

The Feast of Trumpets 5784 (Rosh HaShanah)

There is very little said about the Feast of Trumpets in the Torah. Biblically it is called by two different names, “זכרון תרועה the memorial or remembrance of the trumpet sounding” (Leviticus 23:24) and “יום תרועה the day of the trumpet sounding” (Numbers 29:1). There is no Biblical reason to associate this festival to the New Year. When looking at the observance of this festival historically, it becomes clear that the trumpet which is being referred to by the text is the שופר, the ram’s horn. In previous years, I have discussed the connection of this מועד, **Appointed Day**, to Genesis chapter 22, the binding of Issac. However in this article, I want to focus on the liturgy which is recited in the synagogue on this significant day.

When examining the prayers which are said during the Feast of Trumpets, there is a clear emphasis on תשובה, repentance. The question which must be asked is why is this so? When looking at the L-rd’s Appointed Days (The Biblical Festivals), it is possible to break those which appear in the Torah into two groups: the Spring Festivals and the Fall Festivals. It is obvious when studying the New Covenant Scriptures that there is an inherent relationship between the Spring Festivals and the primary events of Yeshua’s work during His first coming. An additional question which also must be considered is whether there will be a similar relationship between the primary events when Yeshua returns at the **End Times**? One certainly cannot be dogmatic in regard to this question, but it seems that the Fall Festivals should not be viewed as relating to particular times when significant events will take place; rather, the Fall Festivals simply provide a framework for understanding the important events of the End Times.

The message of the sounding of the shofar relates to G-d’s provision to His people for victory, for this is what is taught in Genesis chapter 22. Therefore, in the End Times, believers will be persecuted first for their covenantal relationship with Messiah Yeshua and then the Jewish people will be because of their unique covenantal relationship with G-d. Despite the supernatural assistance that Satan will provide the antichrist and his empire, G-d’s provision for His people will be sufficient to bring victory first to the Congregation of the Redeemed (The Church), and then to the remnant of Israel. It is when one hears the sounding of the Shofar that he or she should remember that only through G-d’s provision can one endure to experience victory.

Another question that needs to be answered is what is victory for G-d’s people? This is something that you should try to answer for yourself. What is victory to you? The proper answer relates to the will of G-d. It is only when one is in G-d’s will and doing G-d’s will is this one experiencing victory. When reading Genesis chapter 22, it

becomes clear that as G-d provided the substitute for Issac which enabled him to live and serve G-d, so too has G-d provided His Son so that through faith in Yeshua one can serve G-d. Sadly, this message has often become corrupted by spiritual leaders and today it is most common for believers to think that G-d will provide what we want or need in order to fulfill our will. In other words, it is G-d Who serves us. Such a perspective, although popular, is absolutely incorrect and provides a foothold for the enemy to manipulate “believers”.

It is such heretical beliefs from which many need to repent. Repentance begins with an acknowledgment of the Biblical standards of G-d which are found in His commandments. G-d provided the Holy Spirit so believers can serve Him, not through the oldness of the letter, but through the newness of the Spirit (Romans 7:6).

This verse should greatly impact one’s life in regard to how a believer serves the Living G-d. When looking closely at this verse, Paul uses the Greek phrase, *παιδιότητι γράμματος*. This phrase should be translated as the “*Oldness of the writing or letter.*” It should not be understood as meaning that the Law has become obsolete, but rather it is now possible, through the wonderful giving of the Holy Spirit, to serve G-d by keeping His word. Once again, there is a heretical understanding of this verse by a large portion of the believing community. Even a cursory examination of only a few of the leading Christian commentators reveals a faulty understanding of this verse.

The Apostle Paul did not use the word *κατηργήθημεν* (“*we have been released*”) as from the Law in general, but the context for this passage demands one to comprehend that it is only from the punishment of the Law that the believer has been released. In the flesh (unredeemed and unsaved), the commandments of G-d only aroused our evil inclination (See Romans 7:5 and Genesis 6:5) and the result was that people brought forth the fruit of death. But now, as new creations in the Messiah, with the provision of the Holy Spirit, we have the new way to serve G-d and fulfill His will. The manner in which much of Christianity interprets this verse is to believe that a key portion of the Scriptures are no longer relevant for followers of Yeshua. They seem to ignore what Paul continues to write in this same chapter about the Law being **holy** and the commandments **holy** and **righteous** and **good** (Romans 7:12).

It is most puzzling that individuals would think that such a significant portion of the Word of G-d, as the Law of Moses, would be done away with. Also, in this same seventh chapter of Romans, Paul explains that the Law is actually spiritual and the problem is not with the Law, but with humanity. In the natural state, Paul says every human is carnal and in bondage to sin. It is only after accepting the Gospel that one becomes a spiritual being with the potential to serve G-d in the newness of the Holy Spirit. It is this serving G-d in the newness of the Spirit and demonstrating the righteousness of G-d that is the victory which every true disciple of Yeshua should be seeking. Failure to do so reveals either a spiritual deficiency (not understanding the purpose for which one has been saved) or the fact that one is not really a believer.

I will conclude this article with one more advantage of walking in the Holy Spirit and fulfilling the righteousness of the Law (See Romans 8:4). When one is serving G-d and fulfilling His purposes this will bring the believer into a closer intimacy with Yeshua. One of the results from this intimacy will be a greater understanding of the will of G-d. In other words, obedience which leads to righteous acts will also be a source of revelation. One could think of this in the following manner: greater obedience and submissiveness to the instructions (commandments) of G-d will bring about a greater understanding and comprehension of G-d's perspective. When a follower of Messiah Yeshua is able to discern G-d's perspective, it will lead to this one making G-d pleasing decisions which will bring about blessings in his or her life and the ability to be a blessing to other individuals.

This principle can also have a significant impact on one's ability to understand the Word of G-d. When a believer approaches Scripture with a desire to implement it into one's life, whatever the Holy Spirit teaches, then there will be a greater revelation from Him to the believer. If a person approaches G-d with an attitude which is, "*Teach me your truth and then I will decide if I will obey it or not*", then it is very unlikely that the Holy Spirit will reveal and teach this one much about the perspective and purposes of G-d.

May you embrace the Feast of Trumpets with a prepared heart ready to receive G-d's provision and truth in order to serve Him with a greater obedience.