

ROSH HASHANAH

“Feast of Trumpets”

I. Introduction

The **Feast of Trumpets** is one of **seven appointed feasts** given by **God to Israel**. In the book of **Leviticus** we read:

“Speak to the **sons of Israel**, saying,
‘In the **seventh month** on the **first** of the **month** you shall have a **rest**,
a **reminder** by **blowing of trumpets**, a **holy convocation**.
You shall **not** do any laborious work, but you shall present
an **offering** by fire to the LORD.”
(Leviticus 23:24-25)

The **Feast of Trumpets** is one of **three fall festivals** that occur in the **seventh** month known as **Tishri** (Sept.-Oct.). It marks the beginning of what is known as the **Jewish High Holiday** season.

In the course of Jewish history, the “**Feast of Trumpets**” became known as **Rosh Hashanah**, which literally means the “**Head of the Year**.” This fall holiday would mark the **beginning** of the **Jewish civil calendar**, and became known as the **Jewish New Year**.

However, unlike our New Year, **Rosh Hashanah** is **not celebrated** with parties and revelry. Instead, it is a time of *solemn self-evaluation*. **Rosh Hashanah** marks the beginning of a **ten day period** of **judgment** called the “**days of awe**,”

According to **Jewish tradition**, all the children of men pass before their **Creator** in **judgment**. During this time,
the *righteous* are written in the **Book of Life**,
the *wicked* are **condemned**,
and *those* who are not *wholly righteous* or *wholly wicked*,
are given **ten days** to **repent** and thus, escape **judgment**. These **ten days** of **repentance** and **introspection** lead into the *most solemn day* of the **Jewish year**, **Yom Kippur**, the **Day of Atonement**.

The *significance* of **Rosh Hashanah** can be **summarized** by its various names:

- A. **Rosh Hashanah**—“**Head of the Year**”—the **Jewish New Year’s day** according to the *civil calendar*—**Jewish tradition** has it that **creation** happened on the **first** of **Tishri** (Sept.-Oct.).
- B. **Feast of Trumpets**—“**Yom T’ruah**”—the **day of blowing**—named because of the **blowing of the trumpet** or **shofar** (ram’s horn), one the **central** activities during this feast.

- C. **Yom Ha Zikaron** – “**Day of Remembrance**” – declared a time of *remembrance*, that **Israel** might be **remembered before God** – For at the **blast** of the **trumpets**, the people **gathered themselves**, as it were, **under God’s banner**, and **before His throne**. This **proclamation** and **confession of Him** as “**Jehovah their God**” brought them **before Him** to be *remembered* and *saved*--this is also a day for **Jews** to *remember their sins* before the **Day of Atonement**. It is also believed to be a day when **God remembers His creatures** in order to show them **mercy**.
- D. **Yom Ha Deen** – “**Day of Judgment**” – named because of the belief that all Jews are to pass in *judgment* during these days to see whether or not their **sins** will be **forgiven**, and whether they will be **inscribed** in the **book of life** for another year.

II. **Rosh Hashanah-- Customs and Practices**

- A. **Blowing of the Shofar** - As we read in scripture, the central activity during **Rosh Hashanah** is the *blowing of the trumpet* or **shofar** (ram’s horn). The *blowing of trumpets* in Israel was used for various purposes. On **Rosh Hashanah**, the shofar “**blasts**” serve to **gather us before God** in *remembrance*, as well as to “**rouse men to repentance**.” (Edersheim)
- B. **Tashlikh** – During **Rosh Hashanah**, it is customary to perform a ritual known as **tashlikh**. On the afternoon of the first day, many Jews gather near a **flowing body of water** to recite special **prayers of forgiveness** and “**cast all their sins** into the depth of the sea” (Micah 7:19). It is customary to throw breadcrumbs or stones into the water to **symbolically** cast off the sins and broken promises.
- C. **New Years Cards** – Many Jewish people send **cards** to friends and relatives with a greeting for a **happy, healthy, and joyous new year**. A common **Rosh Hashanah greeting** is “**L shanah tovah tikatevoo**”, which means, “**May your name be inscribed** (in the **book of life**) for a **good year**.”
- D. **Food** – On **Rosh Hashanah**, **special foods** such as **apple slices, honey, round challah bread**, and **sweet cakes** are served. These are **sweet** for a **sweet year**, and **round**, representing a *crown* for **kingship**, celebrating **God as king**, and the desire for a **long span of life**. They are also plentifully served in hope of a **fruitful year**.

III. **Rosh Hashanah and the New Testament**

Although there is **no mention** of the **Feast of Trumpets** in the **New Testament**, it is clear that a number of passages **allude** to themes and activities associated with the observance of **Rosh Hashanah**. This is particularly true with regard to the **blowing** of the **trumpet** or **shofar**.

In his letter to the **Thessalonians**, **Rabbi Paul** describes how a **shofar** or **trumpet** will be heard at the **Lord's second coming**, when all **believers** (both **living** and those who have **died**) will be **gathered** unto Himself.

For this we say unto you by the **word of the Lord**, that we who are **alive** and **remain** until the **coming of the Lord**, will **not precede** those who have **fallen asleep**.

For **the Lord Himself** will **descend** from **heaven** with a **shout**, with the **voice of the archangel** and with the **trumpet of God**, and the **dead in Messiah** will **rise first**.
Then we who are **alive** and **remain** will be **caught up together** with them **in the air**, and so we shall always **be with the Lord**.
(I Thessalonians 4:15-17)

Also in **Matthew**, **Yeshua** tells **His disciples** that a **trumpet** would herald **His coming** and the **age** to come:

"But immediately after the **tribulation** of those days... they will see the **SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY** with **power** and **great glory**.
And **He** will send forth His **angels** with **A GREAT TRUMPET** and **THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER** His **elect** from the **four winds**, from one end of the sky to the other.
(Matthew 24:29-31)

The **shofar** that is blown on **Rosh Hashanah** is a **prophetic picture** of the **trumpet sound** that **precedes** the **regathering** of **God's people** and the **second coming** of our **Messiah**.

Lighting of the Festival Lights

**Ba-ruch A-tah Ado-nai E-lo-hei-nu me-lech ha-olam
asher ki-deshanu be-mitzvo-tav ve-tzvi-vanu
le-hadlik ner shel (Shabbat veshel) Yom Hazikaron.**

Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d, King of the universe,
who has sanctified us with His commandments and has commanded us
to light the candle (of Shabbat and) of the **Day of Remembrance**.

**Ba-ruch A-tah Ado-nai E-lo-hei-nu me-lech ha-olam
she-heche-ya-nu ve-ki-yi-ma-nu ve-higi-a-nu liz-man ha-zeh**

Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, King of the universe,
who has granted us life, sustained us,
and enabled us to reach this occasion.

Congregational Reading

O Lord our God, on this solemn season of the New Year we pray to You.
Be near us in our trials, strengthen us when crises surround us.

May the festival lights always remind us of **Your power to heal,**
and **forgive**, and of **Your love** which is always available to us,
even when we don't deserve it.

May the **light** of our **faith** in you always shine brightly in our hearts,
and give us courage equal to whatever circumstances we may face.
Bless us in the **New Year**, and all those we love, with life,
and health and peace. Amen

Shofarot—Sounding of the Ram's Horn

Also in the day of your gladness and in your appointed feasts, and on the **first days** of your **months**, you shall blow the trumpets over your **burnt offerings**, and over the **sacrifices** of your **peace offerings**; and they shall be as a reminder of you *before your God. I am the LORD your God.*" (Numbers 10:10)

There are **four primary types** of **shofar blasts**:

1. **Tekiah** – A long **single** blast (the sound of the king's coronation)
2. **Shevarim** – **Three** short wail-like blasts (signifying repentance)
3. **Teru'ah** – **Nine** staccato blasts of alarm (to awaken the soul)
4. **Tekiah ha –Gadol** – A **great long blast**

Shofar Blessing

**Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha-olam
asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu lishmoa kol shofar.**

Blessed are You, Ruler of the World,
who has made us holy with commandments,
and who has commanded us to hear the voice of the shofar.

Shema

**She-ma Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai echad
Baruch shem kavod malchuto l'olam va-ed**

**Hear O' Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One
Blessed be the Name of His glorious kingdom for ever and ever.**

And you shall **love the Lord your God** with all your heart
and with all your soul and with all your might.
And these words that I command you today shall be in your heart.
And you shall teach them diligently to your children,
and you shall speak of them when you sit at home,
and when you walk along the way,
and when you lie down and when you rise up.

You shall bind them as a **sign** on your **hand**,
and they shall be for **frontlets** between your **eyes**.
And you shall write them on the **doorposts** of your **house** and on your **gates.**”
(Deuteronomy 6:4-9)

Responsive Reading – Psalm 145
A Psalm of Praise, of David.

145 I will extol You, my God, O King,
And I will bless Your name forever and ever.

**² Every day I will bless You,
And I will praise Your name forever and ever.**

**³ Great is the LORD, and highly to be praised,
And His greatness is unsearchable.**

**⁴ One generation shall praise Your works to another,
And shall declare Your mighty acts.**

**⁵ On the glorious splendor of Your majesty
And on Your wonderful works, I will meditate.**

**⁶ Men shall speak of the power of Your awesome acts,
And I will tell of Your greatness.**

**⁷ They shall eagerly utter the memory of Your abundant goodness
And will shout joyfully of Your righteousness.**

**⁸ The LORD is gracious and merciful;
Slow to anger and great in lovingkindness.**

**⁹ The LORD is good to all,
And His mercies are over all His works.**

**¹⁰ All Your works shall give thanks to You, O LORD,
And Your godly ones shall bless You.**

- ¹¹ They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom
And talk of Your power;
- ¹² **To make known to the sons of men Your mighty acts
And the glory of the majesty of Your kingdom.**
- ¹³ Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
And Your dominion *endures* throughout all generations.
- ¹⁴ **The LORD sustains all who fall
And raises up all who are bowed down.**
- ¹⁵ The eyes of all look to You,
And You give them their food in due time.
- ¹⁶ **You open Your hand
And satisfy the desire of every living thing.**
- ¹⁷ The LORD is righteous in all His ways
And kind in all His deeds.
- ¹⁸ **The LORD is near to all who call upon Him,
To all who call upon Him in truth.**
- ¹⁹ He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him;
He will also hear their cry and will save them.
- ²⁰ **The LORD keeps all who love Him,
But all the wicked He will destroy.**
- ²¹ My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD,
And all flesh will bless His holy name forever and ever.

Message

Congregational Worship

Kiddush – Closing Blessings