
Special Feast Edition

INTRODUCTION

This Parsha Pearls Feast Edition is designed specifically for Yom Teruah. In Leviticus 23:1-2, Yahweh told Mosheh to speak to the children of Yisra'el about His appointed times (moadim), which they were to keep as set-apart gatherings (mikra kodesh). Three times each year, the children of Yisra'el were required to travel to Yerushalayim (Jerusalem) to observe one of the 3 pilgrimage feasts (shalosh regalim).

The 3 spring festivals are:

1. Passover (Pesach)
2. Festival of Unleavened Bread (Chag HaMatzot), which immediately follows Passover
3. Feast of Weeks (Chag HaShavuot)

The 4 autumn festivals are:

1. Day of Trumpets (Yom Teruah/Zichron Teruah/Rosh HaShanah)
2. Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), Day of Atonements (Yom HaKippurim)
3. Feast of Tabernacles (Chag HaSukkot)
4. 8th day Assembly (Shemini Atzeret), which immediately follows Sukkot



Yom Teruah is the 3rd appointed time (moad) of the year and the 4th High Sabbath. Yom Teruah/Zichron Teruah is commonly referred to as Rosh HaShanah on the calendar. It is also known as the Day of the Shofar Blast (Yom Teruah) or Remembrance of the Shofar Blast (Zichron Teruah). The term Rosh HaShanah meaning head of the year, is not found in the Torah. However, the name Rosh HaShanah is used by our brother Yehudah (Judah) because this feast marks the head of the new fiscal year. In English this feast is commonly known as the Day of Trumpets. *"Speak to the children of Yisra'el saying, 'In the 7th month (new moon), on the 1st day of the month (new moon), you have a rest, a remembrance of blowing of trumpets (Teruah), a set-apart gathering. You do no servile work, and you shall bring an offering made by fire to Yahweh'" (Lev. 23:24-25).*

These festivals were commanded by Yahweh to be kept by the children of Yisra'el throughout their generations, and that is why we are observing them as well (Lev. 23).

In parsha Beha'alotcha (Lev. 10:1-10), Yahweh told Mosheh to make 2 silver trumpets. He then gave him instruction about the different ways these trumpets were to be blown, so that when the children of Yisra'el heard any of them, they would recognize the signal and know what to do.

The Word does not give us a reason for observing this feast day other than as a 'remembrance' of blowing of trumpets (Lev. 23:24). It is certainly proper to 'remember' the events at Mt. Sinai on this festival, because when the children of Yisra'el received Yahweh's commandments there was a sounding of the shofar (Parsha Yitro - Ex. 19:13, 16, 19; 20:18).

Brother Yehudah has many ideas about what may have happened during this Sinai event, and you can research them if you would like. In Psalm 81:3-4 we are told, "*Blow the shofar (ram's horn) at the time of the New Moon, at the full moon, on our festival day. For this is a law for Yisra'el, And a right-ruling of the Elohim of Ya'aqob.*"

Now let's take a look at some of the traditions that brother Yehudah does on this day when they gather in their synagogues.

Greetings

- On this feast day, Yehudim usually greet each other with the words, "L'shanah tovah" (for a good year). This is a shortening of "L'shanah tovah tikatev v'taihatem," or to women, "L'shanah tovah tikatevi v'taihatemi," which means, "May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year."

Shofar/Trumpet Blasts

- While everyone is gathered, it is customary to hear someone blow 100 shofar blasts on a ram's horn. There are 4 different kinds of sounds that make up the 100 blasts:
 - The *Tekiah* is a long, single blast. It is a smooth, continuous note symbolizing the expression of joy and contentment.
 - The *Shevarim* are 3 short blasts. The 3 broken notes symbolize weeping.
 - The *Teruah* consists of 9 staccato notes sounded in very quick succession, like a short trill. This symbolizes trepidation, sorrow and sobbing.
 - The *Tekiah Gedolah* is the 100th blast, and means 'the last trump.' It is a very long, sustained final note, symbolizing the hope of redemption.

Apples and Honey - Bread and Honey

- It is customary to serve apples and honey as a symbol of the hope that the New Year will be sweet. It is also customary to dip the bread for the Motzi (blessing over the bread) in honey instead of the usual practice of sprinkling salt on it.

Round Loaf of Bread

- It is customary to serve a round-shaped bread for the Motzi (blessing over the bread), which symbolizes a crown.

Ten Days of Awe

- Yom Teruah begins a short period known as the '*Ten Days of Awe*', which lead up to and include the next commanded feast day, Yom Kippur. It is a time of introspection, reconciliation and preparation.

Tashlich

- Brother Yehudah performs this ceremony based on Micah 7:18-19. One will throw bread or rocks into the water to symbolize 'sins' that are cast into the sea and washed away.

Common names for this day and their meanings

- Yom Teruah - a day of blowing the trumpet - Num. 29:1
- Zichron Teruah - a remembrance of blowing of trumpets - Lev. 23:24
- Rosh HaShanah - head of the year (the most common term used by brother Yehudah)

Chag Sameach (Happy Feast) from MTOI and YMTOI