



MBS118

A MESSIANIC BIBLE STUDY FROM ARIEL MINISTRIES



# THE FEAST OF ROSH HASHANAH (TRUMPETS)



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*And Jehovah spoke unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, shall be a solemn rest unto you, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation.  
Leviticus 23:23-24*

NOTES

This feast will be studied in six categories: the introduction, *Rosh Hashanah* in the Scriptures, the usage of the trumpet in the Old Testament, the usage of the trumpet in the New Testament, the prophetic and messianic significance, and the fulfillment of the Feast of Rosh Hashanah.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Three things will be discussed by way of introduction: first, the names; secondly, the biblical practice; and thirdly, the Jewish observance.

### A. The Names

#### 1. Zicharon Truah

The first name is *Zicharon Truah*, which means the “memorial of triumph” or the “shouting for joy.” The memorial of triumph is a biblical name for this feast found in Leviticus 23:24. The Hebrew term *Zicharon Truah* is actually found in this passage and the literal meaning is “a remembrance of blowing.”

The concept of shouting for joy is based upon Job 38:7, which states that when God created the heavens and the earth, *the sons of God* shouted for joy. Judaism teaches that God created the heavens and the earth on the Feast of Trumpets, so it was on this occasion that the angels shouted for joy. The Feast of Trumpets, therefore, is known as the shouting for Joy.

The horn that is used on this day is not only to be remembered, but also to be blown. The only time that the ram’s horn is not blown is when the Feast of Trumpets happens to fall on a Sabbath day.

#### 2. Yom Truah

The second name is *Yom Truah*, which literally means a day of blowing

of trumpets. This is also a biblical name found in Numbers 29:1. Judaism teaches that the reason for this name is that on this day there is a call to Jews to remember their sins. Literally, the term means “a day of blowing,” emphasizing the blowing. Whenever the Feast of Trumpets falls on a weekday the ram’s horn is blown, but on the Sabbath it is not.

### 3. Rosh Hashanah

The third name is Rosh Hashanah. This is the most common Jewish term for this feast today. Very few Jewish people today talk about the Feast of Trumpets; rather, they mention Rosh Hashanah which means “the head of the year.” Although it is never referred to in this way anywhere in Scripture, this has become the most common term for this feast in Judaism. The expression Rosh Hashanah is found in Ezekiel 40:1, but that verse does not speak of this particular feast day. The reason Jewish people call this feast Rosh Hashanah or “the head of the year,” is because they believe that God created the heavens and the earth on this day. Therefore, this feast has become known as the beginning of the Jewish civil year.

### 4. Yom Hazicharon

The fourth name is *Yom Hazicharon*, which means “the day of remembrance.” This is a rabbinic name for the feast because the rabbis teach that on this day there is a call to all Jews to remember their sins before the next holy day, which is the Day of Atonement. On this day, it is believed, that God remembers His creatures and shows them mercy. Thus it is called Yom Hazicharon, the day of remembrance.

### 5. Yom Hadin

The fifth name is *Yom Hadin* which means “the day of judgment.” In Jewish beliefs, all Jews on this day are to pass in judgment to see if their sins will be forgiven or not.

## B. The Biblical Practice

The second thing by way of introduction is to discuss the biblical practice. This will be done in detail later, but four biblical practices will be summarized here.

First, in biblical days it was a one-day festival, but in modern Judaism it has become a two-day festival. Secondly, it was to be a day of no labor, a day of rest. Thirdly, it was a day of special sacrifices, something that will be covered in detail later. And fourthly, it was celebrated by the blowing of trumpets, specifically known as the shofar or the ram’s horn.

## C. The Jewish Observance

The third thing by way of introduction are ten Jewish observances of the Feast of Rosh Hashanah.

### 1. The Month of Elul

The Jewish month of *Elul* is the month that precedes the month known as *Tishrei*. In the month of Tishrei, three holy days occur: the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles. In Jewish observance, the month of Elul is a month of preparation; a month to begin repenting of one's sins; a month to be more diligent to fulfill the commandments of God.

During this month, the ram's horn is blown every day at the end of the morning service with the exception of the Sabbath day and the day preceding the Feast of Trumpets. This is in order to separate the blowing that is based only on custom as over against that which is commanded by Scripture.

Another observance during this month is the recitation of Psalm 27. It is recited twice every day throughout this month and on into the next month, until the last day of the Feast of Trumpets. The reason for this practice is because the rabbis believed that this Psalm had a direct reference to the Feast of Trumpets.

### 2. The Meaning of Rosh Hashanah

The second thing by way of Jewish observance is the meaning. According to the teaching of the rabbis, the name Rosh Hashanah means "the head of the year." It is the head of the year for five reasons. First, it is the head of the year because Creation occurred on this particular feast. Secondly, it is the head of the year for the Sabbatical Year count. Thirdly it is the head of the year for the Year of Jubilee. Fourthly, it is the head of the year for trees. When a new fruit tree is planted, rabbinic law forbids the eating of the fruit for the first three years of its growth. One begins the count for this on the Feast of Trumpets. And fifth, it is the head of the year concerning the laws pertaining to vegetables in that ten percent of all produce is to be given to the Levites on this particular occasion.

In rabbinic literature, the meaning of Rosh Hashanah concerns three main things: first, it is the anniversary of the Creation; secondly, it is the day of judgment; and thirdly, it is a day of renewing of the bond between God and Israel.

One last thing about the Feast of Rosh Hashanah or Trumpets is that, whereas in the Bible, it was only one day, it has become a two-day festival in Judaism. In the earlier days one could not always be sure when one day ended and another began since it was based on the visibility of three stars by eyewitnesses. For Jews living outside the Land, they would have to try to figure out when the day began in Israel and not, for instance, in Babylonia. So in order to make sure that they did not observe the wrong day, it has become a two-day festival. Technically, in Judaism, it is known as *Yom Arichta* or "the long day" because the two days are counted as one rather than two singular days.

### 3. The Blowing of the Shofar

The third thing about the Jewish observance concerns the blowing of the shofar or trumpet itself.

#### a. The Reasons for the Blowing of the Shofar

The blowing of the trumpet is the only actual command in the Bible as to how this feast was to be observed, but the Bible does not give any reason for it. Where the Bible fails to give a reason, the rabbis felt a need to provide one. Consequently, in the Talmud they concern themselves greatly on the reasons for the blowing of the trumpet. Their concern is in ten areas.

##### (1) The Chiuiv: The Obligation

First, What is the obligation? Is the obligation merely to blow it, or to hear it? According to the rabbis, the answer was primarily to hear it, although hearing requires the act of blowing.

##### (2) The Tekoah: The Blast

Secondly, the rule concerning the blast is that the mouth and the trumpet must touch; there can be no intervening space. If at all possible, it should be blown from the right side of the mouth.

##### (3) The Shmiah: The Hearing

Thirdly, concerning the hearing; the hearing must be clear so there must not be any mixtures of other sounds.

##### (4) The Seder: The Order

Fourthly, concerning the order of the trumpet blasts; there were to be three separate soundings, each sounding consisting of three blasts. The three soundings were based upon the three passages where the ram's horn is mentioned (Lev. 23:24, 25:9; Num. 29:1).

##### (5) The Chomer: The Material

Fifth, concerning the material of the trumpet: What horn could be used? Technically, the answer was that horns of all kosher animals were permitted except those of the cow, bull, and ox. In Hebrew, the horns of these animals are not known as a shofar, but a *keren*. The horns of a cow, bull, and ox are formed in layers, and therefore appear as being more than one while, in Hebrew, the word is singular. Furthermore, it will also avoid any remembrance of the sin of the Golden Calf. Also, the horns of wild animals were not allowed because these horns are solid bone and not hollow. Although all other horns are permitted, Jews have come to prefer the ram's horn in remembrance of Isaac's substitute, for it plays a major role in Jewish thinking on this occasion.

##### (6) The Tzurah: The Shape

The sixth thing that rabbis worried about was the shape of the trumpet: Should it be curved or straight? The answer was that either

was permitted, but the curved was preferred because it symbolized repentance. The size had to be at least a hand's breadth so that when it was grasped, both ends were be visible.

**(7) The Ishim: The Person**

The seventh thing concerned people; it was obligatory on every male of Israel. Those exempt from having to listen to the blowing of the ram's horn were women, minors, mentally incompetent people, and those who were deaf and mute.

**(8) The Zman: The Time**

The eighth thing concerned the time: At what time in the day should it be blown? It was permitted to be blown throughout the day, but the usual practice is late in the day toward the evening service.

**(9) The Kavanah: The Intention**

The ninth thing is the intention; the intent is to obey the Lord. Unless that intent is there, one is not fulfilling the command.

**(10) The Brachot: The Blessing**

Then the tenth thing concerned the blessing; one blessing was for the ram's horn and the other blessing was over the ram's horn.

**b. The Purpose for the Blowing of the Shofar**

There are three main purposes for the blowing of the ram's horn. The first purpose is a call to repentance. It was a call for all Jews to return to Judaism, for on this day all Jews will pass under judgment. The second purpose is to remind Israel of her covenant relationship with God. And the third purpose is to confuse Satan on the day that he accuses Israel. He gets so confused when the ram's horn is blown that he never manages to organize his accusations.

A rabbi, Saadiah Gaon, gave ten specific purposes for the blowing of the ram's horn: first, to remember the day of Creation; secondly, to introduce the ten days of penitence that come between the Feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement; thirdly, to evoke the revelation at Sinai when the Law was given with the blowing of the trumpet; fourthly, to fulfill the command of the prophets that one must give warning of impending judgment; fifth, to remind one of the sound of battle and the clash of arms in memory of the fall of Jerusalem and a reminder to pray for the rebuilding of the Temple; sixth, to remember Isaac's sacrifice; seventh, to arouse fear; eighth, to remember the ultimate day of judgment; ninth, to symbolize the final gathering of Israel; and tenth, to symbolize the final resurrection.

**c. The Meaning of the Blowing of the Trumpets**

There are three meanings given to the blowing of the ram's horn. The first meaning was that it was a symbol of the final regathering of Israel when the Messiah comes. The second meaning was that it was



the symbol of the resurrection from the dead. And the third meaning was that on this day three different books will be opened in Heaven. One is called the Book of Righteousness. Those who were perfectly righteous would have their names inscribed in the Book of Life and they would live another year. The second book is called the Book of the Wicked or the Book of the Dead. Those whose names are inscribed in this book would die during the year. Since most people are neither totally righteous nor totally wicked, there is a third book called the Book of the In-Between. Those inscribed in the third book are given ten days to repent, which are the ten days between the Feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement.

#### 4. The Trumpet Blasts

The fourth thing by way of Jewish observance concerns the trumpet blasts themselves. There was to be a total of one hundred blasts and these one hundred blasts came in four different categories of sounds.

##### a. The Tekiah

The first category of sound, known as the *tekiah*, is a long, single blast. This is a straight, plain, smooth, continuous note and it is to symbolize the expression of joy and contentment.

##### b. The Shevarim

The second category, known as the *shevarim*, is three short blasts. This is a combination of three broken notes to symbolize weeping.

##### c. The Truah

The third category of sound is known as the *truah*. These are extremely short blasts that are a combination of nine staccato notes in a very quick succession of short trills. This symbolizes trepidation, sorrow, and sobbing.

##### d. The Tekiah Gedolah

And the fourth category is known as the *tekiah gedolah*, which means “the great tekiah” or “the last trump.” This one symbolizes the hope of redemption. It is a very long, final note.

In these one hundred blasts, the first three categories are combined back and forth until there is a total of ninety-nine sounds. Then comes the one hundredth, the tekiah gedolah, a very long-sustained note as long as the trumpeter had breath to hold it and it is known as “the last trump.” That will become very significant when the messianic implications of this particular festival are discussed.

#### 5. The Scripture Reading

##### a. From the Law of Moses

On the first day, two passages are read: first, Genesis 21, which deals with the birth of Isaac; and secondly, Numbers 29:1-6, which deals

with the special offerings for this occasion.

On the second day, two Scriptures are read: first, Genesis 22, which is the story of the binding of Isaac to be sacrificed and of God's providing a ram in his place; and secondly, Numbers 29:1-6.

#### **b. From the Prophets**

On the first day, I Samuel 1:1-2:10 is read, which deals with the birth of Samuel, because the rabbis believe that Samuel was born on this day.

On the second day, Jeremiah 31:2-20 is read, which deals with Israel's coming forgiveness and restoration.

#### **c. From the Writings**

Another Scripture that is read is Psalm 47, which is a praise to God. It is recited seven times because it mentions the blowing of the ram's horn in verse 5.

### **6. The Tashlich Service**

The word *tashlich* means "the casting forth." This ceremony is based upon Micah 7:18-20, especially verse 19, where Micah predicted that God was going to cast the sins of Israel into the depths of the sea. It has become a Jewish custom on the first day of the Feast of Trumpets to go to a body of water in the afternoon following the service and symbolically empty their pockets into the water. This symbolizes God "casting their sins into the depths of the sea." If the first day of the Feast of Trumpets happens to fall on a Sabbath, this service is postponed until the following day.

Another question the rabbis asked was: "Why go to a body of water?" This is based on an old Jewish legend concerning the events of Genesis 22 and the offering of Isaac. Jewish tradition teaches that when Abraham was challenged with this climactic test in his life, part of the test included Satan's being free to try to impede Abraham by trying to weaken his devotion to God. Satan first played on the emotions of Abraham by pointing out that this was the only son that he had left since he had already sent Ishmael away. But when that did not convince Abraham, at that point, Satan placed an impassable river in front of Abraham and Isaac. Although it was impassable, Abraham went into the water anyway. He went deeper and deeper until the water reached his neck and he was in real danger of drowning. As Abraham was about to drown, he cried out to God for help. When he did, the river disappeared. Thus, the Tashlich Service is intended to recall this climactic episode on the way to the offering of Isaac, and so the Jews are to go to a body of water to remember that their forefather, Abraham, defeated Satan by a river.

**NOTES**

The Tashlich Service itself begins with the recitation of Micah 7:18-20, which prophesies the forgiveness of Israel's sins and the casting of those sins into the depths of the sea. Next, Psalm 118:5-9 is read, which speaks of seeking refuge in God. Then, Psalm 33 is read, which is a praise of God for past deliverances and present hope. Isaiah 11:9 is read next, which deals with the Messianic Kingdom of Peace. Psalm 24 is also read, which speaks of the righteous worshipper and the glorious King. Next, there is a special Jewish prayer known as *Yehi Ratzon*, which means "may it be desirable." This is a prayer for livelihood. There are also some additional supplications which speak of the struggle against the evil inclination.

### 7. Other Regulations

There are certain other regulations followed by Jews on this occasion. One rule is that this day can never fall on a Wednesday, a Friday, or a Sunday because that would interfere with some other observations either on the Sabbath or the Day of Atonement. If the first day does fall on the Sabbath, the law is that the blowing of the ram's horn is postponed until the next day because, by Jewish law, one cannot carry the ram's horn on the Sabbath day, for that would be work.

### 8. Other Practices and Customs

It is customary to wear something white on this occasion such as a white kittle or a white robe, because this is a symbol of purity; it symbolizes the forgiveness of sins.

Another custom is to have a special midnight service to be held on the Sabbath before the Feast of Trumpets.

Another Jewish custom is to feast on this day. This custom is based upon Nehemiah 8:10 where, after the reading of the Law, the people were sent out to feast. They were to eat festive foods but they were not to eat anything that was bitter or made with vinegar, because the emphasis is on praying for a sweet year, not a bitter one. They were not to eat anything containing nuts, because that would make the mouthing of the prayers difficult. The constant emphasis in all of the eating was on sweetness.

The special bread that is eaten is *Challah*, the egg bread that Jewish people eat on the Sabbath day. On the Sabbath it is normally dipped in salt but, on this occasion, it is dipped in honey to emphasize sweetness. Sabbath Challah is braided and elongated, while the Challah for this occasion is round, symbolizing the cycle of life and desire for a long life.

It is customary for the feast to eat something that contains a head. Sometimes a ram's head is eaten in memory of the sacrifice of Isaac. Sometimes, it is the head of a fish based on the prophecy that Jews will some day become the "head" and no longer the "tail."

The special fruits eaten on this occasion are usually grapes, pomegranates, apples, and dates. The main vegetables are leeks, beets, and gourds. A lot of rich food is eaten and sweet drinks are served to emphasize the hope for a sweet year.

It is customary not to sleep on this occasion because, if one sleeps at the beginning of the year, his guardian angel might sleep throughout the year. A nap is permitted in the afternoon, but one should be careful not to go to sleep on this day.

### 9. Legends of Rosh Hashanah

There are various legends concerning the Feast of Rosh Hashanah or Trumpets: the creation of the world occurred on this day as did the creation of Adam; Adam fell on this day; Cain was born with a twin sister and Abel was born with a twin sister; on this day both Cain and Abel offered their sacrifices; Cain killed Abel; the flood dried up; Abraham was born and died on this day and the same thing is true of Isaac and Jacob; on this day Isaac was offered up; Jacob arrived in Bethel; Sarah gave birth and so did Rebecca, Rachel, and Hannah; Joseph was liberated from prison; Samuel was born; the first Temple was dedicated; Elisha was born; and the sacrifices were resumed after the Temple was rebuilt.

### 10. The Ten Days of Penitence

Ten days of penitence fall between the Feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement. These are the ten days during which one must repent, particularly the seven days in the middle, because the first two of these ten days are the Feast of Trumpets and the tenth day is the Day of Atonement. So the days of penitence actually concern days three through nine only. It is during these seven days that one is to seek forgiveness. Special prayers of forgiveness are recited in the Temple. The Sabbath that falls within these days is known as “the Sabbath of repentance” and there is a great emphasis on repentance, especially on that Sabbath day. The three main elements which were to concern the Jews during these days were: confession, fasting, and specialized prayers for this occasion.

## II. ROSH HASHANAH IN SCRIPTURES

The Feast of Trumpets is found in five different places, all in the Old Testament.

### A. Leviticus 23:23-25

*And Jehovah spoke unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, shall be a solemn rest unto you, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. Ye shall do no servile work; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto Jehovah.*

In verse 23, the Word of Jehovah comes to announce this new festival. In verse 24a, the date is given; it is to be observed on the seventh

month of the year and is to be observed on the first day of that month. Verse 24 speaks of the day itself and mentions three things: first, it is to be a solemn rest; secondly, it is to be a memorial of blowing of trumpets; thirdly, it is to be a holy convocation. Verse 25 gives two specific regulations: first, they could do no servile work, no labor; it is to be a day of rest; secondly, on this day they were to offer up an offering made by fire.

From this passage, five deductions can be drawn. First, it is a day of rest; a day of no labor. Secondly, on this day there were to be sacrifices, which were to be offered. Thirdly, the uniqueness of the day was the blowing of the trumpet. Fourthly, the text itself does not mention the shofar, the ram's horn, but it does mention the blowing of something. And fifth, there was no specific reason given for the action of blowing the trumpet. Whereas in other feasts, reasons were given for the different actions, on this feast God chose to give no reason for blowing the trumpet.

#### **B. Numbers 29:1-6**

The second passage emphasizes the various sacrifices to be offered on this day. The date and regulations of this celebration is given in verse 1: *And in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, ye shall have a holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work: it is a day of blowing of trumpets unto you.*

The date is the first day of the seventh month. The three regulations of this day are: first, they were to have a holy convocation; secondly, they were to do no servile work; and thirdly, it was to be a day of the blowing of trumpets. This verse summarizes what was already stated in Leviticus 23:23-25.

Then verses 2-5 reveal new material spelling out that this was a day of sacrifices. There were three categories of sacrifices to be offered on this day. The first category is in verse 2: *And ye shall offer a burnt-offering for a sweet savor unto Jehovah: one young bullock, one ram, seven he-lambs a year old without blemish;*

The burnt-offering was to consist of one young bull, one ram, seven male lambs each a year old, and all without blemish.

The second category was the meal-offering in verses 3-4: *and their meal-offering, fine flour mingled with oil, three tenth parts for the bullock, two tenth parts for the ram, and one tenth part for every lamb of the seven lambs;*

The meal-offering was to be composed of fine flour mingled with oil.

The third category was the sin-offering in verse 5: *and one he-goat for a sin-offering, to make atonement for you;*

The sin-offering was to be composed of one he-goat; this was the one that actually made the atonement for their sins.

Additional offerings are mentioned in verse 6: *besides the burnt-offering of the new moon, and the meal-offering thereof, and the continual burnt-offering and the meal-offering thereof, and their drink-offerings, according unto their ordinance, for a sweet savor, an offering made by fire unto Jehovah.*

Moses pointed out that the offerings that he had mentioned in verses 2-5 were to be in addition to and not in place of others, such as new moon offerings consisting of both a burnt-offering and a meal-offering. Furthermore, there were daily offerings, which were to be offered as well.

Three deductions can be drawn from the second passage. First, the Feast of Trumpets was to be a day of rest. Secondly, it was to be a day of the blowing of the *truah*, which means “some kind of a trumpet.” Thirdly, it was a day heavy with sacrifices.

### C. Psalm 81:3-4

*Blow the trumpet at the new moon, At the full moon, on our feast-day.*

*For it is a statute for Israel, An ordinance of the God of Jacob.*

In the third passage where this feast is mentioned, verse 3 emphasizes the specific day. The first day of each month was a new moon day, but the only time that the new moon day was also a festival was on the day of the Feast of Trumpets, the first day of the seventh month. The Hebrew here does mention the *shofar*. In verse 4, he gives the command: *it is a statute for Israel.*

From these two verses four things can be deduced. First, there is some question whether the feast mentioned here is really the Feast of Trumpets. Secondly, it may only be the new moon festival. Again, the first day of every month was a new moon feast. Thirdly, while it does not necessarily have to mean the Feast of Trumpets, the fact that a trumpet is mentioned may indicate that it was the Feast of Trumpets. And fourthly, if so, the passage does mention the type of trumpet that the Jewish people prefer to use, which is the *shofar*.

### D. Ezra 3:1-6

This passage is the fourth place where this feast is mentioned, particularly in verse 6: *From the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt-offerings unto Jehovah: but the foundation of the temple of Jehovah was not yet laid.*

The altar was rebuilt on this occasion. When the altar was rebuilt, the sacrifices were resumed before the Temple itself was actually completed.

### E. Nehemiah 8:1-12

There is only one other place where this particular feast is mentioned and that is Nehemiah 8:1-12, especially verse 2: *And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month.*

On this occasion Ezra read the Law of Moses before the Jewish people. Out of this arose a Jewish custom to stand up and read the entire Mosaic Law.

To summarize: these are the five specific places where the Feast of Trumpets is mentioned in Scripture and they are all in the Old Testament. It is never mentioned as a feast in the New Testament, but this does not mean that there is no hint of it. As will be seen in the section covering the prophetic and messianic implications, there is reference to it in its fulfillment. But as far as the feast itself is concerned, it is not mentioned anywhere in the New Testament.

### III. THE USAGE OF THE TRUMPET IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

In this discussion of the usage of the trumpet in the Old Testament, four things will be mentioned.

#### A. The Two Key Words

The first Hebrew word is shofar, which literally means “a horn for blowing” and refers to a curved horn. It was an instrument that was used for the feast.

The second Hebrew term is truah, which means, “shout,” “a blast of war, alarm, joy.” This is the word that is used for this feast in Leviticus 23:24.

#### B. The Use of Shofar Alone

The word shofar in the Old Testament is used in ten different ways. First, it was used as the sound of a trumpet at the time that the Mosaic Law was given (Ex. 19:16, 19; 20:18).

Secondly, it was blown at the fall of Jericho when the walls fell down (Josh. 6:4, 8, 9, 13, 16).

Thirdly, it was the shofar that Gideon used to cause confusion in the camp of the Midianites (Judg. 7:16, 18-20, 22).

Fourthly, the shofar was a call to war or a warning of war and this is one of its more common usage (Judg. 3:27; 6:34; I Sam. 13:3; II Sam. 20:1; Neh. 4:18, 20; Job 39:24; Is. 18:3; Jer. 4:5, 19, 21; 6:1, 17; 42:14; 51:27; Ezek. 33: 3-6; Hos. 5:8; 8:1; Joel 2:1; Amos 3:6; Zeph. 1:16; Zech. 9:14).

Fifth, it was used as a call for the cessation of war (II Sam. 2:28; 18:16; 20:22).

Sixth, the shofar was used in the anointing of a king (II Sam. 15:10; I Kg. 1:34, 41; II Kg. 9:13).

Seventh, this word was used for the feast of the new moon and perhaps as a name for this feast in particular (Ps. 81:3).

Eighth, the shofar was used as a way of praise of God (Ps. 98:6).

Ninth, it was used as a call to repentance (Joel 2:15).

And tenth, it was used once as a declaration of Israel's sins (Is. 58:1).

### **C. The Use of Truah Alone**

The term truah has five categories of usage. First, it was used as the name of this feast, the Feast of Trumpets (Lev. 23:24; Num. 29:1).

Secondly, the truah was also used as the alarm for war like the shofar (Num. 23:21; 31:6; II Chr. 13:12; Jer. 20:16; 49:2; Ezek. 21:22; Amos 1:14).

Thirdly, it was used for the order of tribal march. When the Twelve Tribes of Israel were ready to march in their specific, progressive order, this was announced by the sounding of a truah (Num. 10:5, 6).

Fourthly, it was used for the "shout for joy" in a general sense (Job 8:21).

And fifth, this word was used for the "shout of joy" in a religious sense (I Sam. 4:5, 6; Ezra 3:11-13; Job 33:26; Ps. 27:6; 33:3; 89:15).

### **D. The Use of Shofar and Truah Together**

There are six different categories of usage when these two words were used together. First, they were used to announce the year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:9).

Secondly, they were used at the fall of Jericho (Josh. 6:5, 20).

Thirdly, they were used at the time that the Ark was brought into Jerusalem (II Sam. 6:15; I Chr. 15:28).

Fourthly, they were used as a call to repentance (II Chr. 15:14).

Fifth, they were used as a praise of God (Ps. 47:5; 150:3).

And sixth, they were used together as a call to war (Job 39:25; Jer. 4:19; Amos 2:2).

## **IV. THE USAGE OF THE TRUMPET IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**

The trumpet is used in four different ways in the New Testament. First, it was used to make an announcement (Mat. 6:2).



Secondly, it was used as a call to war (I Cor. 14:8).

Thirdly, it was used as a reminder of the sound of the trumpet at the time of the giving of the Law (Heb. 12:19).

And fourthly, it was used as a symbol of the voice of God (Rev. 1:10; 4:1).

## V. THE PROPHETIC AND MESSIANIC SIGNIFICANCE

The prophetic and messianic significance of the Feast of Trumpets will be divided into two sections: the Old Testament and the New Testament.

### A. The Old Testament

Insofar as the Old Testament is concerned, the one passage where the prophetic and messianic implications are spoken of is Isaiah 27:13: *And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great trumpet shall be blown; and they shall come that were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and they that were outcasts in the land of Egypt; and they shall worship Jehovah in the holy mountain at Jerusalem.*

This passage speaks of the regathering of Israel. In relationship to the regathering of Israel, a great trumpet shall be blown; The Hebrew word used here is shofar, the same word used in the passages previously studied in conjunction with the Feast of Trumpets. This verse states that a great trumpet, the shofar or ram's horn, shall be blown that will signal the final return of Israel for the purpose of worshipping God in the Kingdom. Insofar as Israel is concerned, the significance of Feast of Trumpets is the final return. It signals the final return to take place some time after the blowing of the trumpet. The regathering does not take place before the trumpet is blown nor does it take place during the blowing of the trumpet, it is only after it is blown. This point will be understood better in conjunction with its significance in the New Testament.

### B. The New Testament

Concerning the prophetic and messianic significance of the Feast of Trumpets in the New Testament, two things can be mentioned.

#### 1. The Signal of the Regathering

Just as in the Old Testament, the Feast of Trumpets signals the regathering of Israel. The correlating passage to Isaiah 27:13 in the New Testament is Matthew 24:31: *And he shall send forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

This verse is very similar to Isaiah 27:13 and makes four points. The

first point is: *he shall send forth his angels*. The means of the regathering is that God is going to use angels to bring the Jewish people back into the Promised Land.

The second point is: *with a great sound of a trumpet*. Here, the similarity of the language with Isaiah 27:13 should not be missed. There is going to be a regathering following a great sound of a trumpet.

The third point is: *they shall gather together his elect*. Sometimes the word elect refers to all believers, but sometimes in any given context it applies only to a specific group of believers. In the context of Matthew 24, especially verses 15-22, Yeshua (Jesus) was dealing specifically with the Jewish elect. So, they shall gather together his elect meaning the Jewish elect; it is the Jews that are going to be gathered from all parts of the world.

The fourth point is: *from one end of heaven to the other*. It is going to be from all over, from the four winds. It is going to be a great world-wide regathering of the Jewish people in conjunction with the blowing of the trumpet. The actual regathering takes place after the blowing of the trumpet, but how long after will be seen later.

## 2. The Announcement of Judgment

The second thing about the prophetic and messianic significance of the Feast of Trumpets in the New Testament is that it is also an announcement of judgment. Just as in the Old Testament, the blowing of the trumpets was often used by the prophets to announce a coming judgment, God is going to use trumpets again to announce judgments, especially the specific judgments of the Great Tribulation. These are the specific trumpet judgments that God speaks of in the Book of the Revelation in chapters 8-9. For example, Revelation 8:2 states: *And I saw the seven angels that stand before God; and there were given unto them seven trumpets*.

And in Revelation 8:6: *And the seven angels that had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound*.

In the Book of Revelation, trumpets play a major roll in conjunction with the judgments of the Great Tribulation, especially in the realm of announcing these particular trumpet judgments. In that sense, then, the blowing of trumpets in particular play the same or a similar roll that they played in the Old Testament when it was often used as a warning of coming judgment.

## VI. THE FULFILLMENT OF THE FEAST OF ROSH HASHANAH

The fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets is going to be the Rapture of the Church. There are two main passages that deal with the details of the Rapture and in both of those passages there is the presence of a

trumpet, the trumpet of the Feast of Trumpets.

NOTES

#### A. I Thessalonians 4:13-18

In verses 13-15, Paul is answering a question that was raised by people in the Church of Thessalonica: *But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep.*

The question is: “Do believers who die miss out on the benefits of the Rapture?” It is clear that Paul had taught them some truths about the Rapture. He did not have time, however, to teach the whole counsel of God because of the persecution that arose in Thessalonica; Paul had to leave the city and leave the church to take care of itself, thereby leaving many of their questions unanswered.

One of the questions that remained unanswered concerned believers who had passed away. They already knew that when the Lord returns they would be *caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air*. What they did not know was about those believers who had already died. In these verses, Paul comforts the bereaved members with the truth: dead believers will not miss out on the benefits of the Rapture. In fact, they are going to receive these benefits first.

He spells out the program of the Rapture in seven specific steps In verses 16-17: *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*

The first step is: *the Lord himself shall descend from heaven*. At some point in the future, the Lord will come out of the Heaven of heavens and descend into the atmospheric heavens. That is, He is going to come out of the third heaven, pass through the second heaven and come into the first heaven: into the air, into the atmosphere.

The second step of the Rapture is: *with a shout*. The Greek word translated shout is a word that is used in reference to a command of a military leader. The shout is a command for the resurrection of dead believers and the translation of living believers to occur. Paul put the whole sequence of events very much in specific military terms. The Messiah will shout the shout of a military commander ordering the Rapture to begin.

The third step of the Rapture is: *with the voice of the archangel*. Angels are often used to put God’s plan into motion. In this case, it is not going to be just any angel, but Michael the Archangel. The word archangel means “chief angel” and there is only one archangel: Michael. He is

the one in authority over the other angels. It is Michael the Archangel who will be used in conjunction with the Rapture. It states: with the voice of the archangel. If one follows the military pattern that Paul used, after the chief commander gives the shout of command, that command is repeated by the sub-commander. So after Jesus the Chief Commander, issues the shout, Michael, the sub-commander, will repeat the order. Jesus will give the shout or command for the program of the Rapture to begin and it will be Michael's task to set it in motion, so he will repeat the command of the Messiah.

The fourth step of the Rapture is: *the trump of God*. A trumpet of some kind is going to be involved in the program of the Rapture. As pointed out earlier, the sound of a trumpet was used as a summons either to battle, to worship, or to come together. With Michael's repetition of the Lord's command, the trumpet sounds. Again, this follows the regular military procedure: first, the chief commander gives the shout; next, the sub-commander repeats the command of the chief commander; and then the trumpeter sounds the specific note so that the soldiers will know exactly what the command is. Hence, the trumpet sound will trigger the Rapture itself. This trumpet will serve as a summons for the Rapture to move into action. Consequently, the Rapture of the Church will fulfill the Feast of Trumpets.

The fifth step of the Rapture is: *the dead in Christ will rise first*. This is the Resurrection of dead believers and this is why they will not miss out on the benefits of the Rapture; they will actually begin to enjoy the benefits of the Rapture first. The expression "the dead in Christ" limits the resurrection at the time of the Rapture to those who were baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Body of the Messiah, which began only in Acts 2. Thus the resurrection at the Rapture only includes the Church saints. The Old Testament saints will not be resurrected at this time, but they will be resurrected at a later point in God's prophetic program.

The sixth step in the Rapture program concerns the living believers: *then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air*. The resurrection of the dead saints is followed by the translation of the living saints. Every believer, without exception, will be removed from the earth and will be reunited with the Lord in the heavens. The living believers will be caught up or "raptured" with the dead ones to meet the Lord in the air.

Then will come the seventh step: *so shall we ever be with the Lord*. The final step is the guarantee that once we have been united with the Lord in the air, we will permanently remain with the Messiah and return with Him into Heaven.

Paul admonishes his readers in verse 18: *Wherefore comfort one another*

*with these words.*

NOTES

### **B. I Corinthians 15:50-58**

This is the second passage that deals with the details of the Rapture and also mentions the role that the trumpet will play. Verse 50 declares the necessity of a change in the nature of the body of the raptured living and dead believers: *Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither does corruption inherit incorruption.*

The background to this statement is found in Genesis 2:17: *but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it: for in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die.*

And Genesis 3:17-19: *And unto Adam he said, Because you have hearkened unto the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree, of which I commanded you, saying, You shall not eat of it: cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil shall you eat of it all the days of your life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to you; and you shall eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of your face shall you eat bread, till you return unto the ground; for out of it were you taken: for dust you are, and unto dust shall you return.*

Because of sin, man has become subject to corruption and mortality. Our bodies are mortal bodies, subject to death. Our bodies are subject to corruption; sickness and illness. Upon death these bodies are destined to become dust because this kind of body cannot enter into Heaven itself.

All men are guilty by imputation of participating in Adam's sin according to Romans 5:12-14: *Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned: for until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, who is a figure of him that was to come.*

According to this passage, mankind is living under the sentence of death in that his physical body is subject to corruption and mortality. The sin-nature is in it and the results of sin are evident in the death of the body. This kind of body, subject to sin, mortality, corruption, and death, cannot enter into Heaven. Therefore, a change will be necessary, either by means of resurrection or by means of translation, before the bodies can enter into Heaven.

I Corinthians 15:51-53, describe the change itself: *Behold, I tell you a mystery: We all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

In verse 52a, the emphasis is on the quickness and rapidity of that change. It will be done *in a moment*. The Greek term translated

moment is the word from which the English word “atom” comes. It is going to be in the “atom” of time. Furthermore, it will also be as fast as *the twinkling of an eye*. This is not the blinking of an eye, but a reference to a sudden flash of recognition. It is like seeing a person one knows but does not immediately recognize. Then suddenly, that sudden flash of recognition is what is meant by the twinkling of an eye. This, too, emphasizes the quickness of that change.

Verse 52 also points out that this event is going to happen *at the last trump*; at the time of the blowing of the trumpet: the trumpet shall sound. The trump here is the same as the trumpet of the I Thessalonians passage. That trumpet begins the process of the Rapture itself; it begins the process of both the resurrection of dead believers and the translation of living believers.

Furthermore, it will be at *the last trump*. Those who believe that the Church will go through the Tribulation often use this verse as evidence. They identify the last trump with the seventh trumpet in Revelation and then claim that this shows that the Rapture will not occur until after the Tribulation.

However, this is not what is meant by the last trump. For one thing, when Paul wrote about the last trump in I Corinthians, the Book of Revelation had not even been written. Paul obviously expected them to understand what he was talking about. But the Corinthian church could not have turned to the Book of Revelation, found the seventh trumpet in chapter 11 and then concluded that this was what Paul was talking about. The Corinthians had no knowledge of any seven trumpets. Yet, it is very evident from the fact that when Paul used the definite article and said the last trump, that he expected the Corinthians to know what he was talking about. The only knowledge that they would have by way of trumpets would be those spoken of in the Old Testament; those of the Feast of Trumpets. Thus, the last trump refers to the Feast of Trumpets and the Jewish practice of the blowing of the trumpets at this feast every year.

It was pointed out earlier that, in the synagogue service, there are a total of one hundred trumpet blasts of various types of notes. The one-hundredth blast was a very long trumpet sound, for as long as the trumpeter could hold it. This was known as the tekiah gedolah or the last trump. It is the last trumpet sound of the Feast of Trumpets and not the trumpets of the Book of Revelation that Paul had in mind here. Paul’s point was that the Rapture will be the fulfillment of the Feast of Trumpets.

By itself, however, this says nothing about the timing of the Rapture. One cannot prove the timing of the Rapture by the expression the last trump because he is not referring to the last trumpet of Revelation; he

is referring to one specific trumpet blast of the Feast of Trumpets. This trump is the same as the trump of God in I Thessalonians 4:16. At the sound of the trumpet, the dead will be raised incorruptible and the living will be changed. The problem of corruption that keeps the bodies of dead believers out of Heaven will be solved through resurrection; the result will be incorruption. The problem of mortality that keeps living believers out of Heaven will be solved by translation; the result will be immortality.

In light of the fact that the Rapture will fulfill the Feast of Trumpets and in light of the order of the prophetic significance of the seven holy seasons, these teach that the Rapture will occur before the Great Tribulation. The first four festivals come close together, within fifty days of each other: the Feasts of Passover, Unleavened Bread, First-fruits, and Weeks. All four of these were fulfilled in the program of the First Coming. The Feast of Passover was fulfilled by the death of the Messiah. The Feast of Unleavened Bread was fulfilled by the sinlessness of His blood-offering upon His death. The Feast of First-fruits was fulfilled by the Resurrection of the Messiah. The Feast of Weeks was fulfilled by the birthday of the Church.

Following the first cycle of feasts came a four-month interval separating the first cycle of feasts from the second cycle of feasts. This four-month interval is fulfilled by the Church Age. God's program for the Church interrupts His program for Israel as revealed in the sequence of the festivals.

Just as the first four festivals come close together, so do the last three within two weeks of each other. The last three will be fulfilled by the program of the Second Coming. The Feast of Trumpets will be fulfilled by the Rapture of the Church. The Day of Atonement will be fulfilled by the Great Tribulation with Israel's national salvation at the end of that period. The Feast of Tabernacles will be fulfilled by the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom.

The Feast of Trumpets precedes the Day of Atonement by a number of days. Furthermore, the Feast of Trumpets will be fulfilled by the Rapture while the Day of Atonement will be fulfilled by the Great Tribulation. And, just as the Feast of Trumpets occurs before the Day of Atonement, even so the Rapture will occur before the Tribulation. So while the expression the last trump reveals nothing about the timing of the Rapture, the very sequence by which the feasts of Israel will be fulfilled teaches that the Rapture will occur before the Tribulation just as the Feast of Trumpets comes before the Day of Atonement.

### **C. The Resurrection Body**

It was pointed out earlier that a major emphasis in Judaism concerning the Feast of Trumpets was on resurrection. It is no

accident that the Rapture, which fulfills the Feast of Trumpets, involves not only the “catching up” of the living saints, but also the resurrection of dead saints. In concluding this study, several things will be said about the nature of the resurrection body of the believer at the Rapture.

It was pointed out earlier that according to I Corinthians 15:50, the kind of bodies that believers now have cannot enter into Heaven: *For flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither does corruption inherit incorruption.*

So changes are necessary. These changes will occur at the Rapture when “corruption puts on incorruption and mortality puts on immortality.”

While this new body is not the subject of much revelation, a few things are revealed. The largest single passage about the resurrection is I Corinthians 15:35-49 and 53, a passage which precedes the discussion on the Rapture and the role of the trumpet in the Rapture: *But some one will say, How are the dead raised? and with what manner of body do they come? You foolish one, that which you yourself sow is not quickened except it die: and that which you sow, you sow not the body that shall be, but a bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other kind; but God gives it a body even as it pleased him, and to each seed a body of its own. All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fishes. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. So also it is written, The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; then that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is of heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither does corruption inherit incorruption.*

Verse 53 states: *For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

From this one passage, six things can be learned about the nature of the resurrection body. First, it is going to be a body that is incorruptible in verse 42: *It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption;* it will no longer be subject to corruption.

Secondly, it is going to be a glorified body in verse 43a: *it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory.* This same point is made by Philippians 3:21: *who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to*



*the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself.*

Thirdly, it is going to be a body of resurrection power in verse 43b: *it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power*; it is going to have power that our bodies do not have at the present time.

Fourthly, it is not going to be a blood-sustained body, but a spirit-sustained body, it is going to be a spiritual body in verses 44-46: *it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. So also it is written, The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; then that which is spiritual.*

Fifth, it is going to be a heavenly body in verses 47-49: *The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is of heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.*

And sixth, it is going to be an immortal body in verse 53: *For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

The resurrection body will no longer be subject to mortality or corruption. That is why this type of a body will be able to enter into Heaven itself.

As far as direct statements of Scripture, this is all that God has chosen to reveal about the nature of the resurrection body. There is another possible source of information that can be used to try to discover things about the nature of the resurrection body: the resurrected body of the Messiah. However, this must be done with caution. One cannot always be sure that everything that was true about the resurrected body of Yeshua will necessarily be true of the believer's body. Nor is it not always easy to determine if something that was true of the body of the Messiah was true because of His Resurrection or because of His deity. Yeshua was not only resurrected, He is God and perhaps some things are true because He is God and not because He had a resurrected body. Certain things that were true of His resurrected body will not be true of ours. For example, after His Resurrection Jesus still had the wounds in His hands and in His side. Yet the believer's resurrected bodies will have no evidence of this kind of corruption such as wounds or scars. Yet for some reason, the resurrected body of Jesus did have the wounds and scars, though it is not known if He still has them today. Perhaps when He was glorified upon His entry into Heaven at the Ascension, the scars of the Crucifixion were removed. One thing that is known is that when He first arose, He did have the scars of the Crucifixion. When believers are raised from the dead, they will not have any scars whatsoever. So it must not be assumed that everything that was true of the body of

Jesus at His Resurrection is necessarily going to be true of us. Again, it is not always easy to determine if what He did was because of His resurrected body or because He is God.

Six observations can be made concerning His resurrected body. First, it is known that Messiah's voice was recognized as being the same one that He had before His death and Resurrection (Jn. 20:16). It was when He said, Mary, that Mary Magdalene recognized that the One speaking to her was none other than Yeshua. Whatever accent He had and He probably had a Galilean accent; whatever tone of voice He had since everyone has a unique tone of voice; Mary recognized His voice. Possibly, our voice is going to be recognizable because it will be much the same.

The second thing about the resurrected body of Jesus is that His physical features were always recognized, but not always immediately (Jn. 20:26-29; 21:7). There were enough changes in His resurrected body that recognition was not always immediate. But some things remained the same so that the people who knew Him eventually recognized Him.

The third thing about the resurrected body of Yeshua is that it was a real body and not a phantom body, because His body was embraceable (Jn. 20:17, 27).

The fourth thing about the resurrected body of Jesus is that it was able to appear and disappear (Lk. 24:31). But the question is: "Was the Messiah able to appear and disappear because He had a resurrected body or because He is God?" There is no guarantee that believers will be able to do the same thing.

The fifth thing about the resurrected body of Yeshua is that it was able to go through walls (Jn. 20:19). Here again, believers cannot be sure that their resurrected bodies will be able to do the same.

And the sixth thing about the resurrected body of Jesus is that He was able to eat food (Lk. 24:41-43). Believers will certainly be able to do this much in their resurrected bodies because they will participate in the Marriage Feast, and there is no sense in coming to a feast if one cannot eat and feast. The resurrected body will be immortal, not subject to death. So they will not have to eat in order to survive; it will be purely for pleasure. The nature of the resurrected body will be such that believers will be able to eat all they want and never gain an ounce of weight.✧

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