

Zichron Teruah — When Ahavah and Yirah Share One Day

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I. The Silent Blast

Tomorrow evening the year turns. Candle-lighting on Friday, 11 September, opens Erev Rosh Hashanah 5787. Shabbat and the first of Tishrei arrive together. The books open under a double sanctity — and the shofar, on that first day, will not sound.

This is not an accident of logistics. Chazal ruled that when Rosh Hashanah falls on Shabbat, we refrain from blowing lest someone carry the horn through a reshut harabbim. The decree is famous. What is less often lingered over is the Torah's own language for the day.

In one place the Torah calls it *yom teruah* — a day of blasting (Bamidbar 29:1). In another it calls it *zichron teruah* — a remembrance of the blast (Vayikra 23:24). The Yerushalmi and later masters notice the shift. When the horn can sound, the day is the sounding. When the horn must be silent, the day becomes a memory of sounding — and memory, in this register, is not a lesser substitute. It is a higher vessel.

Rav Dov Ber Cohen's recent teaching presses the point without sentimentality: only when Rosh Hashanah coincides with Shabbat does the Torah's wording *zichron teruah* find its full calendar home. The mitzvah's outer layer — the physical blast — is withheld. What remains is crowning, yearning, davening, and the inner work the blast was always meant to awaken. Action is not cancelled. It is translated.

That translation is the hinge of this essay.

II. Palace and Table

The Slonimer *Netivot Shalom*, as the shiur frames it, offers a mashal that must be handled carefully and attributed as received teaching rather than as a free paraphrase of every page.

Shabbat is the day we enter the King's palace. Protocol, delight, and nearness without the weekday's scramble. The Yamim Nora'im are the days the King comes to *your* table — judgment that visits the ordinary house, the ordinary meal, the ordinary name written in the books. Two movements of nearness: we go up; He comes down.

When Rosh Hashanah falls on Shabbat, the mashal does not choose. Palace and table coincide. You stand in the hall of Shabbat's love at the same hour the King of Judgment sits at the year's first table. The calendar itself refuses the false choice between sweetness and awe.

This is why the day feels denser than an ordinary Yom Tov that happens to land on Saturday. It is not denser because Heaven is confused. It is denser because two legitimate grammars of relationship are running at once.

III. Two Wings

The core image of the teaching is simple enough to teach a child and hard enough to spend a lifetime on: *ahavah* and *yirah* are two wings. Shabbat carries love; Rosh Hashanah carries awe. A bird does not fly on one wing. A Jew who tries to crown the King with fear alone grows rigid. A Jew who tries to keep Shabbat's nearness without the seriousness of the throne grows soft in the wrong places.

On this Shabbat–Rosh Hashanah the wings are paired before the ascent toward Yom Kippur. The pairing is not a blend that dissolves either term. Love does not cancel judgment; judgment does not cancel love. They become jointly usable.

Covenantal language helps here without dragging the day into politics. Limited kingship in the Torah always joined joy and constraint: the king who must keep a Torah scroll beside him is not less a king for the limit; he is a king whose power tracks a higher text. So too the Jew who approaches the Days of Awe: freedom before God is not the freedom to invent the terms of the relationship. It is the freedom to answer with both wings — delighted nearness and upright fear — in one stance.

The silent shofar does not remove the coronation. It removes the prop. What is left is whether the mouth, the heart, and the memory can still say: You are King.

IV. Five Layers, One Yearning

The shiur names five dimensions that attend every mitzvah: the deed itself; the words and berakhah; basic intention; a higher orientation “for Hashem alone”; and the joy — *simchah* — that reveals how deeply the soul has connected. When the deed is unavailable, the upper layers are not ornamental. They become the work.

The Piaseczner's pastoral counsel, as presented there — roughly, “fake it till you awake it” — is not theater for its own sake. It is the recognition that the neshama's excitement already exists beneath the heaviness, and that movement, breath, and honest imagination can uncover what fatigue has covered. On a silent Rosh Hashanah this counsel is especially usable: you cannot blow; you can still prepare the vessel that would have received the blast.

Yearning for the unperformed shofar is not nostalgia. In the teaching's frame, sincere yearning can itself become a form of fulfillment — not as a loophole against halakhah, but as the inner face of *zichron*. Memory that costs something. Davening that carries what the horn would have carried: crowning, awakening, the Akedah's binding remembered without spectacle.

None of this requires treating folk lore about “years when Rosh Hashanah falls on Shabbat” as causal history. Such associations circulate; they are not evidence. Handle them lightly or leave them. The day is enough without omen-talk.

V. What to Do With the Silence

Threshold discipline for Erev and for Day One:

1. **Treat silence as assignment, not loss.** The missing blast is the calendar's demand that memory and tefillah do heavier lifting.

2. **Hold both wings.** Let Shabbat's *oneg* and Rosh Hashanah's *yirah* share the table. Do not apologize for joy; do not use joy to dodge standing.
3. **Crown without a prop.** Malchuyot language in the Amidah is doing shofar-work when the horn is still. Mean the words.
4. **One concrete acceptance.** The Field of Elul is closing into palace mode. Name one pattern you will not feed in 5787 — and one act of nearness you will keep when the kitchen is loud again after the Days of Awe.
5. **Remember the second day.** The horn returns on Sunday, 2 Tishrei. Memory on Shabbat does not abolish sounding on the second day; it prepares the ear.

VI. Close

Ha'azinu has been singing all week that ends can still be considered while free will is intact. Elul's King-in-the-Field mashal has been teaching approachability with a calendar. Tonight and tomorrow those lines meet a rarer clause: the New Year whose first day refuses the outer blast so that *zichron teruah* can be more than a phrase.

Palace and table. Love and awe. Two wings.

The horn is silent on Shabbat so that something in us that is usually outsourced to sound can learn to speak.

Shanah tova u'metukah — may the year that begins in remembrance be written with both wings open.

— *Teaching credit: Rav Dov Ber Cohen (Living In Tune); Netivot Shalom / Yerushalmi frames as received in the shiur.*

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