

THE CALL OF THE SHOFAR Proclaiming God's agenda

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In our day many of the original instruments, garments and utilities of the Bible are being restored to the church. Among Gentile believers there is a renewed interest in age-old Jewish practices and traditions and it is now widely accepted that Christians need to understand and appreciate the origins of their faith in Judaism.

Christians worldwide have rediscovered the blessings and the rich spiritual meaning of the Jewish festivals. Instruments such as the harp and tambourine are now incorporated into times of worship, and the *tallit* or prayer shawl and banners and dance are used when Gentile believers celebrate the *shavat* on the eve of the Sabbath.

But perhaps it is the sounding of the *shofar* that has typified the celebration of the Jewish practices among Gentile believers more than any other in recent times. In its revived form the *shofar* is now a common sight at celebrations, church meetings, times of intercession, spiritual warfare and prophetic proclamation, and at the calling of assemblies.

It is very significant that it was God Himself who blew the *shofar* for the first time. In Exodus 9 He used the ram's horn to call men into His awesome presence at the foot of Mount Sinai. Scripture states that He will also be the last one to blow the trumpet to call His bride when He returns (1 Thes 4:16)! In a sense the *shofar* is the shadow* of the expression of the voice of God (Rev 1:10; 4:1).

Throughout Scripture the *shofar* is used to proclaim God's agenda. There is no power in the horn itself. What is important when the *shofar* is blown is that it expresses the call of the Breath of Life, the *ruach* of the Living God, to His people. As God formed man from the dust of the earth and breathed Life into him, we are brought to Life by the breath of God when we got born again. Likewise we blow the *shofar* through the *Ruach Ha Kodesh*, the Holy Spirit, and breath His abundant life into a fallen world.

As New Testament believers we know that Christ is our life (John 20:31; Col 3:4) and therefore in this dispensation the sounding of the *shofar* proclaims, announces or shows forth the One in whom is all the power, victory, healing and authority.

The *shofar* is used for various purposes. In Psalms (98:6; 150:3) it is used to praise and worship God. In 2 Samuel 6:15 it is used to usher in His Presence. For instance this was done at the dedication of Solomon's temple when 120 priests sounded the *shofar*. Joined by the singers they gave praise with one voice and God's glory filled the temple (2 Chronicles 5:12-14).

The *shofar* is also blown at appointed times and yearly festivals as well as on Friday evenings to announce the Sabbath. It is a way of sounding the alarm and calling the flock of the Lord to assemble. One entire feast is called *Yom Teruah*, the Feast of the Trumpets, and is also called the Jewish New Year (*Rosh Hashanna*). It proclaims the resurrection of the dead, the coming of the Bridegroom, the prevailing judgement of God, the coronation of the King Messiah and the wedding supper of the Lamb. At the blowing of the *shofar* the kairós time of God is prophetically proclaimed.

In ancient Israel watchmen also used a *shofar* to sound the alarm when an enemy was approaching. Therefore it is common that in various accounts of historical battles the *shofar* was used to execute God's judgement. When it is blown, both physical and spiritual strongholds are brought down.

At *Shofar* we believe it is possible for God to use this modern day technological rams horn to call His bride and to proclaim His agenda!