

Yom Teruah and the Two Silver Trumpets

Written by Batya Wootten

Shalom All:

We will soon be celebrating *Yom Teruah*, the *Day of Trumpets*, a day that is filled with special meaning about the reunification of both the houses of Israel.

We know that our Messiah was born on *Sukkot* (Tabernacles), became our Sacrificial Lamb on *Pesach* (Passover), was raised from the dead on the Day of First Fruits, and then poured out His Spirit on *Shavuot* (Pentecost). Similarly, many believe He will return to rule and reign as Judge of the whole earth on Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), and that He will forevermore Tabernacle here on Earth with His people Israel.

But what about Yom Teruah?

Our Jewish brothers mistakenly call this day *Rosh haShanah*, meaning *Head of the Year*. However, the Father said Abib was to be the beginning of months for us (Exodus 12:2). In defense of *Rosh haShanah*, some say they are celebrating a *civil* New Year while others claim the change is to commemorate the creation of the world, which they believe happened in the fall. Thus Judaism begins their calendar in the seventh month, with “*Rosh haShannah*.” (We address this issue in some detail in the Yom Teruah related chapters of my Feast book: see below.)

We point out this difference because we do not want Believers in the Messiah to miss out on the true significance of this unique feast day. This feast is different in that, Yom Teruah is the only feast that falls at the beginning of the month and thus coincides with a celebration of the New Moon. Yom Teruah also marks the beginning of the Fall Feasts (Leviticus 23:23-25). Traditionally, it begins what is called the “Ten Days of Awe,” a time wherein we are to make peace with our brothers, before the Day of Atonement. (The chapter offered below includes “Ten Days of Prayer” that can be prayed during this time.)

We are told that the Father “made the moon to mark the seasons” (Psalm 104:19); and we know that in fact, the moon does not produce light, but instead *reflects* the light of the sun. So it is with the Body of Messiah: Yeshua is the Son/Sun, and we are called to reflect His light. Thus, celebrating the New Moon gives us opportunity to reflect the truth of Yeshua’s glory to others. We also suggest the little-understood feast of Yom Teruah offers a special time for Messiah’s Body to reflect to the world the truths of the God of Israel and to gather the whole house of Israel.

On the New Moon, and thus on Yom Teruah, Israel is to blow two hammered silver trumpets (Numbers 10:1-10). Listening with the ears of the Spirit to a brief outline of the instructions for this time will help us to see Yom Teruah in its coming glory.

YHVH said Israel was to make two trumpets of silver hammered work and priests were to blow them. The united sound of the trumpets would then be used to summon all Israel, and to have the camps set out. Two trumpets were to be sounded when going to war in the land, that we might be remembered before our God, and by Him, be saved from our enemies.

Note that the two silver trumpets of Numbers chapter 10 were used to:

1. Gather the assembly (vs. 2)
2. move the camp (vs. 5)
3. prepare for war (vs. 9)
4. celebrate the feasts (vs. 10)

We also note that silver depicts our being refined (Malachi 3:3), and that trumpets depict voices (Revelation 1:10). “Cry loudly, do not hold back; raise your voice like a trumpet, and declare to My people their transgression and to the house of Jacob their sins” (Isaiah 58:1).

Historically, there have been only two people groups on the earth that have been giving voice to a testimony about the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: Christians and Jews, Ephraim and Judah. They are the only two major people groups to claim that He is their God. This is not said to imply that everyone who says they belong to either group is acceptable to Him, but to say that both claim to believe in Him, and for many centuries both have been giving testimony about Him. In this way, we see them as “two witnesses” for the God of Israel. This also is not said to deny that there may be two actual latter-day witnesses whom He will raise up. It is merely to state that, historically, these two people groups have been “two witnesses” for the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Why would YHVH need two witnesses?

He said of the sons of Israel, “You are My witnesses” (Isaiah 43:10), and He then divided Israel’s twelve tribes into two houses: Ephraim/Israel and Judah (2 Chronicles 11:4). Moreover, in Israel, all things must be confirmed by “two or more” witnesses before a truth can be believed (Numbers 35:30; Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15; John 8:17; 2 Corinthians 13:1). For this reason, YHVH also has two witnesses: Ephraim and Judah.

The problem is that His two witnesses have not been sounding their voices in *unison*. Instead, they spend much of their energy denying one another, and to gather *all* Israel, the two trumpets must be made of *refined* silver, and they must sound in harmony, for it is their unified voice that will gather all the tribes.

Yom Teruah foretells the day when two voices will speak in *perfect harmony*. It foretells two refined witnesses who will ultimately serve their purpose, which is to

confirm the Father's truth in the earth – Genesis to Revelation.

Some claim it is not clear from Scripture that the silver trumpets are to be used to announce Yom Teruah, and some say the ram's horn, or shofar, instead should be used. While the rules for sounding, or blowing (*teruah*) before our feasts and sacrifices may appear to be shadowy, since Yom Teruah falls on the first of the month and at the time of the New Moon, we know for certain that two silver trumpets are to be blown (Numbers 10:2,10). "On the first day of the seventh month hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work. It is a day for you to sound the trumpets" (Numbers 29:1, KJV).

The word translated *trumpets*, is *teruah*. *Strong's* defines it as a "clangor of trumpets." *Brown-Driver-Briggs* calls it a "signal, shout, blast of war, alarm, or joy." It comes from a word that means to cry out in distress, joy, or triumph, or to give a war-cry or battle alarm (*Strong's* and *BDB #'s* H8643; H7321).

Yom Teruah begins with the sound of the silver trumpets, and Jubilee begins with the blowing of the shofar. Every fifty years there is a Jubilee year, and it always begins on Yom Kippur (Day of Covering), thus this feast would naturally begin with the sound of the shofar.

Perhaps the shofar is to be used for these occasions because the focus of Yom Kippur and Jubilee is not on a declaration being made by confirming voices, but on the finished work of the Sacrifice Lamb. Thus it is appropriate that a ram's horn be used to begin Yom Kippur and the year of Jubilee. These times also are associated with the voice of the Almighty. Its haunting sound heralds the time when He declares that bond-servants can return to his land and family; its prophetic cry announces freedom, deliverance, and equality for all Israel.

Judah has used the shofar almost exclusively to announce their feasts. However, the shofar is mentioned only four times in the Torah: three times it was sounded at Mount Sinai, and it is mentioned once in the instructions about announcing the year of Jubilee (Exodus 19:16,19; 20:18; Leviticus 25:9). It is thereafter mentioned repeatedly in the Book of Joshua and following its powerful sound Jericho's walls fell down flat (Joshua 6:4-20; Shofar: *BDB #H7782*).

Silver Trumpets and Temple Times

According to rabbinic tradition, "In the Temple on Rosh Hashanah two men blowing silver trumpets stood on either side of the one who blows the shofar....The Gemara...cites the verse [Psalms 47:5; 81:3; 98:6; 150:3] that requires trumpets along with the shofar." We also read that, "A community beset by calamity is under a Rabbinic obligation to... [be] assembled for supplication and prayer, and this is always accomplished with trumpets as it is written (Numbers 10:2): And they shall be yours for summoning the assembly....we sound the trumpets in order to stir the hearts of the people and bring them to repentance by causing them to realize that the disaster resulted because of their sins. In the Temple, shofars were blown along with the

trumpets. The shofar [blows] short...and the trumpets [blow] long...for the primary commandment is with trumpets.”

In these rabbinic statements, the word “shofar” is footnoted: “The use of two shofars, one on each side, is a Rabbinic innovation, to publicize that the special mitzvah of the day is with trumpets (Yom Teruah).” “Trumpets” is footnoted with: “The purpose of sounding an instrument on a fast day is to assemble the people for supplication and prayer....blowing the trumpets is more important, for it is mandated by the Pentateuch, whereas the shofar accompaniment is derived from the aforementioned verse in Psalms” (Schottenstein Gemara, chap. 3, “Rosh Hashanah,” pp 24b2, notes 21, 24, 27,28, Mesorah Publications, Brooklyn, NY.) Also see *The Writings of Flavius Josephus*, “Antiquities of the Jews,” Bk. 3, Chap. 12, www.bible.crosswalk.com.)

The golden sound of the shofar clearly has its place in the divine plan. It has especially been used by the Holy One to tear down walls. However, some have assigned to the shofar attributes that were assigned to the silver trumpets, and we do not want to overlook their importance, we do not want to miss the foreshadowing of our call to unity as a people. (Note that *unity* does not mean *uniformity*.)

As we begin to see the place of the silver trumpets let us not make it an issue of silver trumpets *versus* shofars, lest we miss the point. For it is not about what is blown, as much as what is in the heart of the one who is blowing. Our hearts need to be full of faith that our Father is gathering and restoring the whole house of Israel at this time through a unified call (Numbers 10:3).

From this quick overview we see that Yom Teruah marks a time of “darkness,” as well as a time when Believers are especially called to reflect the truth of the Messiah. It is a time for the unified voices of Judah and Ephraim to sound an alarm, to wake up, and to gather YHVH’s people.

My prayer is that we might begin to understand the Day of Trumpets in all its fullness, and that we might be inspired to collectively celebrate this feast with new enthusiasm. May all Israel arise to the exciting challenge that lies just ahead. Amen.

Berachot (Blessings),
Batyá