

# *Hearing the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah*

Some Reflections - Tim Hegg

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In the principle texts on Rosh Hashanah (Lev. 23:23-25; Num 29:1), the festival itself is primarily marked by the blowing of the shofar. Interestingly, neither text gives any specific explanation for the purpose or meaning of blowing the shofar at this time. We may therefore assume that the purposes given throughout the Tanach regarding the blowing of the shofar are to be contemplated on this special day.

The following are a few of the many instances found in the Tanach which teach about the blowing of the shofar. Let us consider the meaning of each, and make a personal application as we hear the shofar sounded this Rosh Hashanah.

## 1. Exodus 19:16

So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who *were* in the camp trembled.

Lessons:

- a. The blowing of the shofar called the people to pay close attention, to give heed to what was about to happen.
- b. The blowing of the shofar announced that the King was about to speak—to give His Torah for His people.

Lessons: How is G-d attempting to get our attention? What specific aspect of His word is He urging upon us, to which He is calling each of us to pay attention? Are we willing to submit to His sovereign rule in every area of our life?

## 2. Ezekiel 33:4

then he who hears the sound of the trumpet and does not take warning, and a sword comes and takes him away, his blood will be on his own head.

Lessons:

- a. The blowing of the shofar alerts of danger.
- b. It is the responsibility of the prophets (like Ezekiel) to sound the warning blast

Lessons: Are we heeding the warnings of the prophets, especially regarding the end-times?

## 3. Amos 3:6

If a trumpet is blown in a city will not the people tremble? If a calamity occurs in a city has not the L-rd done it?

Lessons:

- a. Like an air-raid siren, the sound of the shofar caused a sense of trembling for what it signalled.
- b. Such a shofar blast marked the presence of danger—a danger of divine proportions.

Lessons: Do we have a proper fear of G-d, humbling ourselves under His mighty hand?

## 4. Zeph. 1:14-16 / 1 Thess 4:16-18

Near is the great day of the L-rd, near and coming very quickly . . . A day of trumpet and battle cry (shout).

For the L-rd Himself will descend from heaven with a shout (battle cry), with the voice of *the* archangel, and with the trumpet of G-d; and the dead in Messiah shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in clouds to meet the L-rd in the air, and thus we shall always be with the L-rd. Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Lessons:

- a. The final day of the L-rd is announced with a trumpet call, as a warrior coming to conquer His enemies and rescue His people.
- b. The day marks utter destruction for all who have rejected G-d's rule, but peace and victory for those who bow to His kingship.

Application: if Yeshua were to return today, would you be ready? Would He find you being faithful to Him?