

THE TRUMPET BLAST OF GOD

The trumpet is, without question, the most popular instrument mentioned in the bible. In ancient Israel the trumpet was not only a musical instrument, it was an instrument that represented both celebration and war. What is this instrument's significance today? What can we learn from this ancient symbol? Let's start by taking a look at one of the most popular verses that talk about it.



1 Thessalonians 4:16 *“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. and the dead in Christ will rise first.”*

When the Messiah comes back, the Word says the dead in Christ will rise first at the sound of the trumpet. It could have said “at the sound of his voice,” but He didn’t. It is the frequency of the trumpet blast that releases all those waiting for the resurrection of the just. What is it about the trumpet that has such power, such authority? Let’s keep digging.

Exodus 19:13 After telling Moses that no one is to come past the barrier around Mt. Sinai, Yahweh tells him, *“...When the trumpet sounds long, they shall come near the mountain.”*

This is the first time the word *trumpet* is used in our English Bibles, and it’s used in the context of God calling out to His people. Can you see the connection to 1 Thessalonians and the event in Exodus? Both times, Yahweh uses the trumpet to call His people to Him. Interestingly enough, the word trumpet in the above verse is the exact same word for the year of jubilee – *yovel* – and is the only time the Bible uses it for the sound of the trumpet. In using this word here, God is

trying to tell His people that the betrothal ceremony that was about to happen at the giving of His instructions was like a jubilee. This is the exact moment that the Israelites **really** became free from Egypt and all debts were canceled. The moment they accepted the covenant and chose to come near Him, they were free. Every moment after that was them walking out their “salvation” and newfound freedom. The yovel year also commenced at the sound of a ram’s horn, or trumpet, and is connected to the time when the Messiah will come back and we will finally be free as we once again come up the mountain of God to pay homage to the King of kings.

The Walls of Jericho

Joshua chapter six features the story of Jericho. Joshua instructs the people to march around the city once each day for six days as the priests blow the rams’ horns. On the seventh day they were to march with the ark as the priests blew the trumpets seven times. On the seventh time all the people were to shout at the top of their lungs, and the trumpets were to grow louder. It was the trumpet mixed with the sound of the people’s voices that caused the walls of Jericho to come tumbling down. Was this some mystical formula for warfare? Not at all. The God of Israel was letting the whole world know that the gates of hell will not prevail against His people and that a man’s voice is connected to a trumpet. This is an important fact that we will unpack more in a moment.

Beyond the frequency of the trumpet and the miracle that happened that day in Jericho, there is something far more important that Yahweh is trying to reveal. Why does He tell us the story of the Israelites besieging Jericho? What was His original intent? He says nothing without having a reason and everything He tries to teach us is going to be related to something about His character.

What happened at Jericho was definitely an example of unconventional warfare. Why did Yahweh tell Joshua to do what He did when the Israelites had Jericho completely outnumbered? They could have taken over the city with less than half the men they had available and wouldn't have experienced a single loss of life. Why engage in this strange act of marching and blowing of trumpets and shouting? Can you imagine being an Israelite warrior ready for battle and having your commander-in-chief tell you to stand there and yell rather than storming the city?

Have you ever had a situation in life where you had a bit of a war in front of you, a situation that required you to take action in order for you to overtake and overcome? The answer was within your grasp, and you could gain victory without a problem. What do we normally do in situations like that? We act! We follow our instincts and do what we know we can do to accomplish the goal before us. What do we do when the situation is overwhelming and we don’t know what to do? We come to God for help. It seems we only come to Him for help when we FEEL like we need Him. He becomes more of our crutch than our daily dependence for everything. This story teaches us how much Yahweh desires us to communicate and consult with Him on **everything**...every day...all the time.

The story of Jericho tells us that Yahweh is a God of unconventional warfare. He fights differently than we do. He started the first battle in the Promised Land by establishing that HE was the one that was going to go before His people and that it was HE who had the power to

subdue their enemies. He wanted them to **FULLY** rely on Him in **EVERY** situation regardless of whether or not they thought they had control over it or could do it themselves. He wanted to be consulted for strategy before they ever engaged in anything.

How often do we plunge into a situation headfirst only to find out later that there was no water in the pool? I've certainly had my share of situations where people have done things to me that are unfair, unbiblical, and even destructive. In my flesh, I knew exactly what I could have done to **"take care of it."** But the Father has taught me that although I could have taken "Jericho" on my own, He wanted to be consulted first. And in my consulting, He steered me to do things completely differently than I normally would have. Sometimes we want revenge when He wants justice. Doing things our way puts us in charge and supersedes His desire that we trust Him and let Him fight our battles for us. He knows what needs to be done and when. His ways are higher than our ways and many times don't make sense to us until He finally chooses to reveal His strategy.

Shofar

The most common name for a trumpet in the Bible is the Hebrew word *shofar*. In biblical times, a shofar was mainly a ram's horn but could also be the long, curved horn of a kudu. Both were used for many different purposes. They were blown on new moons, feast days, times of war, to warn the people, and for other significant events. They were designed as an instrument of praise and warning. In the Hebrew, *shofar* is spelled *shin*, *vav*, *pey*, *resh*. In the ancient Paleo pictograph Hebrew, where every letter was originally a picture that had its own meaning, the word *shofar* had a much deeper meaning. Originally, the letter *shin* was like fire or teeth and meant "to devour, all-consuming fire, to destroy, or El Shaddai; the all-consuming fire of God." *Vav* was a nail or tent peg that meant "nail, to secure, bridge, or connect." *Pey* meant "mouth." And *resh* was a picture of a man's head and meant "head or beginning." As a matter of fact, Rosh Hashanah literally means "Head of the New Year." When you put all that together, the word *shofar* means "The all-consuming fire of God connected to the mouth brings a new beginning." And amazingly, this is the exact picture of Yom Teruah, the Feast of Trumpets. When the trumpet of God is placed in the mouth of one of His servants, it brings about a new beginning and a new year. When He comes riding on the clouds, and that great trumpet blast is heard, it will announce the true "Head" of mankind and will usher in a new beginning.

Psalms 3:4 *"I cried to the LORD with my voice, and He heard me from His holy hill."*

Psalms 26:7 *"That I may proclaim with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all your wondrous works."*

Psalms 28:6 *"Blessed be the LORD, because He has heard the voice of my supplications!"*

The trumpet of our voice is a powerful weapon. It is to be used in the same way as the shofar: in praise and thanksgiving, in bringing our prayers and supplications before Him, as well as in proclaiming war against the enemy. But there is one thing that is true about a trumpet or shofar.

When it gets played, it has to be played with a very clear and distinct note or it won't achieve its objectives.

I Corinthians 14:8 *"For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle?"*

Each of us is a trumpet of God. We are sounding our shofars and proclaiming the good news that has changed our lives. In doing so, we need to make sure that we're playing the right notes, the very clear sound of the voice of God speaking through us. When we mix our voice, our flesh, with the voice of God, the sound becomes unclear and confuses all those who hear it. It's all about the wind that goes through the trumpet.

Revelation 4:1 *"...And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me..."*

John says the very voice of the Messiah sounded like a shofar. So now we know whose voice really brought down the walls of Jericho that day. It was not the voice of the people, nor the sound of the shofars that were blasting away. It was the voice of God *through* the voice of those instruments that caused those walls to come tumbling down. Their obedience caused the Spirit of Yahweh to partner with them and accomplish something that they could not possibly do on their own. It was not their logic nor their might, but the wind (ruach) of the Spirit blowing through their trumpets that created the miracle right before their eyes.

In the same way, Yom Teruah, the day of blowing the trumpets, is like the Israelites circling Jericho six times blowing the shofar. On the seventh day, the voice of God joined with them, the walls came down, and the quest for the Promised Land began. In scripture, each prophetic day is a thousand years. Since the time of Adam we are at the end of the six thousandth year, or at the end of the sixth day. We have been marching around this enemy camp for six thousand years and the seventh day is approaching fast. While we have been on our own for these last six "days," surrounding the enemy and waiting for the command to charge, that seventh day will come and the Messiah will appear with a shout of His trumpet. The gates of hell will not prevail against Him. They will fall before us and we will plunder the enemy once and for all.

Zechariah 4:6 *"...Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit says the LORD of hosts."*

Until then, we would do well to remember that the power of our "trumpet" lies in the right wind blowing through it. When it is our wind, it is nothing but hot air that produces an unclear sound. When it is His wind and His Spirit, it is crystal clear and there is no enemy fortress that can withstand it. When we let Yahweh strategize for us and only speak what He tells us to speak with the power of love, every heart melts and victory becomes imminent!

Chag Sameach (Joyous Festival, Happy Holiday!)

Jim Staley