and the individual. Thus the *shofar* becomes a means of conveying the themes of the festival to us as well as to God. Moreover the structure of the *shofar* liturgy, both in the context of the *mussaf amidah* and in the Torah service, is consolidated and concretized in this period into the rubrics we see in traditional *machzorim* today.

The modern era sees a great deal of liturgical creativity, particularly in Reform and Reconstructionist prayerbooks, both in the USA and in Great Britain. While earlier, more traditional, liturgists generally only felt empowered to add to the existing liturgy

and re-interpret what had been passed down by previous generations, these modern liturgists both added and subtracted from the liturgy and engaged in much liturgical creativity to recreate the *shofar* liturgy to conform to their ideological and aesthetic preferences and those of their community. Moreover, these liturgies generally understand the *shofar* blowing in a psychological way, as a powerful symbol to remind us of the themes of the festival and to consider those themes in our own lives.

Introduction

From the first references to the *shofar* in the Bible until today, the *shofar* has been a potent and recognizable Jewish symbol. In particular it has been inextricably linked to the festival of Rosh Hashanah. The blowing of the *shofar* is an integral and essential part of the celebration of the Jewish New Year and its symbolism is the subject of countless Rosh Hashanah sermons.

As with the reading of the Torah, the blowing of the *shofar* in the course of the Rosh Hashanah morning and *mussaf* services is surrounded and interpreted by liturgical passages and ritual. These passages frame the *shofar* blasts and provide a liturgical and theological context in which they can be understood and appreciated. Lawrence Hoffman states that the "*shofar* ritual is highly structured, comparable to a beautiful painting, a finely crafted play or a symphony, in that its appreciation depends on our ability to recognize the artistic scheme that governs the relationship of the parts to the whole."[1] To understand the *shofar* liturgy one must therefore examine the separate elements that make up the liturgical rubric, tracing the development and meaning of these elements as they were understood by their framers and subsequent liturgists. At the same time we must examine the liturgy as a whole, both as it appears now and as it appeared in various stages of its development. In particular the themes of *malkhiyot* (Kingship), *zikhronot* (Remembrance ; "Calling to Mind") and *shofarot* (Shofar Blasts) are central to the *shofar* and its liturgy.

As with many other liturgical rubrics, this liturgy has its roots in the Bible and has developed through the talmudic period and medieval writings until it reached the form in

[1] Lawrence Hoffman, Gates of Understanding 2: Appreciating the Days of Awe, (New York: CCAR, 1984), 96

which it appears in the traditional Machzor. Throughout the development of the *shofar* liturgy, the meaning of the *shofar* and the central themes of the liturgical rubric have been interpreted and reinterpreted for different ages and modes of thought. Whereas in previous eras this meant adding to the liturgy or reinterpreting existing elements to conform to contemporary ideas and sensibilities, the modern era has seen more radical approaches to reinterpreting and reframing the *shofar* and its liturgy. Reform and Reconstructionist liturgies in America, the UK and around the world have engaged in more radical reediting (to greater or lesser extent) of the prayerbook as a whole, and the *shofar* liturgy in particular.

This thesis will thus explore the development of the *shofar* liturgy, its structure, themes and messages as it developed from its biblical roots through its treatment in rabbinic and medieval writings. Faced with the liturgy as we now know it, it is easy to assume that the structure of the *shofar* liturgy its themes have always been as they appear today. This thesis will thus look at the *shofar* and its liturgy in the biblical, talmudic and medieval periods, analyzing the treatment of the subject in the context of the time and with the benefit of critical analysis of the texts. In so doing we will trace the development of the liturgy as it evolved over the ages, deconstructing the liturgical rubrics so that we are able to see which elements and themes appear at which time and how these elements were understood by their creators. Having traced how the liturgy developed into the form in which it appears in the traditional Machzor, this thesis will then explore the ways in which various liberal liturgies have approached the traditional rubrics. It will look at how these liturgies have excised what does not conform with their

theology or aesthetic sensibilities and engaged in liturgical creativity to reframe the *shofar* and its themes to express the needs and ideals of that community.

Chapter 1 – Biblical Sources

A critical look at the biblical sources for the Rosh Hashanah *shofar* liturgy reveals few indications of the ritual as we know it today. Many of the elements that are familiar to us today do not appear in the Bible. It would seem, on the basis of the biblical evidence, that much of what we now recognize as the Rosh Hashanah *shofar* liturgy was developed after the biblical period. What the biblical sources do reveal leaves us with a great many questions about the nature of the holiday as it was celebrated in biblical times and the role of the *shofar* in its ritual.

The word *shofar* itself is used on a number of occasions in the Bible and serves a variety of functions:

- The sound of the *shofar* heralds the divine revelation at Sinai (Exodus 19:16, 19:19 and 20:18 and in Psalm 47:6).
- The *shofar* is used to praise God (e.g. Psalm 98:6 and 150).
- The *shofar* heralds the Messianic Age (e.g. Isaiah 27:13)
- The *shofar* is used as a signal for war (e.g. Josh 6:4-20)
- The *shofar* is used in connection with royal coronations (e.g. 1 Kings 1:34)
- The *shofar* is used in worship (e.g. on Day of Atonement in Leviticus 25:9)

Interestingly, however, the term *shofar* itself is NOT found directly connected to Rosh Hashanah in the Bible. Indeed the name Rosh Hashanah is not given to this festival in the Torah. Rather, in Leviticus 23:23-25 and Numbers 29:1-6, the holiday is referred to as "the first day of the seventh month". In these verses there is no indication that the holiday was celebrated as a new year celebration, nor indeed is any specific meaning or

purpose given to the celebration of the holiday. These are the only two toraitic references to the festival, and they are the only instances in the Bible in which this festival is connected with blowing a musical instrument or note. The components of the biblical holiday are as follows:

- It occurs in the seventh month of the Israelite calendar year, on the first day of that month (Lev 23:24, Num 29:1),
- It is connected with the sound *teruah*. In Leviticus the holiday is commemorated or remembered with *teruah*, while in Numbers the holiday is a day of *teruah*.
- It is a day of rest from work (Lev 23: 25, Num 29: 1),
- It is a day on which we are commanded to give sacrificial offerings (Lev 23: 25, Num 29: 2-6),
- It is followed in the festival calendar by a Day of Atonement and self-denial (referred to in Leviticus as *Yom Kippurim*). There is no explicit connection between the festival of the first day of the seventh month and the festival on the tenth as we now have between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

Not only do these descriptions of what would later become known as Rosh Hashanah not provide a context or significance for the festival but they do not refer specifically to the *shofar*. Rather they both refer to *teruah,* a term which is translated variously as "loud blasts", "sounding of a horn", "sounding a trumpet", "alarm blasts", "short blasts" or even "shouting"[2]. Although the *shofar* is not specifically mentioned here, the sound of *teruah* is later, and perhaps at the time, inextricably linked with it. We are thus left with

[2] Jewish Study Bible, ed. Adele Berlin and Mark Zvi Brettler (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 265.

the questions of what exactly is referred to by *teruah* and what purpose it serves in the context of this festival (as no clear purpose is indicated).

Although later tradition distinguishes between the reference in Leviticus to a "*zikhron teruah*" (a remembrance of *teruah*) and in Numbers to "*yom teruah*" (a day of *teruah*), it is unclear whether these terms were simply two different ways of describing the same ritual or whether they were intended to convey something different. Certainly later tradition makes a clear distinction between the two references by basing on them the differing practices in respect of blowing the *shofar* on a Rosh Hashanah that falls on a weekday and one that falls on a Shabbat. The *teruah* may be understood to serve a function of reminder. The term *zikhron teruah* can be understood as being a reminder of the *teruah* (as in b. RH 29b), i.e., we are commanded to remember or commemorate the blowing of the *teruah.* Or it can be understood as a reminder by way of *teruah,*[3] i.e., the people or God are being reminded of something by the act of blowing and hearing the sound of *teruah.* This last interpretation would indeed provide a basis for interpreting the two biblical references to be different ways of saying the same thing. This may also be suggested by looking at Numbers 10:10, where we are instructed to blow trumpet blasts at joyous occasions and holy times as a reminder of us before the Lord. Although this verse does not use the word *teruah,* a parallel might arguably be made between the two actions. Just as the sound [*tekiah*] of the trumpet [*hatsotsrot*] acts as a reminder to God of the Jewish people in Numbers 10, so might the *teruah* in Numbers 29 be for the purpose of getting God's attention and reminding him of his people[4]. Baruch J. Schwartz suggests that the blowing of *teruah* in the context of the festival "would be envisaged by

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[3] Jacob Milgrom, Anchor Bible, Leviticus 23-27 (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 2014.

the Priestly tradition as a day of Israel's crying out to God, to remind Him that they are His people and to secure his aid." [5]

Shofar vs *Hatsotsrot*

As noted above there is some question as to whether *shofar* and *hatsostrot* are connected or refer to entirely different instruments. The Septuagint makes a clear distinction between the two instruments translating *shofar* as a "Keratines/horn trumpet" (in Psalm 98:6) and *hatsotsrot* as "salpinx/metal trumpet." Comparing the recorded uses of the trumpet and the *shofar* in Scripture it is clear that there is a certain amount of overlap[6]. The *shofar* is used to muster an army (Judg 3:27, 6:34), to frighten an enemy (Judg 7:8, 16-20), to proclaim victory (I Sam 13:3), to terminate a battle (2 Sam 18:16, 20:22), to crown a king (2 Sam 15:10, 2 Kings 9:13, etc.). The trumpet was also used for similar cultic, military and official purposes in addition to specifically being used in the context of signaling joyous occasions (Num 10:10). It has been suggested by those who argue that the priestly texts are later texts, that the *shofar* was an earlier, more primitive instrument that was replaced by the metal trumpet in Second Temple times. This is rejected by Milgrom[7] who notes that several of the references to trumpet are clearly pre-exilic and thus also early references. Rather he suggests that the two instruments were used at the same time and were distinguished not by what they were used for but by who they were used by – the trumpet was exclusively used by the priestly class. This view seems to be confirmed in Psalm 81:4 – "Blow the horn (*shofar*) on the new moon, on the

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[4] Ibid., 2014-2015, 2016.
[5] Jewish Study Bible, 265.
[6] Jacob Milgrom, JPS Torah Commentary, Numbers (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society: 1990), 373.

full moon for our feast day". This command is directed at all Israel, not just at the Levites and is a specific reference in the later biblical literature to the *shofar* being used to commemorate joyous occasions and feast days rather than the trumpet[8]. Later literature, such as the Talmud Bavli (Shab 36a, Sotah, 43a etc), appears to make no distinction between horn and trumpet, and Philo calls the first day of the seventh month the "Feast of Trumpets"[9].

Teruah vs *Tekiah*

In describing the sound of the trumpet, Numbers 10:10 refers to *uteqatem* (the verb for producing the sound *tekiah*), clearly linking such a sound to a trumpet. Leviticus 23:23-25 and Numbers 29:1-6 however describe only a sound – *teruah* – but do not specify the instrument that produces it. However the sound is generally understood to refer to the sound produced by the blasting of the horn (*shofar*). Milgrom[10] argues that *teruah* is a sound of alarm "functioning as a battle cry" and used for breaking camp (Numbers 10: 5-6) while the *tekiah* is used to assemble the camp of Israel (Numbers 10:3-4). The use of such an alarm blast in conjunction with this festival is curious, given the otherwise lack of indication as to the nature and purpose of the holiday in its biblical context. Milgrom suggests several possibilities for this:[11]

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[7] Ibid., pp. 246 and 373.
[8] Milgrom, Anchor Bible, Leviticus 23-27, 2015.
[9] Philo, The Works of Philo, Complete and Unabridged, Translated by C.D. Yonge, Special Laws II, 188-192, (Peabody Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers: 1993), 586.
[10] Milgrom, Anchor Bible Leviticus 23-27, 2014.
[11] Ibid, 2017-2018.

1) The fate of world is decided on Rosh Hashanah. This is suggested by rabbinic interpretation and there are ancient near eastern precedents for a New Year on which the fate of the world or the nation is decided. Some scholars suggest that in pre-exilic times, before the ancient Hebrew (Canaanite) calendar was replaced by the Babylonian one, the year in fact began in the autumn and this was therefore always understood as a new year celebration[12]. However, this is a highly speculative assertion, which is contradicted by Exodus 12:2. This verse states that the year begins in the spring. Moreover, there is no indication in the text that the first day of the seventh month is understood as a new year festival at this stage. Nor does it appear that it had such significance as a day of judgement at this point, unless it was understood as a judgment with respect to (or perhaps through) rains and harvest in anticipation of Sukkot.

2) To announce the upcoming pilgrimage festival (Sukkot) and the beginning of the new agricultural season. This announcement may be seen as being directed both to God, who is being implored to take note of Israel for good rain in that season, and to the people themselves, who are being reminded to implore God's mercy for such rain in the coming weeks[13]. Gerstenberger[14] also comments on the "anticipatory character" of the festival on the first day of the seventh month. Levine makes this point by linking the blowing of the *shofar* in Lev 23:24 to Psalm 81:4, which states that the

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[12] Jewish Study Bible, 342; Century Bible, New Edition, Leviticus and Numbers, ed. N. H. Snaith (Nelson: 1967), 155; Eryl W. Davies, New Century Bible Commentary, Numbers, (Marshall Pickering: 1995), 313; Milgrom, JPS Torah Commentary, Numbers, 245.

[13] Milgrom, Anchor Bible, Leviticus 23-27, 2018; Baruch A. Levine, JPS Torah Commentary – Leviticus (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1990), 160.

[14] Erhard S. Gerstenberger, Leviticus, A Commentary, (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 349.

shofar is blown for the new moon and pilgrimage festivals. Levine thus implies from this verse that a function of the *shofar*, and the one relevant here, was to announce the coming of the new moon and pilgrimage festivals[15].

It may be that this day was sacred for no other reason than it was the first day of a month with an uncommon concentration of festivals, including the solemn Day of Atonement, and thus was a day celebrated in its own right to signal the beginning of such a holy month.[16] Alternatively, the number seven has importance in the Jewish holy calendar and the first day of the seventh month may be set apart as holy as is the seventh day, the seventh year, etc.[17]. Berlin and Brettler suggest that the new moon of the seventh month might act as a Sabbath of new moon celebrations[18]. Gerstenberger suggests some further possibilities, such as it being simply a signal to cultic assembly, that it is a reminder to the people of past wars (the *shofar* being a signal of war) or that it may be imitating the encounter at Sinai[19]. Although these three possibilities all recall other recognized uses of the *shofar* in the Bible, there is no context for the latter two in the text of either Numbers or Leviticus and no indication why the cultic assembly of the people should be signalled on this occasion and in this fashion but not on other occasions.

Reviewing the biblical references to *shofar* in its context of Rosh Hashanah leaves us with a confusing picture. It is difficult to look at the material without wanting to fill in the obvious gaps with details supplied by later sources, which we have come to link with

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[15] Baruch A Levine, Anchor Bible, Numbers 21-36 (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 387; Levine, JPS Torah Commentary, Leviticus, 160.
[16] Davies, New Century Bible Commentary, Numbers, 313.
[17] Milgrom, Anchor Bible, Leviticus 23-27, 2011.
[18] Jewish Study Bible, 342; Gerstenberger, Leviticus, A Commentary, 350; Milgrom, JPS Torah Commentary, Numbers, 245.

this festival today. Indeed one cannot help but wonder whether the distinct lack of detail lent itself to the holiday being given more meaning by the Rabbis and other post-biblical commentators who filled in the gaps in the biblical sources. With no specified purpose for either the holiday or the *teruah* blast, later sources would identify the holiday as a New Year celebration on which God judged humanity, and the name Rosh Hashanah would be attached to the first day of the seventh month. Lacking a clear reference to the instrument from which the sound *teruah* came, the *shofar* was supplied. Alternatively it is possible that the sound *teruah* may have been understood in biblical times to be the sound of the *shofar*. In the same way that one would automatically connect the sound "moo" with a cow or "quack" with a duck, it may have been unnecessary to specify the instrument. And without a specified purpose for the blowing of *teruah* a plethora of reasons were subsequently ascribed, although whether any of these was ascribed to the act in its biblical context is a matter of conjecture.

Post-Biblical References

References to the *shofar*, indeed to the festival of the first day of the seventh month, are few and far between in post-biblical literature until the Mishnah and Talmud. The book of Jubilees deals in great detail with Passover and Shabbat but makes no mention of Rosh Hashanah, the first day of the seventh month or the *shofar* in such a context. Josephus refers to the first day of the seventh month, but focuses only on the

[19] Gerstenberger, Leviticus, A Commentary, 349.

sacrifices that must be made and completely ignores the *shofar* as a component of the festival[20].

Of the major writers from the late Second Commonwealth period, only Philo and Pseudo-Philo deal with this festival in any significant detail and with reference to the *shofar* as an aspect of the festival ritual. In Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* the festival is called the Festival of Trumpets[21]. According to Pseudo-Philo this festival involves offerings "on behalf of your watchmen" and is a festival of the beginning of the year. On this day God reviews creation and takes note of the entire world and decides who will die and who will be born[22]. This of course sounds much closer to Rosh Hashanah as we understand it today. The term *teruah* has been concretized as trumpet, possibly after the translations in the Vulgate and the Septuagint. Some confusion exists in respect of the reference to watchmen and their identity and purpose in this context. Some suggest that this refers to some form of watcher or guardian angels, but it has also been suggested that the phrase should be read as referring to city watchmen, who were equipped with trumpets which they would blow in times of danger. This theory might therefore tie together the aspect of an offering and the description of the festival as a festival of trumpets. The imagery of the city watchmen blowing the trumpet to alert the town of danger could be linked with the idea that the people are alerting God to their need for rescue. Moreover the imagery of the watchman

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[20] Flavius Josephus, Judean Antiquities 1-4, Volume 3, ed. Steve Mason; translation and commentary by Louis H. Feldman, Book 3, Paragraph 239, (Boston: Brill, 2000), 297.
[21] Howard Jacobson, A Commentary on Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum, Volume One, Chapter 13, Paragraph 6, (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 113.
[22] Ibid.

was often used as a metaphor for the leaders of the people[23]. But, such speculation aside, it is interesting to note that despite the description of the holiday as the Festival of Trumpets, Pseudo-Philo proceeds to provide no context for the relevance of those trumpets to the meaning of blowing them for the festival. The reference to the watchmen may be an attempt by Pseudo-Philo to provide a context for the trumpets of the festival (having translated the Hebrew text thus) but the statement in respect of God judging creation is clearly based on post-biblical tradition.

In Philo's treatise *On the Special Laws,* the festival is described as the Eighth Festival (with Yom Kippur as the ninth) and is described as "the festival of the sacred moon in which it is the custom to play the trumpet in the Temple at the same time that the sacrifices are offered"[24]. From this practice the festival is called the True Feast of Trumpets and Philo identifies two reasons for the practice of blowing the trumpet:

1) In commemoration of the giving of the law at Sinai "for then the voice of a trumpet sounded from heaven".
2) The trumpet was the instrument of war, sounded when commanding a charge or a retreat. Philo notes that war in this case also includes a kind of war in which nature is set at war with itself by God. Both kinds of war do damage to the earth. Therefore the festival is given the name of a warlike instrument to show the proper gratitude to God who gives peace (in both kinds of war described here).

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[23] Jacobson, Commentary on Pseudo-Philo, 512.

[24] Philo, The Works of Philo, Complete and Unabridged, translated by C.D. Yonge , (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrikson Publishers: 1993), Special Laws II, Paragraph 188-192, 586.

It would seem therefore that at some point, in the intervening period between the canonization of the Bible and the time of Philo and Pseudo-Philo, aspects of the festival and the use of the *shofar*/trumpet in this context were clarified and concretized. It is impossible to know for certain which aspects of the festival as it existed in biblical times were not spelled out in the biblical sources and were simply being made explicit in these later works, and how much of these later traditions were developed to provide context for a festival and tradition whose context and meaning had been partly, or largely lost in the intervening time period. The fact that these are the only significant pre-tannaitic sources, along with Josephus, for details of the festival might lead one to question whether the relative importance of the festival only emerged later. The lack of reference to the *shofar*/trumpet in Josephus, may indicate that at least in some areas the sacrifices were considered the defining element of the festival, not the *shofar*. This may reflect the priestly (and thus concerned with sacrifices) context of the Leviticus and possibly Numbers sources for the festival in the Bible. Certainly both Philo and Pseudo-Philo identify the trumpet as the defining symbol of the festival, although only Philo actually provides any reason for this prominence or any meaning to the act (although Pseudo-Philo's reference to reviewing creation could be seen as referring to the *zikhron* aspect of the festival). It is also interesting to note that at this stage there was no distinction in the mind of either Philo or Pseudo-Philo between the *shofar* and the trumpet, and that they are conflated in these texts. This may indicate a post-biblical conflation of two distinct instruments that were understood as different in biblical times, or it may reflect a real similarity or interchangeability of the *shofar* and the metal trumpet in biblical times that is reflected in these later works.

Chapter 2 – The Rabbinic Period

As is the case with many (if not perhaps all) aspects of Judaism, the Rabbis expanded and extrapolated upon the nature and practices of the festival as it was set out in the biblical sources. Where there are gaps in the biblical account of the festival of the first day of the seventh month, the Rabbis, in contrast, attempt to leave no stone unturned, no aspect of the festival's meaning, purpose and practice unexplained. It is therefore over the course of the rabbinic period and in its literature that we discover for the first time much of what we now understand as being the essential aspects of this festival, its symbology and its ritual, including of course the *shofar* and its liturgy. It should be noted however that this does not necessarily mean that all of these aspects were invented wholesale by the Rabbis. Joseph Heinemann suggests, for example, that the central prayer rituals of the *shofar* service, the blowing of the *shofar* and the recitation of the *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofarot* verses, originate in the Temple.[25] There is no way to know for certain whether the *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofarot* verses can in fact be traced to the Temple. However the ruling of Yochanan ben Zakkai in the Mishnah (M. RH 4:1) allowing the *shofar* to be blown outside the Temple compound after its destruction effectively confirms that the *shofar* was blown in the Temple on Rosh Hashanah. In any event, while the Rabbis may indeed have been drawing on previously existing material, they undoubtedly elaborated a great deal to arrive at the systematic treatment of Rosh Hashanah that emerges from their writings.

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[25] Joseph Heinemann, Prayer in the Talmud, (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1977), 128-129.

Mishnah

Rosh Hashanah and Ta'anit

In contrast with the paucity of information in the biblical sources, we are now bombarded in the Mishnah with details about the nature of the festival and the role of the *shofar* relating to Rosh Hashanah.

The mishnaic treatment of Rosh Hashanah begins (in M. RH 1:1) by noting that there are four new years *(roshei shanim)*, each being the beginning of the year for a different purpose. The first of Tishri (the seventh month) is the New Year (Rosh Hashanah) for years, for sabbatical years, jubilee years, planting and vegetables. This *mishnah* therefore introduces the concept of the holiday as a new year, which was not present in the biblical sources. Moreover by introducing the idea that certain days are new years for particular purposes, this *mishnah* resolves, to some extent, the difficulty created by having a new year which is in the seventh month of the year. This then becomes not **the** New Year, but rather **a** new year for certain things, while the years for other things start at different times of the year appropriate to them (such as the 1st of Nissan being the new year for the cultic festival calendar).

The Mishnah continues (M. RH 1:2) to introduce the concept of judgement in connection with this festival, stating that there are four periods in which the world, or more accurately aspects of the world, are judged. While the world is judged with respect to the abundance of grains on Passover, of fruits on Shavuot and of water on Sukkot, people ("all the inhabitants of the world") are judged on the New Year (Rosh Hashanah). This Mishnah therefore solidifies the name of the festival (Rosh Hashanah) and the centrality of judgement to the meaning of Rosh Hashanah. Intriguingly, having

previously noted that there are several new years for different purposes, the Mishnah now seems to refer to this festival as **the** Rosh Hashanah. Despite this shift, the Mishnah has nevertheless, in two short passages, rectified the more perplexing aspects of the biblical account of the festival – the lack of name and stated purpose for the festival itself.

The Mishnah also examine details of what does and does not constitute a valid *shofar* and how it can be blown to fulfill one's obligation to blow the *shofar* for the festival (M. RH 3:2 – 7). The Mishnah states that there are several kinds of *shofar* (M. RH 2:2) and it is the straight horn of a wild goat that is blown for the New Year and the curved horn of a ram that is used for fast days (2:3). This of course contradicts the current and traditional practice of blowing the curved ram's horn for Rosh Hashanah. Such practice follows the opinion of R. Judah who states that the ram's horn was indeed used on Rosh Hashanah while the goat's horn was blown for the Jubilee year (M. RH 2:5).

In the middle of this technical discussion the Mishnah appears to change course to relate occasions in the Bible when the Israelites were victorious or were healed through looking heavenward and subjecting their hearts to God but were conquered or perished when they failed to do so (M. RH 3:8). Although this *aggadic* tradition appears not to be related to the subject of the *shofar*, its placement here may indicate that it is intended to point towards the purpose of the *shofar* blowing – to direct one's thoughts and prayers on high to God. The rationale for the placement of this passage here may be in respect of the concept of *kavanah,* or intention and follows on from the statement in M. RH 3:7 that if one concentrates one's mind on the *mitzvah* of blowing the *shofar* he has carried out his

obligation. Of course this may also be one of the frequent rabbinic digressions that have nothing in particular to do with the main topic at hand.

Mishnah RH 4:1 notes that when Rosh Hashanah falls on Shabbat the *shofar* would be blown in the Temple but not in the provinces.

Mishnah RH 4:5 deals in detail with the *shofar* liturgy in the *amidah* of Rosh Hashanah. The Mishnah makes clear below (M. RH 4:7) that the *shofar* is to be blown in the *mussaf* service of Rosh Hashanah rather than the morning service (as it states that the second service leader of the day is the one who causes the *shofar* to be blown). But this is not specified here and this may reflect a tradition in which the additions were perhaps inserted into all morning *amidot* of Rosh Hashanah, or at least not only in the *mussaf* service.[26]

In the time between the canonization of the Bible and the writing of the Mishnah certain assumptions seem to have been made, on which the Mishnah bases its discussion:

- The *shofar* blowing is to be done in the context of the *amidah* .
- The blowing of the *shofar* is connected to the recitation of ten biblical verses/passages relating to the themes of Sovereignty (*malkhiyot*), Remembrance (*zikhronot*) and Shofar Blasts (*shofarot*), which are inserted into the order of the *amidah* blessings.
- The *shofar* is blown three times in the course of the *amidah.*
- There should be nine blessings in all, 7 blessings of the usual festival *amidah* with one of the three extra blessings attached to one of the usual blessings. Exactly which of the additional blessings is attached to which of the usual *amidah* benedictions and

[26] Petuchowski, Jakob J., "The Malkhuyoth, Zikhronot and Shofarot Verses", in Pointer, (Autumn, 1972) 4-6, 5

after which blessings the *shofar* is blown, however, is the subject of debate in the Mishnah.

These assumptions are almost certainly of rabbinic origin as there is no record of them in pre-rabbinic material. Moreover, the *amidah* itself is a rabbinic creation. In any event, the above assumptions form the framework for the mishnaic discussion on the *shofar* liturgy.

As noted above, there is a debate in the Mishnah about exactly where these passages are placed in the order of the *amidah* blessings, and where the *shofar* is blown in that order. According to R. Yochanan ben Nuri one recites the *avot, gevurot* and *kedushat hashem* blessings and attaches the Sovereignty verses to this last blessing, but one does not blow the *shofar* after this passage. Then one recites the blessing for the holiness of the day (*kedushat hayom*) and sounds the *shofar*, followed by the Remembrance passage and another blowing of the *shofar*. Then one recites the *shofarot* passage and blows the *shofar* a third time and concludes the *amidah* blessings (*avodah, hoda'ah*, and *birkat kohanim*). Akiva, on the other hand, argues that there is no point to inserting the Sovereignty passage into the *amidah* if one does not accompany it with blowing the *shofar*. He therefore proposes that one combines the Sovereignty passage with the *kedushat hayom* blessing and blows the *shofar* after that. Then one recites the Remembrance passage and blows *shofar*, the *shofarot* passage and blows the *shofar* and then concludes with the final three *amidah* blessings. The Talmud Yerushalmi notes that Rabbi Akiva's opinion was followed in Judaea and Rabbi ben Yochanan Nuri's opinion was followed in the Galilee (Y. RH 4:6). It would appear that Rabbi Akiva's

view has become the universal Jewish practice, although Petuchowski notes that the expanded third benediction of the Rosh Hashanah *amidah (kedushat hashem)* contains insertions that recall Yochanan ben Nuri's ruling.[27] One might ask on the basis of this discussion why the *malkhiyot* verses do not merit their own separate blessings. Although it is not clearly stated (and it should be noted that they do differ from the current versions), it is reasonable to suggest that the blessings (or at least the eulogies) for the other two sets of verses were as described in Mishnah Ta'anit 2:2-4 for the *zikhronot* and *shofarot* verses on fast days. This also confirms that even at this early stage there were blessings that accompanied the recital of these verses both on fast days and on Rosh Hashanah. But the *malkhiyot* verses are not accompanied by a separate blessing. Rather they are merged with the *kedushat hayom* blessing or the *kedushat hashem* blessing, depending on whose opinion is followed. Liebreich suggests that this is due to the recognition by the sages that Rosh Hashanah was, at least biblically, a "festival of two aspects, and of only two aspects", namely *shofarot* and Remembrance.[28] Therefore, by appending the *malkhiyot* verses to a pre-existing blessing, the sages were able to maintain the prominence of the dual themes of the festival while also emphasizing the sovereignty of God. Alternatively, of course, one could argue that the theme of God's sovereignty is, and has always been, a major aspect of the festival of Rosh Hashanah, God's sovereignty being an integral part of God's judgment, and that the *malkhiyot* verses are considered so important that they should be connected to the *kedushat hayom* blessing.

According to Mishnah RH 4:6, the Sovereignty, Remembrance and *shofarot* passages are composed of a series of ten verses on each theme. Although this number is clearly

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[27] Jacob J Petuchowski, "The Malkhuyoth, Zikhronot and *Shofar*ot Verses", 4-6

specified here and is the number we use in the liturgy today, there remains some confusion in both the Mishnah and the Talmud Bavli (but not the Yerushalmi) as to the number of verses to be recited. Some of these different opinions or variant traditions are rationalized but there are nevertheless some loose ends. R. Yochanan ben Nuri states that if one recites three verses on each theme one has fulfilled one's religious obligation. The Mishnah continues to note that one may not include verses on these themes that refer to divine punishment. The Mishnah concludes by saying that one opens these series of verses with verses from Torah and concludes with verses from Prophets (implying that verses from Writings may be put in the middle) but that if one concludes with verses from Torah one has fulfilled one's religious duty. The Mishnah thus "creates the impression that the selection of appropriate scriptural verses was not, at that time, permanently fixed."[29] The lengthy discussion on this subject in the *gemara* would appear to confirm this implication. Liebreich argues that the selections from Prophets are all from later prophets, whose writing is generally more hopeful and consolatory, rather than from the earlier prophets, whose words were more condemnatory. This he claims is due to the "unmistakable aim" of the sages to end on a messianic and therefore hopeful note.[30]

Mishnah Ta'anit 2:2-4 also relates to the *shofar* liturgy, but in the context of public fast days observed in seasons of drought. On such a public fast day there are six additional blessings raising the total number of *amidah* benedictions to 24 on a weekday (the eighteen daily blessings and six more). The first two in the order of these additional

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[28] Leon J Liebreich, "Aspects the New Year Liturgy", Hebrew Union College Annual, vol. 34 (1963), 125-176, 138.
[29] Petuchowski, "Malkhuyoth, Zikhronot and *Shofarot*", 4.
[30] Liebreich, "Aspects the New Year Liturgy", 139.

blessings are the *zikhronot* and *shofarot* verses. The *malkhiyot* verses however are exclusive to Rosh Hashanah. This *mishnah* identifies the eulogies of the *zikhronot* and *shofarot* (presumably the blessings that accompany them, although this is not explicitly stated) as:

Zikhronot – "May he who answered our ancestors at the Red Sea answer you and hear the voice/sound of your crying this day. Blessed are you Lord, who remembers the forgotten things."

Shofarot – "May he who answered Joshua at Gilgal answer you and hearken to the voice/sound of your crying this day. Blessed are you Lord, who hears the *shofar* blast."

One may presume that the eulogies for these passages on fast days were the same as those on Rosh Hashanah, although the eulogies are now somewhat different. Petuchowski notes that the Italian rite still retains the mishnaic eulogy for the *Shofar*ot verses. [31]

Mishnah RH 4:9 specifies that one blows three groups of three notes for each of the three sets of verses. The three notes are the *tekiah*, the *teruah* and the *yevavah*. A *tekiah* note is as long as three *teruah* notes and the length of a *teruah* note is the same as three *yevavot*. The Mishnah further clarifies one's religious obligations in relation to blowing these notes.

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[31] Petuchowski, The Malkhuyoth, Zikhronot and *Shofar*ot Verses, in Pointer, Autumn, 1972 pp4-6, 5

Tosefta Rosh Hashanah

The corresponding Tosefta materials add certain interesting elements to this discussion.

The Tosefta (1:12) says that one should recite verses of Sovereignty, Remembrance and Shofar Blasts and provides reasons for this –

Sovereignty – so that you will make Him (God) ruler over you.
Remembrance – so that your remembrance will come before him for good.
Shofar Blasts – so that your prayer will go up with the quavering sound of the *shofar* before Him.

T. RH 2:3 states that one blows three times with three blasts for each time on fast days and for a journey. It also states that on Rosh Hashanah one blows a *shofar* made from ram's horn while for a Jubilee one blows a *shofar* made from the horn of a wild goat.

T. RH 2:12 records that one recites no less than ten verses each of Sovereignty, Remembrance and Shofar Blasts (as the Mishnah). There is no discussion in the Tosefta of different numbers of verses except for the issue of minimum obligations. In respect of this the Tosefta states that if one recites seven verses for each, one has fulfilled his obligation, according to R. Akiva. According to R. Yochanan ben Nuri there should be no less than seven, but one has fulfilled one's obligation if one recites three of each. Again as in the Mishnah one should not make mention of verses relating to punishment and one begins with verses from Torah and conclude with verses from Prophets. The

Tosefta continues to say that if a verse refers to punishment of gentiles one may make mention of that verse. These elements are all in keeping with the talmudic discussion but are significantly clearer and more conclusive than the Bavli, entertaining no discussion on a variety of different opinions. T. RH 2:13-14 has a similar discussion of questions relating to which verses should or should not be included in each set of verses, discussing the subject in a way similar to the Bavli but with less discussion and fewer variant opinions.

According to T. RH 2:15 the proper way of blowing the *shofar* is to sound three sets of three each – six *tekiot* and three *teruot*. There follows a detailed discussion of how many of each one must hear to fulfill one's obligation to hear the *shofar* on Rosh Hashanah.

Finally in T. RH 2:18 there is a debate over whether each person blows their own *shofar* or whether the community representative or service leader blows for everybody. They conclude that the service leader does the blowing to fulfill the obligation for those who do not know how to do it for themselves.

Talmud Bavli

The Talmud, as usual engages in lengthy expansions upon the statements made in the Mishnah. Those discussions that are relevant to the current question are outlined below.

Purpose of Rosh Hashanah

The Talmud declares the classic High Holiday formulation that all are judged on the New Year and their judgment is sealed on Yom Kippur (16a). It has been suggested

in the previous chapter that the original purpose of Rosh Hashanah was to invoke divine attention in anticipation of the upcoming festival of Sukkot. In contrast, the talmudic discussion leaves us in no doubt that in the rabbinic mind Rosh Hashanah is clearly linked with Yom Kippur by way of the theme of judgement (although it should be noted that judgment is also a theme in Sukkot with respect to the judgment of rainfall). It may be surmised that the Rabbis understood Rosh Hashanah to perform the same function vis a vis Yom Kippur as it previously may have done for Sukkot, reminding both God and the people of the upcoming festival. But while it previously may have called to mind the judgement regarding the harvests, reminding God by way of the *shofar* and sacrifices to remember the people for a good and abundant agricultural year, it now reminds God and the people of human and national judgement. This shift makes sense in context of a people whose fate is less tied to the land and agriculture than it had once been, making the more personal, moral judgement a more real prospect than a divine judgment on crops.

Purpose of blowing the shofar on Rosh Hashanah

The *gemara* proposes a variety of reasons for blowing the *shofar* in the context of Rosh Hashnah that link the blowing of the *shofar* to the central theme of judgment (16a-b):

- By blowing the *shofar* on Rosh Hashanah God is reminded of the binding of Isaac and accounts it to us as if we had been bound as Isaac was. This particular explanation seems to have captured the rabbinic imagination as it is repeated and expanded upon in all of the midrashic material on the subject.

- We blow the *shofar* because God told us to fulfill the scriptural commandment to do so!
- We blow the *tekiah* and *teruah* while sitting and then again while standing in order to confound Satan. Indeed, if the *shofar* is not sounded at the beginning of the year, evil will befall us at the end of the year, because Satan has not been confounded. This may be a justification after the fact to explain a duplication in respect of the *shofar* blowing that people found confusing. This explanation, although not explored in detail in midrashic literature, takes on greater significance in the medieval treatment of the liturgy and the liturgy for blowing the *shofar* in the Torah service, which is not discussed in the classical rabbinic literature, and thus presumably was developed after it.
- We blow the *shofar* to awaken remembrance (26a). Whether this is the remembrance of God or of the People is not specified.

Scriptural Basis for Shofar not being blown on Shabbat

The *gemara* seeks to identify the scriptural basis of the rabbinic rule that the *shofar* should not be blown on the Sabbath (29b). Rabbi Levi bar Lachma said in the name of Rabbi Chama bar Chanina that there is a scriptural contradiction between two biblical references to Rosh Hashanah:

Lev. 23:24 – refers to Rosh Hashanah as a *shabbaton* (rest day), a remembrance of sounding [of the *shofar*].

Numbers 29:1 – refers to RH as a day of sounding [the *shofar*].

So the contradiction is whether Rosh Hashanah is a day of remembrance of blowing the *shofar* or a day of actually blowing the *shofar*. The *gemara* resolves this apparent conflict by stating that the first verse, describing Rosh Hashanah as a day of rest for remembering the blowing of the *shofar*, refers to Rosh Hashanah that falls on Shabbat (and thus one remembers the blowing but does not actually blow). The second verse refers to Rosh Hashanah that falls on a weekday (and therefore one actually blows the *shofar*).

Rava rejects this explanation, reasoning that, if the Torah did in fact prohibit the blowing of the *shofar* on Shabbat, then surely that prohibition would also apply to the Temple. Rava therefore provides a different explanation for not blowing the *shofar* on Shabbat that does not rely on a biblical prohibition. Rather, according to Rava, the prohibition is rabbinic in keeping with the view of Rabbah, who said that everyone is commanded to blow the *shofar* but not everyone is proficient in blowing it. So they might be tempted to take the *shofar* from their house on Shabbat to someone who could teach him how to blow properly and thus accidentally violate Shabbat by carrying something through the public domain. This is the same reason for the prohibition against shaking the *lulav* and reading the *megillah* on Shabbat.

Malkhiyot*, *Zikhronot* and *Shofarot

The *gemara* examines R. Akiva's question of why we should recite the Kingship passage on Shabbat if there is no *shofar* blowing (32a). The answer is that we recite the *malkhiyot* because God told us to! The question therefore appears redundant and the

gemara argues that what Akiva was really asking was why do we recite ten verses of *malkhiyot* rather than nine (three times three verses). Since *malkhiyot* is different from *zikhronot* and *shofarot* with regard to blowing the *shofar*, then perhaps we should recite a different number of verses for it? This is intended as a theoretical question, rather than an actual alternative formulation of the number of verses. The *gemara* here is attempting to make sense of Akiva's question through hypothetical reinterpretation, since it rejects the more straightforward understanding of the question.

The *gemara* identifies the scriptural source for the *zikhronot* and *shofarot* blessings as Lev 23:24 – ***"Shabbaton zichron yom teruah mikra kodesh"*** ("A day of rest, of remembrance, a day of blowing *teruah* [*shofar*], a holy convocation"). "*shabbaton*" is held to refer to the blessing for the Holiness of the Day (*kedushat hayom*), "*zikhron*" to refer to *zikhronot*, "*yom teruah*" to refer to the *shofarot* and "*mikra kodesh*" to refer to refraining from labor. R. Akiva challenges this saying that - "*shabbaton*" refers to refraining [resting/Shabbat] from labor, "*zikhron*" refers to *zikhronot*, "*yom teruah*" refers to the *shofarot* and "*mikra kodesh*" refers to the Holiness of the Day. Two possible alternatives are given for the scriptural basis of the *malkhiyot*:

- Rabbi said that the source is in Leviticus 23:22-25. Leviticus 23:22 (at the end of the laws relating to Shavuot) states – 'I am the Lord your God' and then verse 23 continues with the words "In the seventh month" beginning the description of Rosh Hashanah. This juxtaposition is understood by R. Eliezer to be a reference to Kingship ("I am the Lord your God") in connection with Rosh Hashanah which is described in the verses that follow that phrase.

- R. Yosi bar Yehudah challenges this on the basis that one does not need to refer to a juxtaposition of verses to come to the conclusion that one should recite Kingship verses on Rosh Hashanah. Numbers 10:10 says "and they shall be a remembrance for you before your God [I am the Lord your God]". Yosi bar Yehudah argues the phrase "I am the Lord your God" here is redundant. He concludes that Scripture intends thereby to establish the principle that in every place that one recites verses of Remembrance ("and they shall be a remembrance") one also recites verses of Kingship ("I am the Lord your God").

It should be noted that in *Sifre Numbers*, Section 77, Rabbi Natan proposed Numbers 10:10 as the source, which includes references to all three –

"You shall blow the trumpets" - This is *shofarot;*

"They shall be a reminder of you before your God" – This is *zikhronot*

"I, the LORD, am your God"– This is *malkhiyot*

With respect to the *shofar*ot and *malkhiyot* verses, this analysis relies on understanding *hatsotsrot* (trumpet/horn) as synonymous with *shofar* and the statement of the Lord being our God as a reference to kingship.[32]

The *gemara* then explores the order of the *amidah* benedictions on Rosh Hashanah and specifically where in the course of the *amidah* benedictions one recites the passage for the Holiness of the Day. This question arises in the context of the extra blessings connected to the recital of the *amidah* on Rosh Hashanah (*malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and

[32] Liebreich, "Aspects the New Year Liturgy", 161

*shofar*ot) and how this affects the usual placing and order of the blessings. Again there are two different opinions:

- Rabbi said that one should recite the blessing for the Holiness of the Day together with the *malkhiyot* passage. Since the *kedushat hayom* blessing is normally fourth in the sequence of the *amidah* blessings for a *yom tov*, so here too it should be fourth in the sequence. It must therefore be combined with *malkhiyot* (which is the first in the sequence of the additional blessings for Rosh Hashanah) which would maintain its placement as fourth in the series of blessings.
- R. Shimon ben Gamliel disagrees, saying that usually the *kedushat hayom* blessing would be in the middle of the sequence of blessings. Therefore it should be combined with the *zikhronot* so that it can still be the middle blessing of the sequence.

Since the Mishnah has established that one should recite ten verses each for *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofarot*, the *gemara* seeks to find significance of this number. The Rabbis appear to work from the presumption that the number ten is chosen to represent a series of ten important things from the biblical literature and suggest several possibilities. These include the idea that they correspond to:

- The ten verses of *hallel* (praise) that David said in the Book of Psalms.
- The Ten Commandments that were said by Moses at Sinai, which, according to Exodus 20:15 were accompanied by *shofar* blasts.
- The ten utterances with which the world was created.

One source of confusion relating to the number of verses that should be recited is found in R. Yochanan ben Nuri's statement in the Mishnah. He notes that if one recites three verses in each category, one has discharged one's obligation. The *gemara* asks what R. Yochanan ben Nuri means to teach in this Mishnah. Does he mean that it is sufficient to recite three verses from each division of scripture - three of Torah, three from Prophets and three from Writings - for each of the sections of *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofarot*? This would be a total of nine verses for each section and thus there would be only one verse difference between Yochanan ben Nuri's opinion and the primary mishnaic opinion that one should recite ten verses. Or does Yochanan ben Nuri mean three verses in total - one verse from each of Torah, Prophets and Writings for *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofar*ot - so that there are only three verses for each section? This would yield a greater difference between Yochanan ben Nuri's opinion and the main statement in the Mishnah. The *gemara* seeks to resolve the question of what exactly Yochanan ben Nuri means and to resolve the apparent contradiction by relating his opinion to the question of the minimum number of verses one must recite to fulfill one's obligations. The *gemara* states on the basis of a *baraita* (Tosefta RH 2:12) that we should indeed recite no fewer than ten verses but that if one recited seven verses (corresponding to the seven heavens) one would have discharged his obligation. R. Yochanan ben Nuri continues in this *baraita* to say that one who minimizes his observance (i.e. one who seeks to do the minimum necessary to be discharged from their obligation) should recite no fewer than seven verses. But if he recited three of each of them he has discharged his obligation. Therefore Yochanan ben Nuri's opinion in the Mishnah is not in contradiction with the primary mishnaic statement that one should recite no fewer than ten verses. One

should recite ten verses for each of the additional sections but if one only recites three verses, one each from Torah, Prophets and Writings, one has discharged one's minimum halachic obligation.

The *gemara* proceeds to explore the criteria for the verses to be recited for Kingship, Remembrance and Shofar Blasts. Several restrictions and qualifications are discussed, including:

- Verses that refer to punishment should not be used as *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* or *shofarot* verses. Verses that refer to punishment of idolaters can be used, however.
- Verses that mention remembrance of an individual cannot be used, even if that remembrance is for good. However a verse in which God takes note of Sarah (Genesis 21:1) is acceptable (although on this criterion see below) as many people descended from her as a result of this taking note – it resulted in the birth of Isaac.
- There is a debate (apparently unresolved at this point) as to whether the word *pakad* (to take note of) is synonymous with the word *zachar* (remember) and thus whether verses in which the word *pakad* is used (such as Genesis 21:1) can be used as verses of remembrance.

These discussions, along with others that follow in the Talmud, suggest that at this time the verses were not yet fixed. Perhaps different rabbis and communities used different verses in their liturgy, or perhaps each service leader was expected to fill in his own verses on the basis of the above criteria. Liebreich notes a curious aspect of the *shofar* verses – the preponderance of references to the revelation at Sinai. This, he notes,

does not appear to be directly related to any of the themes of Rosh Hashanah. He argues therefore that the importance of these verses is not so much that they recall the revelation specifically but that they recall Israel's past. In a supposed link with the *zikhronot* theme expressed in the previous set of verses, the *shofar* verses also deal with remembrance. As the revelation at Sinai is the only significant event in Israel's past connected to the blowing of the *shofar* that can supply a sufficient number of verses, it was natural that these verses would be chosen for use here.[33]

The *gemara* also deals with questions of minimum requirement in dealing with the Mishnah's statement that one begins with verses from Torah and concludes with verses from the Prophets. R. Yosi says that if one concludes with verses from Torah one has discharged one's obligation. But the *gemara* notes a *baraita* in which the same Rabbi Yosi questions the worthiness of a person who concludes with a verse from Torah. The *gemara* resolves this problem by amending the Mishnah to read R. Yosi as saying that one should conclude with a single verse from Torah. But the *gemara* immediately raises an objection to its own re-write. As the Mishnah says "if one concluded [with Torah]" it implies that the person who does this has discharged his obligation but should initially try to do differently. Therefore, as concluding with Torah appears to be a minimum obligation rather than an optimum one, it seems strange to amend the Mishnah this way. The *gemara* thus further amends the Mishnah to say that one should begin with the Torah and conclude with Prophets. R. Yosi says one should conclude with a verse from Torah but if one concludes with a verse from Prophets one has discharged one's obligation.

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[33] Liebreich, "Aspects the New Year Liturgy", 141.

This answer is supported by a *baraita* - R. Elazar the son of R. Yosi said that those who seek to be complete in their observance would conclude with a verse from Torah.

Having now concluded that one optimally begins each of the *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofarot* verses with three verses from Torah and concludes with another verse from Torah, the *gemara* raises another problem. This fits well for the *zikhronot* and *shofar*ot verses, as there are many verses that can be used. But for *malkhiyot* there are only three appropriate verses (i.e., that use the root *malach* in reference to God and in an appropriate way in the Torah).[34] But we require four such verses and there are not enough. This is followed by a debate as to appropriate verses that do not mention *malach* specifically but relate to God as a King. This discussion includes "Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One" (i.e. the Shema – Deuteronomy 6:4), which is the verse that eventually appears in our liturgy as the concluding verse (although the talmudic discussion does not appear to come to a definite conclusion on this point).

Mussaf Service

Expanding upon the Mishnah's statement that the service leader who leads the *mussaf* service is the one who causes the *shofar* to be blown, the *gemara* discusses the reasons for the placement of the *shofar* liturgy here.

- One answer is that it is because of the dictum, "In a multitude of people is a king's glory" (Proverbs 14:28). The implication appears to be that, because there are more people in attendance at the synagogue during *mussaf,* the glory given to God in worship, and thus in the *shofar* liturgy, will be greater at that time.

[34] Numbers 23:21, Deuteronomy 33:5, and Exodus 15:18

- Another answer that is proposed is a more mundane and practical one – it is a defense against an anti-Jewish government decree, which according to Rashi's commentary prohibited the blowing of the *shofar*. It is not entirely clear why delaying the blowing of the *shofar* would solve this problem, although one might speculate that those who enforced the decree were known to get lax in their vigilance by late morning and stop checking up on the Jews in time for *mussaf*! In all likelihood this explanation is one made up after the fact and in keeping with the social situation of the time, although there has been no shortage of anti-Jewish sentiment in the course of Jewish history so one cannot entirely discount it as a possibility. However this does not mean that the other explanation is correct by default. It could also just as easily have been created later to explain an already existing practice.

Talmud Yerushalmi

As is often the case the Yerushalmi covers much of the same ground as the Bavli, often in less detail, but also differs in certain interesting ways.

Sources for *Malkhiyot*, *Zikhronot* and Shofarot

Y. RH 3:5 provides a much more succinct set of biblical sources for the *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofarot* verses of Rosh Hashanah than does the Bavli. They are as follows:

Malkhiyot – Leviticus 23:22 "[And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest; you

shall leave them for the poor and the stranger:] I the LORD am your God." The implication here is that God will judge the people if they do not obey the commandment set forth here and this is an act of judgement such a king would do.[35]

Zikhronot – Leviticus 23:24 – "[Speak to the Israelite people thus: In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall observe complete rest, a sacred occasion] commemorated with loud blasts."

Shofarot – Leviticus 25:9 – "Then you shall sound the horn loud; [in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month -- the Day of Atonement -- you shall have the horn sounded throughout your land]."

This last passage links the blowing of the *shofar* on Rosh Hashanah with the blowing on the Yom Kippur of the Jubilee. It notes that Leviticus 25:9 includes an apparently superfluous reference to the seventh month, which is understood to mean that, in the seventh month of the Jubilee year one does on the the tenth day of the month as one does on the first, i.e. one also recites the *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofar*ot for the Jubilee as for Rosh Hashanah. In the same way a parallel is drawn between the order of *shofar* blasts on the Yom Kippur of the Jubilee and the blowing of the *shofar* on Rosh Hashanah. It is thus concluded that the order is the same (*tekiah*, *teruah* and then *tekiah*) for the blowing on Rosh Hashanah as it is for the Yom Kippur of the Jubilee and that there are three sets of three blasts each.

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[35] Edward A. Goldman, The Talmud of the Land of Israel, A Preliminary Translation and Explanation, Volume 16, Rosh Hashanah, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 87f.

Blowing the Shofar on Shabbat

The Yerushlami (RH 4:1) states, in contrast to the Bavli, that not blowing the *shofar* on Shabbat is in accordance with biblical law. The Bavli rejected this proposal on the basis that if the sounding of the *shofar* was according to biblical law then that law would surely be the same in Jerusalem and the provinces. But the Mishnah clearly states that the *shofar* was blown on Shabbat in Jerusalem but not in the provinces. The Yerushalmi nevertheless decides that the distinction between blowing the *shofar* on a weekday and not on Shabbat is biblically based, drawing on the different terms in Numbers 29:1 (a day of blowing) and Leviticus 23:24 (a memorial of sounding the *shofar*). The first refers to blowing the *shofar* on a Rosh Hashanah that falls on a weekday while the second refers to remembering the blowing but not doing so on a Rosh Hashanah that falls on Shabbat. The Yerushalmi then refers to Numbers 29:1 again to specifically rebut the idea that if the *shofar* could be blown on Shabbat in the Temple according to biblical law, then it could also be blown elsewhere and vice versa. According to Edward Goldman this scriptural verse is specifically understood to refer to the Temple, as it was there that they determined when it was the "first day of the month".[36]

Mussaf Amidah Benedictions

Y. RH 4:6 notes that in Judea they followed the custom of Rabbi Akiva (including the *malkhiyot* verses with the *kedushat hayom* benediction and then blowing the *shofar*) while in Galilee they followed the custom of Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakhai (including the

[36] Ibid., 100.

malkhiyot verses with the *kedushat hashem* benediction and not blowing the *shofar* until after the *kedushat hayom* blessing). However if one transgresses by following the custom of Judea in Galilee or vice versa, then one has nevertheless fulfilled one's obligations in respect of reciting these verses.

It is also noted that one may substitute the phrase "the Mighty One of Rulership" *(adir hameluchah)* in the eulogy of the *kedushat hashem* benediction of the *amidah* in the *mussaf* service of Rosh Hashanah. This is the only occasion on which one may do this. This phrase is indeed found in the eulogy in Palestinian liturgical texts of the Rosh Hashanah *amidah* in the Cairo Geniza. This corresponds to the view of Rabbi Yochanan ben Nuri who stated that one should include the *malkhiyot* verses in the *kedushat hashem* benediction. Therefore replacing the usual reference in this benediction to God's holiness (the usual ending being "Blessed are you, Lord, the Holy God"), with a reference to God's sovereignty is appropriate here as it is in concert with the theme of the *malkhiyot* verses.[37]

Details of the Shofar Service

Y. RH 4:7 discusses the central details of the *shofar* service. It is noted that one may not recite fewer than ten each of *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofar*ot verses, contrasting with the Bavli that, as we have seen, provides a wide array of different possibilities for the amount of verses to be recited for each. Also, unlike the Bavli, the Yerushalmi has no

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[37] Ibid., 106.

debate regarding what these ten verses correspond to in each case. The correspondences are clearly and unambiguously stated as:

- Ten expressions of praise uttered by David for *malkhiyot*,
- Ten expressions of confession uttered by Isaiah for *zikhronot*, and
- Ten offerings in the Temple made on Rosh Hashanah for *shofar*ot (the 7 lambs, the bullock, the ram and the goat).[38]

A debate follows in which there is discussion as in the Bavli (but again much shorter) as to what verses may be counted for *malkhiyot* in respect of various ways of describing God. The Bavli includes much discussion on where verses with particular references may be placed (*malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofar*ot). The Bavli excludes some verses from one or the other set because they do not include a sufficiently relevant term or because they contain more than one such term (e.g. one term referring to Kingship and one to Remembrance). In contrast, the Yerushalmi only covers the *malkhiyot* verses. It also focuses on finding verses that may or may not be counted as more than one of the ten verses, because they contain more than one reference to God as sovereign (e.g. verses with *el, elyon,* or with both God and King). This is in contrast to the Bavli, which seeks to find verses that should be excluded.

The Yerushalmi is also clearer in its treatment of how many verses one is required to recite for each of the sets of verses. It notes that they used to think that one had to recite three verses in each but that a *baraita* (Tosefta RH 2:12[39]) instructs that one may recite three in all (presumably one for each of *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofar*ot) and still fulfill

[38] Ibid., 108.
[39] Ibid.

one's obligation. The toseftan *baraita* is cited in part by the Yerushalmi and in full by the Bavli, accounting in part for the lengthier and more complicated discussion on this subject in the Bavli.

Shofar blowing in Mussaf

As in the Bavli, the reason given in the Yerushalmi for blowing the *shofar* in *mussaf* rather than *shacharit* is connected to the idea that the *shofar* could be understood as a signal for war (Y. RH 4:8). But, whereas the Bavli treatment is vague and not well explained, the Yerushalmi is quite specific. In the Yerushalmi an actual event is related in which the enemies of the Israelites mistook the blowing of the *shofar* in the morning service as a signal for war. Moreover cogent reasons are provided for why blowing the *shofar* later, in the *mussaf* service, would make any difference to this perception, a question not answered in the Bavli.

- The enemies see the people reading the *shema* and Torah and praying in the morning service and therefore would be able to perceive that the *shofar* was being blown as part of a religious observance.
- In an intriguing recognition of the tailing-off of attendance at later services, it is noted that not all the people would be present for the *shofar* service. This implies that their enemies would be unlikely to perceive the *shofar* blowing as a call to arms as many of the people would not be there.

This section also identifies scriptural sources for blowing the *shofar* in the *mussaf* service. For instance, Numbers 29:1-2 refers to the blowing of the *shofar,* followed closely by a reference to making a burnt offering. This juxtaposition is understood as indicating that the *shofar* should be blown at the time of the burnt offering, which is in the *mussaf* service.

The section concludes with a discussion of whether the service leader absolves the congregation from the obligation to recite the prayers themselves, and focuses on the recitation of the Rosh Hashanah additions to the *mussaf amidah.* Rabban Gamliel argues that the reader does absolve the congregation of their obligation and a story is told that confirms this view. In this story Rav Hisda repeated the prayers as he did not have the proper devotional attention during the first recitation. Had he had the proper devotion he would not have had to repeat them, since the reader's recitation would have fulfilled his obligation. Further support for this position is drawn from the Mishnah's dictum that the prayer leader must recite *avot, gevurot* and *kedushat hashem* benedictions, implying that one must be present for the recitation of the first three benedictions in order for one's obligation to be fulfilled by the service leader.

Midrashic Works

The amoraic (Byzantine) *midrashim* from the land of Israel also shed light on our topic and we shall discuss the relevant texts here.

Pesikta de Rav Kahana

PRK Piska 23 (and the practically identical *Leviticus Rabbah* chapter 29) is clear in its understanding of Rosh Hashanah as a day of judgement for human beings and understands the blowing of the *shofar* within this context.

Aspect of Justice, Aspect of Mercy

Piska 23:3 introduces the central conceptual basis for the discussion that follows. The text here employs a rabbinic understanding of two of the names of God. Rabbinic tradition understands biblical references to God as *Elohim* as referring to God acting in his aspect of justice and judgement. The name *Adonai* on the other hand denotes God acting in his aspect of mercy. The Piska thus states that *Elohim* ascends the throne of justice on Rosh Hashanah and does so in his aspect of strict justice. But when Israel blows the *shofar* to *Adonai* he rises from his throne of judgement (Psalm 47:6 – "God [*elohim*] ascends midst the *teruah*; Adonai, to the blasts of the *shofar*", a verse which will later appear in the morning *shofar* liturgy) and takes his seat on the thrown of mercy, turning the measure of justice into the measure of mercy. The *shofar* is thus understood as a means of appeasing God (Piska 23:4). In Piska 23:11 it is noted that on Rosh Hashanah the Israelites take time off from their daily work to blow the *shofar* and cause God to move from the throne of judgment to the throne of mercy. This, along with linking the *shofar*-blowing to the binding of Isaac, is a central theme of the midrashic treatment of the *shofar* and its liturgy on Rosh Hashanah. Rosh Hashanah is clearly and unmistakably a day of judgement, yet humans are flawed and could not, in the rabbinic mindset possibly stand up to a strict divine (and thus all-knowing) accounting of their

sins. Therefore the *shofar* acts as the means by which we cause God to treat us with mercy and compassion rather than the strict justice we probably deserve.

The Binding of Isaac

As in the talmudic treatment, Piska 23:7 understands the blowing of the *shofar* additionally as a remembrance of the binding of Isaac (drawing from the reference to remembrance in Lev 23:24). Indeed this is one of the most prevalent explanations in midrashic literature for why the blowing of the *shofar* succeeds in moving God from the throne of strict justice to the throne of mercy. Reminded by the *shofar* blast of merit accruing to Israel from the binding of Isaac, God will turn the attribute of judgement into the attribute of mercy (Piska 23: 9). Piska 23:10 expands on this with an interpretation of Genesis 22:13 ("And Abraham raised his eyes and he saw and behold a ram"). According to this interpretation God showed Abraham the ram tearing itself out of one thicket and getting caught in another again and again. He said, "Just as the ram is entangled so will your children be entangled in their sin but in the end they will be redeemed by the horn of a ram," i.e. through the *shofar* blowing on Rosh Hashanah. The *piska* then provides another interpretation of this verse saying that the people of Israel will be entangled among the nations but in the end they will be redeemed by a ram's horn sounded on Rosh Hashanah. This expands the theme of personal judgement and redemption to a messianic redemption for the whole people.

Further meanings

In Piska 23:8 R. Nachman provides an interpretation of Psalm 81:4 ("Blow the horn on the new moon, on the full moon for our feast day") that understands

"month/*hodesh*" as *hadash*/new" to mean renew your deeds, and *shofar* as "*shafar*/beautify or improve", meaning to improve your deeds. God said that if we improve our deeds before him he will be like a *shofar*. Just as the *shofar* takes in air at one side and lets it out at the other, so shall God rise from the throne of justice and take his seat on the throne of mercy. Then he will become filled with mercy for us and turn the attribute of justice into the attribute of mercy. Although this *piska*, like the previous one, sees the blowing of the *shofar* as a means of convincing (perhaps even forcing) God to move from the throne of justice to the throne of mercy, it introduces a more inward/human focussed element – that this *shofar* blowing is connected to the renewing of one's deeds.

Blowing on Shabbat

Piska 23:12 relates to Mishnah RH 4:1 in respect of not blowing the *shofar* on Shabbat. It comes to the conclusion that Num 29:1 ("a day of blowing") refers to when one actually blows the *shofar* ("a day of blowing") which is when Rosh Hashanah falls on a weekday, while Lev23:24 ("a remembrance of blowing the *shofar*") refers to Shabbat when one does not blow the *shofar* but only makes mention of blowing the *shofar*.

Pesikta Rabbati

This midrashic work, somewhat later than *Pesikta de Rav Kahana and Leviticus Rabbah*, but based on them, also works on the premise that the primary function of blowing the *shofar* is to cause God to be filled with compassion and move from the throne of judgement to the throne of mercy (Piska 39:1). Like these earlier midrashic

works *Pesikta Rabbati* also contains more inward-directed rationales for blowing the *shofar*. Piska 39:2 provides an interpretation for Psalm 81:4 ("Blow the *shofar* at the new moon [*hodesh*]") in which "*hodesh*" is understood as "*hadash*/new". Thus it is understood as meaning that we "blow the horn at the renewing". This means that when we blow the *shofar* we are to renew our way of living and repent. Then, no matter how many sins have been charged against us, God will cover them up and pardon them.

In Piska 40:1 the *midrash* extends the talmudic effort to find correspondences for the number of verses in the additional *amidah* passages to the number of benedictions in the *amidah* on Rosh Hashanah. It states that, in the *tefillah* of Rosh Hashanah day one is required to say nine benedictions rather than the usual seven as on Shabbat. This corresponds to the nine invocations of God's name in the chapter (I Sam 2) in which Hannah recites her Tefillah (it being understood that this recitation took place on Rosh Hashanah).

Piska 40:2 suggests an interpretation of the contradicting verses, Num 29:1 and Lev 23:24. It interprets Num 29 as referring to blowing the *shofar* everywhere when Rosh Hashanah falls on Shabbat, and Lev 23:24 (remembrance of *shofar*) refers to the *shofar* being blown only in Yavneh when Rosh Hashanah falls on Shabbat.

Piska 40:3-4 provides an explanation for why we do not blow the *shofar* during the *amidah* of the morning service but rather during the *mussaf* service. This is so that when the people arise in judgment at the blowing of the *shofar* they will already have meditated abundantly during the *amidah* on many good deeds and thereby be acquitted in judgment. This is based on an interpretation of Psalm 17:1-2 – "A Prayer of David. Hear a just cause, O LORD, Attend to my cry; Give ear to my prayer which is not from

deceitful lips. Let my vindication come from Your presence; Let Your eyes look on the things that are upright".

"A Prayer of David" – refers to the words of devotion a man utters at the time he awakes from his sleep,

"Hear a just cause, O LORD" – refers to the recitation of the *shema*.

"Attend to my cry" – refers to the morning prayer (*tefillah*).

"Give ear to my prayer" – refers to the *mussaf tefillah*. God is asked to give ear to this prayer because "it goes not out of feigning lips". In the time it took to recite the other preceding prayers during the course of the morning one would not have had time to engage in idle speech and deceitful words but only in meditation on Torah, in acts of charity and in good deeds. Therefore when we pray for judgement and blow the *shofar* in *mussaf*, God will be more disposed to disregard the wicked deeds which we may have done. This of course suggests a very different rationale for placing the *shofar* liturgy in the *mussaf* service than the "historical" explanation set out in both the Bavli and the Yerushalmi. Rather, this explanation is in keeping with the second impulse in the Yerushalmi, to provide a scripturally-based rationale for placing the *shofar* service in the *mussaf* service rather than the morning service.

This *piska* also provides another inward-directed reason for the blowing of the *shofar*. It is intended to make one tremble, a wordplay on the word *tekiah*, and prepare oneself for penitence. This is based on Amos 3:6 – "When a *shofar* is sounded [*yitakah*, from same root as *tekiah*] in a town, do the people not take alarm? Can misfortune come to a town if the LORD has not caused it?"

Piska 40:6 provides an interpretation for the inclusion of the word *achar* in Gen 22:13 before the verse notes that Abraham saw the ram caught in the thicket. This extra word refers to the future when Abraham's ancestors will be entangled in sin like the ram in the thicket. They are then to lift up the ram's horn and blow and God will be reminded of the binding of Isaac and acquit them in judgement. This idea is one that resonates in other *midrashim* such as *Pesikta de Rav Kahana* and *Leviticus Rabbah* (although not on the basis of the same interpretation).

Piska 40:7 ends with a messianic statement. Just as in this world God is moved to compassion by the *shofar*, so too in the world to come. He shall be moved to compassion by the *shofar* for the Jewish people and bring redemption closer to hand. This is based on Joel 2:1 ("Blow a horn in Zion, sound an alarm on My holy mount! Let all dwellers on earth tremble, for the day of the LORD has come! It is close").

Introductions: Tekiata deve Rav

The *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofar*ot verses are preceded by introductory passages. The *malkhiyot* verses are introduced by *aleinu*, the *zikhronot* verses by *attah zokher* (You Remember), and the *shofarot* verses by *attah nigleta* (You Revealed). These prologues are known as *tekiata deve rav*. This designation is ambiguous: it may be translated as the "*shofar* prayers of the school of Rav", referring to the third century Babylonian *amora*; or *deve rav* may be understood as a generic term meaning "of the schoolhouse ("*bei rav*"). Elbogen notes that we have no firm information as to when these introductory prayers were written. He surmised nonetheless that the *attah zocher* prayer, which introduces the *zikhronot* verses, can be attributed to Rav or someone of his

school. Elbogen also notes that the style of the other two passages are very similar and that it is therefore "not too daring to suppose that the three introductions are all from the same hand"[40]. Petuchowski, following Heinemann, however, argues that the *aleinu* is stylistically quite different from the *attah zocher* and was undoubtedly composed earlier (although these stylistic differences are somewhat dubious). Even if Rav did compose the introduction to the *zikhronot* verses this does not "compel the assumption that he also composed the introductory prayer of the Malkhuyoth"[41]. Rather he sees Rav as the editor of the *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofar*ot, including the final selection of the scriptural verses that are used in each section. Liebreich sees Rav or a member of his academy as the writer of the *zikhronot* and probably *shofar*ot prologues but not the *aleinu* that acts as prologue for the *malkhiyot* verses. He therefore argues that Rav or his disciple wrote these prologues to "confer upon zikhronot and shofarot equal liturgical status with qedushat ha-yom."[42]

Conclusion

The rabbinic treatment of Rosh Hashanah and the role of the *shofar* in it is, as we have seen, wide-ranging and extensive. There is much that is unclear about the extent of rabbinic invention on this subject. How much of what they recorded in the above works was of their own creation and how much was consolidation and systemization of ideas and practices that dated back to Temple times or post-biblical traditions? There is no

[40] Ismar Elbogen, Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History, translated by Raymond P. Scheindlin (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1993), 120.
[41] Petuchowski, "Malkhuyoth, Zikhronot and Shofarot", 6.
[42] Leibreich, "Aspects the New Year Liturgy,"161.

definite answer to these questions, but in any event, the achievement of the Rabbis in respect of the festival, its rituals and practices is monumental. A brief survey of the rabbinic literature reveals a wealth of ideas and practices that we recognize as essential parts of the festival of Rosh Hashanah and its liturgy today. Among them are the centrality of the theme of judgment to the festival and the central role that the *shofar* plays in drawing down divine mercy, and much of the content for the *shofar* liturgy of the *mussaf* service. Moreover the festival, and the *shofar* in particular, are clearly linked to the binding of Isaac and the ancestral merit that provides for us in respect of attaining divine mercy.

While much of the *mussaf shofar* liturgy is delineated in the classical rabbinic, literature there are nevertheless aspects that are not clarified there. There is much discussion as to the verses to be recited, and how many, for each of the *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofarot* rubrics. But we are left with the distinct impression that the set of verses we recognize today was not yet finalized by this point. Moreover while there are specific wordings of concluding blessings in Mishnah Ta'anit, there is no clear indication that these were understood to be the same as those for the Rosh Hashanah, although there is also no reason to presume otherwise. And we know that, while similar, the eulogies for the *zikhronot* and *shofarot* blessings are not the same today as the ones that appear in Mishnah Ta'anit. Moreover, despite the above discussion, there is also no clear evidence that Rav was the author, or even the editor, of the blessings that surround the three sets of verses, or, even if he was, that they were not reworked by later Rabbis. But the basics and many of the details are set out and clarified in the classical rabbinic literature. Later Rabbis and thinkers would build on the extensive foundation laid by these sages.

Chapter 3 - Medieval

The Middle Ages saw a proliferation of Jewish writing in a variety of fields. Prayer books and commentaries on the liturgy of the time included *Seder Rav Amram* (9th Century), *Siddur Saadia* (10th century), and the great prayer book commentary of David Avudraham (1340) in the Sephardi world. In the Rhineland there was *Siddur Rashi* (by the disciples of Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac of Troyes, 1040-1105), *Sefer HaManhig* (by Isaac of Lunelles) and *Machzor Vitry* (by Simchah ben Samuel of Vitry, 11th century, a disciple of Rashi). In addition, philosophers like Maimonides and Saadia (author of *Siddur Saadia*) produced works that included explanations of both the meaning of the *shofar* and the *shofar* liturgy of Rosh Hashanah, while Bible commentators such as Rashi and Ibn Ezra interpreted the relevant biblical passages relating to the *shofar*, and mystical works such as the *Zohar* attributed deep mystical significance to the *shofar*. This period saw the crystallization of the *shofar* liturgy in the form we are familiar with today.

Seder Rav Amram

The lengthy responsum known as the *Seder Rav Amram* provides the earliest and most complete record of the traditional Jewish liturgy. Written in the ninth century in Babylonia, as a response to a question from the Jewish community in Barcelona, *Seder Rav Amram* had a major impact on both the Sephardi and Ashkenazi rites.[43] Unfortunately it cannot be viewed as an unimpeachable source of ninth century Jewish liturgy. Comparison of manuscripts of *Seder Rav Amram* show several variations and suggest that additions were made to the book by succeeding generations and communities

who added their own traditions and practices into the text. The actual prayer texts that are laid out in *Seder Rav Amram* are particularly suspect in this regard. Nevertheless *Seder Rav Amram* represents the most comprehensive record of early medieval Jewish liturgical practice.

Torah Service

The Talmud mentions that one of the reasons for blowing the *shofar* is to confuse Satan (according to Rabbi Isaac, b. RH 16a-b). This is achieved by blowing the *shofar* while standing and also while sitting. Blowing the *shofar* while standing clearly refers to blowing the *shofar* in the context of the *amidah* but what of blowing while sitting? It would appear that already in the time of the Talmud there was a tradition of blowing the *shofar* twice, once while standing (i.e., during the *amidah*) and once while sitting. However the Talmud and other rabbinic material focus on the *shofar* blowing in the *mussaf amidah*, leaving some confusion as to what this other blowing consists of and when it occurs. By Amram's time this confusion appears to have been resolved in the form of a *shofar* blowing at the end of the Torah service in the morning. What is unclear is whether this is the same place to which Rabbi refers or whether the rubric that appears in Amram's *siddur* for this blowing has its roots in talmudic custom or is a later development. In any event, Rav Amram's *siddur* places this *shofar*-blowing just prior to the returning of the Torah to the ark, when the congregation sits before *mussaf*. As compared to the elaborate ritual laid out in the Talmud for the *mussaf* service, the *shofar* ritual in the Torah service as presented by Rav Amram is much simpler. We are told that the service leader takes the *shofar* in his hands and recites the blessing – "Blessed are you

[43] The Encyclopedia of Judaism, ed, Geoffrey Wigoder, Jerusalem Publishing House (Jerusalem: 1989), 57

Lord our God king of the universe who hallows us with his *mitzvot* and commands us to hear the call/sound of the *shofar*." He then recites the *shechechianu* blessing and blows the *shofar*. The notes of the *shofar* that are blown are:

- *tekiah*, *shevarim*, *teruah* and *tekiah*
- *tekiah*, *shevarim* and *tekiah*
- *tekiah*, *teruah* and *tekiah*

The service leader blows the *tekiah* three times and then *shevarim*, *teruah* and *tekiah* three times. Then he blows *tekiah* three times again and then *shevarim* and *tekiah* three times. Then *tekiah*, *shevarim* and *tekiah* three times. This is based on the opinion of Rabbi Abahu of Caesaria in the Bavli (R.H. 33b).

The stated reason for blowing the *shofar* twice, while sitting (during the Torah service) and while standing (during the *mussaf amidah*), is to be to confuse Satan, as noted by Rabbi Yitzchak in the Talmud (b. RH 16a-b), although how this succeeds in confusing Satan is not made clear.

This is the extent of the blowing of the *shofar* during the Torah service as described by Rav Amram and thus much of the liturgy as it appears in contemporary *machzorim* is not described here. Later tradition would add further readings before and after the blowing. The Ashkenazi ritual has Psalm 47 being recited seven times before the blowing, while the Italian rite includes this Psalm being read once before the scriptural reading.[44] This tradition can be traced to *Masekhet Soferim* Chapter 19, Rule 2 (one of the non-canonical "talmudic" tractates known as the Minor Tractates). This rule

states that on the New Year we recite "All you peoples, clap your hands, raise a joyous shout for God" (Psalm 47:2)[45]. The recitation of this Psalm seven times is a custom that can be traced to Rabbi Ephraim Zalman Margaliot (1762-1828),[46] under the influence of Lurianic Kabbalah.

This Psalm contains the word *Elohim* seven times and its recitation seven times is understood to correspond to the number of firmaments created by God[47]. The Sephardic, Italian and Yemenite rites all include further biblical verses referring to the power of the *shofar*, including Psalm 47:6 and Psalm 89:16. Lurianic tradition also added several meditations to be read before and after the blowing, and these can be found in both Ashkenazi and Sephardic rituals[48]. This includes the six verses (mostly from Psalms) to be read prior to the blowing of the *shofar*. These verses form an acrostic – "*Kera Satan*/cut off Satan". The composition of this series of verses can be traced to the kabbalists of Sefad.[49] Idelsohn also notes that in Sephardic-Oriental traditions and Hassidic traditions (that follow the Sephardic rites) the *shofar* is also blown during the silent *Amidah*[50]. However, what is laid out in *Seder Rav Amram* is still the core of the *shofar* liturgy in the Torah service today.

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[44] A. Z. Idelsohn, Jewish Liturgy and its Development, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1932), 211.
[45] Rev. Dr. Abraham Cohen ed., Minor Tractates of the Talmud, Masekhet Soferim, (London: The Soncino Press, 1984), Chapter 19, Rule 2.
[46] B. S. Jacobson, Netiv Binah, 5 vols; (Tel-Aviv: Sinai, 1978), vol. 4, 94.
[47] Philip Birnbaum, High Holyday Prayer Book, (New York: Hebrew Publishing Company, 1951), 315 ff.
[48] Idelsohn, Jewish Liturgy, 211.
[49] Yeshaya Halevi Horowitz, Siddur Sha'ar Hashama'im, 2 vols., (Jerusalem: Ahavat Shalom, 1997).
[50] Ibid., 213.

Mussaf Service

Amram instructs that after the return of the Torah to the ark, we begin the *mussaf* prayers. He confirms that the *mussaf tefillah* consists of nine blessings as stated by the talmudic sages (b. RH 32) –

- *avot,*
- *gevurot* and
- *kedushat hashem,*
- *malkhiyot* combined with *kedushat hayom* and followed by a *shofar* blowing,
- *zikhronot* followed by a *shofar* blowing,
- *shofar*ot followed by a *shofar* blowing,
- *avodah*
- *hoda'ah*
- *birkat kohanim*

This is followed in the text by what is probably a later addition that explains why the *malkhiyot* precedes the *zikhronot* and *shofar*ot in the liturgy. The remembrance (and judgement) flows from the kingship of God. It is also noted that one recites no less than ten verses each of *Malkhiyot*, *Zikhronot* and *Shofar*ot and if one recites three of each, from Torah, Prophets and Writings, one has fulfilled one's obligation. One starts with Torah, then Writings and then conclude with Prophets.

Amram then explains that the service leader is the one who blows the *shofar* and recites the three additional blessings (and accompanying verses) for Rosh Hashanah. If

one is unable to attend synagogue then one may do this oneself, although this only applies to those in more rural areas far from an accessible synagogue. If one lives in a town then one is obliged to attend the synagogue to hear the service leader blow the *shofar* and recite the blessings. In a place in which there is a service leader then the individual recites the seven usual festival blessings. Then the service leader repeats the *amidah* and after the first blessing (presumably the first of the additional blessings for Rosh Hashanah – *malkhiyot*) blows *tekiah*, *shevarim*, *teruah* and *tekiah*. And after the second (additional) blessing he blows *tekiah*, *shevarim* and *tekiah*. And after the third (additional) blessing he blows *tekiah*, *shevarim* and *tekiah*. And then after the *tefillah* he blows *shevarim* three times. This is the custom of the two *yeshivot* in Babylonia. It may be an earlier parallel to the blowing of the *tekiah gedolah*, but it is not current practice.

Amram sets out the actual text of the Rosh Hashanah additions, which is almost identical to the traditional liturgy as we now know it (e.g. in Birnbaum). Indeed Elbogen states that the texts of the three introductory passages have been "identical in all rites since Amram"[51]

- ***Malkhiyot***

    - Introduction: *aleinu* – During the individual recitation of the *amidah* the individual recites the *kedushat hayom* as it appears in the other *amidot* for Rosh Hashanah. But when the service leader repeats the *amidah* he continues and recites the *malkhiyot* blessing and verses. The blessing begins with *aleinu*, which relates to the sovereignty of God, stating that God is the Creator of the universe

and thus the Master of all, and the King of the people of Israel in particular. As his people, we acknowledge him as our supreme ruler. In the second part of the *aleinu, al ken nekaveh*, we look forward to the day when all peoples of the earth will praise God and acknowledge him as their ruler.

- Verses
- Epilogue – Each of the series of verses is concluded by an epilogue beginning with *eloheinu veilohei avoteinu* and followed by a petition relating to the theme of the section (in this case, *meloch al kol haolam kulo bikhvodekha* etc.). Although there are minor variations among the various medieval works (*Seder Rav Amram, Siddur Saadia, Siddur Rashi, Machzor Vitry* etc.) these epilogues are broadly the same in these various versions. According to Liebreich, while Torah verses in each section relate to our past, the epilogues, like the verses from the later Prophets in the verse selection, "focus attention on the glorious future in store for Israel".[52] The *malkhiyot* epilogue in Amram includes a sentence (beginning with *hoshiyeinu adonai eloheinu*/"save us Lord our God") that appears in the standard *eloheinu velohei avoteinu* passage for the festivals, but has been dropped from today's liturgy. The passage as a whole is adapted for the *malkhiyot* theme in referring to God's reigning over the whole world and exhorting all living creatures to acknowledge God's's sovereignty and proclaim that God is their king.
- *Shofar* blowing – *tekiah, shevarim, teruah* and *tekiah*
- *Hayom harat olam* – This passage is repeated after each of the *shofar* blowings in the *mussaf* service but is not recited in the individual's recitation of the *amidah*

[51] Ismar Elbogen, Jewish Liturgy, 119.
[52] Liebreich, "Aspects the New Year Liturgy," 150

benedictions (during which the *shofar* is not blown). The same passage is recited after each of the *shofar* blowings for *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofarot*. The passage proclaims that Rosh Hashanah is the birthday of the world and that all mankind is judged on this day. It asks God to have mercy on us in his pronouncement of our sentence.

In several manuscripts of *Seder Rav Amram* there are additional passages after the words *ein od*, between the *aleinu* and *al ken nekaveh*. These are likely later additions in accordance with later local customs and do not appear in today's liturgy. One of these *piyyutim* is described by Avudraham as appearing in this position.

- ***Zikhronot***

  - Introduction: *atta zocher*. This prayer relates to various aspects of remembrance – God's remembrance of his works, of our deeds and of all things. It also states explicitly that Rosh Hashanah is a memorial day, decreed by God, of the anniversary of the world's creation and that on this day nations and mortals will be judged for life or death, war, peace, famine or abundance. Liebreich argues[53] that the focus of this passage on the theme of judgement influenced the insertion of other geonic additions to the *amidah* (*zochreinu lechaim, mi kamocha av harachamim, ukhtov lechaim* and *besefer hachaim*). However it is just as likely that the judgment theme reflected in these passages is an expansion of the biblical

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[53] Liebreich, "Aspects the New Year Liturgy," 170-171

yom zikaron rather than the *zikhronot* passage, which itself is probably derived from the biblical idea.

- Verses
- *Ya'aleh veyavoh* – this is the standard *ya'aleh veyavoh* recited for the festivals. It is not recited on Rosh Hashanah in later medieval and contemporary liturgies although the theme fits both the festival and the *zikhronot* section. It is included in *Siddur Rav Saadia*.
- Epilogue - *eloheinu velohei avoteinu zochreinu bezikaron tov* … While the epilogues to *malkhiyot* and *shofarot* focus on only one theme, Liebreich argues that the epilogue for *zikhronot* is comprised of three distinct strata[54]:

- Stratum 1 – Liebreich argues that this has a pronounced resemblance to the *ya'aleh veyavoh* passage above and that it was composed with the aim of compressing the themes of that passage (presumably for liturgical traditions that did not preserve the full *ya'aleh ve yavoh*, since Saadia does not have this stratum but does have *ya'aleh veyavoh*).
- Stratum 2 – This stratum implores God to remember the covenant with Abraham.
- Stratum 3 – Having referred to the covenant with Abraham in the second strata the passage now turns to deal explicitly with the *akedah*. Liebreich argues that this is interpolated from stratum 2's theme of the covenant with Abraham. This interpolation relates in particular to the idea of God's compassion in extending the merits of the forefathers to us, their descendants.

  However it is probably more likely that these are not in fact distinct strata but rather separate trains of thought in a unified liturgical composition.

- *Shofar* blowing – *tekiah, shevarim* and *tekiah.*
- *Hayom harat olam*

- ***Shofarot***

  - Introduction: *atta nigleita.* This passage relates to the revelation at Sinai, which took place amidst the sound of the *shofar.*
  - Verses
  - *Eloheinu velohei avoteinu teka beshofar gadol lecheruteinu* … This petitionary passage requests the speedy blowing of the ultimate Great Shofar that shall be blown to herald the messianic age and signal the ingathering of the exiles.
  - *Shofar* blowing – *tekiah, teruah* and *tekiah*
  - *Hayom harat olam*

At the conclusion of the *amidah* the *shofar* is blown again – this time only one *teruah gedolah* – in order to confuse Satan. It should be observed that the note referred to here is *teruah gedolah* rather than *tekiah gedolah.*

If there is no service leader then the individual should recite the nine blessings and blow the *shofar.* According to Elbogen, it was Babylonian custom for the congregation to recite only seven blessings in the silent *amidah* and to hear the service leader recite the additional blessings and blow the *shofar.* This is confirmed by Amram (as noted above) and other *geonim* and is recorded by Avudraham. Nevertheless the more common practice in Europe in the Middle Ages was for the congregation to recite

[54] Liebreich, "Aspects the New Year Liturgy,"145-149.

all nine blessings even during the silent repetition of the *amidah,*[55] and this is the custom today.

Saadia Gaon

Saadia's *Siddur* follows much the same format as *Seder Rav Amram* with several important additions and distinctions:

- Saadia describes the *teruah* as a long trembling sound, indicating that it has yet to be clearly defined as a series of staccato notes.
- He states that an individual who prays as part of a public gathering led by a service leader does not recite the three *mussaf* additions, as does Amram. However, unlike Amram, Saadia notes that someone praying privately does recite the additions but does not interrupt the prayers to blow the *shofar*. Rather they should blow the *shofar* either before or after the *amidah*.
- Saadia also points out that, in public, thrirty *shofar* blasts are blown before *mussaf*. This is a version of the *tekiata demeyushav* but he doesn't associate this blowing with the Torah being out of the ark.

Avudraham

Torah service

David Avudraham (Seville, 1340), in his commentary on the prayer book, describes the *shofar* liturgy that appears in the Torah service. The service leader recites several scriptural verses before blowing the *shofar*. These verses do not appear in today's Ashkenazi liturgy but are retained (and supplemented by further verses relating to

[55] Elbogen, Jewish Liturgy, 121.

the *shofar*) in Sephardi liturgies. The congregation and the service leader stand and the service leader blows the *shofar* after having recited the blessing (as stated above) and the s*hehechianu* blessing. Avudraham notes that the recitation of the blessings here absolves the service leader from reciting them again before the blowing of the *shofar* in the *mussaf* service as this recitation covers both blowings. He then proceeds to discuss (in great detail) aspects of the different notes of the *shofar*. He also confirms that three notes are blown three times each and that the *mussaf amidah* has nine blessings.

Avudraham also reiterates what we have seen in *Seder Rav Amram* regarding the reasoning for blowing the *shofar* twice (i.e., both in the Torah service and in the *mussaf amidah*). This is done to confuse Satan. He notes several rationales for why this would confuse Satan, including the idea that Satan will be confused as to the time and think he has missed his chance to accuse us while we are praying.

While the blessing recited in the Torah service fulfills the obligation for blessing before blowing the *shofar* throughout the service, it is the blowing of the *shofar* in the *mussaf amidah* that fulfills the congregation's obligation to hear the *shofar*.

In respect of blowing the *shofar* on Shabbat, Avudraham's commentary mostly comprises a digest of the talmudic material on the subject. However he also mentions that it was the custom of others, such as the Rabbi Isaac Alfasi (the Rif), to blow on Shabbat.

Avudraham confirms that the *shofar* is also blown on the second day of Rosh Hashanah and that the *shofar* was to be made from a ram's horn. This is in remembrance of the binding of Isaac. The sound of the *shofar* is understood by Avudraham to be the wailing of prayer for one's sins.

After the blowing of the *shofar* in the Torah service selected verses from Psalms are to be recited. This is no longer customary in the Ashkenazi ritual but is maintained in the Sephardi liturgy.

Mussaf Amidah

Avudraham comments in detail on the three additional sections in the *mussaf amidah*, providing the scriptural basis for the *aleinu, attah zocher and attah nigleita* passages.

In discussing the ten verses that follow the *malkhiyot* passage Avudraham digests the talmudic discussion regarding what these verses correspond to (e.g. ten utterances said in creating the world, ten commandments, etc.). He also notes that some recite more than ten verses. Avudraham discusses why the verses from Psalms are recited before the verses from Prophets. This is because King David, who is traditionally believed to be the author of Psalms, chronologically precedes the prophets and their writings, despite the fact that Psalms appears after Prophets in the order of the Bible. He also provides an explanation for the inclusion of the *shema* verse (Deuteronomy 6:4) as the final *malkhiyot* verse even though it does not specifically mention sovereignty or kingship. The theme of the verse, according to Avudraham, is the yoke of heaven and thus, while not using the word *malach* it nevertheless relates to God's kingship.

Avudraham also draws attention to the fact that the tenth *malkhiyot* verse is recited immediately after the other nine whereas the final verse of *zikhronot* and *shofarot* is recited just before the eulogy of the blessing. There is however no specific eulogy for the *malkhiyot*, since it is incorporated into the *kedushat hayom* blessing. The eulogy of

that blessing therefore acts as the eulogy for the *malkhiyot* verses. This tradition of splitting the tenth verse from the others and placing it before the eulogy for *zikhronot* and *shofarot* is retained in the Ashkenazi ritual while other rites include the tenth verse with the others[56].

In addition to the above, Avudraham also cites Saadia Gaon's famous ten reasons for the blowing of the *shofar*, discussed below in the section on philosophers. This is the only source for this list, which does not appear in Saadia's extant works or his *siddur*.

Various other medieval prayer books and commentaries essentially repeat the structure discussed above as set out in *Seder Rav Amram* and Avudraham, with minor variations. These include *Siddur Saadia*, *Siddur Rashi*, *Sefer Hamanhig* and *Machzor Vitry*. In particular it should be noted that *Machzor Vitry* confirms that one does not recite the *v'hasienu* verse in the *eloheinu velohei avoteinu* prayer on Rosh Hashanah. This is the current practice.

Medieval Commentators and Philosophers

The works of the medieval philosophers also shed light on the *shofar* liturgy. Some, such as Maimonides and Saadia (whose reasons for blowing the *shofar* are cited in Avudraham), state ideas that have become standard understandings of the meaning of the *shofar* blasts. Others base their commentary on the form of the *shofar* liturgy itself.

[56] Elbogen, Jewish Liturgy, 119.

Biblical Commentators

Medieval commentators primarily dealt with the *shofar* and its liturgy in the context of their interpretations of Leviticus 23:24.

Rashi understands the words "a memorial proclaimed with the *teruah*" to mean a memorial of the verses of *zikhronot* and of the verses of *shofar*ot to remind you of the binding of Isaac in whose stead a ram was offered. Sforno understands the *shofar* blast as a memorial of the trumpet signal for the king by which people acclaim their sovereign. The *shofar* is blown because God sits on the throne of justice on Rosh Hashanah. It is therefore fitting that we should rejoice more so at the time when He who is our King will be inclined to lean towards bring kindly and judging us mercifully. Rashbam states that we will be remembered by God as a result of our blowing the *teruah* from the *shofar*. Ibn Ezra states that the sages say that Rosh Hashanah is a day of judgement and the sound of the *teruah* is a reminder of the sovereignty of God. By the time of these commentators it is evident that the three themes of the *shofar* liturgy were clearly entrenched in the Jewish mind, although only Rashi refers explicitly to the additional *mussaf* passages themselves. The linking of the themes of remembrance and sovereignty are evident in these commentaries.

Philosophers

In the era of rational philosophy, inspired by the Arab fascination with Greek philosophical works, the *shofar*'s strident sound led many to ascribe meaning to the sounding that conformed with these philosophical ideals.

Saadia Gaon

Saadia Gaon, cited in Avudraham's commentary, sets out ten reasons for the command to blow the *shofar* on Rosh Hashanah. These reasons focus primarily on their effect on the listener, reminding us of various important things and inspiring in us certain feelings and ideas, rather than their effect on God.

1 Rosh Hashanah is the beginning of creation on which God created the world and reigned over it. Just as one blows trumpets and horns to make a king's presence known, we blow the *shofar* for God whom we acclaim as king.

2 Rosh Hashanah is the first of the ten days of repentance and the *shofar* is sounded on it as a warning. It is a warning to all those who want to repent that they should do so, and if they do not repent they should reproach themselves. This is parallel to the actions of kings who warn the people of their decrees and then do not accept excuses if someone violates the decree having been warned.

3 To remind us of Mount Sinai where the horn was blown and that we should accept for ourselves the covenant that our ancestors accepted for themselves.

4 To remind us of the exhortations of the prophets, which are compared to the sound of the *shofar* (Ezekiel 33:4-5).

5 To remind us of the destruction of the Temple and the sound of the battle cries of the enemies. When we hear the sound of the *shofar* we will be moved to ask God to rebuild the Temple.

6 To remind us of the binding of Isaac who offered his life to heaven. We should likewise offer our lives for the sanctification of God's name, and thus we will be remembered for good.

7 When we hear the blowing of the *shofar* we will be fearful and tremble and humble ourselves before God. The nature of the *shofar* is that it causes fear and trembling (Amos 3:6).

8 To recall the day of the great judgment and be fearful of it.

9 To remind us of the ingathering of the scattered ones of Israel. This is based on Isaiah 27:13 in which the messianic ingathering of the exiles is heralded by the blowing of the Great *Shofar*.

10 To remind us of the resurrection of the dead and the belief in it. Again this is based on a passage from Isaiah which is understood to link the rabbinic concept of the messianic resurrection of the dead with the day of judgment on which the *shofar* is blown (Isaiah 18:3).

Maimonides

Perhaps the most enduring interpretation of the *shofar* call comes from Moses Maimonides. In his *Guide to the Perplexed* (3.43) he notes that Rosh Hashanah is a day of repentance on which men are aroused from their forgetfulness. This arousing is done with the blowing of the *shofar*. The context of this statement is Maimonides' assertion that external rituals have internal meanings that work on us rather than on God. Maimonides expands on the idea that the *shofar* arouses us in repentance in the Mishneh Torah (1180), Laws of Repentance (3.4). Here Maimonides states that the *shofar* is

sounded as if to say: "Arise from your slumber, you who are asleep; wake up from your deep sleep, you who are fast asleep; search your deeds and repent; remember your Creator. Those of you who forget the truth because of passing vanities, indulging throughout the year in the useless things that cannot profit you nor save you, look into your souls, amend your ways. Let everyone give up his evil way and bad purpose". The *shofar* blast is then a "wake-up call" for the congregation to remember their sins and repent for them, and to remind them of the sovereignty of God.

Maimonides also deals in detail with the *shofar* in Mishneh Torah, Laws of *Shofar*. In chapter 1 he states that it is a toraitic commandment to blow the *shofar* on Rosh Hashanah (from Numbers 29:1). He notes that the Torah does not in fact specify that the *teruah* sound referred to in that verse should be made by a *shofar*. Maimonides infers from the fact that the *teruah* is specifically stated as being sounded with the *shofar* on Yom Kippur of the Jubilee year (Leviticus 25:9) that the *shofar* should also be used on Rosh Hashanah.

In chapter 3 of his Laws of *Shofar*, Maimonides focuses in detail on the liturgy. As is usual in the Mishneh Torah Maimonides' treatment of the subject is largely a digested codification of the talmudic laws on the subject. However, also as usual, he draws on other sources and focuses his discussion in such a way that it often yields ideas that the talmudic discussion does not. In 3:1 Maimonides reiterates the connection between the blowing of the *shofar* on Rosh Hashanah and in the Jubilee year. He argues that the blowing of the *shofar* on Rosh Hashanah and on Yom Kippur of the Jubilee year are the same. On both nine blasts of the *shofar* are to be blown – *tekiah*, *teruah*, *tekiah*, *tekiah*, *teruah*, *tekiah*, *tekiah*, *teruah* and *tekiah*. The *shevarim* note is not discussed here,

presumably because it does not appear in the talmudic discussion. In 3:2 Maimonides notes that there is some question as to the actual sound of the *teruah*. The Torah does not itself describe the sound and Maimonides suggests that if we had ever known the exact sound, the certainty as to its precise nature has been lost in years of exile. He suggests three possible sounds (which appear in the talmudic discussion of the sounding of the *teruah*):

- The sound of the wailing of women when they moan (i.e. short staccato sounds)
- The sighs that a people release when they are distressed about a major matter (i.e. longer sounds)
- A combination of the two – sighing and the crying that follows it

Thus, since we do not know the precise sound of the *teruah*, we blow all three sounds to be sure. The crying sound is what we call the *teruah*, the sigh is the *shevarim*. In order to remove any doubt that the correct nine sounds have been sounded with the *shofar* a total of thirty *shofar* blasts are blown as follows:

- The blessing is recited and one sounds *tekiah*, three *shevarim*, *teruah*, *tekiah*. This series is repeated three times
- Then he sounds the *tekiah*, three *shevarim* and *tekiah*, three times
- Then he sounds the *tekiah*, *teruah* and *tekiah*, again three times.

Maimonides notes that it is sufficient for one to hear the *shofar* blasts while sitting (i.e. after the reading of the Torah). As the congregation has already sounded the full series of blasts during this blowing to satisfy every possible doubt about the actual sound required, it is unnecessary to repeat the series in its entirety during the *amidah*. Rather it is sufficient for them to hear one series of blasts for each blessing in order to fulfill the

requirement to hear the blasts during the course of the *mussaf amidah* blessings. Maimonides also notes that if one should be in a position in which one has to choose between going to a city where it is known that someone will be able to recite the nine blessings but not blow the *shofar*, or a city in which there is someone to blow the *shofar* but not to recite the blessings, one should go to the latter. This is because the blowing of the *shofar* is a scriptural commandment while the recitation of the blessings is a rabbininic enactment (3:13).

In 3:7-8 Maimonides confirms the pattern from the Talmud and later tradition of the traditional *amidah* blessings and the placement of the additional blessings and the *shofar* blowing as well as the amount and identity of these verses. In addition to this, however, he reflects on the "commonly accepted custom of blowing the *shofar* after the reading of the Torah, a practice that is not in the Talmud" (3:10). He confirms the blessing that we have seen in all the treatments above, the recitation of the *shehechianu* blessing and the blowing of thirty *shofar* blasts. Maimonides, being of the school of rational philosophy, does not mention the idea that the *shofar* is sounded here to confuse Satan, which pervades much of the medieval commentary on the issue.

Isaac ben Moses Arama

According to Isaac ben Moses Arama, the nature of man is that his inner powers are influenced by exterior factors. Man therefore requires some form of outward factor or instrument to affect changes and feelings in him. The sages therefore invented various devices by which the memory of man could be strengthened, thereby indelibly imprinting on his heart things which he said or heard. Musical instruments are suited to various

moods and the listener can be moved by them to joy or sadness or to spiritual awe. The principal task of the *shofar* therefore is to arouse spiritual awe in the heart of those who respond to it. The different sounds of the *shofar* arouse different emotions. The *tekiah* tends to leave one in a joyful humor, and symbolizes the righteous and their joyful future in which they will receive their reward. The *teruah* is a symbol of awe, while *shevarim* lies in between these two sounds. Thus, Arama suggests that the wicked quake and tremble on Rosh Hashanah, at the sound of the *teruah* blast, while the average man is filled with joy, sadness and hope, inspired by the other two notes[57]. While talmudic and midrashic interpretations dealt in great part with the effect of the *shofar* blowing on God (reminding him of the merits of our fathers etc) this interpretation of the *shofar* blasts, like several of Saadia's, focuses on the effects the *shofar* has on the inner spiritual and emotional state of the person who hears it. Such inward-focused interpretations are to play a much greater role in the modern era, in which the psychological state of the listener rather than the cosmic relationship with God is the primary focus.

Joseph Albo

In *Sefer Ha Ikarim* 1.4[58] Albo notes that there are three general and essential principles of divine law:

- Existence of God
- Providence in reward and punishment
- Divine revelation

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[57] Isaac ben Moses Arama, Akedat Yitzchak, cited in Philip Goodman's The Rosh Hashanah Anthology, (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1992), 38.

[58] Joseph Albo, Sefer Ha –Ikkarim, Book of Principles, ed.Isaac Husik, 2 vols., (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1929), vol. 1, 64-67.

These three principles are incorporated in the three blessings of the *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofarot* that correspond to these three principles. They are intended to call our attention to the fact that by properly believing in these principles together with the dogmas derived from them we shall win a favorable verdict in the divine judgement.

Malchuyot – Corresponds to the principle of the existence of God. This is based on the blessing's focus on the messianic age when God will establish his kingdom and all shall accept the yoke of his kingdom.

Zikhronot – Points to providence and reward and punishment. This is indicated by the reference in the blessing to God remembering the works of the universe and keeping in mind all living creatures.

Shofarot – This alludes to revelation. It begins by stating that God revealed himself in the cloud of his glory to his holy people. The benediction is called *shofarot* because the revelation at Sinai was accompanied by the sound of the *shofar* such as had never been heard before in the world and such as will not be heard again until the time of redemption.

Albo also refutes the idea that he has seen stated that the *shofarot* blessing is an allusion to the binding of Isaac on the basis that the binding of Isaac is not mentioned in the blessing. Rather the binding is mentioned in the *zikhronot* blessings. He accepts that the opinion that links the *shofarot* blessing to the binding of Isaac can be traced to the rabbinic statements that the blowing of the *shofar* on Rosh Hashanah is in memory of the

binding of Isaac but he does not believe that these statements justify the opinion. According to Albo, what the Rabbis meant was that the we are required to blow the *shofar* in order to commemorate the ram of Isaac. But, the blowing of the *shofar* does not have this meaning and the *shofarot* benediction does not allude to that event.

Zohar

Alongside the philosophical thinking of the Middle Ages there was also a pronounced stream of mystical thought. Among these writings the *Zohar* has remained the pre-eminent work of the period.

The *Zohar*[59] draws on many of the same themes and imagery that the other works of the period do, but attributes mystical significance to them. The *Zohar* explains that Rosh Hashanah is observed for two days because there are two connected courts of divine judgment set up on Rosh Hashanah – the upper court of strict judgment (*gevurah*) and the lower court of lenient judgement (*malkhut*). *Gevurah* and *malkhut* are both mystical *sephirot*. According to the Zohar, the Babylonian Rabbis (of the Talmud and beyond) did not understand the mystical significance of the different *shofar* sounds. They had said that only one sound was absolutely necessary but, being in doubt as to which sound was the correct one, they decreed that all the different possible sounds were to be blown to be sure (b. RH 34a). However two different sounds (*yevavah* and *yelalah*) in fact denote the two different courts set up on Rosh Hashanah. Thus the *yelalah* (equivalent of the *teruah*) denotes strict judgement while the three *shevarim* notes (*yevavah),* which sound like groaning, denote lenient judgment.

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[59] Isaiah Tishby, The Wisdom of the Zohar, 3 vols., (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 1989), vol. 3, 1301 –1302.

The *Zohar* also provides a mystical interpretation for Psalm 81:4 ("Blow the horn at the new moon, at the full moon [*keseh*] for our feast"). "Blow the horn at the new moon" – the new moon here refers to the court of lenient judgment (*malkhut* is a symbol for moon). *keseh* refers to the upper world (*gevurah*), the throne of the Lord, which is the fear of Isaac (Isaac being a symbol for *gevurah* and fear indicating strict judgement). This strict judgement is tempered by mercy. The *Zohar* also provides a mystical interpretation of Psalm 89:16 ("Happy is the people who know the joyful sound of the *teruah*"). It notes that the verse does not refer to those who hear or blow the *shofar* but those who know it. This is interpreted as referring to those who know the mystery (i.e. the mystical significance) of the *teruah*. All those who know this mystery are drawn near to God and walk in the light of his countenance.

Conclusion

In the course of the Middle Ages the *shofar* liturgy took on the shape we are familiar with in traditional prayer books today. The *shofar* blowing in the Torah service appears in liturgical works of this period, and although various additional aspects were added later, the core of this liturgy is the same today. Moreover, the *shofar* liturgy of the *mussaf* service is concretized in this period. Although there are some differences in details, the form is mostly uniform among the various liturgical works surveyed. Works of commentary, philosophy and mysticism of the period draw heavily on the themes of the liturgy and expand upon its meaning in ways that still find their way into Rosh Hashanah sermons today.

Chapter 4 – Modern Liturgies of North America and Britain

Lawrence A. Hoffman has argued that liturgy is a social, performative medium through which communities express their sense of their own identity. While Jewish communal life remains essentially stable, only minor revisions are made. But when the structure of the Jewish community undergoes radical changes, as it has in the modern era, greater changes to the prayerbook become necessary. When a Jewish community reevaluates its identity as a result of changes in environment and ideology, the liturgy must also be changed to reflect the changing identity[60]. The *shofar* liturgy of Rosh Hashanah is no exception. The various Reform and Reconstructionist prayer books written in America and Britain take the prayers and rubrics of the traditional liturgy and adapt them for their own purposes and sensibilities, expressing their changing identities and ideology via the liturgy. Petuchowski[61] lists ten major characteristics of Reform liturgy as follows:

1) Abbreviation of the traditional service
2) Use of vernacular
3) Omission of angelology
4) Reduction of particularism
5) Elimination of prayers for the ingathering of the exiles and the return to Zion
6) Elimination of prayers for the restoration of the sacrificial cult
7) Substitution of the Messianic Age and Redemption for the Personal Messiah

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[60] Lawrence A. Hoffman, "*The Liturgical Message*," in Gates of Understanding: A Companion Volume to Shaarei Tefilla: Gates of Prayer, Lawrence A. Hoffman ed., (New York: CCAR, 1977), 131-168.
[61] Jakob J. Petuchowski, revision to Ismar Elbogen, Jewish Liturgy, A Comprehensive History, (Philedelphia: Jewish Publication Society 1993), 331-332.

8) Substitution of spiritual immortality for physical resurrection

9) Provision of variety

10) Addition of new prayers expressing the aspirations of the modern age

To this list one may now add the issue of gender sensitivity. While these characteristics are not all relevant to the *shofar* liturgy and they are not all applied equally in different liturgies, they provide the basic guidelines by which Reform prayer books have approached and adapted the traditional *shofar* liturgy of Rosh Hashanah.

The *Shofar* Liturgy in Early American Prayer Books

As noted in the previous chapter, since the Middle Ages the traditional *machzor* has contained two distinct *shofar* services, one after the reading of the Torah and one in the course of the *mussaf amidah*. This has created certain issues for the various Reform liturgies in dealing with the *shofar*. As Petuchwski notes above, Reform prayer books tend to abbreviate the traditional liturgy. In particular the writers of these prayer books have tended to curtail or eliminate repetition of prayers such as the *amidah*. Therefore Reform liturgists have tended to see little need for two *shofar* liturgies when one will do. Moreover the *mussaf* service, more than any other, is intricately connected to the ancient Temple cult. As noted in *Gates of Understanding 2,* Reform Judaism has always had a "somewhat ambivalent relationship to the ancient sacrificial system that once characterized Jewish worship, a system which is both respected and rejected[62]." The *mussaf* service embodies a theology that laments the loss of the Temple and the sacrificial

cult and hopes for its return. Nineteenth century European liturgies, tending towards greater traditionalism, mostly retained the *mussaf* service. In America, a more radical break with traditional rabbinic practice and theology took hold that was more in keeping with the concerns and sensibilities of American Jewry. Thus the *mussaf* and its themes were mostly rejected and successive Reform *machzorim* have eliminated or curtailed the *mussaf* service in general, including on Rosh Hashanah. With no *mussaf* service, these liturgies have had to reorganize the traditional *shofar* liturgy to compensate. Even where the prayerbook maintains a form of the *mussaf* service, such as in Isaac Mayer Wise's *Minhag Amerika* (1857), changes are made.

The early American Reform rabbis mostly came out of the German cultural milieu. Initially, the movement for reform in Germany came primarily from people who remained within the established liturgical and communal framework, although this push for liturgical reform was arguably instigated by novel, breakaway groups such as the Hamburg and Berlin *Reformgemeinden.* Most of these early reformers had no desire to create a new movement in Judaism, breaking away as a matter of principle from traditional Judaism. Rather they intended to sway "whole Jewish communities, rooted in the Rabbinic tradition, and attached to their own liturgical rites, towards the acceptance of liturgical reforms"[63]. As a result early reforms tended to be piecemeal, focusing on abridgment of the service, introduction of the vernacular and decorum (as in the Hamburg Temple in 1817)[64]. The next generation was less satisfied with this approach and "sought to revise the Prayerbook according to theologically consistent principles in addition to

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[62] Lawrence Hoffman, Gates of Understanding 2, Appreciating the Days of Awe, (New York: CCAR, 1984), 9.
[63] Jakob J. Petuchowski, Prayerbook Reform in Europe, The Liturgy of European Liberal and Reform Judaism, (New York: The World Union For Progressive Judaism, 1968), 36.

contemporary aesthetic sensibilities"[65]. These reformers split over how to achieve their aims. Some, such as Abraham Geiger, preferred a moderate, gradualist approach. Others, such as Samuel Holdheim and the Berlin Temple, advocated a more extreme and uncompromising Reform position, even going so far in respect to the *shofar* liturgy as to excise it altogether. It is this generation of reformers that found themselves on American shores as part of a major wave of Jewish immigration from Europe, bringing with them their reforming ideals and intending to apply them in this New World. Those who had the most influence on later liturgical prayerbooks (notably Union Prayerbook) were Isaac Mayer Wise and David Einhorn.

Wise was "determined above all else to establish a strong and united Judaism in America"[66] and was pragmatic and flexible enough to create what he hoped to be a liturgy that would have broad appeal and acceptability. Wise's *Minhag Amerika*[67] therefore tended to be more traditional than its contemporary counterparts and its liturgical successors. In the context of the Rosh Hashanah liturgy this means that Wise retains the *mussaf* service and both *shofar* rubrics are in their traditional positions. The *shofar* liturgy following the Torah Service is brief, starting with the two blessings. The *shofar* blasts are interspersed with choral pieces. Wise also added to the traditional *mussaf* rubric by inserting a reading in the vernacular, and choral renditions of various psalmic verses adumbrating the themes of the *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofarot*. The

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[64] Eric L. Friedland, "Were Our Mouths Filled With Song", Studies in Liberal Jewish Liturgy, (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1997), 10.
[65] Friedland, "Were Our Mouths Filled With Song," 10.
[66] Michael A. Meyer, Response to Modernity, A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism, (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1988), 240.
[67] Isaac Meyer Wise, Minhag Amerika, The Divine Service of American Israelites for the New Year, (Cincinnati: Bloch Publishing Company, 1857).

instructions for the *shofar* blowing indicate that the choral rendition and organ were to synchronize with the calling and sounding of the notes[68].

Whereas Wise represented a more gradualist and flexible approach to Reform liturgy, David Einhorn was entirely uncompromising and intellectually consistent in his liturgical reforms. Einhorn's *Olath Tamid*[69] is remarkably concise in its treatment of the *shofar* liturgy, and the traditional themes are dispersed throughout the Rosh Hashanah services. An English passage presenting a universalistic version of the *malkhiyot* theme (based primarily on the *aleinu*) is placed in the *amidah* of the Rosh Hashanah evening service as part of the *kedushat hayom*. The *zikhronot*, in the form of a long English (originally German) passage under the title *attah zocher*, is placed in the *amidah* of the morning service. And the *shofarot*, in the form of another long universalistic English passage, is placed in the Torah service after the *haftarah* and before the return of the Torah to the ark. Einhorn concludes this universalistic paraphrase of *attah nigleta* (the introduction to the *shofarot* section) with one series of *tekiah, teruah* and *tekiah* on trumpets, which constitutes the entirety of the *shofar* blowing in Einhorn's liturgy.

A provisional version of the *Union Prayer Book* in 1893 shows an attempt to bridge the very different treatments of the *shofar* liturgy of Wise and Einhorn[70]. Like *Olath Tamid* this treatment distributed the three sections between the evening and morning services of Rosh Hashanah. It shortened Einhorn's very long *shofarot* passage, included Psalm 98 as in Wise and concluded with Wise's treatment of the *tekiah d'meyushav*, placing it all after the return of the scroll to the ark. The *shofar* blessings

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[68] Friedland, "Were Our Mouths Filled With Song," 194.
[69] David Einhorn, Olath Tamid: Gebetbuch fur Israelische Reform-Gemeinden, (Baltimore: 1858); English translation by Emil G. Hirsch, Olath Tamid: Book of Prayers for Jewish Congregations (Chicago: 1896).
[70] Friedland, "Were Our Mouths Filled With Song", 194.

were not recited and one set of *shofar* blasts was sounded after each section, rather than the traditional three times as in Wise's liturgy. This treatment was ultimately rejected in the finalized version of the *Union Prayerbook*, which came out a year later. The Union Prayerbook did away entirely with the *mussaf* service and therefore moved the entirety of the *shofar* liturgy into the Torah service[71]. The liturgy that appears here is, however, based on the rubric of the *mussaf amidah* liturgy rather than the rubric that appears traditionally in the Torah service. The *malkhiyot, zikhronot* and *shofarot* rubrics are thus lifted from their traditional place in the *mussaf amidah* and put here, replacing the rubric that appeared in the Torah service. Each of these sections is comprised of a responsive reading of thematic verses (although not the traditional verses), an English passage relating to the traditional themes of each section, and the *shofar* blowing. This early edition indicates that the *shofar* is blown after each section but does not indicate precisely what notes are to be blown, in what order and how often. This format is retained in the revised edition of 1922[72]. The newly revised edition of 1945[73], however, preface the *shofar* service with an introduction summarizing many of the major themes of the *shofar*, recalling the revelation at Sinai, the blowing of the *shofar* at festivals and at the Jubilee, and calling us to be roused by the call of the *shofar* to "struggle against the forces of evil within our hearts and in the world" and arouse righteousness, justice and trust in God within us[74]. This last edition also includes the two traditional *shofar* blessings, which are placed in the *malkhiyot* section prior to the blowing of the *shofar*. In this last edition, the order of the *shofar* blowing after each section is clearly set out (*malkhiyot – tekiah,*

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[71] The Union Prayerbook for Jewish Worship Part II,, (New York: CCAR, 1894), 70-75.
[72] The Union Prayerbook for Jewish Worship Part II,, Revised Edition, (Cincinnati: CCAR, 1922).
[73] The Union Prayerbook for Jewish Worship Part II, Newly Revised Edition, (New York: CCAR, 1945), 77-84.

shevarim, teruah, tekiah; *zikhronot – tekiah, shevarim, tekiah*; and *shofarot – tekiah, teruah, tekiah, tekiah gedolah*) and only one series of blasts is blown for each section.

Gates of Repentance, which replaced *UPB 2* in 1978[75], maintains a similar structure to *UPB 2* in respect of the *shofar* liturgy. As in the earlier volume there is no *mussaf* service for Rosh Hashanah (an additional service is provided for Yom Kippur but it is merely a collection of readings for congregations that wish to bridge the the morning and afternoon services with some form of liturgy) and the *shofar* is blown in the Torah service. Unlike the *UPB*, but in accordance with the general tendency of Reform liturgy to provide alternative versions of the same rubric or prayer to cater to different tastes and spiritual needs (and the possibility of a second day of the festival), *Gates of Repentance* provides two services for both Rosh Hashanah evening and morning. This results in there being two *shofar* liturgies, each based on a similar structure, but also with significant distinctions between them. Also in contrast to *UPB, Gates of Repentance* includes more Hebrew and more of the traditional rubrics as well as the traditional order of *shofar* blasts for each section.

The *shofar* ritual in Rosh Hashanah Morning Service I opens with a recitation of Numbers 29:1 and a responsive reading composed by Chaim Stern, alluding to "a number of Rabbinic and Scriptural passages which interpret the meaning of RH in general and the sounding of the *shofar* in particular"[76]. This is followed by Maimonides' classic formulation of the message of the *shofar* from *Hilchot Teshuvah* 3:4 ("Awake you sleepers ..."). The use of this passage as an introduction to the *shofar* liturgy is

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[74] Ibid., 77.
[75] Gates of Repentance, The New Union Prayerbook for the Days of Awe, (New York: CCAR, 1978, Revised 1996).
[76] Chaim Stern's notes in Hoffman, Gates of Understanding 2, 188.

significant. It provides a link to the theological and philosophical tradition of a great Jewish thinker, whose influence on Reform Jewish thought is enormous. Moreover the passage places the blowing of the *shofar* in a psychological context amenable to Reform sensibilities. Where once the *shofar* was primarily a way of getting God's attention and reminding him and the people of the merit of our forefathers in the binding of Isaac, this introduction sets the *shofar* blowing firmly within the framework of its effect on the one who hears it. Within the context of the repentance of Rosh Hashanah, the *shofar* blowing is thus presented as a wake-up call for the listener to remember God's eternal truth in the midst of daily life and abandon his or her evil ways.

The *shofar* liturgy in Service I is structured according to the traditional three themes of *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofarot*. Each section is introduced by a version of the traditional introduction for the section and includes the *eloheinu velohei avoteinu* paragraph for the section. Each section also includes a series of scriptural verses and is concluded by *hayom harat olam* and *areshet s'fateinu* (without the traditional instruction to omit this last passage on Shabbat). Each section presents four scriptural verses, chosen from the ten traditional verses for the section, one from Torah (introduced by the phrase "The Torah proclaims ..."), one from Writings (introduced by the phrase, "The Psalmist affirms ..."), one from Prophets (introduced by the phrase, "The Prophet declares ..."), and concluded by another verse from Torah (introduced by the phrase, "As it is written in the Torah ..."). This thus maintains the traditional structure but with fewer verses than the traditional ten. It also provides a helpful guide, by way of the introductory phrases, as to the nature and purpose of the verses in the context of this liturgical rubric.

The selection and presentation of the verses also provides a theological context for each section. The Remembrance verses recall the covenant with God, providing a rationale for God to remember us as covenental partners. The *shofarot* section is entitled "Revelation" in English and the verses selected begin by referring to the revelation at Sinai. However the concluding verses switch focus to the redemption of the messianic age. The link, according to *Gates of Understanding 2*[77], is the covenant referred to in the Remembrance verses. We are covenanted with God at Sinai to work towards the perfection of the world and the bringing about of the Messianic Age. The blowing of the *shofar* thus occurred at the inauguration of our covenant will occur again at the fulfillment of the covenant in the messianic age when the goal of Jewish history has been achieved. The Sovereignty section links the Remembrance and Revelation sections, as it is only through the agency of God as the ultimate ruler of the universe that the world will be perfected[78].

Rosh Hashanah Morning Service II includes an alternative order for blowing the *shofar*. This alternative liturgy follows the same traditional structure but with several differences that set it apart and provide liturgical variety. This service returns to the traditional number of ten verses for each section. However the verses are selected thematically from the larger body of scriptural verses rather than repeating the traditional selection. Creative introductions drawn from the *Union Prayer Book* and the 1973 British Liberal *machzor* (the similarly named *Gate of Repentance*) replace the traditional introductions for the *zikhronot* and *shofar*ot but the *aleinu* is retained as the introduction

[77] Ibid, 100.
[78] Ibid..

to the *malkhiyot* verses. This service does not retain the traditional concluding paragraphs (*hayom harat olam* and *areshet s'fateinu*) as in Service I.

British Reform and Liberal Liturgies

British Liberal Liturgies

Taking its inspiration from the radical Classical Reform in America, the British Liberal Movement ironically began simply to provide supplementary services for those who were estranged from the traditional liturgy or unable for economic reasons to attend regular services. But while these services were not initially intended to create a new denomination, and indeed benefited from the involvement of some Orthodox rabbis, the radicalism of their founding principles soon estranged the more conservative elements. The "implicit radicalism" was "made explicit"[79] and a new movement was born. A succession of liturgies were produced in the early years, most notably Israel I. Mattuck's *Liberal Jewish Prayer Book, Vol. I and II*[80]. Vol. I, for Shabbat and weekdays, was more radical than Vol. II, for the High Holydays, which is "marked by a far greater adherence to tradition"[81]. However, this adherence to tradition is less evident in the *shofar* liturgy, insofar as the entirety of the *shofar* liturgy is in English. Following the return of the Torah to the ark the three themes of the *mussaf amidah* are recited. Each section includes an English introduction and conclusion based on the themes of the section, a selection of scriptural verses, other readings and hymns (in English) on the theme and the instruction that "The *Shofar* is Sounded." No indication is given as to the extent of the blowing or

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[79] Petuchowski, Prayerbook Reform in Europe, 71.
[80] Liberal Jewish Prayerbook Vol. II, Services for the Day of Memorial (Rosh Hashanah) and the Day of Atonement, (London: Liberal Jewish Synagogue, 1923).

notes to be blown. It should be noted that the themes are not clearly delineated in each section, with references to God's dominion, revelation and the light of God that leads to human progress all interspersed among the sections. The *aleinu* follows the *shofar* liturgy as part of the concluding service and there is no *mussaf* service.

The British Liberal *Petach Teshuvah (Gate of Repentance)* of 1973[82], while sharing an editor with the American *Gates of Repentance* (Chaim Stern), takes a rather different approach from its later American counterpart and from its British Liberal predecessor. *Gate of Repentance* retains both *shofar* rubrics, although it does so in a creative manner. There is no *mussaf* service for Rosh Hashanah in *Gate of Repentance*, so both rubrics are placed one after the other following the return of the Torah to the ark. The rubrics are separated by a meditation and the *unatane tokef* prayer up to the phrase "But repentance, prayer and good deeds annul the severity of judgment."

The *tekiah de meyushav* in *Gate of Repentance* retains little of the traditional liturgy, except the two blessings, one series (rather than three) of *shofar* blasts and Psalm 89:16 after the blasts (rather than the longer composite passage made up of Psalm 89:16, 84:5 and 144:15). Instead the rubric is introduced by the scriptural verse Numbers 29:1, a meditation, the ubiquitous Maimonidean passage "Arise you sleepers", and Psalm 81:4. The meditation is particularly interesting in that it traces the development of the meaning of the *shofar* from announcing the new moon and New Year, to commemoration of the binding of Isaac and the covenant at Sinai, to today when it reminds us of our "responsibilities as human beings, created in God's image." This leads in to the Maimonides passage setting the modern purpose of the *shofar* blowing firmly in the

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[81] Petuchowski, Prayerbook Reform in Europe, 74.

mode of psychological symbol of our repentance and personal soul-searching at this time of year.

The *shofar* liturgy then continues with the *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofar*ot. The *malkhiyot* section is introduced by a creative passage that frames this section as "extolling the sovereignty of God manifest in creation"[83] followed by a *piyyut* by Judah Halevi on this theme that does not appear in the traditional *shofar* liturgy. While *Gate of Repentance* retains the traditional number of ten verses, it abandons the traditional selection in favor of verses that convey the theme of the section as framed by the introductory passage. The *zikhronot* section offers a choice of introductory readings, one on the theme God's righteousness and the divine order maintained by God and the other recalling the revelation at Sinai. Again the section replaces the traditional verses with verses that relate to the themes explored in the introductory passages. The *shofarot* section focuses on future redemption rather than the covenant at Sinai, both in its introductory passage and in its selection of verses. This section is concluded after the final *shofar* blowing with the hymn "All the World Shall Come to Serve You" and a universalistic reworking of the *Aleinu*, the latter placed in such a way that it is both concluding the *shofar* liturgy while also being in its more familiar place in the concluding portion of the morning service. The *aleinu* therefore serves double duty in its placement here and acts as a transition from the *shofar* blowing to the conclusion of the service. It should also be noted that, while the traditional *shofar* blessings appear before the first *shofar* blowing in the *tekiah de meyushav*, *Gate of Repentance* provides a blessing to

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[82] Gate of Repentance: Service for the High Holydays, (London: Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues 1973).
[83] Friedland, "Were Our Mouths Filled With Song", 194.

introduce each of the three sets of *shofar* blowings. In each case this is in fact the traditional concluding eulogy passage for that section, with the *malkhiyot* section utilizing the traditional eulogy for the *kedushat hayom* for Rosh Hashanah.

The British Liberal Movement's more recent *machzor* for the Days of Awe, *Machzor Ruach Chadashah* (2003)[84], follows much the same rubric. The *tekiah de meyushav* is identical except for some judicious editing and pruning that shortens it and apparently excises gender-specific language. The *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofar*ot are now prefaced by a new introduction summarizing the themes of each section, and by a quotation from b. Rosh Hashanah 34b relating to the three sections and the *shofar* being the vehicle for raising the favorable remembrance of the people before God. *Ruach Chadashah* returns the *aleinu* (or more specifically the universalistic version presented in *Gate of Repentance*) to its traditional place as the introduction to the *malkhiyot* section replacing the creative passages that appeared in *Gate of Repentance*. The same selection of verses as appears in *Gate of Repentance* is used here and placed between the opening paragraph of the *aleinu* and the *al ken nekaveh* paragraph. The *zikhronot* section is introduced by a new creative passage recalling the biblical covenant, reminding us that God recalls our deeds and those of our ancestors and telling us to remember our own deeds in the past year. This is followed by "Ten Sayings of Remembrance" although the selection is both different from the traditional selection and from the previous selection in *Gate of Repentance*, reflecting the change in theme of the introductory passage. The *zikhronot* section is concluded with "*areshet s'fateinu*". The *shofarot* section is approached very differently, both from *Gate of Repentance* and from the two previous sections in *Ruach Chadashah*. The long introduction of *Gate of Repentance* is replaced

by short framing sentences introducing short series of thematically relevant verses. First we are told that the *shofar* "calls to mind our history", then that the *shofar* "calls to mind our responsibility", and finally we are told that the *shofar* "calls us to look forward to the day when our people and all peoples will acknowledge God as Sovereign of all the world"[85]. This framework and selection of verses deftly present the primary themes of the *shofar* liturgy in the context of Rosh Hashanah, while also placing these themes in the context of the psychological needs of the congregants and what the *shofar* calls to mind for us. The series of verses is concluded by the entirety of Psalm 150 followed by the *eloheinu velohei avoteinu* worded as in the *malkhiyot* section in the traditional liturgy, placed here because "it looks forward to the messianic future and the full realisation of God's rule" in keeping with the theme of the final *shofar*ot verses selected by the editors[86]. After the final *shofar* blasts the *shofar* liturgy concludes with a choice of either "All the World Shall Come to Serve You" or *ein keloheinu*. Having already placed the *aleinu* in its traditional place in the *malkhiyot* section, *Ruach Chadashah* does not repeat it in the concluding portion of the service.

British Reform Liturgies

The Reform Movement in Britain (initially based at West London Synagogue) started as a move for liturgical and ideological change that was independent of (although influenced by the spirit of) the reformist movements of continental Europe and America. This movement was based in a rejection of the binding character of rabbinic tradition and an equally strong belief in the divine nature of Scripture. This Anglican-style biblicism

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[84] Machzor Ruach Chadashah: Services for the Days of Awe, (London: Liberal Judaism, 2003).
[85] Machzor Ruach Chadashah, 150-152.

resulted in a general tendency to maintain traditional liturgy that communicated themes found in the Bible. The Bible contains the "sacrificial legislation and a promise of the ultimate restoration of the sacrificial cult"[87]. Therefore *Forms of Prayer for the High Holydays* retains an Additional (*mussaf*) Service for Rosh Hashanah and includes the *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofarot* in their traditional place in the *amidah* of the *mussaf* service. The first edition of the High Holy Day prayer book from 1841/2[88] retains both the *shofar* liturgy in the Torah service and in the *mussaf* service. The liturgy that appears in the Torah service (after the reading of the Torah and the prayer for the royal family and before the return of the Torah to the ark) is largely based on the traditional rubric for that liturgy. It begins with Psalm 47 although, in keeping with the reform dislike of repetitious liturgy, it lacks instructions to repeat the Psalm seven times. This is followed by the two traditional blessings and a truncated *shofar* blowing (only *tekiah* and *teruah*). This is followed by a slightly adapted version of the traditional series of psalmic verses recited following the *shofar* blasts *(ashrei ha'am ...)* and other scriptural verses that do not appear in the traditional liturgy. What is absent from this liturgy are the prayer, traditionally placed between the first and second of the three series of *shofar* blowings, asking that it be God's will that the sound of the *shofar* ascend before God to plead for the pardon of our sins, and the mystical acrostic of psalmic verses spelling *out karah satan*. The absence of the latter (which does not appear in any other Reform liturgy surveyed) would appear to be as a result of the rationalistic, anti-mystical tendencies of the Reform Movement.

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[86] Machzor Ruach Chadashah, 488.
[87] Petuchowski, Prayerbook Reform in Europe, 66.
[88] Forms of Prayer, Vol. III Prayers for the Day of Memorial (New Year), (London: West London Synagogue of British Jews, J. Wertheimer and Co., 1841/2).

The *shofar* rubric in the *amidah* of the *mussaf* service (a service which quite happily prays for the rebuilding of the Temple in the *kedushat hayom*) is both quite traditional and peculiarly truncated and rearranged. Presumably so as not to repeat the *aleinu* here and in the concluding prayers, this piece does not appear here, and the *malkhiyot* passages are limited to the *eloheinu velohei avoteinu* passage for the *malkhiyot* section. This is followed by a truncated *attah zocher* and the *eloheinu velohei avoteinu* for the *zikhronot* section and then the *avodah* benediction of the *amidah*. Curiously, for such a biblicist movement, neither section includes the recitation of scriptural passages. The ark is opened and a series of prayers is recited, concluding (bizarrely for a liturgy that seemed so reticent to repeat the *aleinu*) with a repetition of the *eloheinu velohei avoteinu* for the *malkhiyot* section and the Sanctification of the Day. The *shofar* is then blown followed by Leviticus 23:24. Only now is *attah nigleita* recited, followed by Psalm 150, and a brief selection of verses relating to the *shofar* and its role in the messianic age. This is placed here presumably to end the entire *amidah* (rather than just the additional section in the midst of it) on a high note (no pun intended). This series of prayers is completed by the *eloheinu velohei avoteinu* for the *shofarot* section and a final short series of *shofar* blasts (*tekiah* and *teruah*) and another recitation of Leviticus 23:24. By the 1909[89] edition the *shofar* blowing had been expanded to three blasts, adding a final *tekiah* note, but is otherwise identical (with the exception of modernizing the English translations).

[89] Forms of Prayer, Vol. III Prayers for the Day of Memorial (New Year), Fourth Edition, (London: West London Synagogue of British Jews, J. Wertheimer, Lea and Co., 1909).

This liturgy was retained with no significant changes until the publication of the eighth edition in 1985[90] (now published as a *machzor* for the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain, RSGB), in which a quite different approach was taken. This edition retains many of the elements from the previous editions. At the same time the *machzor* both returns some of the traditional structure of the liturgy and also engages in much greater creativity than previous editions. Again both rubrics are maintained. The *tekiah de meyushav* appears much as it did in the earlier edition with a few notable changes:

- Only verses 6-10 of Psalm 47 are included, presumably due to the implication in the earlier verses of Jewish superiority over the nations.
- A meditation is included after Psalm 47 that states that the sound of the *shofar* shatters our illusions and awakens us to the needs to repent, calling us to account.
- One (but not three) full series of *shofar* blasts is indicated.
- A choice between the traditional Psalm 29 and Psalm 24 is given, and these psalms are placed within the context of returning the scroll to the ark, not before.

Although this edition retains the *mussaf* service, it eschews the previous editions' hopes for the rebuilding of the Temple. It also succeeds in returning a more traditional structure to the *shofar* liturgy, while also engaging in some interesting creativity within that context. Each section is prefaced by a meditation that introduces the theme of the section. The *malkhiyot* is introduced by a passage that asks us to think of the (mostly negative) psychological forces that rule our lives (ambition, instinct, desire, habit, routine etc.) and how God as King is greater than all of them. The *zikhronot* meditation focuses

[90] Forms of Prayer for Jewish Worship, Vol. III Prayers for the High Holydays, Eighth Edition, (London: RSGB 1985).

on remembering the year that has past, recalling the good and the bad deeds we did, and seeking God's guidance to help us face our past and repent. The *shofar*ot section begins with a meditation that looks back to the *shofar*'s symbolism in relation to the binding of Isaac and Sinai and forward to its call to fulfill "Israel's task and the redemption of mankind"[91]. Each section continues after the meditation with a shortened form of the signature passage for that section (*aleinu*, *attah zokher* and *attah nigleita*), but not the relevant *eloheinu velohei avoteinu*. Ten verses are included for each section, but not the traditional verses. Indeed, the editors have taken the innovative step of interspersing scriptural verses with selections on the relevant theme from non-biblical sources including midrashic literature, *Pirke Avot*, Maimonides (the inevitable "Awake you sleepers"), Nachman of Breslav, Leo Baeck, Victor Frankl, and Franz Rosenzweig. These series of verses are concluded by the relevant eulogy for each section, and each is followed by a series of *shofar* blasts. In concluding each of the three sections, a choice is given between the recitation of *areshet s'fateinu* leading into the next section or another prayer. For *malkhiyot* the alternative is a prayer exalting God as King with the refrain "The Lord does rule, the Lord has ruled, the Lord shall rule for ever and ever" (from a traditional Rosh Hashanah *piyyut*) *zikhronot* offers a scriptural recitation – Leviticus 23:23-24. And *shofar*ot suggests *hayom harat olam* as its alternative.

Reconstructionist Liturgies

The Reconstructionist Movement emerged in America in the 1930's, based at its inception on the religious philosophy of Mordechai Kaplan. Kaplan "denied the divine origin of Jewish practice but valued Jewish ritual for its role in forging and maintaining

[91] Forms of Prayer for Jewish Worship, Vol. III, Eighth Edition, 238.

group consciousness, cultivating appreciation for the gifts of life, and sensitizing people to the presence of the divine force in the universe"[92]. Kaplan placed high value on the traditional rituals of Judaism, including in the realm of communal liturgy, while also insisting on more theological consistency than many Reform liturgies. Kaplan saw prayer as a vital part of Jewish life that opened people to the awareness of the divine in the universe. He produced a Sabbath Prayer Book in 1945 and a High Holyday Prayer Book in 1948. Like the Reform and Liberal liturgies surveyed above, Kaplan's prayer books approached the traditional liturgical rubrics from a particular point of view and adapted them on the basis of his particularly theological and cultural sensibilities. This theological agenda includes the reduction or excising of references to the "Sinai Myth", a personal messiah, superstition, physical resurrection, the Temple sacrifices, repetitions and Jewish chosenness and the inclusion of meditations and interpretive versions of prayers[93].

In keeping with his preference for preservation of traditional ritual, Kaplan's 1948 *High Holyday Prayer Book*[94] preserves both *shofar* liturgies in their traditional positions although with significant changes and additions. The *tekiah de meyushav* begins with a responsive reading relating to the theme of the *shofar* being sounded for liberation and to end oppression (in a similar vein to the *shofar* verses in the *shofar*ot section in the *mussaf amidah*) and includes the two traditional blessings, a full series of *shofar* blowing, and Psalm 89:16. The superstitious and mystical *karah satan* acrostic is excised entirely.

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[92] Eric Caplan, From Ideology to Liturgy, Reconstructionist Worship and American Liberal Judaism, (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press 2002), 5.
[93] Caplan, From Ideology to Liturgy, 55-93.
[94] Mordechai M. Kaplan, High Holyday Prayer Book: Prayers for Rosh Hashanah I (New York: 1948).

While eschewing the traditional references to the sacrificial cult (and thus arguably the rationale for the service) Kaplan retains the *mussaf* service on Rosh Hashanah and the *shofar* liturgy in it. The *mussaf* service, excised of its references to the sacrificial cult, includes the *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofarot* sections in their traditional place in the *amidah*. Each section comprises a truncated version of the introductions (with the *aleinu* specifically eschewing particularistic references) a selection of scriptural verses and the relevant *eloheinu velohei avoteinu* for the section. None of the sections, as they appear in the *mussaf amidah* itself, is followed by an actual *shofar* blowing. After the *amidah* is completed each section is provided with a series of readings based on the themes of the section as interpreted by Kaplan. In each case a different reading is provided for the first and second day of the festival. These interpretive versions of the traditional themes weave together aspects of the introductory and concluding prayers of each section and the scriptural verses for each section with the particular ideals and theology of Kaplan, focusing the hearts and minds of the congregation on our connection to a higher divine power and improvement of the moral and spiritual self through doing so, as well as looking forward to a future time of justice and mercy for all. After these interpretive versions of the traditional themes, each section concludes with a meditative passage introducing a series of *shofar* blasts and *areshet s'fateinu* (*shofarot* is also concluded by *hayom harat olam*). These meditative passages, as is often the case in non-traditional liturgies, place the *shofar* blasts into a context that accords with the ideological and theological concerns of the liturgists. The *malkhiyot* passage states that this section heralds the dominion of God and "commands us to renounce the false gods of superstition, pride, selfishness and power" and to "consecrate our efforts to the

establishment of God's kingdom of universal justice, brotherhood, and peace"[95]. The interpretive introduction to the *zikhronot* section says that the section "recalls to us that we are our brother's keepers ... It awakens us to a sense of responsibility for the ills that we bring upon one another" and "bids us combat by word and deed all ignorance, poverty, oppression, and war."[96] And the *shofarot* section "assures us of the eventual triumph of righteousness and the dawn of a better world" bringing "hope and comfort to the oppressed and the downtrodden everywhere" and "directs us to love freedom and preserve it here and throughout the world, so that Israel and all people shall live in dignity and peace[97]. Although one suspects that these themes may not have been in the mind of the Rabbis when they constructed the traditional liturgy, Kaplan' interpretive passages act to direct the thoughts of modern congregants to these ideals in the context of the *shofar* blasts. It should also be noted that, in keeping with Kaplan's respect for tradition, while the interpretive versions of the sections are decidedly non-traditional, each section includes instructions before the *shofar*-blowing that the page should be omitted on Shabbat (in accordance with the traditional prohibition against blowing the *shofar* on Shabbat). One aspect of this liturgy that is not clear is how the traditional passages appearing in the *amidah* and the interpretive passages are to be used, particularly considering that the traditional passages are not followed by the *shofar* blowing. Thus it is not clear whether one is to intended to recite the *amidah* in full and then continue with the interpretive prayers and the *shofar* blowing or if one is intended to

[95] Ibid., 300.
[96] Ibid., 309.
[97] Ibid., 315.

choose one or the other. Eric Caplan indicates that the readings sections based on the themes of the *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofarot* are to be recited after the *amidah*[98].

In 1999 the Reconstructionist Movement published a new High Holyday *machzor* as part of its innovative *Kol Haneshamah* series of prayerbooks. The editors of *the Kol Haneshamah* series adhered to most of Kaplan's basic themes and ideology but were often less strict in their rejection of certain aspects and more open to seeing that some of these themes (such as messianism and the "Sinai Myth") could be seen as "a mythic image that need not be understood literally."[99] They were nevertheless just as clear in their rejection of other aspects of the traditional liturgy such as particularism and references to the Tample sacrifices. Moreover, the series focuses on feminist themes, kabbalistic ideas that "enrich Kaplan's naturalism by giving it a rich mythology it is deemed to lack,"[100] and vastly increased the range and scope of the creative and interpretive aspects of the prayerbooks. Along with interpretive versions of the prayers, *Kol Haneshamah* also provided guided meditations, "how to" instructions on various aspects of the liturgy (intended to empower and educate the laity), various readings, and commentary on the prayers. This commentary tends to focus on several basic themes including[101]:

- God's immanence in the world,
- The idea that God does not control the world, suggesting non-supernatural interpretations for traditional liturgical statements that conflicted with Reconstructionist theology,

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[98] Caplan, From Ideology to Liturgy, 219-220.
[99] Ibid., 180.
[100] Ibid., 145.
[101] Ibid., 255-268.

- The assertion that *tikkun olam* (the perfection of the world) depends on human action,
- The need to act in an ecologically responsible manner,
- The importance of experiencing the wonder of our bodies,
- The positive contribution of religion to personal well-being,
- The need for intentionality (*kavanah*) in prayer,
- The evolving nature of Judaism, and
- Creativity.

As in Kaplan's *High Holyday Prayerbook, Kol Haneshamah for the Days of Awe* retains both *shofar* liturgies in adapted forms. The *tekiah de meyushav* appears before the return of the Torah to the ark and is introduced by a series of readings. These readings revolve around the "Awake from your slumber" passage of Maimonides ("Awake you sleepers" in *Gates of Repentance*) and the notes of the *shofar*, focusing on the effect of the *shofar* blowing on the individual psyche. The liturgy proper opens with Psalm 47:6-8, which the commentary notes is a "natural choice because of the way it heralds God with the *shofar* blasts and cries of joy." Only verses 6-8 are included in keeping with the editors' "commitment to eliminate references to chosenness and to celebrations marking the destruction or subjugation of other peoples"[102]. This, intriguingly, is followed by the traditional acrostic of psalmic verses *karah satan*. The mystical aspect of this set of verses and the acrostic reference to Satan is ignored in the commentary in favor of focusing on an interpretation of Psalm 118 from which the first lines of the acrostic are taken. This is followed by the two *shofar* blessings and three series of *shofar* blasts. The commentary here relates to themes of personal emotional empowerment, connection with

[102] Kol Haneshamah, Prayerbook for the Days of Awe, (Pennsylvania: The Reconstructionist Press 1999), 590.

community, and awaking us to our social obligations. This section of the liturgy concludes with Psalm 89:16. The book indicates that some congregations that do not recite the *mussaf* service continue here with the *malkhiyot*.

The introduction to *Kol Haneshamah for the Days of Awe* suggests four distinct ways in which the *shofar* liturgy, and particularly the *shofar* liturgy in the *mussaf amidah*, may be integrated into the service of the day:

- In some communities the *mussaf* themes are interwoven and a separate *mussaf* service is eliminated,
- Other communities focus on the themes of the *mussaf* service, reciting the *mussaf* aloud, but do not blow the *shofar*,
- Some communities chose to include a silent *amidah* in the *mussaf* service as well as the communal reading, and
- Yet other communities move the *mussaf* themes into the *shacharit* service.[103]

It is also stresses that communal practices are likely to evolve over time and to differ from the first day to the second. The *machzor* sets out to provide the rubrics for all these various possibilities (and arguably any other combination chosen by the community). This provides a great deal more flexibility in practice than the other liturgies surveyed here, organized on the basis that each element may be taken, combined, and recombined to construct a liturgy that reflects the sensibilities of the congregation. Each of the *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofarot* opens with the traditional introduction relevant to that section. Two alternative versions of the *aleinu* are provided that eschew the implication of the "inferiority of other faiths and peoples" central to the traditional version. The

traditional wording is provided "below the line"[104]. Each section also includes a selection of scriptural verses, a version of the relevant *eloheinu velohei avoteinu* passage for each section, a series of *shofar* blasts, *areshet s'fateinu* and *hayom harat olam*. Each section is also followed by a selection of five interpretive readings, apparently intended to inspire the congregation emotionally and intellectually on the themes. These readings include poetry and inspirational imagery from secular and non-Jewish sources. The *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofarot* as a whole are introduced by what is essentially a sermon (by Michael Strassfeld) on the themes of these passages. This passage equates *malkhiyot* with control (over self and others), *zikhronot* with memory and thought, and *shofar*ot with sound, and thus communication and speech. These, we are told, are what make us human and these themes allow us to realize our full human potential as reflections of the divine[105]. This is followed by a selection of songs and another meditative passage exploring the unity of the three themes as they relate to the divine nature of God. The *malkhiyot* section includes an alphabetical acrostic *piyyut* by Rabbi Eleazar Kallir telling of "the divine praise sung by the angels on high." The comparison is made between the angelic praise of God and the Jewish people following their metaphorical example in praising God fervently[106]. The inclusion of this *piyyut* points to the greater willingness of *Kol Haneshamah* to understand traditional symbolism (such as angelology) in metaphoric ways than did Kaplan and the Reform and Liberal liturgies. The *shofarot* section concludes with both the traditional *hayom harat olam* and an interpretive version (a poem by Mary Oliver relating to the wonders of nature).

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[103] Kol Haneshamah, Prayerbook for the Days of Awe, xxi.
[104] Ibid., 611.
[105] Ibid., 608.
[106] Ibid.,626.

Conclusion

The prayerbooks surveyed in this chapter illustrate Hoffman's assertions regarding liturgy as a vehicle for the expression of communal self-identity. Each of these liturgies has taken the basic building blocks of the traditional *shofar* liturgy and adapted them according to their particular sensibilities, ideology, theology, and contemporary aesthetics. They have injected creativity and variety into the standard rubrics, such as alternative scriptural readings, meditative readings, and interpretive versions of the prayers. Such creativity serves the dual function of conforming the liturgy to contemporary aesthetic preferences and acting as the vehicle by which the prayerbooks reframe the *shofar* liturgy to express their beliefs and ideals to others and primarily to their own community. Moreover the treatment of the *shofar* liturgy points to another significant aspect of liberal liturgies and prayer. Where traditionally prayer and the liturgy were seen as commanded, and as the primary method by which we expressed our beliefs and praise to God, liberal prayer theology is more about the effect on the person praying. Thus the focus of these liturgies, as evidenced by the frequent appearance of the "Awake you sleepers ..." passage, appears to be on directing the hearts and minds of the congregation to higher matters, to connecting with the divine to the moral and spiritual improvement of each individual. In this context the *shofar* becomes the vehicle for spiritual awakening and self-reflection through the imagery of the *shofar* itself, its notes and the themes of *malkhiyot*, *zikhronot* and *shofarot*.

Conclusion

As is the case with so much of the prayerbook, the story of the *shofar* liturgy is one of gradual development, as each generation adds to the liturgy, building on what came before. Thus, oblique biblical references to the sounding the *teruah* (or the remembrance of such blowing) on the festival of the first day of the seventh month become two fully fledged liturgical rubrics by the Middle Ages.

The biblical references from which this entire liturgy developed are remarkably slight. They link the festival to the blowing of a sound (*teruah*), set a date (the first day of the seventh month) and note that it is a day of rest. The levitical reference also introduces the concept "remembrance". However, the Bible reveals little of the larger context behind these details, namely the themes and purpose of the holiday and the function of the *teruah* in the celebration of the festival (which at this point also lacks a name).

The works of Philo and Pseudo-Philo do expand on these issues but it is the Rabbis in the Mishnah, Talmud and various midrashic works, who expand and expound upon the slivers of information in the Bible. The rabbinic literature reveals a wealth of ideas and practices that we recognize as essential parts of the festival of Rosh Hashanah (including the name) and its liturgy today. The Rabbis introduce the central theme of judgment to the festival and frame both the role of the *shofar* (which is to draw down divine mercy), and much of the content for the *shofar* liturgy of the *mussaf* service. It is in this literature that we find much of the structure and content for the *mussaf shofar* blowing, including the *malkhiyot, zikhronot and shofarot*, as well as the seeds of the *tekiata demeyushav.*

The wealth of liturgical and theological creativity from the rabbinic period resulted in a great deal of material, not all of which is consistent. While the liturgical and philosophical tracts of the Middle Ages were not all in agreement, the work of the medieval liturgists and thinkers were much more consistent. These liturgists drew together many of the divergent strands of the rabbinic literature and their work resulted in the concretization and consolidation of the rabbinic material, along with their own compositions and ideas, into the *mussaf shofar* liturgy and the core of the *tekiah demeyushav,* found in traditional prayerbooks today.

Finally, in the modern period, the Reform and Reconstructionist movements, both in the USA and Great Britain, have taken these rubrics and recreated them in their own image. In both the rabbinic and medieval periods the prayers and ideology of the *shofar* liturgy reflected the ideas and beliefs of those who composed them (for instance the philosophical bent of the medieval writings). However, it is in the modern period that the nature of liturgy as a reflection of a community's self-identity becomes most evident. In previous periods the liturgy had been expanded, interpreted and consolidated. In contrast, the modern period has seen a more extensive reworking of the liturgical rubrics, pruning elements that offend aesthetic and theological sensibilities, as well as an explosion of varied creative additions and substitutions to the traditional rubrics. While the medieval liturgists preferred to re-interpret and add to the existing liturgy to reflect their ideals, the liturgists of the modern period feel free (within certain constraints) to rework the liturgy to represent as close an expression of their beliefs and aesthetic preferences as possible. Thus they are more than willing to excise or replace any elements of the liturgical rubrics,

as well as playing with the order of the traditional liturgical elements, when they do not effectively express their vision of the *shofar* and its themes.

Moreover, the focus of the themes of the festival have developed over the ages. We know little of the themes and context of the *shofar* (if indeed that was the original instrument connected with the sound of *teruah)* in the biblical period, although it appears that it was part of the Temple ritual. In the rabbinic period the central themes of judgment, remembrance and sovereignty take center stage and the shofar is primarily seen in the context of getting God's attention, for the purpose of remembrance of our ancestral merits and to invoke divine mercy (in the context of divine judgement). The medieval liturgists and thinkers expand on these central themes but the focus is now more firmly on the congregation, rather than God, hearing the *shofar* and understanding its themes. Thus, the medieval period sees more inwardly focussed rationales for the blowing of the *shofar* in which the *shofar* works to direct the mind of the individual on a theme or ideal of the festival (for instance Maimonides' famous "Awake you sleepers"). However, this period also sees the inclusion of the *tekiah demeyushav* as a fully-fledged rubric, on the basis of the profoundly mystical rationale of confusing Satan. In the modern period the focus becomes almost exclusively psychological. Drawing in part from the inward focus of the medieval writings and the theological and aesthetic sensibilities of the modern era, these modern prayerbooks uniformly understand the *shofar* as a means of eliciting spiritually relevant thoughts and emotions from individuals who hear it. Where once we blew the *shofar* to remind God of the merit of our ancestors and obtain his mercy, we now do so to remind ourselves of our past deeds in the context of repentance, to be made aware of God's sovereignty etc. Moreover, with the exception

of the most recent Reconstructionist liturgy, the mystical aspects of the liturgy are entirely ignored (and even in this liturgy there is no mention of Satan).

This analysis of the *shofar* liturgy is revealing on several levels. On one level, we can see the development of the themes of the *shofar* in the context of the festival of Rosh Hashanah. We see how the themes and the purpose of the *shofar* in respect of those themes, have been developed and understood through the major periods of Jewish liturgical and theological creativity. And we can see this development as an example of liturgical development in general. Through the study of the *shofar* liturgy we can see how liturgy incorporates and reflects the beliefs of the community in which and for which it is written.

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