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Two Silver Trumpets
10: 1-10

Two silver trumpets DIG: What were the purposes of the trumpets in the life of God's people in the past? What will the trumpet's purpose be in the future? How will these trumpets help the Israelites journey through the wilderness? What does it say about God that He is concerned with such details?

REFLECT: What aspects of your own life has ADONAI shown special concern for lately? Just how does he show His concerns? What does this teach you about Him? About yourself? When God wants to get your attention and give you marching orders, what "trumpet blast" does He use?

**When the trumpets were sounded with short blasts,
it signaled that it was time to follow the fire-cloud and move the entire camp.**

We now have come to the preparation for the march. At **God's** command, **the trumpets sounded** and the people assembled in marching formation. Thus, the use of **the trumpets** was **Isra'el's** response to the divine signal given by **the fire-cloud** (**to see link click Bk – The Pillar of Cloud and Fire**). The image of **the fire-cloud** and **God's** leading of the people in **Numbers 9**, is complemented by the leadership and guidance provided by **the sons of Aaron** through the blowing of **silver trumpets**.

Throughout these early chapters of **Numbers** there is a topical presentation rather than a chronological arrangement of the material. They have been telling us the story of **the Israelite's** preparations to leave Mount Sinai. In the first four chapters of **Numbers**, **they** took **a census** (see **An – The Levitical Census**) and assigned **the Levites** to **their** various tasks (see **Ar – The Four Camps of Levites**). **Numbers 7-10** is a flashback and relates how **Isra'el** was ready to depart from Mount Sinai. **Chapters 9** and **10** tell of the final preparation before the departure

from Saini as a flashback **on the twentieth of the second month of the second year (10:11)**; the observance of **the second Passover** six days earlier **(9:1-14)**; **the pillar cloud and fire** as a guide **(9:15-23)**; **the trumpet signals** for assembling **the people** and **its leaders** and for breaking camp **(10:1-10)**; the order of march **(10:11-28)**, and a narrative relating a different marching order **(10:29-36)**.[152]



ADONAI said to Moshe, "Make two trumpets; make them of hammered silver. Use them for summoning the community and for sounding the call to break camp and move on" (10:1-2). The trumpets were not rams' horns, or shofarim. **They** were **two silver trumpets**. The message depended on how the **trumpets** were blown. When there was **a** long **blast** with both **trumpets** the entire assembly of **Isra'el** would meet at the Tabernacle. When only one **trumpet sounded**, only the leaders would meet. When **the trumpets** were **sounded** with short **blasts**, it signaled that it was time to follow **the fire-cloud** and move the entire camp. Furthermore, a series of short **blasts** of both **trumpets** was to be **sounded** during times of war. In addition, **the trumpets** were to be blown during the festivals. **When they are blown, the entire community is to assemble before you at the entrance to the Tabernacle (10:3).**

The two likely were slightly different size and produced varying tones; **two trumpets** were blown for **the assembly of the people** and **one for the assembly of the leaders. The trumpets** were blown with varying tones and

lengths of **blasts**. The Hebrew words used in our text to describe the kinds of **sounds** which were to be made with **the trumpets** are also the same words used to describe the kind of **sounds** the modern shofar blower is to make on **Rosh ha'Shanah**. Hence, when there was to be a long **blast**, the Hebrew word is *tekiah*. **The blast** can be represented by a long, continuous, straight line, (_____). **If only one is sounded, then just the leaders, the heads of the clans of Isra'el, are to assemble before you. When you sound an alarm, the camps to the east will commence traveling** because they are in the lead**. A** short **blast** is the Hebrew word *teruah*. It can be drawn with nine dots, (_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _). **The remaining sound of Rosh ha'Shanah is called *shevarim*. This one is not in this passage of Torah. It can, however, be pictured by a series of three short, short staccato blasts (_ _ _). Thus, on Rosh ha'Shanah, the main pattern for the sounding of the shofar is as follows: *tekiah*, *shevarim*, *teruah*, *tekiah*, (_____, _ _ _, _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _, _____).**[153] The different **sounds** would tell **the people** what **the sound** is for and what to do. **When you sound a second alarm, the camps to the south will set out;** so the principle is that **they will sound alarms to announce when to travel (10:4-6).**

The two functions are outlined by way of summary in **10:7**, and in **10:8 the priests** are given the responsibility for **sounding the trumpets**. **However, when the community is to be assembled, you are to sound; but don't sound an alarm (10:7). It will be the sons of Aaron, the high priest, who are to sound the trumpets,** and as such were **Temple** dependent **(10:8a).** In the ancient Near East, **priests** were an integral part of a military force **(Deuteronomy 20:2-4; First Samuel 23:9** and **30:7)**. **Basing themselves on Deuteronomy 20:2, the rabbis speak of a special priest "anointed for war." The War Scroll of the Dead Sea sectarians goes into great detail concerning the high priest, the "priest chosen for the day of revenge."**[154]

The trumpets are said to be given as **a permanent regulation for you through all your generations (10:8b).** This term is used elsewhere in **Exodus**, **Leviticus**, and **Numbers** to refer to a legal enactment that is underlined as particularly relevant or important. Other perpetual ordinances deal with matters such as **the Passover (Exodus 12)**, **Yom Kippur (Leviticus 16)**, and the ritual of **the red heifer (Numbers 19)**, all of which concern **the priests** in a special way, although **the people** were also involved.[155]

When you go to war in your Land against an adversary who is oppressing

you, you are to sound an alarm with the trumpets (Joel 2:1 and **Zephaniah 1:16); then you will be remembered before ADONAI your God, and you will be saved from your enemies** because of **God's** intervention **(10:9). The trumpet blasts** also serve as a prayer whose efficacy is recorded in the war between **Abijah** and **Jeroboam (2 Chronicles 13:12-16)**. **The Dead Sea War Scroll prescribed trumpets named "trumpets of remembrance" to be used "when the battle intervals open for the skirmishers to go forth" and bearing the inscription "vengeful remembrance at the appointed time of God." However, trumpets used as instruments of prayer appear to be unique to Isra'el.**[156]

As in the case of battle, it appears that **the blowing** of **the trumpets** was a means of knowing that **the people** were **remembered** by **ADONAI**. **Also, on your days of rejoicing, at your designated times** (see the commentary on **Leviticus Dw – God's Appointed Times**) **and on Rosh-Hodesh** (a new month)**, you are to sound the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; these will be your reminder before your God (10:10a). The trumpets** were used singly or together for administrative, military **(2 Chronicles 13:12-14)** purposes, but also for worship, and, as this verse points out, they were solely occasions for **joy**, verified by the ample examples of **the trumpet** in the Bible: in coronations **(2 Kings 11:4; Psalm 98:6)**; the installation of **the ark in David's tent (1 Chronicles 16:6** and **42)**; the dedication of **Solomon's Temple (2 Chronicles 5:12-13)**; the rededication of **the bronze altar** and covenant under **Asa (2 Chronicles 15:8-15)**; the purification of **the Temple** by **Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 29:37)**; the laying of the foundation of **the** Second **Temple (Ezra 3:10)**; and the dedication of **the walls** of **Jerusalem (Neh 12:35).**[157]

In **the** Second **Temple** era, **the priests** used **the trumpets** to signal the opening of **the** huge **Temple** gates, the beginning of Shabbat, the beginning of holy days, the pouring out of the water during Sukkot (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Gp – On the Last and Greatest Day of the Feast**), and other significant events in the Temple. In recent years, an inscription from the debris of **the** Second **Temple** was found. It is a plaque which was probably once on a **Temple** tower from which **the priests sounded the trumpets**. It reads, "For the House of the Trumpeting."[158]

The concluding phrase: **I am ADONAI your God (10:10b)**, states in profoundly

plain terms the sovereignty of **God** over the nation. **He** is the supreme **LORD** and ruler of **His people Isra'el**. **The nation** is the visible expression of **His** existence, personality, and saving power. Without **Him they** are meaningless, but **they** have been chosen specifically out of **His** abundant love to be a witness to the surrounding **nations (Genesis 12:3)** because of **their** being **a Kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exodus 19:6).**[159]

In many American Messianic congregations, **trumpet blowing** has become an end in itself. Biblically speaking, neither **the trumpet** nor the shofar was used as a layman's worship instrument with which to punctuate a praise service. **The trumpet** of the Torah was the given and carefully ordered element of the liturgical service of the Levitical sacrificial system. Except for the shofar of **Rosh ha'Shanah**, **trumpet blowing** was a function of **the** Aaronic **priesthood**. Unfortunately, **trumpets** and shofars have become cliché's of the Messianic movement. Probably the exotic look and **sound** of the shofar has endeared itself to the movement, but when it is blown at every function, it loses any real significance.[160] Believers should be encouraged to hear the shofar blown on **Rosh ha'Shanah** (see the commentary on **Leviticus Ee – Rosh ha'Shanah: Trumpets**), but the mitzvah of **the two silver trumpets** belongs exclusively to **the priesthood** and **the Temple**.

Like the righteous of the TaNaKh during the Dispensation of Torah (see the commentary on **Exodus Da – The Dispensation of the Torah**), the children of **God** today are awaiting **"the sound of the trumpet"** that signals our gathering together to **Yeshua** as well as **Ha'Shem's** declaration of war against the wicked world ready for judgment (see the commentary on **First Corinthians Dw – The Rapture: Victory Over Death**). Until that time, we remain a pilgrim people in this wilderness world, following **His Word** and serving **Him** faithfully.[161]

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, Praise **You** that you will someday sound **the trumpet** to call your children to move from this life into their eternal home in heaven. **For this we tell you, by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord shall in no way precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the blast of God's shofar, and the dead in Messiah shall rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left behind, 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 encourage one another with these words (First Thess 4:15-18).** As I focus on*

moving soon to my eternal home of peace and joy, I am encouraged and burdens are lifted. ***For I consider the sufferings of this present time not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed to us. (Romans 8:18).*** *Soon* ***the trumpet*** *will* ***sound,*** *calling me and all those who love you to move to our eternal home in heaven, where there will be* ***no tears*** *or sadness.* ***(Revelation 21:4).*** *We wait in anxious anticipation for* ***the trumpet sound*** *and we wisely use our time on earth for* ***Your*** *eternal glory. In* ***Messiah Yeshua's*** *holy name and power of* ***His*** *resurrection. Amen*