

THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS

“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 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, an holy convocation.” (Leviticus 23:23-24 (KJV))

In the United States, weather warnings, and other alerts, are preceded on radio and television by a series of loud and distinctive sounds. When you hear these sounds it is wise to stop whatever you are doing and pay attention. An important announcement is about to be made.

In Bible times the trumpet served the same purpose.

- When the trumpet sounded the people were to assemble at Mt. Sinai (Ex. 19:13).
- The sound of the trumpet called the Israelites to assemble (Nu. 10:1 - 7).
- The sound of the trumpet warned of an attack by the enemy (Ez. 33:4).
- The sound of the trumpet summoned an army to battle (1 Cor. 14:8).
- The sound of the trumpet will signal the return of Christ (1 Thess. 4:16).
- The sound of the trumpet will announce the resurrection of the dead (1 Cor. 15:52).
- Etc.

Since the Hebrews observed a lunar calendar, the new moon signaled the first of the month. Every new moon was announced by the sound of the trumpet (Nu. 10:10). The first day of the seventh month, however, the month of Tishri, was special. It not only was the beginning of the month, it was also the beginning of their civil year. Modern Jews call this Rosh Hashanah. The word “Rosh” means “head”. The word “ha” means “the”. The word “shanah” means “year”. Thus Rosh Hashanah means the head, or beginning of the year. This expression is only found once in the Bible (Ez. 40:1). The original instructions for this special day given in Leviticus are expanded in Numbers 29:1 - 6. Here more details are given about the appropriate sacrifices and offerings to be made at the Feast of Trumpets. On this day Nehemiah read the Law to those recently delivered from captivity. It was a joyous time and mourning and weeping were forbidden (Neh. 8:1 - 12).

The Jewish religious year, as you know, began in the Spring in the month of Abib, or Nisan. The Lord told Moses to begin their year on the first day of that month (Ex. 12:2). On the 10th day of that month they were to shut up a lamb without blemish, and on the 14th day they were to sacrifice it as a Passover Lamb. There was no confusion among the Jews about this, for their civil year began on the 1st day of the 7th month of their religious year as our text indicates.

It is encouraging to note that God is not just interested in our spiritual life, but also in our civil life as well. Mankind is unique! We are spirit, soul, and body and God wants us to be sanctified and blameless in all three dimensions of our life (1 Thess. 5:23). Their civil year began with the Feast of Trumpets. Ten days later was the Day of Atonement. Five days after that was the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:23 - 34). The Feast of Trumpets got their attention. The Day of Atonement focused on the forgiveness of sins. The Feast of Tabernacles focused on the Fall harvest and God's divine protections for His people for 40 years in the wilderness.

The Word of God is alive and active and can influence our lives in many profound ways that are not immediately obvious. For the followers of Jesus this Jewish feast can also provide a wake up call. Remember, the things written before were written for our learning (Rom. 15:4). **“Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. 9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,” (1 Thessalonians 5:6-9 KJV)**