

Curriculum Guide

The High Holy Days, or the High Holidays, consist of two separate holidays. The first holiday is Rosh HaShanah, the Jewish New Year, that takes place on the 1st and 2nd days of the month of Tishrei. The second holiday is Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, on the 10th of Tishrei. The ten days from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur, including those holidays, are collectively known as the Ten Days of Repentance (Aseret Yemei Teshuvah).

Below, you will find ten themes that are associated with the High Holy Days and the Ten Days of Repentance. Each topic is the subject of one of the clues in ***HolidayQuest: High Holidays Unlocked***.

The Shofar

The Shofar that is blown on Rosh Hashanah is made from the hollowed out horn of a kosher animal, such as a ram. Rosh Hashanah, which is also known as “Yom Teruah”, is strongly associated with the Shofar. The Shofar is mentioned several times in the Torah (the Bible) - in Breisheet (Genesis 22:13) at Akeidat Yitzchak (Binding of Isaac), in Shmot (Exodus 19:13) at Har Sinai (the giving of the Torah), and later, in Yehoshua (Joshua 6:4) when Bnei Yisrael (the Israelite Tribes) conquer Yericho (Jericho).

The shofar is traditionally used to blow three different distinct types of loud blasts:

- Tekiah (תקיעה) is a single long blast of the shofar.
- Shevarim (שברים) is composed of three short blasts.
- Teruah (תרועה) is, in most traditions, a string of many short broken blasts made by the tongue (e.g. tut-tut-tut-tut, etc.). In the Yemenite and Babylonian Jewish communities, it is a single long, trembling blast.

On Rosh Hashana Day 100 shofar blasts are blown (each day) in the following set groups:

Tekiah-Shevarim-Teruah-Tekiah Abbreviated: תשר"ת	Tekiah-Shevarim-Tekiah Abbreviated: תש"ת	Tekiah-Teruah-Tekiah Abbreviated: תר"ת
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Note: If the first day of Rosh Hashanah falls out on Shabbat, the shofar is not blown. Rosh Hashanah never begins on a Sunday (יום א), a Wednesday (יום ד), or Friday (יום ו), so the second day of Rosh Hashanah can never be on Shabbat.

Many different meanings have been suggested for the sounds of the shofar. Some of them are connected with the idea that the loud sounds of the shofar “wakes us up” for the “Yom HaDin”, the Day of Judgement.