

Beha'alotecha - Meir Scweiger 2009

Til now Numbers is instructions and detailed prep for entering the land of Israel

Final steps are chapter 10

Command to make trumpets

Dual role - to gather the people when need arises and signal to travel

V'taku (tekia) for gathering the people - uninterrupted sound

If only 1 trumpet is blown gathers the heads of the people

Truah = journeying but language is u'tekatem truah

When you gather the cong you shall sound a tekia but not the truah

Chazal ask why this verb (utekatem) is used for truah - say they blew truah for travel but also blew tekia before and after the(travel) truah

On RH we blow a tekia before the truah and a tekia after

RH called yom truah - the day of the truah/broken sound but whenever you blow the truah surround a truah with a tekia

Trumpets are a mechanical device to get people to move but commentators say there's more going on here

Hirsch - tekia is uninterrupted (triumphal) = used to bring people together = the grandeur of the community so where only leaders are summoned only 1 trumpet used

There is grandeur in leadership = 1 trumpet but it is magnified when all of the people come together = 2 trumpets

2 trumpets = blown in unison reflects plurality and coming together in sound as one - each still matters as individuals

From one piece of metal beaten down - one solid block = unity

Unity is not only among leadership or individuals in community but unity also of blowers and people hearing it

Truah is broken sound - travel = need to break camp

Tekia before and after = unity = before travel were a unit and will be again after travel (after breaking up camp)

All of this is in the midbar

V. 9-10 (when they are in the land)

War = v'hareyotem = truah = crisis

Holidays = u'tekatem = tekia = rejoicing

Sacrifices - "and you will be remembered before God"

Mishna says trumpets were sounded at sacrifices to be 'remembered before God'

Ramban - remembrance before God means for Divine intervention

In times of crisis it's obvious that intervention is about saving us from our enemies - we invoke God as says at end of vers "and you will be delivered from your enemies"

What does "intervention" mean in good times?

To demonstrate closeness to us - To help us feel close - intimacy

Hirsch - difference between trumpet and shofar

Trumpet is silver so manmade = us calling out to God

Shofar is ram's horn so made by God = God calling to us (Rambam says as a wake up call on RH)

When Moses would sound trumpets to gather leaders and gather the people with trumpets was to bring them closer to Divine purpose -

Response to end of chapter 9 - "And when cloud would arise from tent they would travel and wherever the cloud would settle that's where they would encamp...conclusion 9:23 "according to God's order they would travel and encamp they would keep the charge of God according to the order of God at the hands of Moses"

Sign is reinforced by hand of Moses with sounding of trumpets - God needed to be reinforced/validated/acknowledged

9:2 - Midrash (Bamidbar Rabbah) - Why does it say "make trumpets *to you (lecha)*"?

"Fear God and King, my son (Proverbs 24:21)" = Hamlicheihu alecha - Fear God and make God your king as a reflection of your fear. How do we demonstrate this? In making God king we sound the trumpets like in coronations.

We acknowledge God as king in times of crisis and in celebration/joy

When we travel, when we gather the people we are the troops of God and we are acting in order to do the will of God

Sounding of artificial/manmade trumpet = taking creativity (the making of the trumpets) and using it to recognize God as king - use all of your creativity in recognizing God as king

Mishna on RH - Talmud says that in the Temple on RH not only shofar was sounded but trumpets also - "With trumpets and the sound of the shofar before the king, God" meaning in the Temple (Psalm 98:6) where the king/God is present - so coronating the king.

Proverbs 24:21 - "fear God, my son and king" What does "and king" mean?

This can also mean make your yetzer hatov (inclination to good) king (ruler) over your yetzer hara (inclination to evil) = have the good be what rules over your actions

How do I make God king over me? What rules you? Good should be the driving force in your life - I have the divine image within me which I associate with my good inclination to rule over the material/selfish/base drive and impulses within me

Midrash - ends with anyone who fears God will in the end become a king - angel says to Abraham "now I know that you fear God" and that Abraham was acknowledged as a king in the incident with the 5 kings.

But you should know same is true of Moses - Deuteronomy “there was a king in Jeshurun” means Moses and God said “I have made you a king in the same way that when the king goes forth they sound the trumpets before him, so too have I said to you; ‘make to you 2 trumpets”.

Moses feared God and I have made you a king and same as when a king goes forth there are trumpets, so “aseh LECHA chatzatzrot” - “make for YOU trumpets” = God is saying to Moses that in acknowledging Me the people acknowledge *you* and are drawn to you so don’t just invoke God but invoke Moses as well

V. 9 - by cloud then the mouth of God *and the hand of Moses*

First cloud then Moshe then after that’s when Judah, Gershon, Merari, etc. then tribes but the lead is the cloud followed by Moshe

Dialectic of servant and king

I accept God as king I am the servant but in that process that makes me a king the more I attach myself to God the more empowering that is

Pirkei Avot “Ezeh hu mechubad? Hamechabed et habriyot” if this is true for our connection with other creatures how much more so in our relationship with God? Who will be acknowledged? The one who fears God, who honors God.

Our parsha pulls together all of the details - the thrust of all these details is to emphasize the unity of the people reflected in each other and

Until now all of Numbers has been about getting ready - this part is about emphasizing the unity of the people with each other and with God and Moses.

My place within the larger context is supposed to be empowering

They journey (to call of trumpets) as troops of God and become kingly as they do so -this is empowering and they become Godlike

Almost immediately (after this) it breaks down and they start to murmur!

Bitterness, destruction follow, divisiveness

Proclaiming God as king breaks down, joy is lost, unity breaks down

Brings about self destruction

“We are given many opportunities to be empowered to rejoice, to be at one with our surroundings, to what degree is it that we don’t know how to handle that and instead of actualizing our grandeur we self destruct - the purpose of reading these parshiyot is to learn, to grow, to change, to improve ourselves and the Jewish people and the world at large, may we learn from our mistakes. In the words of the midrash, “may and we learn how to allow our good inclination rule over our evil inclination and may the sounds of the trumpets be sounds of triumph and joy!”