



The Fruit of Repentance

Horns (Shofar) are a symbol of God’s Word and Power. The “four horns” are representative of the four Gentile world powers: The four horns which scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem, are four nations, Babylonians, Medes and Persians, Macedonians and Romans. When this vision was beheld, the kingdom of the Babylonians had now passed away, the Medes and Persians were current, the Macedonians, and Romans were yet to come. The “Four carpenters” was the term for stone workers, metal workers, and wood workers, those who shape material with hammers and chisels. These “Hammers” represent the nations which overthrow the 4 horns. In Daniel 2:34-35, 45 the Roman Empire, revived in the last days will be hammered by the returning Messiah.

Shofar History:

- To Commemorate the ram in the bush (when Abraham was about to sacrifice his beloved son Isaac)
- Announcing of the Ten Commandments from atop Mount Sinai. There was lightning, thunder, and the sound of a shofar blast prior to God declaring the Decalogue.
- To announce Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year) in the Torah, it was simply called, “Yom Teruah, the Day of the Shofar Blast.”
- In Jewish tradition, it was all about breath. Humankind began when the Creator blew a breath of life into Adam and Eve. All the required shofar blasts can only be made by forcing air through the wind instrument, literally breathing into it.

This year let the shofar inspires us to seriously ponder each breath we are granted, about how it is a gift each time we inhale and exhale. Each of us is given a finite number of breaths over our lifetime.

The Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot) is a biblical Jewish holiday celebrated on the 15th day of the seventh month, Tishrei (varies from late September to late October). During the existence of the Jerusalem Temple, it was one of the Three Pilgrimage Festivals on which the Israelites were commanded to perform a pilgrimage to the Temple. The Hebrew word sukkot is the plural of sukkah; "booth" or "tabernacle", which is a walled structure covered with plant material, such as overgrowth or palm leaves.

A sukkah is the name of the temporary dwelling in which farmers lived during harvesting, an agricultural significance of the holiday is in Book of Exodus. It also has a religious significance from the Book of Leviticus, as that of commemorating the Exodus and the dependence of the People of Israel on the will of God (Leviticus 23:42–43). On each day of the holiday, it is mandatory to perform a waving ceremony with the Four Species: **the fruit of a citron tree, a ripe green olive, closed frond from a date palm tree, and boughs with leaves from the myrtle tree.**

Questions

1. What is the reason Israel was exiled in the first place? Based on Ezra 3, have they learned their lesson?
What can we learn from this about how we should respond when we are disciplined by God?
Read 2 Chronicles 7:14
2. Why was it important for the Israelites to be unified in the work (gathered together as one man)?
Are you on any team in which unity is important? Why?
What are some of the most common causes for disunity then and now?
3. Besides setting up the altar and beginning daily sacrifices, what else did the Israelites do?
4. In Zechariah's vision who is "the Angel of the Lord?" Has He appeared in other places in the Bible?
Did he have authority over the other horsemen?
Do you believe the Angel of the Lord is the human appearance of God?
5. How did the Lord explain the vision of the four horns and four craftsmen?

Apply the Word: A call for repentance.

Try to find an area in your life that you hear God but do not change according to His expectations.
Repent and make your heart more sensitive to God by changing!

The church is weak in many aspects, but could we say that God still calls and reaches out to them?
Defend your answer by the verses we have read in Ezra and Zechariah

