

Yom Teru'ah Study

By Yochanan Zaqantov

It is the first day of the seventh month. It coincides with the New Moon of the seventh month. It is a day by its name means to shout or loud blasts. We will be looking at Teru'ah and its verb Ru'a and see the meaning of these words and what we are to do on this day.

Teru'ah (Tav-Resh-Vav-Ayin-Hey) or from the root (Resh-Vav-Ayin) I reference number 8643 and found in the Brown Driver Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon (BDB) on page 929 and in the New Englishman's Hebrew Concordance (NEHC) on page 1358. It is a feminine noun and comes from the verb Ru'a. It has the meaning of a loud sound as done when playing a loud instrument or raising one voice in a shout.

Lets look at some reference to this in the scripture (miqra). The word is a noun so it identifies a person, place or thing. In looking at these references lets not confuse action with an object.

For the day of Yom Teru'ah:

Vayiqra (Leviticus) 23:24

24 Speak to the Israelite people thus: In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall observe complete rest, a sacred occasion **commemorated with loud blasts**

(zik'ron teru'ah – Memorial Shouts/Blasts זִכְרוֹן תְּרוּעָה).

It is the first shabbaton we celebrate in the fall. Commemorated with loud blasts. A shofar, a musical instrument, or a voice can make a loud blast, as we will see.

Bamidbar (Numbers) 29:1

1 In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall observe a sacred occasion: you shall not work at your occupations. You shall observe it as **a day when the horn is sounded (yom teru'ah יוֹם תְּרוּעָה)** [Yom Teru'ah it shall be to you].

Again the horn is sounded but also sounds on each miqra qodesh. It is a day in which we do no mala'khah (work).

A call to war:

Bamidbar (Numbers) 31:6

6 Moses dispatched them on the campaign, a thousand from each tribe, with Phinehas son of Eleazar serving as a priest on the campaign, equipped with the sacred utensils and the trumpets for sounding **the blasts (hateru'ah הַתְּרוּעָה)**.

Yermiyahu (Jeremiah) 4:19

19 Oh, my suffering, my suffering! How I writhe! Oh, the walls of my heart! My heart moans within me, I cannot be silent; For I hear the blare of horns, **Alarms (teru'ah תְּרוּעַת)** of war.

Yermiyahu (Jeremiah) 49:2

2 Assuredly, days are coming —declares YHWH— When I will **sound the alarm (teru'ah תְּרוּעַת)** of war Against Rabbah of the Ammonites; It shall become a desolate mound, And its villages shall be set on fire. And Israel shall dispossess those who dispossessed him —said YHWH.

Amos 1:14

14 I will set fire to the wall of Rabbah, and it shall devour its fortresses, amid **shouting (bit'ruah – with shouting בִּתְרוּעָה)** on a day of battle, On a day of violent tempest.

Amos 2:2

2 I will send down fire upon Moab, and it shall devour the fortresses of Kerioth. And Moab shall die in tumult, amid **shouting (bit'ru'ah בִּתְרוּעָה)** and the blare of horns;

Shouts or blasts to call people to war and causing them to gather.

As in to move the congregation:

Bamidbar (Numbers) 10:5.6

5 But when you sound short **blasts (teru'ah תְּרוּעָה)**, the divisions encamped on the east shall move forward; 6 and when you sound short **blasts (teru'ah תְּרוּעָה)** a

second time, those encamped on the south shall move forward. Thus short **blasts** (teru'ah תְּרוּעָה) shall be blown for setting them in motion,

They used blasts of horns to tell the group of people to move or gather.

As in an Alarm:

Tzefan'yah (Zephaniah) 1:16

16 A day of **horn blasts** (shofar שׁוֹפָר) and **alarms** (uteru'ah וְתְרוּעָה) — Against the fortified towns and the lofty corner towers.

Divrei Ha Yamim Bet (2 Chronicles) 13:12

12 See, Elohim is with us as our chief, and His priests have the trumpets for **sounding blasts** (hateru'ah הַתְּרוּעָה) against you. O children of Israel, do not fight YHWH Elohey of your fathers, because you will not succeed.”

To warn people of harm to come to them.

As in the Playing of an Instrument:

Tehillim (Psalms) 33:2-3

2 Praise YHWH with the lyre; with the ten-stringed harp sing to Him; 3 sing Him a new song; play sweetly **with shouts** of joy (bit'ru'ah בִּתְרוּעָה).

Tehillim (Psalms) 150:5

3 Praise Him with blasts of the horn; praise Him with harp and lyre. 4 Praise Him with timbrel and dance; praise Him with lute and pipe. 5 Praise Him with resounding cymbals; praise Him with **loud-clashing** (teru'ah תְּרוּעָה) cymbals.

Instruments can produce the Teru'ah or blast and shout.

As in Shouts and Rejoicing:

Yehoshua (Joshua) 6:5

5 And when a long blast is sounded on the horn—as soon as you hear that sound of the horn—all the people shall give a mighty **shout (teru’ah תְּרוּעָה)**. Thereupon the city wall will collapse, and the people shall advance, every man straight ahead.”

The story of Jericho and the shouting that brought down its wall is very interesting in how YHWH showed the Children of Israel that by following him they can accomplish the most amazing things.

Shemu’el Aleph (I Samuel) 4:5-6

5 When the Ark of the Covenant of YHWH entered the camp, all Israel burst into a great **shout (teru’ah תְּרוּעָה)**, so that the earth resounded. 6 The Philistines heard the noise of the **shouting (hateru’ah הִתְרוּעָה)** and they wondered, “Why is there such a loud **shouting (hateru’ah הִתְרוּעָה)** in the camp of the Hebrews?” And when they learned that the Ark of YHWH had come to the camp,

Here we see the rejoicing of the men of Israel as the Ark comes into camp. We see Teru’ah as shouts of joy.

Shemu’el Bet (II Samuel) 6:15

15 Thus David and all the House of Israel brought up the Ark of YHWH **with shouts (bit’ru’ah בִּתְרוּעָה)** and with blasts (ubaqol וּבִקּוֹל) of **the horn (shofar שׁוֹפָר)**.

Again we see Teru’ah as shouts of joy with the voice of a shofar or sound of a shofar.

Divrei Ha Yamim Aleph (I Chronicles) 15:28 (parallel of previous verse)

28 All Israel brought up the Ark of the Covenant of YHWH **with shouts (bit’ru’ah בִּתְרוּעָה)** and with blasts (ubaqol וּבִקּוֹל) of **the horn (shofar שׁוֹפָר)**, with trumpets and cymbals, playing on harps and lyres.

Voices with musical instruments make a teru’ah.

Divrei Ha Yamim Bet (II Chronicles) 15:14

14 So they took an oath to YHWH in a loud voice **and with shouts (ubit’ru’ah וּבִתְרוּעָה)**, with trumpeting and blasts of the horn.

The made sounds of joy. They lifted up their voices.

Ezra 3:11-13

11 They sang songs extolling and praising YHWH, “For He is good, His steadfast love for Israel is eternal.” All the people raised a great **shout (teru’ah תְּרוּעָה)** extolling YHWH because the foundation of the House of YHWH had been laid. 12 Many of the priests and Levites and the chiefs of the clans, the old men who had seen the first house, wept loudly at the sight of the founding of this house. Many others **shouted (bit’ru’ah בִּתְרוּעָה)** joyously at the top of their voices. 13 The people could not distinguish the **shouts (teru’ah תְּרוּעֹת)** of joy from the people’s weeping, for the people raised a great **shout (teru’ah תְּרוּעָה)**, the sound of which could be heard from afar.

Again the shouting of joy at an event of great joy.

Tehillim (Psalms) 27:6

6 Now is my head high over my enemies roundabout; I sacrifice in His tent with **shouts (teru’ah תְּרוּעָה)** of joy, singing and chanting a hymn to YHWH.

Singing and chanting are ways to produce teru’ah.

Tehillim (Psalms) 47:5(6)

6 Elohim ascends midst **acclamation [with shout] (bit’ru’ah בִּתְרוּעָה)**; YHWH, to **the blasts of the horn (baqol Shofar בְּקוֹל שׁוֹפָר)**.

YHWH is lifted up in Teru’ah (shouts).

Tehillim (Psalms) 89:15 (16)

16 Happy is the people who know the joyful **shout (teru’ah תְּרוּעָה)**; O YHWH, they walk in the light of Your presence.

We can see that Teru'ah can mean shouts of blasts, which are very loud. We also see this day we need to do these things in keeping the day as stated in Tanakh. This can be done with an instrument like a shofar, horns, piano, etc... You can also do it with your voice. Shouting praises to his name.

The verb related to Teru'ah is Ru'a. It is the root (Resh-Vav-Ayin). It is reference number 7321 and found on page 929 in the BDB and on page 1164 in the NEHC. The meaning of this word is to Shout/or to Sound. As a verb it is an action.

Bamidbar 10:9

9 When you are at war in your land against an aggressor who attacks you, **you shall sound (vaharei'tem וְהִרְעֵתֶם)** short blasts on the trumpets, that you may be remembered before YHWH Eloheykha and be delivered from your enemies.

The sounding of the trumpet is Ru'a and the sound it makes would be a teru'ah.

Yehoshua (Joshua) 6:10, 16

10 But Joshua's orders to the rest of the people were, "Do not **shout (tariy'u תַּרְיֵעוּ)**, do not let your voices be heard, and do not let a sound issue from your lips until the moment that I command you, 'Shout!' (**hariy'u הִרְיֵעוּ**) Then **you shall shout.(vahariy'tem וְהִרְיֵעֵתֶם)**"

They must make the shout the loud sound. They are told to hold off until Yehoshua says hariy'u (You shout)

16 On the seventh round, as the priests blew the horns, Joshua commanded the people,

'Shout!' (**hariy'u הִרְיֵעוּ**) For YHWH has given you the city.

Here they Shouted.

Shofetim (Judges) 15:14

14 When he reached Lehi, the Philistines came **shouting (heriy'u הִרְיֵעוּ)** to meet him. Thereupon the spirit of YHWH gripped him, and the ropes on his arms became like flax that catches fire; the bonds melted off his hands.

Samson hearing the shouts of the Philistines through YHWH's spirit was able to free himself.

Shofetim (Judges) 7:21

21 They remained standing where they were, surrounding the camp; but the entire camp ran about **yelling** (**vayariy'u וַיִּרְיֵעוּ**), and took to flight.

Shemuel Aleph (I Samuel) 17:20

20 Early next morning, David left someone in charge of the flock, took [the provisions], and set out, as his father Jesse had instructed him. He reached the barricade as the army was going out to the battle lines **shouting** (**v'here'u וְהִרְעוּ**) the war cry.

Ezra 3:11

11 They sang songs extolling and praising YHWH, "For He is good, His steadfast love for Israel is eternal." All the people **raised [shouted]** (**heriy'u הִרְיֵעוּ**) **a great shout** (**teru'ah gedolah תְּרוּעָה גְדוֹלָה**) extolling YHWH because the foundation of the House of YHWH had been laid.

The action Ru'a the result was a teru'ah gedolah or great shouts/blasts.

Divrei Ha Yamim Bet (2 Chronicles) 13:12,15

12 See, Elohim is with us as our chief, and His priests have the trumpets for sounding blasts against you [**to sound for battle**] (**lehariya לְהַרְיֵעַ**). O children of Israel, do not fight YHWH Elohey of your fathers, because you will not succeed."

15 The men of Judah **raised a shout** (**vayariy'u וַיִּרְיֵעוּ**); and when the men of Judah **raised a shout [at the shout]** (**bahariya בְּהַרְיֵעַ**), Elohim routed Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah.

Tehillim (Psalms) 47:2

2 All you peoples, clap your hands, raise a joyous **shout** (**hariy'u הִרְיֵעוּ**) for Elohim.

Tehillim (Psalms) 66:2

2 Raise a **shout** (**hariy'u הַרְיֵעוּ**) for Elohim, all the earth; sing the glory of His name, make glorious His praise.

Tehillim (Psalms) 81:2

2 Sing (**Shout – harenynnu הַרְנִינּוּ**) joyously to Elohim, our strength; raise a **shout** (**hariy'u הַרְיֵעוּ**) for the Elohim of Jacob.

Tehillim (Psalms) 95: 1-2

1 Come, let us sing joyously to YHWH, raise a [**let us**] **shout** (**nariy'ah נַרְיֵעָה**) for our rock and deliverer; 2 let us come into His presence with praise; let us raise a [**let us**] **shout** (**nariya נַרְיֵעַ**) for Him in song!

Singing is a way to make ru'a.

Tehillim (Psalms) 98:4-6

4 Raise a **shout** (**hariy'u הַרְיֵעוּ**) to YHWH, all the earth, break into joyous songs of praise! 5 Sing praise to YHWH with the lyre, with the lyre and melodious song. 6 With trumpets and the blast of the horn raise a **shout** (**hariy'u הַרְיֵעוּ**) before YHWH, the king.

Tehillim (Psalms) 100:2

2 worship YHWH in gladness; come into His presence with **shouts** (**hariy'u הַרְיֵעוּ**) of joy.

We can see from these that ru'a is shout and so we can see that this is reflected in teru'ah and so on this day let us raise up our voices to the one deserving all praise. Let us lift him up in our singing, in or playing, and in out shouting.

Lets look at what Aaron Ben Eliyahu discusses on Yom Teruah.

Karaite Anthology, pgs 172-173 excerpt

“1. Since the first day of the seventh month, Tishri, is called *the day of trumpeting* (Num. 29:1), we must know the significance of the word *trumpeting*.

2. We say that we find *trumpeting* used in the sense of uttering a loud sound. We find it used of a loud sound expressing joy, as in *for the people were uttering a loud trumpeting*. (Ezra 3:13), i.e., in praise of God, as an expression of joy; also the contrary, to express grief, as in *Now, why dost thou utter a trumpeting?* (Mic. 4:9). Again, it is written: *And when Joshua heard the noise of the people in their trumpeting ... And he Said, It is not the voice shouting of power, nor the voice shouting of weakness, for I hear only the voice of shouting* (Exod. 32:17-18), meaning that it was an indefinite sound which might signify either alternative.

3. As for the Rabbanite doubts as to the kind of sighing or wailing which trumpeting expresses, does not Scripture, on the contrary, define this Day of Trumpeting as one of joy as it is written of it: *Mourn not, nor weep ... for this day is holy* (Neh. 8:9)? Furthermore, it is well known that Scripture does not indicate that this trumpeting signifies the sound of a horn. We know rather that in all places where Scripture mentions trumpeting along with trumpets and the sound of the horn—like *With trumpets and the sound of the horn trumpet ye before the king, YHWH* (Ps. 98:6). God is gone up amidst trumpeting, YHWH amidst the sound of the Horn (Ps. 47:6), and probably in all similar passages—this trumpeting is not identical with the sound of the Horn, but signifies trumpeting produced by the voice issuing from the mouths of the People, joined with the sound of a trumpet or horn.

4. The proof of this is the fact that in many places we find trumpeting clearly used solely of the raising of the voice in song and chanting; e.g.; *Come, let us sing unto YHWH, let us trumpet to the rock of our salvation, let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, with psalms let us trumpet unto him* (Ps. 95:1); *Trumpet ye unto YHWH, all the earth, break forth and sing for joy* (Ps. 98:4); *Sing, O ye Heavens, for YHWH has done it; trumpet, ye lowest parts of the earth* (Isa. 44:23); *Sing aloud unto God, our strength; trumpet ye unto the God of Jacob* (Ps. 81:2). Where we find trumpeting joined with horns or trumpets, it does not signify that the sound of the trumpets or horns is identical with trumpeting—the proper term for the former is “blowing”—rather than trumpeting is the raising of the human voice, joined with the blowing of the horns or trumpet.”

Lets look at what Nehemia Gordon discusses on Yom Teruah. This is off the Karaite Korner web site.

On the 1st day of the Seventh month (Tishrei) the Torah commands us to observe a "Day of Shouting" (Lev 23,23-25; Nu 29,1-6) on which work is forbidden. This holiday is widely known today by the Rabbinic misnomer "Rosh Hashannah". The Bible never calls this holiday Rosh Hashanah but instead variously calls it Yom Teruah (Day of Shouting) and Zicharon Teruah (Remembrance Shouting). The Rabbis renamed the holiday Rosh Hashana (New Years) claiming that the Jewish year actually begins in Tishrei. The

absurdity of this claim is immediately apparent since the Bible refers to this holiday as falling out in the Seventh month (Tishrei is a later name never used in the Torah). How could New Years fall out in the Seventh month!

The actual beginning of the year is described in Ex 12,2 which states "This month will be for you the beginning of months; It is first of the months of the year". After this explicit statement the Torah proceeds to describe the ceremony of the Passover sacrifice which is to take place in this First month. Similarly, Lev 23 and Nu 28 list the holidays and both passages describe Passover in the First month and Yom Teruah in the Seventh month. Thus there can be no question that the "beginning of months" mentioned in Ex 12,2 refers to the first of Nissan (in which Passover is celebrated) and not to Yom Teruah which takes place in the Seventh month.

The Rabbis claim that later in the Tanach Yom T'ruah is referred to as Rosh Hashanna. Indeed, the expression Rosh Hashannah does appear in Ez 40,1 which reads "In the beginning of the year (Rosh Hashannah) on the tenth of the month". The fact that Ez 40,1 refers to the tenth day of "Rosh Hashannah" makes it clear that the reference here is to the entire First month and not to the first day of the year. Even if Ezekiel is referring to the 1st day of the 1st month there is no justification to say he is referring to anything other than the 1st day of Nissan (First month).

Undoubtedly the Rabbis felt a need to associate Yom Teruah with New Years because they felt uncomfortable that the Bible does not give us a reason for celebrating this holiday as it does for all of the other Biblical holidays (such as the Exodus for Hag Hamatzot and Harvest for Shavuot). However, the true nature of Yom Teruah can be adduced from its name. In the Bible "Teruah" means to make a loud noise either by blowing a horn (e.g. Shofar Lev 25,9; Silver Trumpets Nu 10,5-6) or by shouting in prayer (Ps 100,1). The purpose of Yom Teruah then was probably to shout to YHWH in prayer similar to the idea commonly expressed in the Psalms such as "Shout unto God with a singing voice!" (Ps 47,2) which uses the same verbal root as "Teruah". The Rabbis claim that this noise making can only be done with a Shofar (ram's horn). There is no Biblical evidence for this assertion and on the contrary as has been shown the word "Teruah" can indicate various methods of noise making from shouting in prayer to blowing on the Silver Trumpets (Nu 10) all of which the Bible describes as acts of worshipping YHWH (see also Psalm 150).

Biblical Verses which mention Yom Teruah:

- Lev 23,23-25 "And YHWH spoke unto Moses saying, Speak to the Children of Israel saying, In the Seventh month on the first of the month will be a day of rest (Shabbaton) for you, a Remembrance Shouting, a holy convocation. You shall do no work and you will bring a fire sacrifice to YHWH."
- Nu 29,1-6 "And in the Seventh month on the first of the month will be a holy convocation for you; you shall do no work, it will be a Day of Shouting for you. [List of Sacrifices for Yom Teruah]."

- Amos 8,4-5 "Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, that make the poor of the land to fail, Saying, When will New Moon Day pass that we may sell our grain, and the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying with deceitful balances?"

http://www.karaite-korner.org/yom_teruah.shtml

Yom Teru'ah Sameach l'kulam (Happy day of Shouting everyone!)