A Blast from the Past
Excerpted and adapted from a *shiur* by Rav Moshe Yitzchok Weg
July 6, 2023
https://baishavaad.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/m-y-weg-Pinchos-shofar
-1.mp3

In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, there shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall do no work of labor, it shall be a day of shofar sounding for you.

<div align="right">Bemidbar 29:1</div>

The mitzvah *de'Oreisa* of *tekias* shofar requires three series of *tekiah-truah-tekiah* (Rosh Hashanah 33b). But the Gemara says we don't know whether *truah* is medium-length sounds (*shvarim*), very short sounds (what we know as *truah*), or a combination (*shvarim-truah*). Therefore, R' Avahu instituted that we blow a minimum of thirty blasts on Rosh Hashanah: three sets with *shvarim-truah,* three with *shvarim,* and three with *truah.*

The simple meaning of the Gemara, which appears to be adopted by the Rambam and Shulchan Aruch, is that we are uncertain about how to blow the *truah,* and thirty blasts are necessary to ensure we fulfill the mitzvah. But Rav Hai Gaon maintains that there is no uncertainty. Rather, each of the three versions of *truah* is kosher, and different communities used different versions. R' Avahu's *takanah* unified the practice of Klal Yisrael. According to the Rambam and Shulchan Aruch, it is difficult to understand why a *shvarim* blown within the set of *tara"t* (*tekiah-truah-tekiah*) would constitute a *hefsek*. Within this set, we should view the *shvarim* as not even being a *kol* shofar, because it is not significant (and non-shofar sounds don't constitute a *hefsek*). Moreover, why does the Rambam write that during each section of *Chazaras Hashatz* we blow only one set (*tashra"t, tasha"t,* or *tara"t*), if we don't know which is correct?

R' Yaakov Schneidman (Sefer Derech Hamelech) answers that even the Rambam and Shulchan Aruch agree that all three shofar blast types are valid, and historically, each community used the type that corresponded to its particular needs that year, but the associations between needs and *kolos* were forgotten over time. Therefore, R' Avahu enacted that every community should blow all of the variants.