



Shofar Blowing During the Silent *Amida*

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Question: I will be the *chazan* for *Musaf* at a small, quite new *minyán*. The one thing that is “foreign” to me, is that they blow 30 *kolot* (blasts) during the silent *Amida* (= *Amida*). They are willing to not blow *shofar* for my sake, since the existing group anyway has mixed feelings about the *minhag*. Should/may I accept their offer? If not, how does it affect my own *Amida*?

Answer: The *gemara* (Rosh Hashana 16a-b) speaks about blowing *shofar* when sitting (before “*Shemoneh Esrei*”) and also when standing (during *Shemoneh Esrei*). The idea of 100 *kolot* is apparently post-Talmudic (see *Tosafot*, Rosh Hashana 33a).

Although the *gemara* is not explicit as to when to do the latter *tekiot*, another *gemara* (Rosh Hashana 34b) implies it. Rav Papa bar Shmuel told his assistant to blow the shofar when he hinted during *davening* to do so. Rava corrected him, saying: the shofar is to be blown only in *chever ir* (the group of the city). The Rambam (Shofar 3:10, see *Maggid Mishneh*, ad loc. 12) is apparently among those who understand and accept Rava as saying that this refers to *chazarat hashatz*. Two problems to

discuss about blowing in the *Amida* are the possibility of *hefsek* and confusion for those who are not at the right place when the *kolot* are blown (see Shut Radbaz I:347). Some early sources (see citations and application in *Yechaveh Da’at* VI:37) maintain the *Amida* of *Musaf* has only seven *berachot* (i.e., *Malchuyot*, *Zichronot*, and *Shofarot* are only in *chazarat hashatz*). Since these *berachot* are connected to shofar blowing (Rosh Hashana 34b), these opinions apparently assumed no shofar blowing in the *Amida*.

On the other hand, we do recite nine *berachot* during the *Amida*. Also, even if in the original obligation for the standing *tekiot* was in *chazarat hashatz*, now, with 100 *kolot*, *Amida* may be a logical time, which might be enough reason to calm concerns for *hefsek* in *Shmoneh Esrei* (see *Eshel Avraham* (Butchatch) to OC 592). In fact, the Aruch (a Rishon) quoted by *Tosafot* (Rosh Hashana 33b), the Tur (Orach Chayim 592), and others, talks of 30 *kolot* during *Amida*.

Still, the Shulchan Aruch relates to *tekiot* regarding *chazarat hashatz* (OC 592:1) and not *Amida* (OC 591), the Rama does not comment, and the Magen Avraham (intro. to OC 592) says that it is better not to blow

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during *Amida*. What apparently changed the practice was the fact that the Arizal recommended blowing 30 during the *Amida* (leaving 10 at the end of *davening*). As often happens, many Sephardi (see Yechaveh Da'at *ibid.*) and Chassidic communities follow the kabbalistically preferred approach (especially regarding something with mystical overtones like *tekiat shofar*). Non-Chassidish Ashkenazim, by and large, especially those who *daven Nusach Ashkenaz*, follow the stronger halachic sources, and do 30+10 after *chazarat hashatz*.

This breakup by affiliation is not complete. A small minority of *Nusach Ashkenaz shuls* blow in *Amida*. The Avnei Nezer (OC 445), the *Rebbe* of *Suchochov*, opposed *tekiot* in *Amida*, but in practice most Chassidic *shuls* blow in *Amida*. The group with the most variance in practice is those who *daven Nusach Sephard* but are not Chassidic.

Poskim (see Yechaveh Da'at *ibid.*) generally justify both approaches and recommend that *shuls* keep their *minhag*. In your case, you could claim that a relatively new *minyán*, with the participants unsettled on the matter, can change based on (a) new arrival(s). However, I would not want to be the catalyst for such a change, which could be divisive at a time we want to heighten unity (e.g., Rosh Hashana). You need not be concerned, as just listening is not a *hefsek* (see Radbaz *ibid.*).

Now, for instructions. If you finish a *beracha* before its *tekiot*, wait at that point

(Nitei Gavriel, Rosh Hashana 64:7). If you are behind them when they blow, listen quietly, and they will count for you (*ibid.*). Although those with this *minhag* will say *Hayom Harat Olam* when they finish each *beracha*, you do not need not do this as practice, as in your regular practice, you would also say it in *chazarat hashatz* but not in *Amida* (see Igrot Moshe, OC II:29). ■

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