

# BETWEEN THE LINES

## *A Deeper Look...*

### #903- SACRED OBJECTS: Items That Inspire

We have considered five specific objects of Jewish ritual observance... the *Shofar*, the *Tallit*, the *Tefillin*, the *Mezuzah*, and the *Kipa*. Let's take a deeper look at each of them.

#### The Shofar:

- A very ancient and specifically Biblical implement.
- There are three Hebrew words related to the sound of the trumpet...
  - *Shofar*- Focusing on the sound/the blast of the horn
  - *Qeren*- Implying the physical shape of the horn
  - *Yobel*- Dealing with the results of the sound (Jubilee!!!)
- There are two Hebrew words used in Scripture for what you hear...
  - *Taqa*- A very sharp blast, a wake up call
  - *Chatsotserah*- A wavering, fuzzy sound
- **Leviticus 25** introduces *Ruabar* for what a shofar accomplishes...
  - (Translated to cause, to transfer, to intensify, to alienate, to convey over, to overrun, to provoke, to escape... Is this not a very pro-active term? The sound of the shofar is not passive!!! It does not allow me to remain passive either!)
- **Luke 1** equates the Messiah to the shofar.

**Conclusion:** Don't we all need to be periodically alarmed by *Taqa* and not left uncertain by *Chatsotserah*? Isn't that what **I Corinthians 14** would teach us?

**Search the Word...** Shofar issues are raised in the following curious passages...

**Exodus 19**- The precursor to the Covenant agreement of Sinai.

**Judges 6,7**- An aid in deliverance from the oppressors.

**Job 39**- God takes no account of the "blasts" of mortal, secular man.

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#### The Tallit: (The shawl with the Tsiytsith)

- The "fringes" and "ribbons" are also a very ancient, Biblical symbol.
- The instructions first came immediately after blatant rebellion...
  - A sign of marking? Of loyalty?
- The color blue is utilized over 45 times in the Torah for sacred things...
  - Little wonder blue on white is how the modern state of Israel would choose to mark themselves on their national flag.
- The intention of the woman is clearly revealed in **Matthew 9** and **Mark 5**...(**Luke 8** reveals her action but not her intention.) She simply wanted to touch the hem. This most likely implies she was grasping for the *Tsiytsith* on the *Arba Kanfot* (four corners) of his garment that day.
- The Tallit is a daytime adornment...
  - (You are commanded to be able "to see/observe it"... in the dark?)

**In Conclusion:** Blu Greenburg (author, imminent Rabbis wife, "mother in Israel", and a very nice lady!) tells of the day that her young son, Moshe, explained to his baseball team that the fringes sticking out from under his shirt were his "soul threads". Not a bad thought!

**Search the Word...** Consider the context of Numbers 15 where you find the institution of this "marking" with the admonition given by Peter for the physical appearance and demeanor of those who would also be "the chosen" in I Peter 3.

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**The Tefillin:**

- *Phylactery* is the New Testament term used by Jesus in Matthew 23...
  - The term means, "guard case" for Scripture slips.
- "Frontlet" is used in Exodus 16 and Deuteronomy 6.
- Texts on the scroll are Exodus 13:1-10,11-17, Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 11:13-23.
- The two "boxes" are *Tefillin Bayit Shel Rosh* and *Tefillin Bayit Shel Yad*...
  - The Tefillin's "house/box of the head" and "house/box of the arm".
  - This teaches the dedication of thought and action.
- The Tefillin is only to be worn when the body is clean.
- The Tefillin is not a Sabbath or festival object.
  - Observance of those days is enough of a marking/binding alone.
- Elements of the Tefillin are...
  - *Bayit*, the box - *Parshiyot*, the text - *Titara*, the base - *Maabarta*, the loop for attaching the strap to the base - *Giddin*, the ligament thread from a kosher animal - *Retzuah*, the strap

**In Conclusion:** Do I sense the daily binding of my thought and action? Do I live under the banner, "Know before Whom you stand"?

**Search the Word...** Go back to the Akedah (Binding of Isaac story) of Genesis 22 and consider again the implications of looking to Heaven and saying, "Bind me well, Father." Then consider Gethsemane and Calvary in this light.

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**The Kipa:**

The head covering that constantly reminds the wearer that there is very definitely "Someone above".

- You may see it referred to as *Kippah*, *Kepah*, *Yarmulke*, or *Skullcap*.
  - This is not an item of specific Biblical origin.
  - The Talmud admonishes the observant to not go even "4 yards bareheaded" lest he forgets there is "Someone above".
  - It is another marking that silently states, "Under the Kipa you expect to find something."
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**The Mezuzah:**

The traditional doorpost marking of the observant home that fulfills Deuteronomy 6 commands.

- Hebrew letters *Shin/Dalet/Yod* spell one of the titles of God-*Shaddai*.
- *Shin/Dalet/Yod* create an acronym for "*Shomer Daltot Yisrael*"..."He who guards Israel's doors."
- It reminds the one who passes that he is both "citizen of the world" and also "member of covenant community".

**In Conclusion:** Have I done things that really mark me and my home?

**Search the Word...** Consider the issues raised about what it means to be God's "peculiar" people in the following passages...**Exodus 19, Deuteronomy 14, Deuteronomy 26, Psalm 135, Titus 2, and I Peter 2.**