

## The Feast of Trumpets – God’s call to Repentance and Redemption Nehemiah 8:1-9

In Leviticus God mandates that Israel have seven annual appointments with Him, which He refers to as “My Feasts” Leviticus 23:2 Just like the seventh day and the seventh year, God sets apart the seventh month as holy.

**Calendar** The fall month of *Tishri* contains three feasts. The Feast of Trumpets or Rosh-HaShanah, literally means the head of the year. This marks the beginning of the Jewish civil calendar reckoned to be year 5782 since the creation. The Jewish New Year begins Monday, September 6, 2021. The second feast, 10 days later is *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement. (September 15, 2021) Last of all is *Sukkot* or the Feast of Tabernacles on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Tishri. (September, 20-27, 2021) God not only commanded a celebration but also a much needed rest, from their agricultural labors but more importantly from their sin. Repentance was required over the next 10 days before the Day of Atonement.

**Greeting** It is customary for Jewish people to greet one another with *Shana Tova Umeekutah* meaning “a good year and sweet!” You can just say Happy New Year. It’s customary to eat apple slices dipped in honey in commemoration of Nehemiah’s instruction. 8:10 “Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and **send portions** unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength.” We’ve given out hundreds of gift bags with apples and honey and gift cards and Hebrew language Gospels of Matthew & Psalms. We wish them a happy new year and wish that their names are inscribed in the book of life. Their response is joyful and thankful. One young Israeli exclaimed, “You gave me my first *parsha*/portion!”

**Holy Convocation** means gathering to the tabernacle/temple for singing praises, offering prayers and sacrifices. Sacrifices include a young bull, a ram, seven lambs and a kid goat. (Numbers 29:2-6) A Levitical choir sang. (Psalm 81) Ezra 2:65 records 200 singers, men and women. The modern high holiday liturgy lasts four to five hours, punctuated by benedictions/*baruchas*. There are trumpet sequences, totaling one hundred blasts of the shofar. The service is divided into three sections that emphasize “*malkhiyot*” - God’s majesty, “*zikhronot*”- remembering His covenant, and “*shofarot*”- announcement of His Holy Law.

**Memorial** Lev. 23:24,25 “Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first *day* of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, **a memorial of blowing of trumpets,**” from the Hebrew *Zikhron Teruah*. What does it memorialize? The rabbinic emphasis is on calling God to remember His covenant to Abraham. (Genesis 22:2,8,13) The account of the binding of Isaac is read at Rosh-HaShanah, “Remember in our favor, O Lord our God, the oath which you have sworn to our father Avraham on Mt. Moriyah; consider the binding of his son Yitzchak upon the altar when he suppressed his love in order to do your will with his whole heart.” (Jewish Encyclopedia) Blowing of a ram’s horn is a memorial of the ram caught by his horns which became the substitute for Isaac, insuring God’s covenant.

**Prophecy** Abraham prophesied of the Lamb of God to be offered. “God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering.” Genesis 22:8 Abraham later praised God in faith for the future lamb. “Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.” (Genesis 22:14.) The same Hebrew word “*ra-ah*” (pronounced raw-aw’) translated “will provide,” in Genesis 22:8, is translated “shall be seen” on Genesis 22:14. The same invisible God “himself,” that will provide, “himself” shall be seen, in the flesh, as “a lamb for a burnt offering.” Key (Word Study Bible, AMG Publishers, Old Testament Dictionary, page 1985)

This mount of the LORD, later claimed by God as “my holy mountain,” (Isaiah 57:13) was chosen place for, “the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.” (John 1:29) It is no coincidence, but rather divine providence that Abraham’s faith in God’s covenant, by which he was declared righteous was demonstrated in sacrifice on the same mount, where Christ was predestined by God to be sacrificed “before the foundation of the world.” 1 Peter 1:19-20. It was because of what happened on this holy mount that all could be made righteous by faith as prophesied both in the Abrahamic Covenant and provided for by his seed in the New Covenant!

**Biblical Record** Nehemiah, contains the only recorded observance of Rosh-HaShanah in the Bible. “And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month.” Nehemiah 8:2 After reading the Law, Ezra expounded the scriptures to them, “from a pulpit of wood,” and “caused the people to understand the law: and the people *stood* in their place. So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused *them* to understand the reading.” Nehemiah 8:7,8 They wept in guilt and repentance when they heard the Law. Nehemiah commanded them not to weep on this day. “Then he said unto them, Go

your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for *this day is holy* unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength.” Nehemiah 8:10

Although it was a day of rejoicing, it marked the ten Awesome Days leading up to the Day of Atonement, “Yom Kippur.” The days that followed were spent listening to scripture and in repentant prayer. They fasted, listened to the Laws of Moses for three hours and confessed sins for three hours. Nehemiah 9:1-3 This repentance was led by the woeful prayers found in Ezra chapter 9 and Nehemiah chapter 9. In the synagogue on Yom Kippur the *Viddui*, “confession,” is recited including the *Ashamnu*, which is an alphabetical acrostic list of different sins committed, said in first-person plural. <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/text-of-yom-kippur-viddui/> For that reason, Rosh-HaShanah is also called the “Yom Ha-Din” or Judgment Day, when it is taught by rabbis that three books are opened in Heaven. The book of the wicked. The book of the righteous and the book of those in between. All of those in the book of the righteous by “Yom Kippur” will be inscribed in the Book of Life. All fear dying prematurely within the next year if they remain in the book of the wicked. In Rabbinic teaching, sadly there is no emphasis of this atonement being of eternal consequence, as they falsely assure Jewish congregants of their eternal safety under the covenant of Abraham.

### **Scriptural clarity on the Book of Life. Every Human conceived was written in God’s book of the living.**

Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my *members were written*. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and **in thy book all my members were written.**” Psalm 139:16

### **Scripture says that those with unforgiven sins will be blotted out of the Book of Life.**

Ex. 32:32 “the LORD said unto Moses, **Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.**

Dan 12:1,2 “every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame *and* everlasting contempt.”

Rev. 20:12-14 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which **is the book of life**: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. ...And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever **was not found written in the book of life** was cast into the lake of fire.”

It is revealed to John the Apostle that the only assurance of your name not being blotted out of the book of Life comes from having your name written in the lamb’s book of life. This comes through belief in Jesus and His death burial and resurrection for the forgiveness of sin and the gift of eternal life. “And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: **but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of Life.**” Revelation 21:27

### **Alternative means of atonement falsely assured by the Rabbis, in the absence of a sacrificial system.**

Rabbis prescribe, the following for atonement in absence of the Temple and blood sacrifices – *mitzvot*/good works including, *Tshuvah*/repentance, *Shlicote*/forgiveness, *Tzedekah*/charitable gifts. These say the Rabbi’s, move one into the book of the righteous. Rather, God was telling Israel to rest from their labors to earn God’s favor and rejoice that He has provided their salvation freely by faith. They were to repent as guilty of breaking God’s laws. Then they were to receive His only means of atonement so they would be ready on the coming judgment day. Then they could enjoy God coming down to dwell with them, portrayed in *Sukkot* – Tabernacles five days later. Just like in the wilderness, God’s presence went with them as a cloud by day and pillar of fire by night. His glory was visible in the shekinah over the mercy seat. What a picture of our salvation under the new covenant by faith as was theirs but now we have God literally “tabernacling” in us through the indwelling Holy Spirit. We have eternal security based on our faith in Jesus’ once and for all sacrifice.

**Eschatological implications** Several parallels from these three feasts can be applied to prophesied events, although it should not become a prophetic dateline. The reasoning is often presented thusly. Since Jesus was crucified on Passover and raised on the Feast of First Fruits and since the Church was born on Pentecost, then it is assumed that the Feast of Trumpets must equate to the “trump of God” at the Rapture in 1 Thessalonians 4:16. The Day of Atonement equates to Israel’s Judgment and national conversion in the Tribulation. The Feast of Tabernacles then would parallel the millennial reign of Jesus on earth. Some falsely deduce that certainly the Rapture will happen on the Feast of Trumpets, but Jesus was clear that “no man knows the day nor the hour.” Certainly the “day” of Rosh-HaShanah can be calculated for centuries to come, yet ever so often someone discovers these parallels and foolishly makes a prediction.

**Theological Negligence** There is another major flaw of interpretation to this line of logic. If one uses the order of the seven Levitical feasts to parallel prophetic events, all feast parallels should be limited to being fulfilled only in regards to Israel, since the feasts were given to them as an annual appointment with the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The Church is in no way connected to the commands in Leviticus chapter 23. Instead of interpreting the Feast of Trumpets as pointing to the Rapture of the Church, it parallels with the trumpet judgments of the “Day of The Lord”- *Yom ha din*, or day of Judgment called the Tribulation. Undoubtedly the sixth feast, the Day of Atonement parallels with Israel’s future national acceptance of Messiah at Jesus appearing after the “Battle of Armageddon”. The ten awesome days of repentance between the feasts of Trumpets and Atonement are strikingly similar to the seven year “time of Jacob’s trouble.” Jeremiah 30:7 To parallel six of the feasts with Israel and then to apply the Feast of trumpets to the Church is inconsistent and forced. Leviticus 23 is all about Israel and not the church. God’s entire program of salvation is through Israel in which the church is included, only during this dispensation. But for 2000 years the primarily gentile church has developed a myopia and a church centered theology which neglects Israel has become guilty of the warning of Paul in Romans chapter 11:18-26 “boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Be not high minded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, *take heed* lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in *his* goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved.” Many preach on the blindness of Israel while blind to Israel as God’s plan of salvation. Over 80% of Christianity sees the church replacing Israel and are in demise and or, are promoting heresy. They are God forsaken and they consistently forsake Israel or worse.

### **Rosh HaShana’s Trumpet symbolizes Israel’s call to Repentance**

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.” Certainly the final Days of Awe await them.

Nonchalant Israel prior to the Time of Jacob’s trouble is warned not to procrastinate their repentance “Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD!” Amos 5: 18

Zephaniah 1:14,15 “The great day of the LORD *is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even* the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day *is* a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, 16 **A day of the trumpet and alarm.**” The Revelation to the Apostle John lists seven staccato trumpet blasts “*teruah*” that announce judgment and her greatest time of mourning. Revelation 8

John in Revelation indicates that those who ignore the trumpet warnings and ignore the Day of Atonement will suffer the Day of Judgment.

Rabbis for centuries have quoted Zechariah 9:14 “and **the Lord GOD shall blow the trumpet**, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south.” Their Talmudic interpretation is “And it is the ram’s horn that The Holy One, Blessed be he, is destined to blow when the son of David, our righteous one, will reveal himself, as it is said: ‘And **the Lord God will blow the horn**’” (Tanna debe Eliyahu Zutta XXII)

### **The Trumpet calls for Redemption**

Jer. 31:32-34 “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, **and I will remember their sin no more.**”

Only when repentant Israel is willing to say “Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.” (Psalm 118:26, Mt. 23:39) will 100% national and personal redemption take place. David said the requirement is to “Kiss the Son.” That is “The Lord’s anointed” “lest He be angry and ye perish”. Isaiah said “every knee shall bow” and “ every tongue shall take an oath” Isa. 45:23

Personal reception of The Messiah is necessary for reconciliation to God. In Proverbs 30:4 Solomon asks if you know His son's name. Rabbi Elieze, one of Israel's ancient Rabbis, declared, "Repent one day before your death." His astonished disciple asked, "Does then one know on what day he will die?" The Rabbi replied, "Then all the more reason that he repent today." Shabbat 153a Isaiah said it this way, "seek the Lord while He may be found." Isa. 55:6.

Zechariah 10:10 "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, **the spirit of grace and of supplications**: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, ... 8 And it shall come to pass, *that* in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off *and* die; but the third shall be left therein. 9 And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: **they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.**"

### **There is no Book of the Righteous. The lost will be blotted out of the Book of Life**

Psalms 69:28 David "Let them be blotted out of the **Book of the Living**, and not be written with the righteous."

Exodus 32:32-33 God said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, **I will blot Him out of My book.**"

Daniel 12:1 Daniel was told, "thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book."

Revelation 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is **the book of life**: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

Revelation 20:15 And whosoever was **not found written in the book of life** was cast into the lake of fire.

Revelation 21:27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are **written in the Lamb's book of life**.

From these scriptures we deduce that all humans are in the Book of Life (living) but those who are NOT in the Lamb's Book of Life through faith in Jesus the lamb of God will be blotted from the Book of Life at the Great White Throne Judgment of the wicked dead and cast into the Lake of Fire. No one who is in the Lamb's book of Life will be at that Great White Throne Judgment nor can they be blotted out of the Book of Life.

### **Final ceremony of Rosh-HaShanah**

The Jewish congregation will gather by a body of water or a fountain or well on the afternoon of Rosh-HaShanah. There they will recite the prayers including these scriptures, Psalm 118:5,9; Psalm 33; Psalm 130:7 And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities." Isa. 11:9. "tashlikh" is from the word "cast" in Micah 7:19 "He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea."

Jewish people cast bread crumbs into the water symbolizing their sins being cast into the depths of the sea.

### **The invitation is open for salvation only through Jesus' death, burial and resurrection.**

Revelation 22:11, 12, 17 "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

### **Give that invitation.**

- Over the next week, give a Jewish person this greeting. "Shana Tova" meaning Happy New Year. You could give a small gift bag with a couple of polished apples and a "honey bear." I often ask if they would pronounce the full greeting, to record on my phone. "La'shanah tovah tikatevu ve techatemu" (לְשָׁנָה טוֹבָה תִּכְתְּבוּ וְתִחַתְמוּ), meaning "may you be inscribed and sealed (in the Book of Life).
- Ask will they feel sure that their name is actually in the Book of Life by Yom Kippur?
- If they say yes, Ask how do they know when they have repented enough, or given enough or done enough?
- Share how you came to know that your name is in the book of life by faith and like Abraham were declared righteous.