

# Celebrating the Lord's *Feast of Trumpets*

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Rosh Hashanah means “the head of the year” and is referred to as the Jewish New Year. However, in the Bible it is known as “the Feast of Trumpets.” We would like to share with you some of this Festival’s deeply meaningful symbolism. In God’s instructions to His people concerning His Feasts, He called them “holy convocations.” The Hebrew word means “*a rehearsal*.” They are also called: “The Feasts of the LORD,” meaning *to move in a sacred procession, to observe a festival*.<sup>1</sup> Under the New Covenant in Christ, we don’t celebrate these Festivals as rituals, or only just as Holidays on God’s Calendar. In Exodus 23:15, God made a reference to them as *appointed times*, which in the Hebrew understanding means: *divine appointments*. So they are like appointments that God has put on His Calendar to have a *special meeting* with us. God said, *Every year on this date, I want to meet with you, because there are some special ways I want to bless you*. They’re not just for the Jewish people anymore. As God’s people, *we* get to be included now too! Zechariah 14 reveals that they are for “all the nations,” and that there are promised blessings for the *Gentiles* who observe the Feasts! We must remember that our Lord—the Man, Jesus Christ—is Jewish—and He will be forever. They are celebrations *of our LORD*. (See Handout: “Celebrating the Feasts of the Lord” for more information.)

The last three festivals the Lord commanded His people to observe are the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles. Each occurs in the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar, the month called Tishrei. Besides announcing the arrival of the seventh month and beginning the final cycle of festivals, the Feast of Trumpets holds much meaning in its own right. It is the Jewish New Year, celebrated by the blowing of trumpets from sunrise to sunset. It is a celebration of the joy of the Creation of God, the joy of receiving the Word of God, the coming of the Gospel of God through the Messiah, and also prophesies the last day Trumpet of God, which shall herald the return of our Messiah as King. The Feast of Trumpets also begins what is known as the “Ten Days of Awe” ending on the Day of Atonement, wherein the repentant humble themselves in preparation for the great “Day of Atonement.”

## **The Original Meaning of the Feast of Trumpets and How it Revealed Jesus:**

Leviticus 23 maps out God’s commandments concerning His festivals. In verse 2, God says: “Concerning the Feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are My feasts.” Verses 23-27 (also Numbers 29:1) give instructions for the Feast of Trumpets. It says it was a day off of work to have “a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation.” The word “memorial” indicates that the event to be *remembered* had taken place prior to this instruction. So, what extremely significant event, involving the blowing of trumpets, had taken place for the children of Israel? What event was of such great importance that God commanded the people to remember it every year? There was one outstanding event—connected to the blowing of trumpets—that required memorializing:

In Exodus chapters 19 and 20 we read the account of God’s appearance on Mount Sinai and the giving of the Ten Commandments. God invited the children of Israel into a covenant (the Mosaic Covenant). In a spectacular revelation, God manifested His presence in the smoke and fire on Mount Sinai—as He came to covenant with His people amidst the sound of a trumpet that caused the people to tremble. They promised to do everything that the Lord commanded. This cataclysmic event was to be stamped indelibly upon the memory of the Israelites. Every year, at the Feast of Trumpets, those same-sounding trumpet blasts reminded them that they were a people under covenant; a nation who had accepted the responsibilities of being God’s people. By doing so, the nation also prepared herself for the Day of Atonement, eight days later, when they would repent and find atonement for all they had done to break this covenant.

The truest fulfillment of this festival is Jesus’ offer of the New Covenant to all who receive it. He said in Luke 22:20: “This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.” We who have accepted the New Covenant remember this fact every time we take communion. The bread and the cup remind us of the cataclysmic events of the Lord’s death and resurrection. They remind us of our responsibilities in being

New Covenant people of God. We repent for our sin and through faith in the shed blood of Jesus, we receive the full and final atonement provided by the New Covenant.

### The Trumpets Use in the Bible:

The trumpet served an important function throughout the Bible as an instrument of communication, great fanfare, and providing signals and directions for their journeying camps.

In Joshua Chapter 6, God instructs Joshua to attack the city of Jericho with seven priests each bearing a Trumpet (*shofar*). The use of these instruments with the accompaniment of shouting soldiers caused Jericho's protective walls to crumble. Gideon utilized trumpets in a similar manner, but on a much larger scale. Supplying each of his men with a Trumpet (*shofar*), three companies of one hundred men chanted and blew their trumpets as they circled the Midianites' camp. As described in Judges 7:21-22, it caused the enemy to turn on themselves and flee.

2 Chronicles 5:13-14, tells about the dedication of Solomon's temple, celebrated with 120 priests playing trumpets, and what resulted: "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 music, and praised the LORD, saying, For He is good; for His mercy endures for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD; so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God."

### "Rehearsal" of Things Yet to Come:

If "holy convocations" are "a rehearsal," what is the Feast of Trumpets a rehearsal for? The Apostle Paul wrote in Colossians 2:16-17: "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a *holyday*, or of *the new moon*, or of the *Sabbath days*: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." Paul wrote this AFTER Jesus had already come, died, and rose again, so those special celebration days were *not* only all about Jesus and a shadow of His first coming. They are also a shadow *of things still yet to come!* This is one reason why we should *still be* celebrating them. The Apostle Paul obviously was; and so was the early Church for hundreds of years.

So, the Feast of Trumpets must hold prophetic aspects as well. For the Israelites, the TRUMPET signaled the end of the agricultural year and the time of the *harvest* (Scripture about the Lord's Harvest: Matthew 9:37-38; 13:36-43; Mark 4:26-29; 14:14-15). Blowing of TRUMPETS also symbolizes the crowning of a *King* (Scripture about the King of Kings: 1 Timothy 6:15; Revelation 11:15; 17:14; 19:16). The TRUMPETS warned the Israelites to *prepare for war* as well. It talks about this very thing in with instructions given by God for blowing the Trumpets at His Feasts (Numbers 10:9-10). Verse 9 says: "And if you go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresses you, then you shall blow *an alarm* with the trumpets; and you shall be remembered before the LORD your God, *and you shall be saved from your enemies*. The sounding of the Trumpet as an *Alarm for War* is another theme of the Feast of Trumpets (symbolism for our battling the devil and his forces). In the New Testament, 1 Corinthians 15:52 talks about the sound of a TRUMPET: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." That is talking about the Second Coming of Christ!

The trumpet plays a crucial role in the book of Revelation. In chapters 8-11, the end of the world as it is now is sequentially signaled by seven angels each bearing a Trumpet. As the seventh angel sounds the Trumpet, the kingdoms of the world becoming the Kingdoms of the Lord, and He will reign over them forever (Revelation 11:15)!

\*Handout written with information from: 1) Article by Lev Leigh, *article*, Lev Leigh September 2000 Newsletter (5761:1), Jews for Jesus | Sep 1, 2000 | <https://jewsforjesus.org> 2) <http://www.middlehornleader.com/Evolution%20of%20the%20Bugle%20--%20Section%201.htm> 3) <http://www.british-israel.us/49.html>

<sup>1</sup> *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1982, #2287.