

2019 Yom Teruah Special!

A Free and Open Teaching, courtesy of www.onefaithonepeopleministries.com

Prayer for Blessing the Scriptures

Barchu et-Yahweh hamvorach

(*Cong.* Baruch Yahweh hamvorach lay-oh-lam va-ed)

Baruch Yahweh hamvorach lay-oh-lam va-ed

Baruch ata Yah-weh, Elo-hay-nu Melech Ha-Olam

Asher bachar banu michol ha-ah-meem

Ve-nah-tan lanu et-torah tow

Baruch ata Yah-weh no-tayn ha-Torah (ve'breet chah-dash-ah)

ALL READ IN UNISON IN ENGLISH:

Bless Yahweh, Who is to be blessed

Blessed is Yahweh, Who is to be blessed forever and ever

Blessed are You, Yahweh our Elohim, King of the Universe,

Who chose us from all the peoples and gave to us the Torah (and the Renewed Covenant Scriptures)

2019 Fall Feast Schedule!

(If there are any variations between this schedule on what is on the published 2019 ETC, this schedule has the final word. **High Shabbats where no work is allowed until the following sunset are in bold.** *Special programming is in red.*)

Wednesday, August 28th→Yom Teruah Special

Thursday, August 29th→ Ki Tavo Parsha

Friday, August 30th (sunset)→Yom Teruah/Rosh Hashanna

Monday, September 2nd (daylight only)→Half day Fast of Gedaliah (optional)

Thursday, September 6th→Nitzavim-Vayelech Double Parsha

Sunday, September 8th (daytime)→Yom Kippur Special

Sunday, September 8th sunset to September 9th sunset is the YOM KIPPUR fast!

Thursday, September 12th→ Sukkot Special Complete

Friday, September 13th (sunset)→Sukkot begins

Thursday, September 19th→Ha'azinu-Ve-Zot Ha Baracha Parsha

Friday, September 20th (sunset)→Shemini Etzeret (also Simchat Torah if outside of Israel)

Saturday, September 21st→Simchat Torah (in Israel only)

Thursday, September 27th→Recycle back to Bereshit

1) What is Yom Teruah?

The original moed (appointed time) was known as the Day of Shofar Blasts. It was already customary to blow shofars at New Moon feasts:

At your festivals, solemnities and new-moon feasts, you will sound the shofars over your burnt offerings and communion sacrifices, so that they recall you to the remembrance of your Elohim. I am Yahweh your Elohim.' (Numbers 10:10 NJB)

Blow the shofar at the New Moon that is the Dark Moon on our feast day. (Psalm 81:3-personal translation)

This Psalm gives Yom Teruah another name in the Jewish tradition: *Yom Ha Kiseh*, or “Day of the Dark Moon”, necessitating this reference in the Zohar:

On this day [*Yom Hakiseh*, the Day of Concealment] the moon is covered, and it does not shine until the tenth day, when Israel turns with a perfect repentance...Hence this day is called the Day of Atonements (plural form, *kippurim*), because two lights are shedding illumination, since the higher lamp is illuminating the lower. For on this day, the moon receives illumination from the supernal Light, and not from the light of the sun. - Zohar Emor 100b-101a

And the Psalm was also put this way in its most ancient Targum (Aramaic interpretation):

Blow the horn in the month of *Tishri*, in the month in which the day of our festivals is *concealed*. (Psalm 81:4-Edward Cook, The Psalms Targum: An English Translation)

The Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Tanakh begun in 256 BCE, also clarifies with the fact that “full moon” is not mentioned. I bring this up because a number of English translations assume “full moon” is there instead of the dark moon. Here is how the great translator Lance Brenton rendered it:

Blow the trumpet at the new moon, in the glorious day of your feast. (LXE)

And finally, on this point about the new moon as dark moon, the Aramaic version of the Tanakh done by Jews in Babylon around 50 BCE, states the following in Aramaic:

קרו בקרנתא בריש ירחא ובכסאא ביזמתא דעדאדא

Blow the trumpet in the commencement of the moon and in [its] concealment¹, in the day of your feast. (personal translation)

However, Yom Teruah itself was singled out because it was the seventh month of the year. Since Torah had already sanctified the seventh day (Shabbat) and the seventh year (Land Sabbath-Shemittah), it made sense that the seventh New Moon or Hebrew month would also be Set-Apart:

'Speak to the Israelites and say: "The first day of the seventh month will be a day of rest for you, of *remembrance* (*zikaron*--זִכָּרוֹן) and acclamation, a sacred assembly. You will do no heavy work and you will offer food burnt for Yahweh." '(Leviticus 23:24-25 NJB)

For this reason, the seventh new moon feast gets another name and is also called *Yom Ha Zikaron* or “Remembrance Day”, and this is the first of many titles that became attached to Yom Teruah. It is also no coincidence that the seventh full moon is also sanctified, as it is better known to us today as the Feast of Sukkot!

In any case, it is at this new moon feast, more than any other, that we are called to remember, but the Torah text never comes right out and tells us what we are remembering, at least, not directly.

However, for many of the great sages throughout history, the Torah does the next best thing:

'Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. For six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath for Yahweh your Elohim. You shall do no work that day, neither you nor your son nor your daughter nor your servants, men or women, nor your animals nor the alien living with you. **For in six days Yahweh made the heavens, earth and sea and all that these contain, but on the seventh day he rested; that is why Yahweh has blessed the Sabbath day and made it sacred.** (Exodus 20:8-11 NJB)

So the Shabbat is a memorial to the Creation of the Universe, and therefore it would make sense that the next seven-cycle, that of the month, would be about the second most important creation: Man. Yom Teruah is believed to be the birthday for Adam, and therefore by extension of the whole human race.

Similarly, the rule for releasing a servant in his or her seventh year is said to be linked to the next most important event after Adam was created, that of the Exodus:

¹ Unlike its Hebrew form, the Aramaic form of *kiseh* can also refer to feasts or moedim. Some translators then have looked at *kiseh* here as part of a synonymous parallelism or where two different ways of saying the same thing are brought side by side. George Lamsa took this approach and rendered the word as “appointed time” to go alongside the synonym of that term at the end of the sentence, “your feast.” In terms of demonstrating that no version of “full moon” made it across into Aramaic (same as the Greek translation) neither choice has any bearing. However, I prefer the other approach of believing that *kiseh* is actually clarifying the previous term “new moon”, to describe what that is like, which still works with Lamsa’s approach because a new moon also is considered an appointed time as well (Numbers 28:11-16).

If your fellow Hebrew, man or woman, sells himself to you, he can serve you for six years. In the seventh year you must set him free, and in setting him free you must not let him go empty handed. By way of present, you will load his shoulders with things from your flock, from your threshing-floor and from your winepress; as Yahweh your Elohim has blessed you, so you must give to him. **Remember that you were once a slave in Egypt and that Yahweh your Elohim redeemed you; that is why I am giving you this order today.** (Deuteronomy 15:12-15 NJB)

So the Yom Teruah linkage to Adam is of course thematically in between overall Creation and the Exodus, explaining why the rabbis have almost universally adopted this view. But the final linkage to Adam is a little closer to home to his time:

Yahweh Elohim shaped man from the soil of the ground and **blew** (*naphach*--נָפַח) the breath of life into his nostrils, and man became a living being. (Genesis 2:7 NJB)

This word *naphach* is very similar to *Teruah* or to blow out, but it has also a critical difference in that humans cannot *naphach* because this is something only Abba YHWH does to breathe life into or resurrect the dead, and this is how Ezekiel uses the exact same word...

Then He said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, son of man, and say to the breath, 'Thus says Adonai Yahweh, "Come from the four winds, O breath, and **breathe** (*naphach*--נָפַח) on these slain, that they come to life.'" (Ezekiel 37:9)

And there is one more key linkage to this word *naphach* carried over intact into Yeshua's own Aramaic dialect:

And when he said these things, he **breathed** (*naphach*--נָפַח) on them and said to them, "Receive the Ruach haKodesh. If you forgive a man's sins, they will be forgiven. And if you retain the sins of a man, they will be retained." (Yochanan 20:22-23 AENT)

Obviously the power to forgive sins is inextricably linked to the power to raise the dead, which the apostles also were able to do on occasion. So this *naphach* is a resurrecting breath from Elohim which imparts great power to those who believe. It's linkage again back to Adam is yet another reason for putting Adam's creation and Yom Teruah together at the same chronological moment, because shofar blowing is also a part of the future resurrections as well:

And immediately after the suffering of those days, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not shine its light. And the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven will be shaken. And then will be seen the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then all the tribes of the land mourn, when they will see the Son of man who comes upon the clouds of heaven with great power and glory. And he will send his Messengers with a large shofar, and they will gather his chosen ones from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other. (Matthew 24:29-31 AENT)

Matthew 24:31 footnote

The phrase here, *shipora raba*, may be better rendered as "Great Shofar". Ancient Torah practice is often said to be mirrored in heaven, and as such the Messengers described here, like the Israelites of blessed memory, would assemble in times of great importance or crisis by blowing the shofar. Similar language is also noted and explained in the book of *Gilyana* (Revelation). See also [Isa 27:13](#). Except for the regular New Moons throughout the year, the shofar is generally blown only during the Fall Feasts and therefore this may be a strong hint that Yeshua will return at some point during the fall feast season.

2) What is Rosh Hashanna?

The fact that Torah counts months differently now than they used to in the beginning is plainly stated here:

Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, "This month must be the first of all the months for you, the first month of your year. (Exodus 12:1-2 NJB)

The text is referring to Abib or Nisan, the month that the Israelites would be freed from bondage in Egypt. The question is, how did they count their months prior to this command from Abba YHWH?

Well the simple fact of the matter is time was counted according to harvests, and there were only two major harvests in Israel, one in the spring and the other in the fall. For each of these seasons also, the year is said to "turn" rather than "end", and those "turns" are of course known to us today as equinoxes in the spring and fall.

Also, throughout the Middle East, almost all the nations around Israel had their years start at either spring or fall equinox. So if the spring equinox is what they changed to, it makes sense the original counting was from the fall equinox. Even the word "tishri" is a clue...it means "opening of the year" in ancient Akkadian.

But there is still more evidence that we need to discuss to really make this case clear and compelling. First, it should be pointed out that the fall to fall system did not completely disappear from Scripture. Rather, it simply assumed secondary importance.

This is evident in several places. For example, the Jubilee rules in Leviticus 25 state that on Yom Kippur, which is on the 10th day of Tishri, the shofar is blown to announce a Jubilee year will commence in the spring, the start of the Hebrew sacred year. This is again because that same seventh month is when the year "turns over", and just after Yom Kippur is "the feast of ingathering" or Sukkot, which is the end of the harvest cycle.

The remembrance of Tishri as the start of the old year also carried over into the times of the Divided Monarchy. The great scholar Edmund Thiele (*Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*) reconciled the seemingly paradoxical years given for the kings of Israel and Judah in *Kings* and *Chronicles* by realizing that each kingdom counted their months differently. As a result, Thiele conclusively proved that the kingdom of Judah—at least as far back as

Rehoboam if not going back to David during the United Monarchy—reckoned their years from Tishri to Elul. By contrast the Northern Kingdom of Israel did their years running Abib to Adar, otherwise there is no other way to resolve alleged contradictions in the text. Then many centuries later, the Rabbis inherited this tradition from the Scripture and from the actual practices of their ancestors, and made Tishri the start of their civil year.

When that happened, Yom Teruah took on another name, *Rosh Hashanna*, which translates to “head of the year” in English. However, the main difference between Yom Teruah as mentioned in the Torah and Rosh Hashanna as it is practiced in modern Judaism is that greater emphasis is placed on the shofar blasts in the modern occasion, whereas the former ancient version was much more sparse in its details:

"In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you will hold a sacred assembly; you will do no heavy work. For you this will be a day of Acclamations. As a burnt offering, as a smell pleasing to Yahweh, you will offer one young bull, one ram and seven yearling lambs, without blemish. The accompanying cereal offering of fine flour mixed with oil will be three-tenths of an ephah for the bull, two-tenths for the ram, and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs.

There will also be a goat as a sacrifice for sin, for performing the rite of expiation for you. This is in addition to the monthly burnt offering and its cereal offering, the perpetual burnt offering and its cereal offering, and the accompanying libations enjoined by law, as a pleasing smell, as food burnt for Yahweh. (Numbers 29:1-6 NJB)

This is pretty much all we have for the ancient version of Yom Teruah, which is why on Rosh Hashanna this is one of the most important Scriptures we read. More details on how Rosh Hashanna is celebrated are related here:

According to oral tradition, **Rosh Hashanah** (ראש השנה) (lit., "Head of the Year") is the Day of Memorial or Remembrance (יום הזכרון, *Yom HaZikaron*), and the day of judgment (יום הדין, *Yom HaDin*). Elohim appears in the role of King, remembering and judging each person individually according to his/her deeds, and making a decree for each person for the following year.

The holiday is characterized by one specific mitzvah: blowing the *shofar*. According to the Torah, this is the first day of the seventh month of the calendar year, and marks the beginning of a ten-day period leading up to Yom Kippur. According to one of two Talmudic opinions, the creation of the world was completed on Rosh Hashanah.

Morning prayer services are lengthy on Rosh Hashanah, and focus on the themes described above: majesty and judgment, remembrance, the birth of the world, and the blowing of the *shofar*. Ashkenazi Jews recite the brief *Tashlikh* prayer, a symbolic casting off of the previous year's sins, during the afternoon of Rosh Hashanah. - Wikipedia

The “tashlikh prayer” mentioned above is actually a ritual where pebbles that represent our individual sins are cast into a lake or other body of water, symbolizing repentance. We will go over that in greater detail in a moment.

The other feature of the day, the blowing of the shofar, is arranged in this manner:

The shofar is blown in long, short and staccato blasts that follow a set sequence:

- *Teki'ah* (long sound) Numbers 10:3;
- *Shevarim* (3 broken sounds) Numbers 10:5;
- *Teru'ah* (9 short sounds) Numbers 10:9;
- *Teki'ah Gedolah* (very long sound) Exodus 19:16,19;
- *Shevarim Teru'ah* (3 broken sounds followed by 9 short sounds).-Wikipedia

The total number of blasts on Rosh Hashana is 100.

And finally, while the term Rosh Hashanna does not directly appear in Torah as an alternate name for Yom Teruah, it is mentioned by Ezekiel as a general term...

In the 25th year of our captivity, *at the beginning of the year* (*b'rosh hashana*-- בְּרֹאֵשׁ הַשָּׁנָה), on the tenth day of the month, fourteen years to the day from the capture of the city, the hand of Yahweh was on me. He carried me away: in divine visions, he carried me away to the land of Israel and put me down on a very high mountain, on the south of which there seemed to be built a city. (Ezekiel 40:1-2 NJB)

3) Why Two Days for Rosh Hashanna?

Another big difference though between the original Yom Teruah and the more modern Rosh Hashanna is that Torah specifically only commands one day of observance, while modern Jewish observance in Israel demands two days.

The main reason for this has to do with confusion over the New Moon that crept into Torah observance very late in the Second Temple period and was passed down into Rabbinic Judaism, where some parts of the Talmud seem to indicate two new moon days, but there was some dispute as to whether day 1 or day 2 was the actual day.

The reality of the situation is that normatively the Scripture does tell us plainly that the new moon was proclaimed over a two-day period, which could only be done by counting from the dark moon or conjunction:

So David hid in the country; New Moon came and the king sat down to his meal. He sat in his usual place with his back to the wall, Jonathan sat facing him and Abner sat next to Saul; but David's place was empty.

Saul said nothing that day, thinking, 'It is sheer chance; he is unclean.' **On the day after New Moon, the second day, David's place was still empty.** Saul said to his son

Jonathan, 'Why did not the son of Jesse come to the meal either yesterday or today?' (1 Samuel 20:24-28 NJB)

The reason David's place was empty on the second day is again because it was normal for Israel to sanctify the New Moon over a two day period. But by the time the rabbis write down their own traditions after being exiled from Israel for centuries, they have actually forgotten which of the two days was the "real" new moon (Eruvin 3:8), so to play it safe they began celebrating Rosh Hashanna over two days. On the other hand, the majority position they have, that the first day is the "real" new moon, is the correct one.

The chief of the Beth Din then said: "It (the new moon) is consecrated," and all the people repeated after him: "It is consecrated; it is consecrated." Whether the new moon was seen at its proper time (after twenty-nine days) or not, they used to consecrate it. R. Elazar b. Zadok said: If it had not been seen at its proper time it was not consecrated, because it had already been consecrated in heaven (*i.e.*, of itself). (Rosh Hashanna 2:4 Rodkinson Mishnah)

One important reason why this works: A lunar month can never be less than 29 or more than 30 days long, so if you do not see the moon after the end of 29 days you know it must be new by the next evening, at the end of the 30th day. That pattern is why the Talmud said above, "it is consecrated in heaven, of itself."

4) What is the "Tashlikh" service?

Who is an Ēl like You – taking away crookedness and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His inheritance? He shall not retain His wrath forever, for He Himself delights in kindness. He shall turn back, He shall have compassion on us, He shall trample upon our crookednesses! And You throw all our sins into the depths of the sea! (Micah 7:18-19 – The Scriptures 1998)

From this general statement, Rosh Hashanna became a time for Jews to symbolize the casting away of their sins by throwing pebbles into a source of living water. It is possible that an early form of what is a purely rabbinic service now is remembered by the 1st century Jewish historian Josephus:

We have decreed, that as many men and women of the Jews as are willing so to do, may celebrate their Sabbaths, and perform their holy offices, according to Jewish laws; **and may make their places of prayer at the seaside, according to the customs of their forefathers.** (Antiquities, 14:258)

As the Middle Ages drew on however, the Zohar (Vayikra, 101a-b) witnessed these ideas taking greater hold and becoming more formalized, referring to the *tashlikh* this way:

Whatever falls into the deep is lost forever ... it acts like the scapegoat for the ablution of sins.

This is basically one of those situations that are inspired by Scripture but clearly not mandated by it. However it is a very nice and optional ritual to do either at Yom Teruah or at Yom Kippur.

5) 40 days of repentance?

For some Jewish groups, the time to repent is not just during the “Days of Awe”—the ten days between Yom Teruah and Yom Kippur—but actually beginning at the start of the last (sixth) month, Elul.

The reasons for this idea have to do partly with rabbinic tradition and also partly with pure practical considerations. Let’s start by looking at this Scripture:

And יהוה said to Mosheh, “Write these Words, for according to the mouth of these Words I have made a covenant with you and with Yisra’el.” And he was there with יהוה forty days and forty nights. He did not eat bread and he did not drink water. And He wrote on the tablets the Words of the covenant, the Ten Words. (Exodus 34:27-28 – The Scriptures 1998)

“And I took the two tablets and threw them out of my two hands and broke them before your eyes, “and I fell down before יהוה, as at the first, forty days and forty nights. I did not eat bread and I did not drink water, because of all your sins which you committed in doing evil in the eyes of יהוה, to provoke Him. (Deuteronomy 9:17-18; also see 10:10 – The Scriptures 1998)

According to Rashi and some other leading rabbis, these two Scriptures reference the third forty-day period Moshe spent on Mount Sinai. The vast rabbinic consensus is this period began on 1 Elul and ended on Yom Kippur.

As a result, many Orthodox Jews try to emulate this example, so when Elul begins they begin reaching out to people they have wronged in the past to ask for forgiveness. The hope is to complete as much of these “atonement connections” as possible during the entirety of that sixth month, so that when Tishri begins they can focus on repentance for the sins they have done against Elohim. Interestingly enough, in doing so, they are following the counsel of Yeshua Ha Mashiyach!

If it is therefore that you offer your offering to the altar and there you should remember a certain grudge your brother holds against you, leave there your offering upon the altar and go first and reconcile with your brother and then come offer your offering. Be in agreement with your adversary at Torah while you are with him on the way, or else your adversary at Torah deliver you to the judge and the judge deliver you to the officer and you be thrown into the house of captives. And truly I say to you that you will not come out from there until you pay the last coin. (Matthew 5:23-26 AENT)

For if you forgive men their transgressions, your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men, your Father will also not forgive you your transgressions. (Matthew 6:14-15 AENT)

However, the biggest twist of all is that it seems Yeshua is most definitely thinking about Yom Teruah when he says these words, as evidenced by the very next point he makes:

And when you fast, you should not be sad like the hypocrites for they disfigure their expression so that they may be seen by men that they are fasting. And truly I say to you that they have received their reward. But whenever you fast, wash your face and anoint your head. So that you will not be seen by men that you are fasting, but by your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret, He will reward you. (Matthew 6:16-18 AENT)

Isn't it interesting that a well-known optional fast, the Fast of Gedaliah, will happen within 48 hours of Yom Teruah while the mandatory one, Yom Kippur, is the following week? Sounds to me like Yeshua is getting prepared for fall feast season!

In any case, while having Elul as a rabbinic repentance month in advance of the Days of Awe is a tradition not in Scripture, at the end of the day it really isn't a bad idea at all. After all, we need to repent of our sins every day, let alone the month before the fall feasts start.

Then again, Yeshua also was no stranger to fasting—even for forty days and forty nights.

END PART 1

PART TWO: Bonus Teaching

Bonus Teaching: **Answering Some Very Basic Calendar Questions**

We begin by answering some frequently asked questions, starting with this big one:

Question #1: Why can't we all just be on the rabbinic calendar and be done with it?

The answer for many of us in Hebrew Roots is to do just that—follow the rabbis! But for others, it's not so easy. The first reason is the rabbinic calendar (from now on, we'll call it the RC) was not the calendar of Moshe, and the rabbis are the first to admit this is true!

The RC is, as the rabbis teach, a product of the Jewish Exile. The Temple was destroyed and the priesthood was gone, so the rabbis had to regroup and transform the faith. One of the first things they did to keep Judaism alive was to invest themselves with special authority to alter the way Jews universally did things.

Part of the reason, as already stated, was because the old ways were gone and they could not go back to them even if they wanted to. But in other ways, the rabbis made things worse.

They added regulations that were not in Scripture, such as postponing certain feasts up to two days so they can't fall on a given day of the week.

As their tradition developed, they also disregarded the few witnesses from Second Temple times they could have consulted in order to make way for that tradition. And that tradition, the RC, did not develop quickly either, but took about a thousand years to reach its final form as we know it today.

Again, from the rabbis' perspective, this was not a problem. They spoke for the Jewish people in their times, and they believed they had the right to change things to meet their needs. Historically also, we can easily see how the RC developed from the Late Classical to the Medieval periods.

After two disastrous revolts against Rome, Jews in the 2nd century were barely hanging on as a people. Exiled from their home, only a few small rabbinic academies in the Galilee and Babylon kept the flame alive. By 180 CE, a systematic effort was underway to codify in writing everything they could remember about their old traditions. And here, the rabbis also freely admit, they couldn't recall everything. That's why they proclaimed: "A minhag in Israel is law". A "minhag" is a custom that they know was done, but not why.

Then in 359 CE, the Sanhedrin, which had up until that time proclaimed the Set-apart times for the Jewish people, dissolved. Many calendar secrets that the Sanhedrin had, those they had not already forgotten by that point that is, died with them. Others became fragmented or confused.

The RC then was a kind of "Band-Aid" to fix a much larger problem. With the Sanhedrin gone, like the Temple and priesthood before it, there was now no central authority to proclaim the feasts. And, without modern mass communication, the Jewish people were so scattered that no proclamation could reach them all at once anyway.

So the RC developed a series of math rules and released them publicly, so that every Jewish community could calculate the feast times locally. It was a good solution for its time but, like the Julian calendar before it, the RC's math was off, to the point now where it can pick the wrong month to start the year, like in 2016.

But all this history talk obscures another important fact: The RC was not the calendar that Yeshua used in the 1st century! The rabbis say it couldn't have been! And, if the RC was not the calendar of the Jews then, it couldn't be the calendar of Moshe either, some 14 centuries earlier, so where is *that* calendar?

Yeshua actually gave us the answer:

Yeshua then spoke with the crowds and with his disciples. And he said to them, "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on the throne of Moshe (כְּרִסֵּי מֹשֶׁה וְדָוִד). Therefore everything that they say to you that you should keep and do, do. But not according to their deeds, for they talk, but do not. (Matthew 23:1-3 AENT)

To sit on the throne of Moshe means literally to rule in his place and deliver decisions that Moshe would have done, exactly as he wrote them in the Torah. And while Yeshua had many problems with the Pharisees, those issues were always about inserting traditions to supersede the Torah (Matt.15:2), not about when they followed the Torah!

Now here's something you may not have considered before: While Yeshua and the Pharisees argued over many, many issues, calendar timings, when to do a Shabbat or a Feast, never came up as a bone of contention. That means Yeshua and the Pharisees agreed about the calendar!

To some of you, that idea may sound a bit shocking, but think about it. If the Pharisees could say, "That Nazarene doesn't even know when Pesach is!" wouldn't they do it? In fact, wouldn't their successors the rabbis also talk of a calendar dispute with Yeshua if they could? And would Yeshua not say anything back ever?

And so for me the conclusion is inescapable. Yeshua and the Pharisees kept the same calendar which was, by the rabbis own testimony, not the calendar Jews use today. And since Messiah just said the Pharisees sit on Moshe's throne, that same calendar went back to Moshe!

Question #2: But if the rabbis themselves don't fully remember what was done in the 1st C, how can we know about this now?

In the later half of the 2nd century, the rabbis made a fateful decision to only study officially Hebrew and Aramaic texts, putting the Jewish Greek traditions aside.

Now you might think a guy like me, one who made a career showing Aramaic NT sources overall being superior to Greek ones, would rejoice at this decision of the rabbis for the Tanakh, but I don't. The reason is just because the Greek in many places was not an ideal vessel for Semitic thought, didn't mean all of it should be discarded.

For one thing, the Greek OT, known as the Septuagint, was translated directly from a Hebrew source that no longer exists and which is far older than the Masoretic Text we use today. This means there are many places where the Greek OT will give a reading that opens a window into what the original Hebrew looked like!

But take the Greek away, and we lose that critical witness. And there's another problem that's even bigger I believe than that one. The rabbis had two witnesses from elite Jews, both descended from priests and kings, as to how the Second Temple was actually run. But since their writings survive only in Greek, they are ignored. I am speaking of our two first century Jewish historians, Josephus and Philo. Basically, we know how the calendar in 1st C Israel worked because Josephus and Philo tell us exactly how it was used!

But the rabbis, long divorced from this material, let their later traditions define what they viewed the past was like, and so the confusion crept in and it has stayed in ever since.

Question #3: Isn't the Karaite calendar though the original calendar of the Hebrew people?

The Karaites did not exist in the 1st C, so their calendar cannot have either. They were formed in Iraq in the 9th C. It is true however that some of their views, such as tracking the moon by the sliver, were opinions of the Sadducees.

However, eyewitness sources from the time (again Josephus) tell us plainly that the Sadducees were never the majority power in Israel, although some Hasmonean kings were more influenced by them than the Pharisees for a brief time.

By 10 BCE, Hillel the Elder reformed the calendar for all and the Pharisees won. As a result, this calendar that Hillel the Elder brought the entire nation back into line observing, is exactly the same Pharisaic calendar kept by Yeshua, all his apostles and even Josephus, and it goes back to Moshe directly! So, by looking at Torah commands, math and history, the real calendar's been found and it's the ETC!

Question #4: If all that's true Andrew, then how is the Eternal Torah Calendar truly different from all the others?

The Eternal Torah Calendar is the only one I know of that uses all of the calendar rules in Scripture, including Genesis 1 and Job 38 that say the stars bring in the seasons. The Eternal Torah Calendar also uses the sophisticated calendar math that is in the Scriptures to perfectly track all cycles of time without ever going out of date. That is something no other calendar ever devised can claim! Josephus, Philo and others then can confirm this too by telling us what was actually done in Israel.

END PART 2

PART THREE: SCRIPTURAL READINGS FOR YOM TERUAH AND COMMENTARY

Genesis 2:1-24

SHAVAT (2:3) = rested, but not because Abba YHWH was tired because He never tires. Rather Abba YHWH completed His work and stopped doing it. This is confirmed in 2:4 with ASAH (made) in past tense, denoting completion. Later Jewish sources though will speculate that certain events, like the building of the Temple, also in their way complete creation.

ASOT (2:4) = made. However, this word connotes a stronger sense of completeness than BARA and other similar words in Hebrew.

VEADAM AYIN LA'AVOD HA'ADAMAH (2:5) = and there was no man to work the ground. However, there seems a word play and hint with the use of ADAM for "man" as opposed to other Hebrew terms, indicating that "there was no ADAM to work the ground".

ADAMAH...ADAM (2:7) = Both the words for Adam (man) and adamah (ground) are also cognates and directly related to the word ADOM, which can mean "red" and "blood".

NEFESH CHAYA (2:7) = Adam BECOMES a living soul. In other words, Adam doesn't HAVE a soul but instead Adam IS A SOUL. His NEFESH contains his emotions, memory and life force...all the things that make Adam unique to himself. He only needs Abba YHWH's spirit to make that nefesh live.

EDEN (2:8) = literally means "delight" or "pleasant" in Hebrew. So the word may be an adjective rather than a place name as if to say "YHWH planted trees in a delightful place" or "YHWH created a pleasant area to plant". It seems it becomes a formal place name or geographical marker AFTER Adam and Eve are expelled in 3:24.

PISHON...HAVILAH (2:11) = some commentators think the Pishon is the Nile but Josephus and others believe it is the Ganges or Indus river. Between Kashmir and Pakistan, on the upper Indus river, there is a very ancient town that has been known as HAVELIAN for more than 5,000 years. The Gihon river though is more likely to be the Nile, also according to Josephus and others. The courses of these rivers must have shifted, either due to tributaries drying up and re-establishing themselves (we can track this back to the time with satellites) or because of the Flood.

Jonathan says that when YHWH creates Eden (2:15) He: "...took the man from the mountain of worship, where he had been created, and made him to dwell in the garden of Eden, to do service in the Torah, and to keep its commandments." This idea again comes from the covenant (breet) that is from in the beginning (bereshit).

EZER KENEGDO (2:20) = the helper who stands in front of you. So the woman is meant to complement the man and stand in front of him, eye to eye and not head down like a servant.

ETSEM ME'ATSAMAY UVESAR MIBESARI (2:23) = bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. This is both literal—Eve came out of Adam's rib—and figurative, to express how deeply intimate he felt connected to his wife.

Jerusalem Targum concludes the chapter (2:25) by saying that not only were Adam and Eve not ashamed at being naked but, "they didn't know what shame was."

Genesis 22:1-24

YAHWEH YIREH (22:14) = YHWH will see. Since the name of the place is established as Salem, YIREH+SALEM is where we get "Jerusalem". In a sense this can mean, "YHWH will see peace". Others render the place name as "YHWH will provide" but the word really does mean to see.

UTZ (22:21) = Some rabbis think this another name for Job, probably because the same word is used to name the place Job was from.

1 Samuel 1:1-2:10

1-8. Elkanah and his family. Elkanah was a Levite, a descendant of Korah (1 Chronicles 6:7-12). He is the unnamed prophet who comes to Eli in the next chapter (2:27-36) and is one of only forty-eight male prophets whose prophecies were recorded for posterity (Megillah 14a, Rashi).

Elkanah had two wives, Peninnah, who had many children, and Hannah, who was childless. Hannah, whose prayer in Chapter 2 was prophetic, was one of seven women whose prophecies were recorded in Scripture (Ibid.).

The leader of the nation was Eli, the Kohen Gadol, who was one of the greatest judges, but who presided over Israel at a time when the spiritual and temporal standing of the people had fallen to a low estate. Eli's predecessor was Samson and, as seen in the Book of Judges, the Philistines were ascendant at that time. – Artscroll: *The Rubin Edition of the Early Prophets (1-2 Samuel)*, p. 1.

My comments: I must take exception at this elevation of Eli as one of the greatest of the judges. Eli was not just in an age of apostasy; he did his active part to support and continue that trend. He raised thoroughly corrupted sons which was one reason for the Word of Yahweh being rare in his days and even just before he died, he was unwilling to issue harsh and necessary correction to them, which brought a curse on his entire family line. In fact, the only thing that is recorded of Eli doing the right thing is in the adoption of Samuel and urging him to speak to the voice of Yahweh when he heard it.

In addition, and regarding the statement that Samson was succeeded by Eli, the period of time given from Exodus to Solomon's fourth year cannot be taken in a full linear model. If we do that, we will add up more than 600 years of events rather than the Scripture's 480 years which is intended as both a literal and exact figure per 1 Kings 6:1 and 2 Chronicles 3:1-2.

As a result, the only way to reconcile these figures is to understand that Scripture is recording events that are happening at the same time. We see some overlap, to give just one example between the end of Joshua and the start of Judges, and the overall pattern up to this point is that Israel had both civilian (Moshe, Joshua, Othniel) and priestly (Aaron, Eleazar, Phinehas) ruling at the same time. This is why Leviticus and Numbers share common chronology but the former focuses on the priests and the latter the civilian leaders. My research then concludes that the only way to balance the time is to show areas in Joshua, Judges and 1 Samuel where priests and civilian leaders were ruling at the same time. In this case, Samson and Samuel rule at roughly the same time before Samson dies and King Saul comes onto the scene.

1. From the land of Ephraim. Though Elkanah was a Levite (see above) he resided in the province of Ephraim, where cities were granted to the Levite families of Kehath (Joshua 21:5). Artscroll: *The Rubin Edition of the Early Prophets (1-2 Samuel)*, p. 1.

My comments: This is a very cutting and ironic situation. Elkanah and his son Samuel are Kohathites which means the rebellious Levite Korah is also their direct ancestor. While Samuel is born then a Levite like Korah, unlike Korah his adoption by the High Priest Eli will elevate him to the high priesthood! As a result, all that Korah coveted from Aaron that he never achieved was given without any effort to his righteous great-grandson!

2. After ten years of childless marriage, Hannah urged Elkanah to take a second wife, following the example of Sarah, who counseled Abraham to take Hagar as his second wife. Peninnah bore

ten children to Elkanah (Pesikta Rabbasi, 43). Artscroll: *The Rubin Edition of the Early Prophets (1-2 Samuel)*, p. 3.

My comments: I really doubt this one is true though I understand the reasons for putting the theory forward. Samuel is very much the new head patriarch of Israel, succeeding the likes of Abraham, Moshe, Joshua and others. As a result, because Samuel is from a similarly high if not higher moral fiber, the rabbis are attempting through midrash to link him with these great leaders of the past. Hannah, like both Sarah and Leah, would be given the status of the first wife, the wife of Elkanah's youth and thus she is doing a humble sacrifice to allow Peninnah into the family and Peninnah resents it. The problems with this idea are that the order given in Scripture makes it clear that Peninnah is the first wife, although admittedly one could make an argument that because her heart became cold she could have lost status to the more righteous and loving Hannah. Also the rabbinic tradition assumes both Abraham and Sarah were righteous in giving the patriarch to Hagar when in actual fact the Torah rebukes Abraham for "hearkening unto his wife" without the confirmation this was the will of Elohim. It is only later on with the driving out of Ishmael that Father Yah explicitly tells Abraham to follow Sarah's counsel.

Note on 1 Samuel 1:6: The rabbis even go so far as to suggest Peninnah was righteous in teasing Hannah, because her motive was for Hannah to not be content with her barren condition. However verse 10 says that Hannah "was bitter and prayed to Yahweh, weeping continuously" and verse 11 makes it clear this was due to her barren condition, which she will then explain to Eli in verse 15 that she was "a woman of aggrieved spirit" for the same reason. Therefore, if Peninnah's intentions were noble she was obviously completely oblivious to the fact that Hannah did not need her provocations to want an end to being barren. This has to be then one of the weakest rabbinic arguments I have seen in recent years.

Note on 1:19-21: Because Hannah's conception happened just around the time her husband brought to Shiloh his *annual offering*, the Sages concluded this was done at Yom Teruah/ Rosh Hashanna and was therefore a contributing factor in Father Yah answering Hannah's prayers by having her conceive on that very day. Other authorities also said that Sarah conceived at Yom Teruah as well.

Note on 2:1-10: There are aspects to Hannah's exultation in becoming pregnant that are repeated in the birth accounts of both Yochanan the Immerser and Yeshua. In particular are the phrases "My heart exults in Yahweh" and "I rejoice in Your salvation," which is to say, "in Your Yeshua!"

Jeremiah 31:12-20

14-19. After depicting the spiritual ecstasy and physical contentment of the Messianic times, Hashem reveals why He redeemed the Jews from their exile: Rachel's weeping (vv. 14-16), Israel's repentance (vv. 17-18), the Torah they study, and Hashem's deep love for His nation (vv. 19). The Midrash relates that Hashem was angered that King Manasseh had the audacity to erect an idol in the Sanctuary (Rashi; see 2 Kings 21:4-5). The Patriarchs and Matriarchs attempted to appease Him, but he rejected all their pleas until Rachel evoked the memory of what she had done for her sister Leah on her wedding night. When Laban substituted Leah for Rachel (Ibid, verse 22). Rachel, knowing her sister would be humiliated when Jacob questioned her, told her

the signs thereby allowing Leah to pose as her. Now Rachel said before God, “Is Your compassion not greater than that of a human being? Not only did I not protest when my rival replaced me on my wedding night, but I even gave her my signs. You also should not forsake the Jewish nation for introducing Your rivals—foreign gods—in Your Temple!” God answered, “You have represented My children well. There is reward for your actions; I will redeem your children from their exile (Rashi, Radak).” For this reason Jacob buried Rachel on the road to Ephrath (Genesis 25:19), because he foresaw that when the Babylonians would drive the Jews out of their land, they would pray at her grave and she would successfully plead for them (Bereshit Rabbah 82:10. Artscroll: *The Rubin Edition of the Early Prophets (Jeremiah)*, p. 267.

My comments: What an amazing midrash! The only problem is it does not go far enough. One obvious ramification of Rachel’s legendary pleadings for example would be it gave grace to David so he could survive the attempts on his life from King Saul and become the rightful king after Saul died. Another is the potential linkage Matthew himself gives by also referring to Rachel weeping for her children, that being that her pleadings also helped an infant Messiah born in the place she was buried to survive the assassination attempts of King Herod the Great and his minions.

END PART 3

PART FOUR: RENEWED COVENANT READINGS AND OTHER FEATURES

Matthew 1:1-21; 2:16-18

1:1. *Yeshua* is the shortened form of *Yehoshua* and, contrary to some popular teachings, there is absolutely no doubt on how to pronounce the name of the Savior. The fact is, *Yeshua* appears in the Tanakh a total of twenty-nine times and there has never been any debate amongst the rabbis as to how to vowel point it. It is in both Hebrew and Aramaic rendered with a *tsere* (an “eh/ay” sound) rather than a *qametz* or a *ptaha* (“ah”) sound. What makes this evidence less familiar to some folks I believe has more to do with translators hiding the name as “Jeshua” in every place it appears. It is not hard though to see why the Hebrew version is easily recovered by swapping the late coming English “J” for the original Hebrew “Y”.

It is also interesting to note that *Yeshua* is the name of the ninth priestly course organized by King David (1 Chronicles 24:10-11), the eighth one being that of Abijah, the same as his second cousin Yochanan the Immerser who preceded his birth (Luke 1:5). In researching competing claims of pronunciation for this name, these seem to arise from a desire to not lose a sound of the YAH part of Mashiyach’s name, sometimes called “Not One Yodh” teaching. While I respect the theological motives many people have who favor *Yahshua*, in terms of history and Hebrew grammar this cannot be his name! It is in fact the overriding rule in Hebrew that two Hebrew words change pronunciation when forming a proper name. For example, the name *Yochanan* is derived from the words YAH and *khanan* (YAH our mercies), but the *-ah* sound became an *-oh* sound for *Yo*-chanan instead. If we followed the logic though of “Yahshua” then the *-oh* sound must be original and therefore the Father would be named “YOH-WAY” instead. Since we know that is not the case, this is why I favor “Yeshua”.

1:16. *The adopted guardian of Maryam.* This may be one of the most interesting Aramaic variants of them all. Instead of saying *husband* as almost every manuscript of Matthew is translated, the Aramaic term here, *gowra*, can refer to any male in a family who assumes a protective role or guardianship over a female, hence adopted guardian. To be sure, this includes being a husband, but it also can refer to a father, cousin or son, depending on the age of the woman. In this case, *gowra* is used to indicate a protector male guardian or parent, probably due to the levirate marriage rules (Deuteronomy 25:1-10; Ruth 4:7-14) happening to Maryam's mother. What most likely happened is that Maryam's biological father died and the procedure in Ruth 4 was used, where a close relative, but not a brother of the deceased, would marry the widow. Ruth 4:10 specifically says that even a close relative who is not the brother of the deceased would ensure the deceased man's name not be blotted out of Israel.

Therefore, this usage explains one of the most vexing readings in the Greek traditions, which is Matthew 1 says there must be forty-two names or three sets of fourteen each, but only lists forty-one, with the last set only having thirteen names. It seems then the early church confused two men named Joseph as one man: the adopted parent in 1:16 with the husband in 1:19. While this confusion is somewhat understandable because *gowra* can also refer to husband, only the Aramaic Peshitta uses a separate word for the Joseph in 1:19, *baalah*, which can only mean husband, to clarify which Joseph has which role. It is the use of the other term in 1:19 then which eliminates the "husband" meaning for the Joseph in 1:16. Once this is understood, there are now actually fourteen names in the last set because Matthew's lineage is of Yeshua's mother, so the Joseph of 1:16 is *not* on the same generational line as Maryam but is the "missing" generation that counts to her adopted father in the previous generation. Interestingly enough also the Greek may not be at fault here either because it uses the term *aner* in 1:16, which, like *gowra*, can also mean parental guardian or husband. Having said that, the western church moved away from that precise understanding and wrongly assumed *from* the Greek that the two Josephs were in fact the same man.

Old Syriac Siniaticus (OSS) reads "espoused" but Peshitta says "the protector-guardian" or *gowra* of Mary. This term most likely indicates a levirate marriage happened where Mary's biological father died and another close male relative married the widow, Mary's mother. In such cases, the Aramaic distinguishes between a biological parent and a legal guardian. The Joseph in Matthew 1:19 is clearly Mary's husband, but the one here in 1:16 is her adopted father. The death of a husband does not dissolve family ties his widow had with his extended family unless she remarries outside the tribe (Numbers 27,36).

1:17. Matthew's emphasis on the number fourteen may be due to the fact that King David's name in one valid spelling of it (D = 4, -V = 6, D = 4) can add up to that number. However, Matthew also has deliberately omitted three kings of Judah from this list, as is recorded in 1 Chronicles 3, namely those of Ahaziah, Yoash and Amaziah. If we follow the OT, the actual number of names in the second set should be 17, not 14, and to this list we might also add Judah's only queen, Athalia, but in that situation I think a case can be made that she was holding the throne in place until the next male heir could take over. However, Matthew had very good reasons for omitting these kings from the list. The omissions begin after Yehoshaphat because he disobeyed a divine command. Master YAH had demanded that the house of Ahab be destroyed down to the last member (1 Kings 21:21, 2 Kings 9:7-10) due to the flagrant idolatry

and wickedness of Ahab and Jezebel. However, before that wicked house could go extinct, Ahab's daughter married Jehoshaphat's son (2 Chronicles 21:5). Following Exodus 20:5-6, Matthew eliminated this whole lot of rulers to punish the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generation. What is interesting about that decision however is that the man who brought this curse, Yehoram, was still included in the list. At first glance that may seem odd, until we remember that the most idolatrous king either kingdom ever produced, Manasseh, also made the list. The difference perhaps is that Manasseh at least attempted to repent at the end of his life. That repentance was not enough for him to receive total forgiveness or even prevent Jerusalem from being destroyed about a century later, but it might have been just enough to keep him on the list. In any case, the sin of Yehoram marrying Ahab's daughter passed down for three generations after Ahab's blood infected the royal house of Judah, and it did not hurt Matthew's decision with the fact that these three kings were all exceedingly wicked on top of all these other considerations. However, in an interesting twist, the Old Syriac Curetonian (OSC) manuscript does list the missing kings, apparently because its writer misunderstood Matthew's intentions, as the omission of these same rulers was well attested to in the earlier manuscripts, including OSS.

2:16. Therefore when Herod the Great decides to kill infants two years and under, this is because the Magi told him they were tracking the king's star for two years. Such a durable phenomenon eliminates from contention comets, novae, meteor showers and the like. Only the cycling of a planet can be tracked for such a long period of time, and the only planet—the term means “wandering star”—that was ever associated with kingship was Jupiter, the largest object in the night sky.

What are the Selichot?

In Ashkhenazic practice, starting on the Saturday before Yom Teruah and continuing throughout the Ten Days of Repentance are the *Selichot* or the traditional Jewish prayers of repentance. Sephardic Jews on the other hand start their version of these prayers during the weekdays of Elul. Either way, there are several types of these, including the following:

- **Selichah** (סליחה) — Hebrew for "forgiveness." This is the default Selichah and comprises the vast majority of the Selichot service.
- **Pizmon** (פזמון) — Hebrew for "chorus." These central Selichot vary according to the day and contain a chorus which is repeated after each stanza.
- **Akeidah** (עקידה) — Hebrew for "binding", a word which specifically refers to the Binding of Isaac. This Selichah contains the theme of the *Akeidah* as a merit for Elohim answering our prayers. It begins to appear on Rosh Hashanah eve and is placed immediately before the Pizmon.
- **Chatanu** (חטאנו) — Hebrew for "we have sinned." Starting on the evening before Rosh Hashanah and continuing through Yom Kippur, this Selichah is said after the final recitation of the Thirteen Attributes and before the *Vidui* confessional. It contains as its refrain, "הטאנו צורנו סלה לנו יוצרנו", "We have sinned, our Rock, forgive us, our Creator". Perhaps the most famous Chatanu Selichah is the *Eleh Ezkera Martyrology* recited during [Musaf](#) on Yom Kippur, though the recitation of the aforementioned refrain is not always followed in this particular Chatanu.
- **Techinah** (תחינה) — Hebrew for "petition." This Selichah begins to appear on the eve of Rosh Hashanah in the Tachanun section, at the very end of the Selichot service.

A fundamental part of the selichot service is the repeated recitation of the "Thirteen Attributes," a list of Elohim's thirteen attributes of mercy that were revealed to Moses after the sin of the golden calf (Ex 34:6-7): YHWH [1], YHWH [2], Elohim [3], merciful [4], and gracious [5], long-suffering [6], abundant in goodness [7] and truth [8], keeping mercy unto the thousandth generation [9], forgiving iniquity [10] and transgression [11] and sin [12], who cleanses [13]. Why is "YHWH" listed twice as an attribute? And why are three of these "attributes" Names of Elohim? Different names of Elohim connote different characteristics of Elohim. The four-letter Name of Elohim (rendered here as "YHWH") is the Name used when Elohim is exhibiting characteristics of mercy, and the Talmud explains that this dual usage indicates that Elohim is merciful before a person sins, but is also merciful after a person sins. The third attribute is a different Name of Elohim that is used when Elohim acts in His capacity as the almighty ruler of nature and the universe.

Yom Teruah in the Rest of Tanakh

Yom Teruah was an especially important time of year for both the United Kingdoms of David and Solomon and for the Southern Kingdom of Judah that followed after it. This was because, as we saw before, Judah reckoned their year with Tishri as their first month, and so Yom Teruah was their New Year's Day and the time that they reckoned the rule of their kings from.

Furthermore, it is no accident that the Temples were built to have their dedications coincide with this seventh month, if not Yom Teruah itself, then definitely for Sukkot. It is important to note that Yom Teruah and Sukkot are kind of two sides of the same coin, as the former celebrates the 7th New Moon of the year and the latter the 7th full moon of the year, making for a complete cycle of total joy. So it is the case with Solomon and the First Temple...

Solomon then summoned the elders of Israel to Jerusalem to bring the ark of the covenant of Yahweh up from the City of David, that is, Zion. All the men of Israel assembled round King Solomon in the month of Ethanim, at the time of the feast (that is, the seventh month). When all the elders of Israel had arrived, the priests took up the ark and the Tent of Meeting and all the sacred utensils which were in the Tent. King Solomon and all Israel, present with him before the ark, sacrificed countless, innumerable sheep and oxen. (1 Kings 8:1-5 NJB)

After Solomon's Temple was destroyed and the nation was taken into captivity in Babylon, forty-seven years passed before Babylon was conquered by Persia. Shortly after that, the first waves of Jews began returning to the Land, and even before the Temple was up and running, Yom Teruah was important enough of an occasion to make sure it got celebrated again...

When the seventh month came after the Israelites had been resettled in their towns, the people gathered as one person in Jerusalem. Then Yeshua son of Yehozadak, with his brother priests, and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, with his brothers, set about rebuilding the altar of the Elohim of Israel, to offer burnt offerings on it as prescribed in the Torah of Moshe man of Elohim. They erected the altar on its old site, despite their fear of the people of the country, and on it they presented burnt offerings to Yahweh, burnt offerings morning and evening; they celebrated the feast of Tabernacles as prescribed, offering daily the number of burnt offerings required from day to day, and in addition presented the continual burnt offerings prescribed for the Shabbats, for the New Moons and for all the festivals sacred to Yahweh, as

well as those voluntary offerings made by individuals to Yahweh. **From the first day of the seventh month they began presenting burnt offerings to Yahweh, though the foundations of the Temple of Yahweh had not yet been laid.** (Ezra 3:1-6)

A little later on, additional tradition was added to this day where the whole Torah was supposed to be read at that time:

Now when the seventh month came round -- the Israelites being in their towns- all the people gathered as one man in the square in front of the Water Gate, and asked the scribe Ezra to bring the Book of the Torah of Moses which Yahweh had prescribed for Israel. ² Accordingly, on the first day of the seventh month, the priest Ezra brought the Law before the assembly, consisting of men, women and all those old enough to understand.

In the square in front of the Water Gate, in the presence of the men and women, and of those old enough to understand, he read from the book from dawn till noon; all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Torah. The scribe Ezra stood on a wooden dais erected for the purpose; beside him stood, on his right, Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah and Maaseiah; on his left, Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam.

In full view of all the people -- since he stood higher than them all -- **Ezra opened the book; and when he opened it, all the people stood up.** Then Ezra blessed Yahweh, the great Elohim, and all the people raised their hands and answered, 'Amen! Amen!'; then they bowed down and, face to the ground, prostrated themselves before Yahweh.

And Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabab, Hanan, Pelaiah, who were Levites, explained the Torah to the people, while the people all kept their places. **Ezra read from the book of the Torah of Elohim, translating and giving the sense; so the reading was understood.**

Then His Excellency Nehemiah and the priest-scribe Ezra and the Levites who were instructing the people said to all the people, 'Today is sacred to Yahweh your Elohim. Do not be mournful, do not weep.' For the people were all in tears as they listened to the words of the Torah.

He then said, 'You may go; eat what is rich, drink what is sweet and send a helping to the man who has nothing prepared. For today is sacred to our Lord. Do not be sad: the joy of Yahweh is your stronghold.' And the Levites calmed all the people down, saying, **'Keep quiet; this is a sacred day. Do not be sad.'**

Then all the people went off to eat and drink and give helpings away and enjoy themselves to the full, since they had understood the meaning of what had been proclaimed to them. (Nehemiah 7:72-8:12 NJB)

Yom Teruah in the Renewed Covenant

In the New Testament, Yom Teruah appears as a metaphor for judgment day, when the shofar sounds the dead are raised and judged. It begins to be alluded to by Yeshua in Matthew 24 and we saw this Scripture earlier:

And immediately after the suffering of those days, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not shine its light. And the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven will be shaken. And then will be seen the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then all the tribes of the land mourn, when they will see the Son of man who comes upon the clouds of heaven with great power and glory. **And he will send his Messengers with a large shofar, and they will gather his chosen ones from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other.** (Matthew 24:29-31-AENT)

The Aramaic here literally reads “Great Shofar”, and amidst the imagery of the sun and the moon being darkened, something important often goes unnoticed. The fact is the phrase, “and the moon will not shine forth its light” relates directly to the terms *kiceh* (dark, concealed), and again Yom Teruah is called *Yom Ha-Kiseh*, but the other imagery in Matthew 24 also relates to the feast’s other name, *Yom Ha-Din*, which literally means “Judgment Day”! Other NT references also go a long way to support these related ideas...

Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed. **Suddenly, as in the twinkling of an eye, at the last shofar, when it will sound; and the dead will arise, without corruption; and we will be changed.** For this which is corruptible, is to put on incorruption; and that which dies, will put on immortality. And when that which is corruptible, will put on incorruption, and that which dies, immortality; then will take place the Word that is written, "Death is absorbed in victory." Where is thy sting, O death? And where is thy victory, O Sheol? (1 Corinthians 15:51-55-AENT)

Because our Master (Yeshua) will himself descend from heaven with the mandate and with the voice of the chief Messenger and with the Qarna (synonym for shofar—AGR) of Elohim; and the dead who are in Mashiyach will first arise; and then we who survive and are alive will be caught up together with them to the clouds to meet our Master (Yeshua) in the air; and so will we be ever with our Master. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17-AENT)

After these things, I looked and behold, a gate opened in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was as of a shofar talking with me. It said, "Come up here; and I will show you the things that must occur afterwards." Instantly, I was in the Spirit: and behold, a throne was placed in heaven; and there was (one) seated on the throne. (Revelation 4:1-2-AENT)

And the seven Messengers who had the seven shofars, prepared themselves to sound. And the first sounded; and there was hail and fire which were mingled with water: and these were thrown upon the earth; and a third part of the earth was burned up, and a third part of the trees were burned, and all green grass was burned.

And the second Messenger sounded and, as it were a great mountain burning with fire, was cast into the sea; and also a third part of the sea became blood. And a third part of all the creatures in the sea that had life, died; and a third part of the ships were destroyed.

And the third Messenger sounded, and there fell from heaven a star burning like a lamp; and it fell upon a third part of the rivers and upon the fountains of water. And the name of the star was called Wormwood; and a third part of the waters became wormwood; and many persons died from the waters because they were bitter.

And the fourth Messenger sounded, and a third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so that the third part of them were dark, and they became dark; and the day did not give light for the third part of it, and the night in like manner. **And I saw and heard an eagle which flew in the midst, and it had a tail of blood, while it said with a loud voice: Woe, woe, to them who dwell on the earth because of the remaining sounds of the shofars of the three Messengers.** (Revelation 8:6-13-AENT)

Yom Teruah for Christian and Hebrew Roots believers

I think the most important aspect of Yom Teruah, for both Christians and Hebrew Roots believers, is that the spring feasts have already been fulfilled by Yeshua the Messiah, from Passover, to First Fruits to Shavuot itself, all are inextricably linked to the death, resurrection and ascension of Yeshua, climaxing with the coming of the Ruach ha Kodesh the day after “Pentecost” on the Shabbat, when “all were assembled as one”.

When we also consider that Yeshua was probably born right after Yom Kippur and before Sukkot—because there was no room at the inn—the significance of this seventh month becomes clear.

We may not know exactly which feast during the seventh month Yeshua will actually return on though I have some fairly strong ideas about that—but nevertheless whichever one, we need to think of the seventh month as a collective whole.

There is a reason why the Hebrew month is structured the way it is. It is a cycle from complete darkness (conjunction) to complete light (full moon) and back again to darkness. It is choreography in the heavens about life itself, and ultimately the month Yeshua actually returns may be more important than the day in that month because...

About the day and about the hour no man knows, not even the Messengers of heaven, but the Father alone. And as in the days of Noah, thus will be the coming of the Son of man. For as they were before the deluge, eating and drinking and taking women and giving them in marriage to men up to the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they did not know until the deluge came and took them all, thus will be the coming of the Son of man.

Then two men will be in the field, one will be taken and one will be left. And two women will be grinding at the mill. One will be taken and one will be left. Therefore be alert, because you do not know in what hour your Master will come. **And know this, that if the master of the house had known, he would not have allowed his house to be plundered. Because of this also, you should be prepared, because in an hour that you do not expect,**

the Son of man will come. (Matthew 24:36-44-AENT)

Conclusions

I think analyzing that last Scripture will more than suffice for my conclusion on the great feast of Yom Teruah and its ultimate importance.

First, the day and the hour no one knows could very well be prohibition against us humans ever figuring out the exact moment of Yeshua's return.

However, in addition to that, it might also be a description of the kind of day—without knowing the exact year—that Yeshua will return on. We see clearly that this day is concealed and it is a time of judgment, and once again this is a perfect interpretation of two names for Yom Teruah—the Day of Concealment and the Day of Judgment.

If that doesn't already “prove”—to the limited extent possible—that it is the actual day of Yeshua's return, it certainly suggests something important and related to that event happening at that time. And again, I have to hold to at least the possibility that the day of return may be known but the year is the real secret that keeps us from knowing “the hour” that only the Father knows.

And finally, the other images in this Scripture—dealing with Noah and a man who didn't know when his house would be robbed—both point to a different meaning of “Behold I come quickly” than has been popularly supposed. I say this simply because the Flood and the robbery were clearly images of being surprised, as opposed to “quickly” as in “very soon, in a few years”. Therefore the better readings for this phrase might instead be, “Behold, I come suddenly”, and this in a sense brings us back to where we started, in Tanakh:

Look, the Day of Yahweh is coming, merciless, with wrath and burning anger, to reduce the country to a desert and root out the sinners from it. For in the sky the stars and Orion will shed their light no longer, the sun will be dark when it rises, and the moon will no longer give its light. I am going to punish the world for its wickedness and the wicked for their guilt, and put an end to the pride of the arrogant and humble the haughtiness of despots.

I shall make people scarcer than pure gold, human life scarcer than the gold of Ophir. This is why I am going to shake the heavens, why the earth will reel on its foundations, under the wrath of Yahweh Sabaoth, the day when his anger ignites. Then like a hunted gazelle, like sheep that nobody gathers in, everyone will head back to his people, everyone will flee to his native land. (Isaiah 13:9-14 NJB)

Blow the ram's-horn in Zion, sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let everybody in the country tremble, for the Day of Yahweh is coming, yes, it is near. Day of darkness and gloom, Day of cloud and blackness. Like the dawn, across the mountains spreads a vast and mighty people, such as has never been before, such as will never be again to the remotest ages.

In their path a fire devours, in their rear a flame consumes. The country is like a Garden of Eden ahead of them and a desert waste behind them. Nothing escapes them. They look like horses, like chargers they gallop on, with a racket like that of chariots they spring over the mountain tops, with a crackling like a blazing fire devouring the stubble, a mighty army in battle array.

At the sight of them, people are appalled and every face grows pale. Like fighting men they press forward, like warriors they scale the walls, each marching straight ahead, not turning from his path; they never jostle each other, each marches straight ahead: arrows fly, they still press forward, never breaking ranks.

They hurl themselves at the city, they leap onto the walls, swarm up the houses, getting in through the windows like thieves. As they come on, the earth quakes, the skies tremble, sun and moon grow dark, the stars lose their brilliance. Yahweh's voice rings out at the head of his troops! For mighty indeed is his army, strong, the enforcer of his orders, for great is the Day of Yahweh, and very terrible -- who can face it? (Joel 2:1-11 NJB)

But fortunately we also know, and our hopes also swell at this time of year, this as well...

"I am Alap and the Taw, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the Completion. **Blessed are they who do His (Master YHWH's) Mitzvot that they may have a right to the tree of life and may enter through the gates into the city.** Without (will be) dogs and sorcerers, and sexual sinners and manslayers and idolaters, and everyone that loves and does falsehood.

I Yeshua have sent my Messenger to testify to you these things before the assemblies. **I am the root and offspring of Dawid: like the splendid star of the morning. And the Spirit and the bride say, 'You come.' And let him that hears, say, 'You come.' And let him who thirsts, come; and he that is inclined, let him take the living water freely.**" (Revelation 22:13-17-AENT)

It is my prayer that all of us, speedily and in our days, will drink the new wine with Mashiyach Yeshua in His kingdom. But if not now, then my prayer is simply this:

***Ketiva ve-chatima tovah!
May you be written and sealed for a good (year)!
Chag Sameyach everyone!
Andrew Gabriel Roth
August 28th, 2019***