

## Listening for the Shofar: Thoughts on Yom Teruah

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notes by Tim Hegg

### Why has God Given us the *Mo'adim*?

- The Hebrew word “*mo'adim*” (מוֹעֲדִים) means “appointed times,” that is, days of special significance which are scheduled to be observed.
- Thus, the *mo'adim* are appointed by God in order to teach us important lessons.
- We first hear of “*mo'adim*” in the creation account:

Then God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for *mo'adim* and for days and years...” (Gen 1:14)

- Signs: primarily for marking special events in history.
- *mo'adim*: seasons; appointed times to be observed.
- days: grouping days into months (lunar)
- years: grouping months into years (solar)
- The first *mo'ed* was the Shabbat, which God revealed at the beginning of creation.

By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made. (Gen 2:2–3)

- In the course of history, we discover that Shabbat became the sign of God’s covenant with Israel:

So the sons of Israel shall observe the sabbath, to celebrate [make] the sabbath throughout their generations a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel forever; for in six days Adonai made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day He ceased from labor, and was refreshed.” (Ex 31:16–17)

- But what does God’s act of creating in six days and resting on the seventh have to do with the covenant God made with Israel?
  - As Creator, God shows Himself to be sovereign.
  - As Sovereign, He has both the right and ability to choose a single nation to be His chosen people.
  - As Creator & Sovereign, He proves Himself to be the one and only true God.
  - Therefore Israel is to serve Him and only Him.

You [Israel] only have I chosen among all the families of the earth; Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities. (Amos 3:2)

### **But Why has God Given us the Other *Mo‘adim*?**

- He has commanded us to observe the other *mo‘adim* because these too are a sign of the eternal covenant He has made with Israel and those chosen from the nations to join His covenant people.

But as for you, speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘You shall surely observe My sabbaths; for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am Adonai who sanctifies you. (Ex 31:13)

- Note: “sabbaths” (plural)
- Note: “sign” (singular)
- This means that the *mo‘adim* (Festivals) taken together are a sign of God’s relationship with His people.

### **The Story of the *Mo‘adim*: God’s Faithful Love for His Bride**

- The *mo‘adim* present a picture of God as “husband” and Israel as “wife.”
  - Pesach: the bride price – redeeming the Bride
  - Shavuot: giving of the Torah; the ketubah, the marriage contract.
  - Yom Teruah: the arrival of the glorious Groom
  - Yom Kippur: cleansing & beautifying the Bride
  - Sukkot: the Wedding; under the Chuppah; dwelling together forever.

## Yom Teruah: The Arrival of the Glorious Groom

- Yom Teruah reminds us in a special way every year that we must be anticipating Yeshua's return.
  - The sound of the shofar reminds us that a day is coming when the "trump of the Lord" will sound.

For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Messiah will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words. (1 Thess 4:16–18)

- We must be preparing for His return
  - ~ being diligent in our own walk of faith
  - ~ being faithful in our service to our Master
  - ~ making disciples of all the nations
- Are we anticipating the return of Yeshua our Lord? Is the promise of His return a source of strength for us?
- Are we preparing to meet Him? Are we engaged in the work He has called us to do?
- Are we being lights to those lost in our dark world, pointing them to the One Who is the way, the truth, and the life? (Jn 14:6)

*See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us,  
that we would be called children of God; and such we are.  
For this reason the world does not know us,  
because it did not know Him.  
Beloved, now we are children of God,  
and it has not appeared as yet what we will be.  
We know that when He appears, we will be like Him,  
because we will see Him just as He is.  
And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him  
purifies himself, just as He is pure.*

1John 3:1–3

