



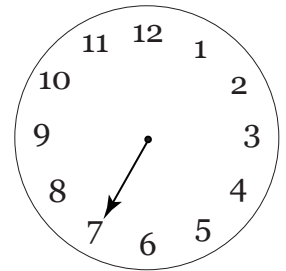
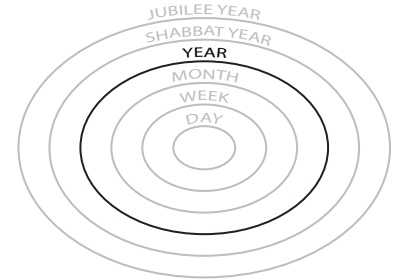
Yom T'ruah

I. Introduction

- a. Review—Spring Mo'adiym: less than 2-month period
 - i. Pesach (Passover)—14th of 1st month
 - ii. Feast of Matzah—day after Passover for seven days; 15th - 21st
 - iii. Beginning of the 49-day counting period from the omer—controversy; starts as early as second day of Matzah, ends as late as 12th day of third month
 - iv. Feast of Shavuot—one-day feast, occurring sometime between 5th and 13th days of 3rd month
- b. Spring Mo'adiym followed by 3.5 month summer period—no special activity on the calendar.
- c. This session: begins a look at the Fall Mo'adiym with “Rosh Hashana” (traditional)
- d. Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur—most observed Jewish holidays (next to Passover and Chanukah); considered the “High Holidays”
 - i. Since Judaism’s teachings on these days are so pervasive, yet so radically different from Scripture, we’ll begin with Judaism’s perspective (not to pick on or denigrate Judaism)
 - ii. Then we’ll see what Scripture says and make application

II. Rosh Hashanah—Traditional Judaism’s View of the Day

- a. The Jewish New Year—“Head of the Year”—one of four “new years” in Judaism; commemorates creation
- b. First of the “High Holidays” (second and “highest” is Yom Kippur), so called because of the solemn observance of the days
- c. Never falls on a Wednesday, Friday or Sunday in order to control the dates of Yom Kippur and the last day of Sukot.
- d. Judaism stresses repentance and returning to God; Rosh Hashanah considered an opportunity to repent for the past year’s transgressions and begin the new year with a “clean slate.”
- e. Begins the traditional season of the 10 days of awe.
 - i. According to Jewish tradition, God takes ten days to make his decision concerning the sinner’s repentance and pronounces judgment no sooner than Yom Kippur
 - ii. The day the “Book of Life” is opened—L’shana tovah tikatevu!—May you be inscribed [in the Book of Life] for a good year!
- f. Tashlich ceremony—Jews gather at a body of water to cast rocks or crumbs upon the water to symbolize their throwing away or casting off of their sins; Micah 7:19, “You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.”
- f. Other traditions
 - i. The wearing of white (to symbolize purity)
 - ii. Foods
 1. Round challah (braided egg bread)
 2. Fruit (grapes, pomegranates and apples)



- 3. Honey and honey cakes
- 4. Tzimmes (a honey-sweetened carrot dish)
- g. Reading the Akedah (binding of Isaac, Gen. 22)
- h. Primary feature—blowing of the shofar (ram’s horn)
 - i. According to Talmud, the sound of the shofar confuses Satan, preventing him from “bringing any charges against Jews before God on the Day of Judgment. When Satan hears the shofar blown so loud and so often, he will believe that the Messiah has arrived and that his influence and power over God will have come to an end.” (Kolatch)
 - ii. Traditionally 100 blasts of the shofar blown on this day.
- h. Summary: somber day of repentance and judgment, filled with many rich, long-standing traditions.

III. What Scripture Says

- a. Leviticus 23:23-25, Again the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “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.’” (NAS)
 - i. “Seventh month”—the middle of the year
 - ii. “First of the month”—it is a new moon, chodesh
 - iii. “you shall have a rest”—שַׁבָּתוֹן, shabaton
 - 1. not a Shabbat like the seventh day or Yom Kippur
 - 2. But more restful than the Spring Mo’adiym
 - iv. “a reminder”—זִכְרוֹן, zik’ron; remember what? It doesn’t say.
 - v. “by blowing of *trumpets*”
 - 1. Traditionally, shofars (ram’s horns)
 - 2. The word “shofar” appears nowhere in the passage. Is it implied? We’ll see.
 - 3. תְּרוּעָה, t’ruah—blowing, or shouting—my definition: loud blasts [of sound]
 - 4. We’ll come back to t’ruah
 - vi. “holy convocation”—a meeting with God
 - vii. “you shall not do any laborious work”—it’s a no-work day
 - viii. “present... [a fire]”—sacrifice
- b. Numbers 29:1 “Now in the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall also have a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work. It will be to you a day for blowing *trumpets*.”
 - i. Aside from the following verses that expand on the sacrifices, this verse gives no new information besides actually calling it “a day for blowing”—Yom T’ruah
 - ii. Again, “shofar” does not occur
- c. This is all that Scripture explicitly says about Yom T’ruah
- d. Note: Scripture never calls Yom T’ruah a “feast”. “Feast of Trumpets” is a misnomer.

IV. Comparing the Perspectives of Judaism and Scripture

- a. Judaism—New Year; Scripture—Middle of the Year
 - i. Scriptural defense of Jewish view: “turn of the year” Ex. 34:22 —actually a reference to Sukkot and the end of an annual agricultural cycle

- ii. Scriptural defense of Jewish view: Lev.25:9 sounding the shofar in the year of Jubilee—actually, the verse is about Yom Kippur.
- b. Judaism—Yom T’ruah is a high holiday; Scripture—there is no higher holy day than Shabbat except Yom Kippur
- c. Judaism—manipulates date; Scripture—determined by the new moon
- d. Judaism—repentance, judgment; Scripture: remembering
- e. Judaism—tashlich; throwing away our own sins; Scripture—we can’t get rid of our sins, they must be taken away. John 1:29 “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”
- f. Judaism—book of life opened annually; Scripture—book of life opened at the end by Yeshua Himself (Rev. 3:5, 13:8, 20:15). Scripture may also suggest that our names are or are not in the Book of Life “from the foundation of the world”
- g. Judaism—blowing the shofar; Scripture—says nothing explicit about the shofar, only “t’ruah”

V. T’ruah

- a. Closest Scripture gets to linking the shofar with Yom T’ruah: Psalm 81:3 “Blow the shofar at the new moon, At the full moon, on our feast day.”
 - i. Yom T’ruah is a chodesh (new moon), and the Feast of Sukot begins on the 15th of the 7th month, which is full moon.
 - ii. The only other option on the calendar would be in the Spring with the Feast of Matzah, but Scripture puts no special emphasis on the first chodesh of the year.
- b. So why does Judaism link the shofar with Yom T’ruah? I don’t know. Only once does Scripture report the shofar making t’ruah—in Leviticus 25:9 on Yom Kippur in the Year of Jubilee. (Psalm 47:5 and Jeremiah 4:19 are not explicit, but may also indicate a similar connection)
- c. The shofar does occur in many passages along *with* t’ruah. So, if t’ruah is not the blast of the shofar, what is it? Here are some examples.
 - i. Shouts of alarm and warning
 - 1. Joshua 6:5-6, “It shall be that when they make a long blast with the ram’s horn, and when you hear the sound of the shofar, all **the people shall shout with a great t’ruah**; and the wall of the city will fall down flat.... So the people shouted, and... blew the shofarot [plural]; and when the people heard the sound of the shofar, **the people shouted with a great t’ruah** and the wall fell down flat....”
 - 2. Amos 2:2, “So I will send fire upon Moab and it will consume the citadels of Kerioth; and Moab will die amid tumult, **with war cries (t’ruah)** and the sound of the shofar.”
 - ii. The joyful shout or noise of praise
 - 1. Job 8:21, “He will fill your mouth with laughter **and your lips with t’ruah.**”
 - 2. Ezra 3:11, “They sang, praising and giving thanks to Adonai, saying, ‘For He is good, for His loving kindness is upon Israel forever.’ And all **the people shouted with a great t’ruah** when they praised Adonai because the foundation of the house of Adonai was laid. Yet many of the... old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, while many **shouted (t’ruah) aloud for joy**, so that the people could not distinguish **the sound**

of the t'ruah of joy from the sound of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud t'ruah, and the sound was heard far away."

3. Psalm 150:5, "Praise Him with resounding cymbals; praise Him with loud-clashing (t'ruah) cymbals!"
- d. What is t'ruah? Loud blasts [of sound]! Can t'ruah only be made with a shofar? No. In fact, according to Scripture, t'ruah is primarily made with our mouths. Of course, this does not *exclude* the shofar.

VI. Messianic/Eschatological Significance of Yom T'ruah

- a. Zephaniah 1:14-16 "Near is the great day of the LORD, Near and coming very quickly; Listen, the day of the LORD! In it the warrior cries out bitterly. A day of wrath is that day, A day of trouble and distress, A day of destruction and desolation, A day of darkness and gloom, A day of clouds and thick darkness, A day of shofar and t'ruah Against the fortified cities And the high corner towers."
- b. Since Scripture also links t'ruah and the shofar with The Day of Adonai, this has led many to connect Yom T'ruah with the Day of Adonai. In my opinion, this is forcing a connection where none really exists.
- c. While there is certainly a connection between t'ruah, the sounding of the trumpet, and the raising of the dead (1Co.15:51-52), and other significant end-time events, Yom T'ruah is not a day celebrating future events. On the contrary, Scripture tells us explicitly that it is for remembering.
- d. "In the most literal sense, and given the other occurrences of these words throughout Scripture, the phrase can be rendered, "remembrance (zik'ron) [with] loud blasts [of sound] (t'ruah)." In other words, we are supposed to remember or memorialize something, and this is either to be caused by or done in conjunction with loud blasts of sound.... When we consider t'ruah in conjunction with the command for zik'ron (remembrance), maybe there is something that has to be jolted back to our minds by the surprising sounds of t'ruah—something we need to remember after the long, hot summer. Indeed, this moed of zik'ron t'ruah opens a season of appointed times memorializing the great and wonderful provision, protection, atonement and deliverance of Adonai—things we are constantly prone to forget. Perhaps we are to open our mouths with shouts of joy and make sounds of praise with our musical instruments in celebration of our great God, and in remembrance of His goodness, faithfulness and loving-kindness."

VII. How Do We Do It?

- a. What we know: rest, no work, have a holy convocation, remember with t'ruah.
- b. Don't forget: the themes of chodesh apply as well—renewal, refreshing, praise and worship; also **Nehemiah 8:1-12**
- c. Yom T'ruah prepares us for Yom Kippur, but it's far from being a somber, repentant event. No matter what we remember—good or bad—in Messiah, we have reason to rejoice and praise Adonai with the joyful shout of t'ruah.
- d. Can we keep the traditions of Judaism and still keep with the spirit of the day? I'll leave that for you to decide. To me, Psalm 150 is the best description of how Yom T'ruah should be.