

The Memorial Portion

©2022 Mike Whyte

Copyright Notice: this document may be used freely for personal study, preaching, and teaching.

No part of it may be used under any circumstances for commercial purposes or to attain personal gain or advantage.

Three “memorials” are identified in the Bible: the **“memorial portion”** of the Grain Offering (Lv2:4a,9); the **First Day of Unleavened Bread** (Ex12:14a,16aα,17a, 13:8-9a); and the **Day of Trumpets** (Lv23:23-24). FDUB is clearly stated to be a memorial of the day Israel left Egypt. There is no explicit indication why the other two are called “memorials”.

The Day of Trumpets: שׁוֹפָר - shophar: a trumpet made of ram’s horn (Ex19:16,19); הַצִּצְרָה - hatzotz^erah: a manufactured metal trumpet (Nm10:2a); תְּרוּעָה - t^eru’ah: a trumpet blast (either trumpet); can also be a “loud shout” (Nm10:5-6). **The Day of Trumpets is yom t^eru’ah – day of loud blast** (Nm29:1). Neither “trumpet” is explicitly identified to be used on the Day of Trumpets. Clearly the shophar was associated with the Day of Trumpets (Ps81:3). The Day of Trumpets looks to the Day of YHWH – the Second Advent. The shophar is frequently associated with war – especially the Day of YHWH (Jsh6:4-5a, Zph1:14a,15-16a).

What is a “Memorial”? something that keeps remembrance alive; a commemoration; a record of an event. The Hebrew word is זִכָּרוֹן - zikkaron, a masculine noun derived from the verb זָכַר - zakar, “think about”, “remember”, “commemorate”.

The Journey to the Promised Land: The first ten chapter of Book of Numbers contain the final instructions from God to Moses for the Israelites for the march to the Promised Land. The instructions end with the specification of **two silver trumpets**, hatzotz^erah (Nm10:1-8a). The trumpets were to be used in the journey as a communication device. Once in the Promised Land the trumpets were to be continued to be used on “days of gladness”, “appointed times”, and on the “beginnings of months” – clearly including the Day of Trumpets, with the stated objective that **God would “remember” the people**. The **trumpet blasts were to be a “memorial”** of the people before God (Nm10:8b-10). This is the **most likely association the Israelites would have had for the Day of Trumpets: a memorial of leaving Horeb setting off to take possession of the Promised Land**.

The Grain Offering: Grain was the most important food in the ancient world, usually wheat or barley. As the staple of life, **offering grain represented recognition by the offeror of God’s beneficence in provision of the necessities of life**. The Grain Offering was always unleavened, always with olive oil, always with salt, always with frankincense, **always a “memorial portion” was required** (Lv2:1-3). The **frankincense and the memorial portion are fully burned on the alter**, an offering by fire: the total consumption of items place on the alter symbolizes **total commitment to serving God** – a pleasing aroma to God.

The Memorial Portion: The word for “memorial portion” is: אֶזְכָּרָה - ‘az^ekarah, a feminine noun derived from the verb זָכַר - zakar, as is zikkaron, so the words are related, **but it is nowhere stated why it is called a “memorial portion”**. Paul records Jesus’ instructions regarding the New Testament Passover:

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. **Do this in remembrance of me.**” In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. **Do this**, as often as you drink it, **in remembrance of me.**” (1 Corinthians 11:23-25 ESV)

The **Passover symbols are a “memorial” of Jesus:** his life, his work, his sacrifice, his resurrection, his current position as “intercessor”: these are **the necessities of eternal life**.

Jesus Christ – the Messiah: The “memorial portion” of the Grain Offering looks forward to the salvific acts of Jesus Christ – the Messiah. **The entire sacrificial system was a foreshadow of the sacrifice of Christ**. As the Grain Offering symbolized the necessities of physical life, a portion of it was always required to look forward in God’s Plan of Salvation to the life and work of Jesus Christ. The First Day of Unleavened Bread to the Israelites was a memorial of deliverance from Egypt; to Christians **the First Day of Unleavened Bread is a memorial of deliverance from sin through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ**. The symbolism of the Day of Trumpets has always been clear: the return of Christ and the First resurrection: **how then is the Day of Trumpets a “memorial”?**

Day of Trumpets – a Memorial: To the ancient Israelites, The Day of Trumpets was a memorial of the day they set off to the Promised Land. Jesus told us to consider the New Testament Passover symbols as a memorial of his life and work. Christ’s life and work make it possible for Christians to have the Holy Spirit which make it possible to live by the Way of God, which makes salvation possible. This suggests that **the “memorial” aspect of The Day of Trumpets** relates to **the day of conversion**, the **receipt of the Holy Spirit – the day each of us set off on our journey to the true Promised Land**, the Kingdom of God. Our journey will be completed at the **last great trumpet blast** which will accompany the **First Resurrection** (1Cr15:50-53, Mt24:30-31).

The “memorial portion” is something of a mystery. The **First Day of Unleavened Bread is clearly stated to be a “memorial” of deliverance**. The Grain Offering relates to the necessities of life. The **Day of Trumpets looks to the beginning of real life in the Kingdom**. As with all the offerings, the **symbolic focus of Grain Offering is Jesus Christ through the “memorial portion”**. To the Israelites, the Day of Trumpets was a “memorial” of the day they began their journey to the Promised Land. To Christians, The Day of Trumpets is **a memorial of the day of conversion**, when the Holy Spirit was given as a gift from God, so that we could **commence our journey to the true Promised Land**.

This material is based on the paper “True Worship of the True God” located at <https://mikewhytebiblicalresearch.ca/>