

GROWING IN GOD PODCAST



GIG269 – The Feast of Trumpets

I am excited about this podcast because we are going to talk about the Feast of Trumpets, or Rosh Hashanah. These Fall feasts are very exciting to me because I believe that they are all looking for a fulfillment today. They are looking for a fulfillment in Christ that has not transpired yet, and we should come before them with an anticipation. So I am, I am anticipating the Feast of Trumpets. Let's talk about it.

In the Hebrew tradition now it is called Rosh Hashanah, or the Head of the Year, and it is celebrated as New Year's Day. That is a fun time and a great expression. But we have to realize that this celebration of New Year's was something that did not transpire until the end of Biblical times. So before that, what is it that the Feast of Trumpets meant, or what was being looked to as the Feast of Trumpets? We must go to Leviticus the twenty-third chapter, verses 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.'" So this was the first announcement and proclamation that Israel was to celebrate this day, this first day of the month, the month of Tishrei.

Now we go to Numbers 29, verse 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.'" Now we have this idea that it was a day of trumpets. It was a holy convocation. It was a day of rest, which means a Sabbath, just as though it was Saturday; no matter what day it fell on, you celebrate it as a Sabbath. You do no work. You have a holy convocation for all Israel to come together. These were the times when all of Israel came up to Jerusalem to celebrate these appointed times with God. An appointment meant God was setting up a time to meet with you; so God was going to do something.

With most of the feasts we can simply understand what it is that God is doing; for instance, with Passover. We know that during Passover, they put the blood of the lamb on the doorposts in Egypt, and that blood saved the household with that sacrifice from the death angel that was coming through all of Egypt. With the Egyptians, all of the firstborn died, but with anyone in Israel who had put the blood over the doorposts, they were saved. So we understand that it is a time of being delivered from the death angel. It was a time of being delivered from slavery. When we look at most of the appointed times, or the feasts, the fasts, the celebrations that God appointed, it is very clear what it is that Israel was celebrating. Not so with the Feast of Trumpets. Okay, you are supposed to blow a trumpet. You are supposed to have a holy convocation. You are supposed to have a Sabbath rest. But why? What is it that you are looking for? Well, I think we have to look a little bit into the terminology here, a little bit into the Hebrew that is being used, if we are going to really be able to understand what it is that God is talking to us about.

When we look in Leviticus 23 and it says that it is a day of reminder, *zikaron* is the word that is being used in Hebrew. If you look that up in a lexicon, the word means a memorial, as well as a remembrance or reminder. Now to me, those are two very distinct things; and I think in the Feast of Trumpets, both are taking place. We are to have a memorial. A memorial is a celebration of something that took place historically. You build a monument, you memorialize an event in history. A reminder, to me, is more of something you are looking forward to. I have to remind myself about my to-do list, something I am supposed to do. So both of these really take place during Trumpets. They both have an expression. What is it then that we are memorializing, and what is it that we are being reminded of? To me, when I think of memorializing an event surrounding Trumpets, I think about Exodus 19, and we will start reading at verse 18. This is where God came down onto Mount Sinai and appeared on the earth. This is the first occurrence of a trumpet blast in the Scriptures. This is what I believe we memorialize when we come to this time of Trumpets. Exodus 19 verses 18-20 says,

Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently. When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him with thunder. The Lord came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; and the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

This to me is what we memorialize. We find that God came to earth, and in His coming He announced His Presence with a trumpet. This was a tremendous occasion. In the beginning with Adam, God would come down to the garden and walk with him in the cool of the evening and have conversation. But after the fall of man, we do not find that being true. We find that God now is relating to man from heaven, and man has to cry out to God in order to get to Him to sacrifice, to build altars, to do these things, because God is no longer touched down and dwelling in the earth as He was able to do or was doing during the day of Adam and during the days of the Garden. Once the fall of man transpired, this idea of God being present on the earth was not something that was familiar and transpired all the time. So God announces His return to earth on Mount Sinai with this blast of the shofar. This is the first shofar, the first trumpet blast, that we find in the Scriptures. It was a very significant time, very worthy of being memorialized.

So I believe that when we come to the Day of Trumpets, Yom Teruah, we are looking at this event of God returning to earth with the blast of a trumpet; and we know this is what was probably being spoken of to memorialize. But what about the remembrance? What are we remembering? Well, again, I believe what we are looking forward to is the promise that God gave, that He once again will return to the earth. Not only did He come during the days of Sinai, but He has said that He will come again. So the first trump that we find is the trump in Exodus, when He comes to Mount Sinai. The last trump we also find is the fulfillment of this promise that He will return to the earth. Let's look at First Thessalonians 4, verses 13-17.

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout [with a teruah, a shout], with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God [this last trump], and the dead in Christ 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.

So God descends from heaven back onto the earth at this last trump. I believe these are the two points that are being presented to us at the Feast of Trumpets. The first occurrence of the trumpet, when He descends from heaven onto earth; the last trump, when He once again descends. It is the promise to us of His return. So this, to me, is what the remembrance is about. Why we have this Day of Trumpets is to remember. And it is a Sabbath, it is a time of rest; it is a time of calling all of the congregation together into a holy convocation before the Lord. This is one of the big mysteries and points of the Feast of Trumpets. It is not that clear, just upon the reading of the verses, why we have this feast. Why is it one of the appointed times? I believe this memorializing and remembering are the reasons for this time of Trumpets.

But there is yet another mystery that goes along with the Day of Trumpets, and that has to do with time. If we are looking forward to this trumpet blast that sees the return of the Lord to the earth, we have to ask, "When does this transpire?" And something is very unique about the Day of Trumpets: Yom Teruah is the only feast or appointed time in the Hebrew Scriptures that is shrouded in a mystery of time. I know it seems very simple to celebrate the Day of Trumpets. You say, "Just go to the drawer and pull out your Jewish calendar. Look at the date, get yourself ready, and celebrate away." But it is not that simple if you put yourself back in the time when Israel was commanded to celebrate this time of the feast. We know that Israel is very unique in that it goes according to a lunar calendar, not like our Gregorian calendar. It is a lunar calendar, so it is different in that aspect of how everything works. Another aspect that is quite unique is that in Israel, you celebrate the beginning of the day when the sun goes down. Now most places that I am aware of recognize the beginning of the day at sunrise; we certainly do that in North America. When the sun comes up, that is the beginning of the day. When the sun goes down, that is the end of our day. But not so with Israel. When the sun goes down, that is the beginning of the day. So we have two unique aspects here. We have this lunar calendar, and we have the fact that the day begins with the sunset.

When you have a lunar calendar then, and you are trying to find the beginning of the month, you have to do it by the sighting of the moon. That would make sense. It still does not seem to be a problem; but it is quite problematic when you think about it. This Feast of Trumpets was to be celebrated on the first day of the month of Tishrei – how do you find when the month begins, and how do you find when the day begins? And that is why I am saying it is a mystery of time. In order to recognize the first day, their tradition was that they would go to a mountain and people would look to see the new moon arise from the horizon. Now, once the moon did arise and it was sighted, they had to go down the mountain to the Sanhedrin and report with at least two witnesses, reliably, that they had witnessed the moon rising. Therefore the Sanhedrin would declare the first day of Tishrei, or any other month, every month was done the same way. The Sanhedrin would declare, "Okay, now it is the first day of the month, we have seen the new moon rising." But with this appointed time of Trumpets, it begins on the first day. When does the day begin? The day begins at sundown. The problem is, the moon does not arise at sundown. So the day begins before you can declare the new month; you can see the issue that was at hand. So this time of Trumpets is a mystery of time that had to be figured out.

What you could say about the Feast of Trumpets is that no one knew the day or the hour that the Feast of Trumpets began, because you could not exactly pinpoint the day or the hour. You did not know when it was. In fact, to this day Rosh Hashanah is celebrated over a two-day period, even though it is a one-day event. The reason for that is coming out of history: they did not know the day, when the day would be, would it be this day or the next day? Therefore, they had to celebrate it over two days; because until the moon was sighted and the Sanhedrin declared that, "Yes, this is in fact the first day," there was no

way to tell. But you had to start celebrating the feast at sundown, the Day of Trumpets, when really nobody knew the day or the hour that the Day of Trumpets would be celebrated.

Now that should remind us of a Scripture, so I want to go to Matthew the twenty-fourth chapter, at verses 29-37. This is Jesus speaking.

“But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet [there is our trumpet again] and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near; so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door. Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all of these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away. But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah.”

It goes on down to verse 42 and says, “Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming.” This is a repeated theme, there are so many places; you can look it up in a concordance to find out how often it is said to be on the alert. “Be on the alert, you do not know the day or the hour.” This is again, I think, pointing to the time of the Day of Trumpets. I think God is giving us a picture here. Sometimes you broadcast something that you cannot know exactly, and He is talking about that in this parable. He says, “Learn the parable of the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door.”

So God does not want us to be ignorant, and it is not that we cannot know the time. Remember that the feasts are called the appointed times. So this is a time. When we go to Mark, for instance, in the thirteenth chapter at verse 33 it says, “Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time will come.” So we come to these appointed times of God. Now we may not know the day or the hour, but we can know the season. He is talking about the fig tree: when certain things are happening, the branches are getting soft and the buds are coming out, you know that you are in the season. Again, when He takes us into the parable about the wise and foolish virgins, they knew that it was the time for the wedding feast, and they had gathered for the wedding feast. They knew that it was ready to happen right around that moment; they just did not know the exact moment, and so some of them did not bring enough oil. We see the similar thing. I believe God is pointing to us to say, “Hey, if you are looking for the season, then look at this appointed time.” The appointed time of Trumpets is all about the return of the Lord. And so He is helping us, because in this feast we are remembering His first coming down on Sinai, we are remembering that He has promised to return and that He will return with the shout of the trumpet. We realize that this feast is shrouded in a mystery of time; but we can know certain things about the season, about the appointment of time, even if we cannot know the exact day and the hour.

So what is our response to be? Our response is to be on the alert. We are to be looking out. What does the Feast of Trumpets tell us? It gets our attention. That is what a trumpet blast is for, to get your

attention, to call you to attention. And we remember that the teruah is also our voice echoing back. What are we echoing? Well, we are echoing the words of Revelation the twenty-second chapter. It says in verses 17-21,

The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost. I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book. He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming quickly." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all.

This is a time when the blast of the trumpet will announce His coming. It is a time when our voices will cry out back unto Him, "Come, Lord Jesus, Come, Yeshua," at this time. It will be as we were taught to pray, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done," in this timeframe.

So we find the reasons, the drive that we have, the excitement that we have, the anticipation that we have for this great Feast of Trumpets. First of all, I want you to remember that we find these directions in Leviticus 23:23 and Numbers 29:1. God directs Israel to observe a Sabbath rest, to memorialize a time, and also to remember a time that is coming, with the blowing of the trumpet, a holy convocation. I believe it is memorializing Sinai. It is reminding us that He will come again at the last trump as He did at Mount Sinai. I also would have you remember that this promised trump, this last trump, is God establishing His return to the earth, His heavenly Kingdom coming onto the earth. It is what we believe for, it is what we look forward to. He is coming. He will return, and He will enthrone His Son Yeshua HaMashiach as King of kings and Lord of lords on the throne of David, to rule and reign forever.

So, number three, I would say we should be on the alert, as the Scriptures tell us over and over and over: don't fall asleep, be alert. When we come to the trumpet, let the trumpet blast awaken us to the time that we are living in, to the season that we are in. We may not know the day or the hour, but I believe we are in that great season, and we should be on the alert. We should watch and pray that we fall not into temptation, but we should believe to be those wise virgins that are prepared and observe His return and the day of His coming.

Lastly, I would say that our Yom Teruah is that prophetic cry of the Day of Trumpets that should be on our lips continually, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on this earth as it is in heaven. So come, Lord Jesus."