

Haverim update

STUDY COMMUNITY

Elul	Tishri	Heshvan	Kislev	Tevet	Shevat	Adar	Nisan	Iyar	Sivan	Tammuz	Av
SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG

FEAST OF TRUMPETS: SEP 16 > DAY OF ATONEMENT: SEP 25 > FEAST OF TABERNACLES: SEP 30-OCT 6

How GOD Used the Torah
to Save the World
featuring Lois Tverberg

Sukkot: A Time for Torah Study
(Episode 1 of 5)

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Currently on jcastudies.com/haverim for you!

- ▶ A new seminar with Lois Tverberg
- ▶ The first 8 episodes of Romans
- ▶ *How the Book of Revelation Reimagines Worship for All of Life* by Ron Herms



Coming October 1st

- ▶ Episode 2 from Lois: *Our Problems with the Torah*

Shalom Friends,

The Feast of Tabernacles (Sūkkōt) can help you live radically for GOD in a culture hostile to grace. I'll go in-depth on the subject in my upcoming online seminar, *Do You Hear the Shofar Sounding?* (jcastudies.com/sukkot). For now, this quote from Dallas Willard's book *The Divine Conspiracy* sets the stage.

"The good news is that Jesus is offering us a course on Life and is always eager to take on new students. True life doesn't begin after death; it begins when we agree to be Jesus' apprentice in his kingdom and allow him to teach us. It's a message not just for the dying, but for the living. *This idea is not new or original, but it has been forgotten in modern Christianity.*"

How Sukkot Inspires and Empowers Disciples

The Apostle John uses Sukkot's emphasis on the number seven as a motif for his Gospel, and its unique command to *dwell in booths* as the defining image of incarnation (Jn. 1:14). As one of the last New Testament books, he is concerned about a church separating from her roots and the reality of eternal life—being apprenticed to King Jesus—experienced in the here and now.

Tabernacles concludes the trio of our Father's appointed times (along with Passover and Pentecost). As such, it completes a story that informs our past, anticipates our future, and fuels our present. Five chief characteristics distinguish Sukkot (ref. Lev 23:33-43), each relevant to those currently enrolled in Jesus' School of Life.

- 1) **The Four Species:** Covenant reconciles us to GOD and takes us back to his original purposes in creation. But we are not home yet. As we travel through a world ruled and devastated by sin, he leads us. Like our faith forebearers, we journey the wilderness through deserts and valleys (*branches of palm trees*) and hills and mountains (*boughs of leafy trees*). Take heart! The Good Shepherd provides water (*willows of the brook*) and sustenance (*fruit of splendid trees*).
- 2) **Live in Booths:** The great symbolic action of Sukkot is to move out of day-to-day life, for one week, into a temporary, hand built shelter called a booth (sūkkāh). Again, it is a reminder that GOD-is-with-us as we live in the world but not of it. John uses this image to capture GOD becoming man in the person of His Son, Jesus of Nazareth. The Son of Man uses the same image to capture the deep truth that as we dwell in him, he, by his Spirit, dwells in and with us.

- 3) **Be Joyful:** Deuteronomy 16 presents this directive in two distinct ways. *Rejoice in your feast* (vs. 14) requires our response; it is a divine call for kingdom people to practice joy. *You will be altogether joyful* (vs. 15) supplies the why to go with the what—because the GOD of all blessing is with us. Jesus, like us, had to walk by faith, not by sight. And his was a life characterized by *the joy of knowing the Father*.
- 4) **Unique Offerings:** Numbers 29 outlines sacrifices for the Feast. The overall total is divisible by the sacred number 7. The number of bulls to be offered begins with 13. It decreases by 1 each day ending with 7 on the last and greatest day. Altogether they total 70, a number Jewish sages help us understand represents all the nations. It is, on one level, a prophetic reminder to be actively and joyfully engaged in his salvation mission knowing we each have kingdom usefulness.
- 5) **Trumpets and Atonement:** The way to living with God in the freedom he intends must pass through judgment via the solemn Day of Atonement. Our gracious GOD gives us ten days of repentance to prepare for that holiest of days. Spiritually speaking, this is the secret to walking out Tabernacles. Come to my online seminar to explore this path in detail jcastudies.com/sukkot.

Haverim Community News

- ▶ Beginning with this Sep/Oct edition, we will mail our newsletter *every other month*—which makes sense for many reasons. Please Note: A new audio message and teaching article by Doug Ward *will still post the first day of each month* on jcastudies.com/haverim.
- ▶ We're pausing our Romans series to bring you five messages from Lois Tverberg's haverim seminar. The first is posted on our website, the next will be available October 1st. While there, you'll also find Ron Herms excellent teaching on worship and Revelation. Enjoy!
- ▶ Coming in the Nov/Dec edition, we'll include our new bookmark with the dates of biblical festivals in 2024.

"I have been following your ministry for many years. With the July Haverim studies I really had and continue to have a better understanding of the book of Romans in particular. Listening to Dr. Pryor's lessons, it is like a light shining in the darkness and it helped me understand the Bible better. Seriously the Holy Spirit opened my mind and understanding concerning the Gospel, and the church." **Immanuel!**

James

The Remembrance Blast of Yom Teruah by Doug Ward, JC Studies

3 min 54 sec read time

The first day of the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar (September 16 in 2023) is known as the Day of Trumpets (*Yom Teruah* in Hebrew). The Bible describes this day as a *memorial proclaimed with blast of trumpets* (Lev 23:24).

The type of trumpet traditionally blown on *Yom Teruah* is a ram's horn, the shofar, an instrument effective at capturing the attention of anyone within earshot. Since it proclaims a *memorial*, the shofar's piercing sound invites hearers to remember something.

Investigating the use of trumpet imagery in Scripture can help us identify what is to be remembered.

First, trumpets announce the sovereignty and kingship of God. God's appearance at Mount Sinai and giving of the Decalogue were accompanied by shofar blasts (Ex 19:16,19; 20:18). Psalm 47, a psalm associated with the Day of Trumpets, pictures God ascending to his heavenly throne *with the sound of a trumpet* (verse 5).

Second, biblical prophets lift their voices like trumpets to declare the sins of the people and call them to repentance (Isa 58:1; Eze 33:1-9). The sound of the shofar announces the coming of the Day of the Lord, a time when God intervenes in human affairs to judge the nations and establish justice (Joel 2:1, 15; Zep 1:14-16). The Day of the Lord is a *day of trumpet blast and battle cry* (Zep 1:16).

Trumpets in the Bible, then, give a call to repentance and a warning of coming judgment from the Supreme Judge. Trumpets prompt God's people to remember their Creator and King.

On the other hand, trumpet blasts call upon God to remember his people and act on their behalf. We see this in Numbers 10:9-10, where Israel's priests are instructed to blow silver trumpets before the nation goes into battle *so that you may be remembered before the Lord your God, and you shall be saved from your enemies.*

Based on these ideas, Jewish tradition views the shofar blast on *Yom Teruah* as an annual call to self-examination and repentance. As in Daniel 7:9-10, heavenly books are opened, books recording each person's deeds. All are judged, and the verdict is finalized ten days later, on the Day of Atonement.

The Day of Trumpets was not the only time when the shofar was blown in Israel. Shofars were sounded on the first day of each month, the time of the new moon (Ps 81:3). The trumpet sounds on the new moons of the first six months can be seen as advance reminders of the evaluation to begin on *Yom Teruah*, and the sixth month is traditionally a time of preparation for that evaluation. The existence of so many reminders of coming judgment reflects God's desire that each person repent of sins and be judged favorably.

These Jewish traditions predate the time of Jesus.

We see hints of them in the Book of Jubilees, a Jewish work from the second century BC. Jubilees 5:13-18 states that all people face divine judgment, and for Israel "it is written and ordained that He will show mercy to all who turn from all their guilt once each year." Jubilees 31:1-3 says that when Jacob and his family prepared to appear before God at

Bethel by removing all their idols (see Ge 35:1-4), they traveled to Bethel *on the new moon of the seventh month*. Beginning on *Yom Teruah* they made a concerted effort to put their lives in order, as their descendants would come to do each year.

The Day of Trumpets is not mentioned explicitly in the New Testament, but its images and themes are evident there. We see these images and themes, especially in Revelation 8-11, where seven angels announce a series of divine judgments with seven trumpet blasts.⁽¹⁾

The trumpets of Revelation are blown in response to the prayers of the saints (Rev 8:1-5), which include prayers of martyrs for vindication (6:9-11). As in Numbers 10:9-10, we see that trumpets are associated with God remembering wrongs that have been done to his people and intervening to set things right.

Divine judgment includes vindication as well as punishment.

These seven trumpet blasts can be viewed as analogous to the trumpets blown on the new moons of the first seven months of the Hebrew calendar. The first six are preliminary and are intended as calls to repentance (see 9:20-21, which mentions that many do not repent). The punishments they announce are limited to a *third* of the possible recipients (8:7, 9, 11-12) and have a limited duration (*five months* in 9:5). The seventh, corresponding to the blast on the Day of Trumpets, announces Christ's universal rule and judgment (11:15-18).

Elsewhere in the New Testament a final trumpet blast, called *the last trumpet* (1 Co 15:52), announces the Second Coming of the Messiah and the resurrection of the saints. This trumpet may coincide with the seventh trumpet of Revelation. At the sound of this trumpet, Jesus will return. He will be joined in the air by resurrected and glorified saints, who then will accompany him to judge and rule the earth (Mt 24:29-31; 1 Co 15:51-57; 1 Th 4:13-18).

The trumpets and traditions of *Yom Teruah* remind us that we all face God's judgment (Heb 9:27; Ro 2:3; 14:10; 2 Co 5:10). God is a God of justice, who punishes the wicked and vindicates the righteous; and a God of mercy, who desires that all come to repentance and receive a favorable judgment (2 Pe 3:9). Knowing these things, *we may have confidence in the day of judgment* (1 Jn 4:17) as we anticipate the last trumpet and the return of Jesus the Messiah.

(1) See Samuele Bacchiocchi, *God's Festivals in Scripture and History, Part 2: The Fall Festivals, Biblical Perspectives*, Berrien Springs, Michigan, 1996, chapter 3.

Join me in Dayton, OH for the Feast of Tabernacles!

The pageantry and joyful worship expressions at Sukkot in Dayton are an annual highlight for me and my family. As a bonus, I am the featured teacher for the Saturday lecture series. It would be amazing to meet you there. ~ James

Host: Church of the Messiah

1180 Upper Bellbrook Rd Xenia, OH 45385

Dates: October 6-7, 2023

Opening Sukkot Celebration (Fri 7 to 9:30 PM)

Haverim Lecture Series (Sat 9 to 1 PM)

Closing Sukkot Celebration (Sat 6 to 8:30 PM)

Cost: All weekend festivities are free of charge

Registration Information: jcstudies.com/sukkot