

HOLY CONVOICATIONS

(MAJOR FESTIVALS)



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“ADONAI said to Moshe, “Tell the people of Isra’el: ‘The designated times of ADONAI which you are to proclaim as holy convocations are my designated times.” (Leviticus 23:1, 2)

יום תְּרוּעָה Yom T’ruah - Day of the Awakening Trumpet Blast

“ADONAI said to Moshe, “Tell the people of Isra’el, ‘In the seventh month, the first of the month is to be for you a day of complete rest for remembering, a holy convocation announced with blasts on the shofar. Do not do any kind of ordinary work, and bring an offering made by fire to ADONAI.’” (Leviticus 23:23-25)

Table of Contents

Part One – A Ram’s Horn vs. a Metal Trumpet.....	2
Part Two – Yom T’ruah	4
Part Three – The Sounds of the Shofar on Rosh HaShanah.....	9
Part Four – The Shofar and Spiritual Warfare	11

Part One – A Ram's Horn vs. a Metal Trumpet

I wish to begin this commentary by fielding a timely sample question, sent in by a reader of mine. To be sure, were it not for this particular question causing me to go back and do further research, my commentary would not have received a necessary update to this topic. The question posed reads:

Thank you, first of all, for your podcasts and available teachings, and your kind spirit. May Abba bless you for the truths of His Word, filtered thru Messiah & His Ruach HaKodesh...for His glory, ah-mein.

I have a question for you regarding the shofar. You've stated (and written) that Torah explicitly commanded Am Yisrael to sound the shofar on Yom Teruah....and you've said it's in the original text to blow the shofar. I've checked several texts, and cannot find the word shofar in the passage of Vayikra/Leviticus or Bamidbar/Numbers regarding this Holy Day. Both English, and Hebrew, have "shofar" absent in their texts & translations. Teruah is used, indeed, but a simple search on that word in the Scriptures (via software prgms) shows it isn't explicitly tied to the shofar only, but includes other uses. I know Tehillim/Psalm 81 utilizes shofar for the month, but not for the Day of Trumpeting/Shouting/Blasting. Please explain. Thank you again for your contribution to the Kingdom. Chag Sameach to you and yours! In our Beloved Messiah...

Firstly, I wish to thank my reader for bringing my error to the light. In previous versions of this commentary, and even still at later times throughout this teaching, you may hear me state that a shofar is to be blown on Yom T'ruah. I have, since gone back and attempted to correct myself to state that a shofar "might" be used, but does not exclusively have to be used. To be sure, as we shall see, the text may allow for a chatsotserah (metal trumpet, Greek=salpinx σαλπινξ) to be utilized.

A computer-assisted word search of the Hebrew of the TaNaKH yielded the following results: metal trumpet (chatsots'rah חֲצֹצְרָה) is found 27 times, while ram's horn (shofar שׁוֹפָר) is found 63 times. Clearly, the shofar just may well be the instrument of choice in the TaNaKH.

In an effort to address his question with due scholarship, I have chosen to lift a significant quote from the Jewish Publication Society (JPS) commentary to Leviticus, by Baruch Levine. Speaking on the topic of 'The First Day of the Seventh Month' we read:

"24. In the seventh month, on the first day of the month...a sacred occasion commemorated with loud blasts. Note the same system of dating in verse 5 above and subsequently in verses 27, 33, and 39. Hebrew *zikhron teru'ah* means literally "commemoration by blasting" the shofar. The same designation of this occasion occurs in Numbers 29:1. The sounding of horns had various functions in ancient Isra'el, as well as elsewhere in the ancient Near East.

Usually, it was a method of assembling the people before moving on to a new location or of mustering troops for battle. There were cultic uses as well. Horns were blasted when sacrifices were offered, and they were used by Temple musicians. In our text, the horn was blasted to announce the forthcoming pilgrimage festival, which occurred two weeks after the first day of the month. Thus we read in Psalms [sic] 81:4 literally, "Blow the horn on the New Moon,/on the full moon for the day of our pilgrimage festival." Chapter 23 presents this occasion as a day of rest and of sacred assembly. It is not conceived of as a New Year at this stage, but, rather, as an occasion preliminary to the Sukkot festival."¹

Notice carefully, the pasuk from the book of Psalms, "Blow the horn..." The careful student will go back and check the Hebrew of this verse and notice that the word rendered "horn" is in fact "shofar":

תִּקְעוּ בַחֹדֶשׁ שׁוֹפָר בְּכֶסֶה לַיּוֹם חֲגֵינֵנוּ

"Tik-u va-chodesh shofar ba-keseh, l'yom chageynu."

Therefore, in answer to the student's question, although the text in Leviticus merely recognizes that an awakening sound is to be made, without clear reference as to whether we use a ram's horn or a man-made trumpet (chatsots'rah?), we may safely state that the psalmist must have envisioned a shofar being used to announce both the new month (for so the text directly states "va-chodesh"), as well as the festival of Yom T'ruah (for so the text directly states "l'yom chageynu"), even though the text in Leviticus 23 does not explicitly mention the shofar, and even though the psalmist may have been speaking with poetic license. To state it plainly, the Hebrew of Leviticus 23:24 and Numbers 29:1 omit the word "shofar," however, Psalm 81:4 adds it. (FYI: the LXX inserts the Greek word salpinx σαλπινξ² at Lev. 23:24, and keras κέρας³ at Ps. 81:3)

To state it plainly, the Hebrew of Leviticus 23:24 and Numbers 29:1 omit the word "shofar," however, Psalm 81:4 adds it. (FYI: the LXX inserts the Greek word salpinx σαλπινξ at Lev. 23:24, and keras κέρας at Ps. 81:3)

Then again, historically, we must admit that both could have very well been used during the time of Moshe, and that only today, Judaism favors the shofar. To be sure, that many scholars, both Jewish and Christian take the Leviticus passage to allow a reading that envisions interchangeability between the terms (trumpet and shofar, as opposed to either or), is evidenced by the variations between translations that alternately insert the words "trumpet/shofar" into the Leviticus

¹ Baruch A. Levine, *JPS Commentary to Leviticus* (Jewish Publication Society, 1989) p.160.

² The New Testament Greek Lexicon defines σαλπινξ as "trump, trumpet, bugle."

³ Ibid. κέρας as "a horn, of animals, a projecting extremity in a shape like a horn, a point, apex."

text, even though the original Hebrew omits any instrumental reference whatsoever.

And even more germane to our question is the historic truth that differing communal individuals blew differing instruments. Thus the Israelite masses may not have been aware of the technical name for the wind instrument blown by the priests (shofar vs. chatsots'rah). This possibility is supported by the account of the battle of Jericho in which the shofar plays a central role. But whereas the people blow the shofar (Josh. 6:9,13b, 20), the priests blow the shofarot ha-yovelim (Josh. 6:4,6,8,13a). Thus this non-priestly source recognizes that the priests resort to a special kind of shofar; only the priestly tradition identifies it with the chatsotserah, the trumpet. The rabbis escape this textual dilemma by positing that the trumpet was only used during the time of Moses but not by Joshua and later generations (Sif. Num. 75). Certainly by the time of the rabbis of the Gemara, and the amoraim, the distinction between the shofar and trumpet was no longer known (Shab. 36a, Sot. 43a; cf. Mish. Kin. 3:6).

Part Two – Yom T'ruah

“ADONAI said to Moshe, “Tell the people of Isra’el, ‘In the seventh month, the first of the month is to be for you a day of complete rest for remembering, a holy convocation announced with blasts on the shofar. Do not do any kind of ordinary work, and bring an offering made by fire to ADONAI.’” (Leviticus 23:23-25)

With the coming of the fall part of the year, comes the final series of festivals, as detailed in our theme passage of Leviticus twenty-three. In rabbinical thinking, these last festivals are known as the “season of t’shuvah,” the season of our repentance. Many scholarly studies have been done on the feasts of HaShem. To be sure, I would recommend that the serious student go back and conduct further research on his own, consulting various rabbinical commentaries and such, to gain an accurate and complete historical perspective on these feasts. However, these present commentaries are not designed to be a comprehensive work on the feasts, rather, I only want to supply the reader with some Messianic insights which I believe will enhance the average reader’s knowledge of Biblical things.

The Feasts of HaShem are meant to serve as daily, monthly, and yearly reminders of the wonderful historical plans that HaShem has for mankind. We in the Church usually only think of the feasts as past requirements that the Jews had to obey. Requirements which are now, somehow, spiritually fulfilled in the work of the Messiah Yeshua, and consequently, no longer pertinent for the non-Jewish believer. In a small way, the Church is not entirely wrong. Yeshua did come to bring to their fullest meaning, the feasts that are listed in Leviticus twenty-three. Yet I’m here to explain to the readers, the greater significance that HaShem had in mind when he instituted these holy gatherings. I wanted to

reiterate some of the things that I commented about in the overview again, as we are entering into the final time period of the feast outline of Leviticus.

Yom T'ruah is another of the “designated meeting times” that the people of HaShem were to remember and meet on. In this particular case, Yom T'ruah was a day just for “meeting” and “remembering.” The literal verse of instruction that I quoted reads just that way. The Hebrew word for day is “**yom**” (while the Hebrew word for trumpet or ram’s horn is “**shofar**”). The Torah instructs **Am Yisra’el** (the people of Isra’el) to commemorate this first day of the Hebrew month **Tishrei** with blasts from the shofar. This blast is called “**t’ruah**.”

Your calendar probably calls this day “**Rosh HaShanah**,” however, the Torah refers to it as Yom T'ruah or as the Hebrew literally reads, זְכָרוֹן תְּרוּעָה, “a memorial [of blowing] of trumpets.” Rosh HaShanah literally means, “Head of the Year,” from the Hebrew words “**rosh**” meaning “head” or “beginning,” and “**shanah**” meaning “year.” Why the two names? Judaism.about.com has this to say concerning the origins and the name “switch”:

The origin of Rosh HaShana, the Jewish New Year, is Biblical (Lev. 23:23-25): "a sacred occasion commemorated with loud blasts (of the Shofar, the ram's horn)." The Bible refers to the holiday as Yom Teruah (the day of the sounding of the Shofar) and Yom Zikaron Teruah (the day of remembering the sounding of the Shofar).

In Talmudic times, Rosh HaShana became a celebration of the anniversary of the world's creation and a day of self-examination, repentance and judgment. While the day was called Yom HaZikaron (Day of Remembrance) and Yom HaDin (Judgment Day), the name Rosh HaShana (Head of the Year) which was first used in the Mishnah has become the most prevalent.⁴

Moreover, Wikipedia lends this definition to our discussion:

Rosh Hashanah is the Jewish New Year. In fact, Judaism has four "new years" which mark various legal "years," much like 1 January marks the "New Year" of the Gregorian calendar. Rosh Hashanah is the new-year for people, animals and legal contracts. The Mishnah also sets this day aside as the new-year for calculating calendar years and sabbatical (shemitta) and jubilee (yovel) years.⁵

To many outside of Judaism this “juggling of biblical calendars” can be quite confusing! Allow me to lift a significant quote from a well-respected web source for clarification on this issue. Biblechronology.com has this to say about the synchronization of the multiple biblical calendars that we encounter in the text:

The Divine Calendar before the Exodus

⁴ http://judaism.about.com/od/roshhashana/a/all_roshhashana.htm

⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosh_hashanah

Later Jewish calendars are lunar, so was the first Biblical calendar also lunar?

- A lunar month (a lunation, the time between new moons) is just over 29 ½ days
- 12 lunations gives a lunar year of just over 354 days ($12 \times 29 \frac{1}{2} = 354$)

Evidence for a lunar year of 354 days is found in the first mention of dates in the Bible in the story of Noah and the flood. The flood...

Started (Genesis 7:11)	Ended (Genesis 8:12-13)
17th day	27th day
2nd month	2nd month
600th year of Noah's life	601st year of Noah's life

The flood ended 1 year and 10 days after it started, so it lasted 1 year and 11 days (taken inclusively). If the Biblical year was 354 days, then the flood lasted 365 days = **A SOLAR YEAR**

Here we see that the first dates in the Bible link the lunar calendar to the solar year. This shows that the first Biblical calendar was lunar, and that the Biblical year at this time lasted 354 days. It probably had 12 months, alternately 30 and 29 months long ($12 \times 29 \frac{1}{2} = 354$). Most dates in the Bible use this Divine Calendar.

The Civil Calendar before the Exodus

However, dates between the end of the flood and the Exodus indicate that the Divine Calendar stopped for the Unreckoned Days of the deluge, but dates relating to the flood do not indicate that the calendar the Bible uses at that time stopped for the deluge. Instead of using the Divine Calendar, all flood events use a Civil Calendar that doesn't stop! From the deluge until the Exodus, the Civil Calendar was therefore slightly ahead of the Divine Calendar.

The Civil Calendar is God's lunar / luni-solar Calendar. The flood is one of the few times Bible dates use the Civil Calendar.

The Divine Calendar after the Exodus

After the Exodus, God introduced seasonal feasts to Israel...

"This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." (Exodus 12:2)

"These are the feasts of the LORD... which ye shall proclaim in their seasons." (Leviticus 23:4)

However the lunar year has only 354 days, which is 11 days short of the solar year of 365 days on which the seasons depend. This means the lunar calendar moves ahead of the seasons by 11 days each year. Autumn feasts would end up in the spring in just 16 years, and vice versa!

Suppose you were born in summer, on 1 July in your own personal lunar

calendar...

...after 16 years your birthday would be in winter, around New Year in our solar calendar!

To solve this problem, God therefore told Israel to start its calendar year in the same season each year, in the harvest season that starts after the spring equinox in Israel. This meant that Israel had to insert an extra month every 2 to 3 years. Early Bible chronographers suggest that they inserted extra months in the 3rd, 6th and 8th years of every eight year cycle. By inserting 3 extra months of 30 days in every 8 years, Israel added 18 months in every 48 years. The 49th year was then left out of the calculations because it was a special sabbatical Jubilee Year (Leviticus 25), so 18 extra months were added every 49 years. We call this calendar luni-solar because it is a lunar calendar that keeps in line with the solar seasons by the intermittent addition of these extra months.

Adding extra months keeps the calendar in line with the solar seasons, but the true length of a lunation is 29.53 days, not 29.5, and the true length of an astronomical lunar year is 354.367 days, not 354. This means that every few years an extra day has also to be added at the end of the year to keep in line with the true astronomical lunar year.

It also means that before the Exodus, the lunar calendar had fallen behind the true astronomical lunar year by about 1 day every 3 years and the new year did not always start at a new moon. However, after the Exodus the new lunar calendar had to come into line with the astronomical lunar year so that the extra months would then bring the lunar year into line with the solar year. That meant the calendar had to advance 10 days to start the new year following the Exodus at a new moon.

The Civil Calendar after the Exodus

The start of the Civil Calendar year was determined by the first appearance of the crescent new moon. However, at the precise time of the true astronomical new moon, the moon and sun are in conjunction (in line). If the astronomical new moon occurs at or near sunset, the moon sets over the horizon at exactly the same time as the sun, in which case you can't see it because there is no visible crescent!

After that the path of the moon falls behind the path of the sun and the moon sets about 45 minutes later each day. The crescent new moon can only be seen...

- when it grows bigger as its path falls behind that of the sun
- as the light fades in the dusk after sunset, before moonset

But Israel's new day started at sunset, so the crescent new moon could not be seen until after the next new day had started, **AT LEAST ONE DAY AFTER** the true astronomical new moon, depending on the timing of that new moon and the weather conditions. This meant that when Israel introduced its new Civil Calendar at the start of the year after the Exodus, it was always at least one day behind the

Divine Calendar!⁶

Religiously, this day has many significant themes attached to it. I want to list the other names of this feast, and then quickly explain the Messianic significance to each one. In this way, I believe the non-Jewish reader can quickly identify with the Scriptures and the People of Isra'el.

Names, Themes, and Hebrew Idioms Associated with Rosh HaShanah:

1. **Season of T'shuvah** – this title, borrowed from the proximity of this particular feast to the Day of Atonement, suggest the attitude that is assumed during this most important time of the year. The Jewish nation as a whole wanted to spiritually prepare their hearts to meet their Creator on the Day of Atonement, hence the title given to the entire time period. As believers in Messiah, we already recognize the significance of his effectual blood sacrifice, thus we too can appreciate the state of mind that the Nation of Isra'el was trying to reach. Because many Jewish people as of yet do not have a personal relationship with Yeshua, I feel that their attitude during this time is appropriate, as, according to rabbinical belief, the Messiah could come to vindicate his chosen people during this season.

2. **Rosh HaShanah** – as previously stated, this day is recognized and celebrated as the head of the Jewish Calendar year.

3. **Yom T'ruah** – because the Torah explicitly commanded Am Yisra'el to sound the shofar on this day, it is called by this name. In Hebrew thought, a shofar is used to sound an “awakening blast” to the listener. Sometimes the call was to assemble, while at other times, the call was to war. In the case of the latter, usually a trumpet was used, instead of the traditional ram's horn. At any rate, the Chazal (Sages of Antiquity) taught that the sound that the shofar made during this time period was to awaken the sleeping sinner from his spiritual slumber, and challenge him to make t'shuvah, repentance, unto the LORD his God. Because of this, Yom T'ruah is better translated as “**Day of the Awakening Blast.**” A spiritual call to assembly was what the writer of the New Covenant had in mind, when he penned the famous words in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17. That quite a few believing Gentiles and Messianic Jews (myself included) teach that our Messiah could return on or around this season, is no small secret. We would do well to study this feast more in our non-Jewish Church settings.

4. **Yom haDin** – translates as “The Day of Judgment.” On this day, the rabbis believed that three great books in heaven were opened, and HaShem the Almighty Judge would weigh each man's worth (Talmud, Rosh HaShanah 6b). During this time period, all of the dead was raised to face the Ancient of Days, linking this day also to the great time period of resurrection. This is quite possibly the time period that Dani'el was referring to in Chapter 7, verse 10, of his book.

⁶ <http://www.biblechronology.com/chrono05.htm>

Also the apocalyptic author John made references to books in Revelation 20:12-15.

5. **Chevai shel Mashiach** – translated as “the Birthpangs of the Messiah.” This final theme associated with Yom T’ruah is a much-repeated one throughout the Torah, especially in the prophets. The idea that one day there would be a great time of trouble on the earth, focusing primarily on the Nation of Isra’el as a people, is a major theme even in some New Covenant passages. Perhaps the most well known passage comes from the book of Jeremiah. In 30:4-7, the prophet speaks of the coming time of dread and terror as likened to a woman in the pains of childbirth. In other words, the Torah suggests that one day, most likely before the Messiah returns, the peoples of the world, and the Nation of Isra’el in particular will have to suffer a horrendous time of “birthing.” This “birthing” is necessary for the Messiah to be “born.” The language here can be confusing if you fail to remember that this is very figurative writing here. The authors employ heavy uses of real life images to convey what they are seeing in the Spirit. We know that Messiah was already born once. Yet, in a spiritual sense, the Torah teaches that all of creation is still waiting for him to be “born.” For in this second “birth,” the new heavens and the new earth will finally come forth also.

What can all of these different names and such teach us about the nature and purposes of HaShem? Our God is in the business of calling men back to himself. In order to get man to realize his fallen spiritual state he sometimes needs reminders. The Torah says of itself, in Psalm 19:11, that by it’s words “your servant is warned.” Warned of what? Of the impending doom that is to befall all of the evil of mankind and the deeds that he does. Within this warning is a message of mercy; the time to repent is now! **Turn to HaShem with your whole heart, cry out for his mercy, beg for his forgiveness in pardoning your sin, and receive his atonement!** There used to be a time when the average person living within the community of Isra’el could bring an offering to the LORD, and the LORD would forgive him. To be sure, we will discuss that time period known as Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) in our next commentary on the **Mikra’ey Kodesh**. But history and the Torah record that our Great High Priest Yeshua changed all of that. Today, if it is the mercy, forgiveness, and atonement of HaShem that you seek, then accept Yeshua as your Savior, and you will find those things! You don’t have to wait until Yom Kippur to pursue atonement. Yeshua offers it freely today, to anyone who will put his or her trusting faithfulness in him!

Part Three – The Sounds of the Shofar on Rosh HaShanah

For this section we will again turn to Judaism.about.com.

Hearing the blowing of the shofar is the special mitzvah of Rosh HaShanah. The

shofar, a ram's horn, is the oldest wind instrument. And the sounding of the shofar is the most ancient rite in the Rosh HaShanah observances. The primitive and simple sound of the shofar spiritually touches us on this day of soul-searching, repentance and judgment.

Why?

Sa'adiah Gaon gives ten reasons for sounding the shofar on Rosh HaShanah.

1. Acknowledges God as Our King
2. Stirs Our Conscience
3. Reminds us of God's revelation at Sinai
4. Reminds us of the Prophets' warnings
5. Reminds us of the destruction of the Temple
6. Reminds us the ram offered by Abraham in place of his son Isaac
7. Reminds us to feel humble before God
8. Reminds us of the Day of Final Judgment
9. Foreshadows proclamation of freedom when exiled will return to Isra'el
10. Foreshadows inauguration of Gods reign of righteousness throughout the world

How?

It is customary to blow the shofar during the daytime in the same place that the Torah is read. The person blowing the shofar (Ba'al Teki'ah) and all those listening should be instructed to have intention to fulfill the mitzvah of hearing the shofar.

Two blessings are recited before the shofar is blown.

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech Ha'Olam, asher kidishanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu leshoma kol shofar.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has blessed us in his commandments and commanded us to hear the sound of the shofar.

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech Ha'Olam, shehechyanu v'kiyimanu v'higianu la'zman ha'zeh.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to this season.

Once the blessings have been made, no one should speak until the end of the shofar blasts.

There are three distinct types of shofar blasts (Tekiot), with a fourth blast mentioned later on:

- 1 Tekiah - one long, unbroken sound
- 2 Shevarim - three medium, broken sounds
- 3 T'ruah - short, quick sounds

When?

The shofar is blown immediately after the Haftarah is read (thirty blasts). During the Cantor's repetition of the Amidah of Musaf, an additional thirty blasts of the shofar are sounded. At the conclusion of the prayer service, forty extra blasts are sounded to make a total of one hundred shofar blasts. It is customary for the final blast to be prolonged (Tekia Gedolah). When Rosh HaShanah falls on Shabbat, the shofar is not sounded.

Who?

All those old enough to be educated regarding the mitzvah of hearing the shofar are obligated to hear the shofar on Rosh HaShanah. To fulfill the mitzvah, women may sound the shofar and say the blessing.⁷

Psalm 47:5 "God has ascended with a shout, The Lord, with the sound of a trumpet.(Hebrew : shofar)."

There are 4 basic sounds of a shofar:

Tekiah: The "blast." One long blast with a clear tone. Signifies Rejoicing and Hope.

Shevarim: A "broken" sound of 3 short calls. Like the sighing. It is a reminder that we need to be broken before a coming King who will judge the earth.

T'ruah: An "alarm." A rapid series of 9 or more staccato notes. Like crying. It is a reminder to plead for mercy before the King who has come to judge the living and the dead.

Tekiah Gedolah: A single unbroken blast held as long as possible. A reminder that at the sound of the last great trumpet sound, the King will be back with power and glory to rule forever.

Part Four – The Shofar and Spiritual Warfare

The *ram's horn trumpet* is one of the first instruments played by the ancient Isra'elites. Bible references concerning the **shofar** (a Hebrew word which according to Strong's Dictionary, #07782, is translated '**trumpet**' in 68 of the 72 times it appears in the TaNaKH) tell us many meaningful things about this ancient wind instrument. But before we consider the Bible references, here are a few facts concerning the **shofar** that I have taken from the **Jewish Encyclopedia**.

*"It was the voice of the **shofar** 'exceeding loud' issuing from the thick cloud on Sinai that made all in the camp tremble (Ex xix. 16, xx.18): and for this reason while other*

⁷ http://judaism.about.com/od/roshhashana/a/shana_shofar.htm

musical instruments were in each age constructed according to the most advanced contemporary practice, the trumpet family being represented by the long straight silver 'hazozerah,' ...the shofar has never varied in structure from its prehistoric simplicity and crudity.

*...The curved **shofar** is symbolic of the contrite heart repenting on the most solemn days of **Rosh ha Shanah** and **Yom Kippur**.*

*The **shofar** represents the windpipe, the spiritual part of the body alongside the gullet, through which the food or the earthly part passes. The sound of the **shofar** awakens the Higher Mercy = 'Rahamim'... The object of the second and third series of '**teki-ot**' is to bewilder and stagger **Satan**, who, at first imagining that the Jews are merely complying with the Law, is surprised by the second blowing, thinking perhaps that the **Messiah is coming**, and finally is dumbfounded, expecting the **Resurrection**, with which his power will finally cease."*

Now (coming full circle from where we began this commentary) let us take a look at some Bible texts. I will simply list them before ending with a short summary. Almost every time you see the word **trumpet** in the TaNaKH remember that the original Hebrew word was '**shofar**.' You may even want to study the full Bible story from which these brief quotations are taken. Believe me, that is a study in itself. Also, when reading, note *when* the '**shofars**' **were** blown, *who* blew them, *what* events did they herald, *what* were the people of Isra'el supposed to do when they heard the **shofar** and *how* did the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob respond. Note also how the LORD Himself is going to blow the **Great shofar!**

Here are the texts:

1. AT MOUNT SINAI.

Ex: 19:16:

*And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the **trumpet** exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.*

Ex: 19:19:

*And when the voice of the **trumpet** sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.*

Ex: 20:18:

*And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the **trumpet**, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off.*

2. ON THE ALMIGHTY'S SABBATHS

Psalms 81:3:

*Blow up the **trumpet** in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn*

feast day.

Lev: 23:24:

*Speak unto the children of Isra'el, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of **trumpets**, an holy convocation.*

Lev: 25:9:

*Then shalt thou cause the **trumpet** of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land.*

3. AT THE DESTRUCTION OF JERICHO

Joshua 6:4:

*And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets **of rams' horns**: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the **trumpets**. 5: And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the **ram's horn**, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him...*

Josh: 6:20:

*So the people shouted when the priests blew with the **trumpets**: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.*

4. VICTORY IN WARFARE

Judges 7:16:

*And he (Gideon) divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a **trumpet** in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers...*

Judg: 7:20:

*And the three companies blew the **trumpets**, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the **trumpets** in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.*

2 Chron.13: 12:

*And, behold, God himself is with us for our captain, and his priests with **sounding trumpets** to cry alarm against you. O children of Isra'el, fight ye not against the LORD God of your fathers; for ye shall not prosper. 13: But Jeroboam caused an ambushment to come about behind them: so they were before Judah, and the ambushment was behind them. 14: And when Judah looked back,*

*behold, the battle was before and behind: and they cried unto the LORD, and the **priests sounded with the trumpets**. 15: Then the men of Judah gave a shout: and as the men of Judah shouted, it came to pass, that God smote Jeroboam and all Isra'el before Abijah and Judah.*

5. THE RETURN OF THE ARK

2Sam: 6:15:

*So David and all the house of Isra'el brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the **trumpet**.*

6. THE ANOINTING OF KING SOLOMON.

1 Kings: 1:34:

*And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Isra'el: and blow ye with the **trumpet**, and say, God save king Solomon.*

7. THE DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE.

2Chron: 5:13:

*It came even to pass, as the **trumpeters** and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up their voice with the **trumpets** and cymbals and instruments of musick, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD.*

8. REBUILDING OF JERUSALEM

Neh: 4:18:

*For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the **trumpet** was by me.*

Neh: 4:20:

*In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the **trumpet**, resort ye thither unto us: our God shall fight for us.*

9. A WATCHMAN'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Ezek: 33:3:

*If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the **trumpet**, and warn the people; 4: Then whosoever heareth the sound of the **trumpet**, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. 5: He heard the sound of the **trumpet**, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul. : 6: But if the **watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet**, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is*

taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand.

10. WARNINGS CONCERNING SIN

Isa: 58:1:

*Cry aloud, spare not, **lift up thy voice like a trumpet**, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.*

Joel 2:1:

***Blow ye the trumpet in Zion**, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand.*

11. THE LORD SHALL BLOW THE SHOFAR!

Zech: 9:14:

*And the LORD shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and **the LORD GOD shall blow the trumpet**, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south.*

Isa: 18:3:

*All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye, when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains; and when **HE bloweth a trumpet**, hear ye.*

Isa: 27:13:

*And it shall come to pass in that day, that the **GREAT trumpet shall be blown**, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem.*

12. ALAS! MANY WILL NOT LISTEN

It is an absolute tragedy that, like Isra'el of old, millions of people pay little or no attention to the Almighty's Word and the warnings it contains. Blindly they stagger on, refusing to acknowledge the Creator's presence, His Word, His Law and His offer of salvation through His only begotten Son Yeshua **the Messiah**. This is the greatest mistake the human race has ever made and - alas - is still making!

Jer: 6:17:

*Also I set watchmen over you, saying, Harken to the sound of the **trumpet**. But they said, **We will not hearken**.*

SUMMARY

The '**shofar**,' the ram's horn trumpet, represents the spokesmen of **HaShem** the

*Almighty God of Isra'el; through whom His Spirit declares the **Truth**. It is a musical instrument of antiquity - of God's own making!*

- 1 A '**divine shofar**' **sounded** at **Sinai** when the **Creator** of the mighty universe gave Isra'el His holy law - for all mankind! Blowing its earthly counterpart (the **ram's horn**) today, is declaring one's acceptance of God's eternal **commandments** and authority over us.
- 2 The **shofar** was, and still is, sounded on **HaShem's High and Holy Days**: i.e. the weekly **Sabbath**, the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement and in the day of the New Moon. Blowing it today is a reminder of the **Everlasting Covenant** between the Almighty God and His chosen people Isra'el.
- 3 The **shofar** was instrumental in triggering the Almighty's power when He demolished the walls of Jericho in the days of Joshua. Blowing it today is an act of *living faith in the Almighty's ability to demolish the systems of this world, however high and mighty their ramparts may be.*
- 4 The **shofar** will always herald victory in warfare, provided the people of the LORD are obedient to His law. Blowing it today is a *call for divine assistance.*
- 5 The **shofar** was sounded when king David brought the ark of the covenant back to Jerusalem. Blowing it today is a *sign of our re-commitment to the Holy One of Isra'el.*
- 6 The **shofar** was sounded when Solomon was anointed king of Isra'el. Blowing it today is a *declaration of our loyalty to the **King of Kings, Yeshua the Messiah**, One who is wiser and greater than Solomon.*
- 7 The **shofar** was sounded when the Temple was dedicated. Blowing it today is a *call to worship.*
- 8 The **shofar** was sounded when Isra'el's exiles returned from captivity to rebuild the city of Jerusalem and the second Temple. Blowing it today is a *symbol of the restoration of God's Truth.*
- 9 The **shofar** was blown by the watchmen on Zion's walls to warn the inhabitants of the sword of the enemy. Blowing it today is a *signal to awake to the danger of Satanic attack.*
- 10 The **shofar** was sounded by the watchmen and prophets of Isra'el to warn of sin. In like manner we must warn God's people else we will have blood on our hands! Blowing it today is a *call to **faith, repentance and obedience.***
- 11 Before the end of this age, all humanity will hear the **LORD Himself sound the Great shofar**, the heavenly trumpet which will raise the dead. Blowing the **ram's horn shofar** today is a *reminder that we are fast approaching that time.*
- 12 Alas! Most people will not heed these warnings, even when they are backed by the **Word of God**. To them the **shofar** is an embarrassment and divine warnings only stir up contempt and anger. Do not let this happen to you, because that would be a disaster! For the fact is, the '**call of the shofar**' signifies all that is dear to the **God of Isra'el: truth, repentance, obedience, dedication, restoration, sanctification, warning, expectation, victory and resurrection from the dead!** So in the future when you hear the '**call of the shofar**' remember these things, humble yourself under the mighty hand of God and bless His holy Name. It may be that He will spare you in the fast-

approaching **Day of Judgment!**

I end here with the prayer that **HaShem, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Isra'el**, Almighty Creator of the universe and **Father of our Lord and Savior Yeshua the Messiah** will bless all those who seek to trust and obey Him. **Hallelujah!**

*Traditional greetings:

“L'Shanah Tovah Tikatevu”

Literal Hebrew to English Translation: May you be inscribed (in the Book of Life) for a good year

Meaning: This Rosh HaShanah greeting wishes others a good year and a good judgment by God.

Note: This greeting is often shortened to Shanah Tovah (Good Year).

“Gemar Chatimah Tovah”

Literal Hebrew to English Translation: May you finally be sealed (in the Book of Life) for good.

Meaning: This greeting wishes others well in the New Year. Use: This greeting is used between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

“Yom Tov”

Literal Hebrew to English Translation: Good Day

Meaning: Holiday. Use: Yom Tov is often pronounced Yuntiff. On holidays, Jews often greet each other with "Good Yuntiff" (Good Yom Tov, Good Holiday).

For further study, read: Leviticus 23:24, 25; Numbers 10:10; Nehemiah 8:1-3; Psalm 47:5; 81:1-4; 89:15; 98:6; Isaiah 26:19; 58:1; Joel 2:1, 2; Zechariah 12:10; Matthew 24:8, 31; 1 Corinthians 15:12-58; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

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