

yom teruah — the shout that rises

numbers 29:1–6 and leviticus 23:23–25: the seventh new-month, the summoned assembly, and the levitical teacher that shows a person their own life in blood, flour, oil, and smoke

part 1 — the scripture texts

numbers 29:1–6

1 and in the seventh new month, on the first day of the new month, you have a set-apart gathering, you do no servile work, it is yom teru'ah

2 and you shall prepare an ascending offering as a sweet fragrance to יהוה: one young bull, one ram, seven lambs a year old, perfect one,

3 and their grain offering: fine flour mixed with oil, three-tenths of an ĕphah for the bull, two-tenths for the ram,

4 and one-tenth for each of the seven lambs,

5 and one male goat as a sin offering, to make atonement for you,

6 besides the ascending offering with its grain offering for the new month, the continual ascending offering with its grain offering, and their drink offerings, according to their right-ruling, as a sweet fragrance, an offering made by fire to יהוה.

leviticus 23:23–25

23 and יהוה spoke to mosheh, saying,

24 speak to the children of yisra'ĕl, saying, 'in the seventh new moon, on the first day of the new moon, you have a rest, a remembrance of teru'ah,

25 'you do no servile work, and you shall bring an offering made by fire to יהוה.' "

part 2 — numbers 29:1: the hebrew text and concrete word-by-word analysis

the hebrew text (numbers 29:1)

וּבַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ מִקְרָא־קֹדֶשׁ יְהִי־לָכֶם כָּל־מִלְאכַת עֲבָדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ יוֹם תְּרוּעָה יְהִי־לָכֶם:

concrete word-by-word analysis

hebrew	transliteration	concrete meaning
וּבַחֹדֶשׁ	u-va-ḥodesh	"and in the new-month." חֹדֶשׁ comes from the root חִדַּשׁ, which concretely means "to be new, to renew." the noun therefore denotes the renewal of the month-cycle — the point at which one month ends and the next begins. it is not the moon itself. it is the turn of the month. in the tanakh, ḥodesh is the ordinary word for "month"

hebrew	transliteration	concrete meaning
		precisely because a month in israel was a renewed cycle of days, not an abstract unit of time.
השביעי	ha-shevi'i	"the seventh." an ordinal number. this is the seventh new-month cycle counted from the spring (the month later called tishrei).
בְּאֶחָד	be-echad	"on the one." אֶחָד is the numeral "one." here it means the first day of that renewed month-cycle.
לַחֹדֶשׁ	la-hodesh	"of the new-month." the same word again: the renewed cycle. the phrase בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ means "on day one of the new month."
מִקְרָא־קֹדֶשׁ	miqra-qodesh	מִקְרָא (miqra) = "a calling-together," from the verb קָרָא (qara), "to call out, to cry out." concretely: a summons — someone shouts, and people gather. קֹדֶשׁ (qodesh) = "set-apart, cut off, distinct." concretely: something separated from ordinary use and reserved for a specific purpose. together: a summoned assembly that is set apart — people physically gathered because they were called out, and this gathering is not for ordinary business.
יִהְיֶה	yihyeh	"it shall be" — the verb "to be" in the imperfect. concretely: "it will happen, it will come to pass."
לָכֶם	lakhem	"for you (plural)" — to the assembled people.
כָּל־מְלָאכֶת	kol-mela'khet	כָּל (kol) = "all, every, the whole." מְלָאכֶת (mela'khet) = "work, craftsmanship, business, occupation" — the concrete labor by which a person makes a living or accomplishes a task. it is the same word used for the work of building the tabernacle (exodus 35:24). it is not abstract "effort"; it is the actual making, building, crafting, and trading that occupies a person's day.
עֲבֹדָה	avodah	"service, labor, servitude" — from the root עָבַד (avad), "to work, to serve." concretely, it is the labor of a servant or slave (genesis 29:27), the toil imposed on a worker. together with mela'khet, the phrase כָּל־עֲבֹדָה מְלָאכֶת means "any work of service" — the entire range of labor by which one serves a master, earns a wage, or performs a necessary task.
לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה	lo ta'asu	"you shall not do/make" — a straightforward prohibition. concretely: do not perform, do not produce, do not accomplish any of that labor.
יוֹם	yom	"day" — concretely, the period of daylight or the twenty-four-hour cycle. in this verse it is a specific, marked day.

hebrew	transliteration	concrete meaning
תְּרוּעָה	teruah	"a shout, a blast, a loud cry." the noun comes from the verb רוע (rua), "to shout, to raise a loud noise." concretely, תְּרוּעָה is the sound made by a human crowd shouting (as when israel shouted at jericho, joshua 6:20) or the sound made by a horn — a short, broken, sharp, piercing alarm-blast, not a melody. it is the sound of war, of alarm, of assembly, of joy — but always a loud, raw, physical noise.
יְהִי־לָכֶם	yihyeh lakhem	"it shall be for you" — the day is to be characterized by this concrete shouting/blasting.

concrete reading of the whole verse

putting it together without later interpretation:

"and in the seventh new-month, on day one of the new-month, a summoned, set-apart assembly it shall be for you. no work of service shall you do. a day of loud shouting/blasting it shall be for you."

the ancient israelite hearing this would picture:

1. **a turn of the month-cycle:** the old month has run its course; a new month begins. there is no reference to the moon's shape here — only to the renewal of the month.
2. **a summons:** someone cries out, and the people gather.
3. **a cessation of labor:** they stop the plowing, the building, the carrying, the serving — all the concrete work by which they sustain themselves.
4. **a loud noise:** they make a raw, ear-splitting sound — either with their voices or with a horn — a sound that is not music but alarm, not speech but cry.

this is the concrete, ancient, hebrew understanding of the day. it is the first day of the seventh month, a summoned assembly, stopped work, loud noise. the "set-apart" quality of the assembly means it is separated out from the ordinary assemblies of trade, politics, or daily life, and reserved for this specific purpose: the loud blast.

note on ḥodesh vs. yareach

to be explicit about the lexical distinction you raised:

- **יָרֵחַ (yareach)** is the moon as a physical body in the sky. it appears among the heavenly bodies (genesis 37:9; deuteronomy 4:19), and it is what is darkened or withdrawn in judgment passages (isaiah 13:10; joel 2:10). it is never used for the first day of the month as a festival.
- **חֹדֶשׁ (ḥodesh)** is the renewal of the month-cycle. it is used for the first day of a month when that day is marked as a special occasion (1 samuel 20:5; isaiah 1:13; amos 8:5; psalm 81:3). it is also the ordinary word for "month" throughout the tanakh. the root חִדַּשׁ means "to be new, to renew," and the noun denotes the newness of the cycle, not the moon itself.

the phrase **חֹדֶשׁ יָרֵחַ** ("new moon") never appears in the tanakh. the "new moon" interpretation of ḥodesh is a post-exilic development. the plain concrete sense of numbers 29:1 is the first day of the seventh month — a day of summoned assembly, stopped labor, and loud shouting/blasting.

part 3 — numbers 29:2–6: the hebrew text and concrete word-by-word analysis

numbers 29:2

hebrew:

וַעֲשִׂיתֶם עֹלָה לְרִיחַ נִיחֹחַ לַיהוָה פֶּרֶךְ בֶּן־בָּקָר אֶחָד אֵיל אֶחָד כִּבְשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה שִׁבְעָה תְּמִימִם:

hebrew	transliteration	concrete meaning
וַעֲשִׂיתֶם	va-asitem	"and you shall make/do." root עשה = to make, shape, produce, accomplish. concrete: you shall prepare/produce.
עֹלָה	olah	"ascending-offering." root עלה = to go up. concrete: the animal that goes up in smoke on the altar.
לְרִיחַ	le-reiach	"for a smell/odor." concrete: for the smell of the smoke.
נִיחֹחַ	nichoach	"restful/soothing." root נוח = to rest, settle. concrete: a smell that settles/quiets.
לַיהוָה	la-yhvh	"to yhvh."
פֶּרֶךְ	par	"bull / young bull."
בֶּן־בָּקָר	ben-baqar	"son of the herd" = a head of cattle.
אֶחָד	echad	"one."
אֵיל	ayil	"ram."
אֶחָד	echad	"one."
כִּבְשִׂים	kevasim	"lambs" — young male sheep.
בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה	bene-shanah	"sons of a year" = year-old.
שִׁבְעָה	shiv'ah	"seven."

hebrew	transliteration	concrete meaning
תְּמִימִם	temimim	"whole, complete, intact, sound." concrete: no missing part, no blemish.

concrete rendering:

"and you shall make an ascending-offering for a restful smell to yhvh: one bull, son of the herd; one ram; seven lambs, sons of a year, whole."

numbers 29:3

hebrew:

וּמִנְחָתָם סֹלֶת בְּלוּלָה בַּשֶּׁמֶן שְׁלֹשָׁה עֶשְׂרִינִים לַפָּר שְׁנֵי עֶשְׂרִינִים לְאַיִל:

hebrew	transliteration	concrete meaning
וּמִנְחָתָם	u-minchatam	"and their grain-gift." מִנְחָה = gift, tribute, present; here a flour gift.
סֹלֶת	solet	"fine flour."
בְּלוּלָה	belulah	"mixed / kneaded." root בלל = to mix, mingle.
בַּשֶּׁמֶן	ba-shemen	"in the oil" — olive oil.
שְׁלֹשָׁה	sheloshah	"three."
עֶשְׂרִינִים	esronim	"tenth-parts" — tenths of an ephah measure.
לַפָּר	la-par	"for the bull."
שְׁנֵי	shenei	"two."
עֶשְׂרִינִים	esronim	"tenth-parts."
לְאַיִל	la-ayil	"for the ram."

concrete rendering:

"and their grain-gift: fine flour mixed in oil — three tenth-parts for the bull, two tenth-parts for the ram."

numbers 29:4

hebrew:

וְעֶשְׂרֹן אֶחָד לְכֶבֶשׂ הָאֶחָד לַשְּׁבַעַת הַכִּבְשִׁים:

hebrew	transliteration	concrete meaning
וְעֶשְׂרֹן	ve-isaron	"and a tenth-part."
אֶחָד	echad	"one."
לְכֶבֶשׂ	la-keves	"for the lamb."
הָאֶחָד	ha-echad	"the one."
לַשְּׁבַעַת	le-shiv'at	"for the seven."
הַכִּבְשִׁים	ha-kevasim	"the lambs."

concrete rendering:

"and one tenth-part for the one lamb, for the seven lambs."

numbers 29:5

hebrew:

וְשַׁעִיר־עִזִּים אֶחָד חֲטָאת לְכַפֵּר עֲלֵיכֶם:

hebrew	transliteration	concrete meaning
וְשַׁעִיר	u-se'ir	"and a hairy one" — a he-goat. root שער = hair.
עִזִּים	izim	"goats."
אֶחָד	echad	"one."
חֲטָאת	chatat	"missing-offering / sin-offering." root חטא = to miss, go wrong. concrete: the offering brought because of missing.
לְכַפֵּר	le-khaper	"to cover." root כפר = to cover over, smear. concrete: to cover over.
עֲלֵיכֶם	aleikhem	"upon you" — over you, on your behalf.

concrete rendering:

"and one hairy goat of the goats, a missing-offering, to cover over you."

numbers 29:6

hebrew:

מלבד עלת החדש ומנחתה ועלת התמיד ומנחתה ונסכיהם כמשפטם לריח ניחח אשה ליהוה:

hebrew	transliteration	concrete meaning
מלבד	mi-levad	"from apart from" = besides, in addition to.
עלת	olat	"ascending-offering of."
החדש	ha-chodesh	"the new-month" — the renewal of the month-cycle. not the moon.
ומנחתה	u-minchatah	"and its grain-gift."
ועלת	ve-olat	"and the ascending-offering of."
התמיד	ha-tamid	"the continual / regular one." concrete: the always-going, standing offering.
ומנחתה	u-minchatah	"and its grain-gift."
ונסכיהם	ve-niskeihem	"and their poured-out offerings." root נסך = to pour out.
כמשפטם	ke-mishpatam	"according to their judgment/rule." concrete: as their manner/rule is.
לריח	le-reiach	"for a smell."
ניחח	nichoach	"restful/soothing."
אשה	isheh	"fire-offering." root ש = fire.
ליהוה	la-yhvh	"to yhvh."

concrete rendering:

"apart from the ascending-offering of the new-month and its grain-gift, and the continual ascending-offering and its grain-gift, and their poured-out offerings, according to their rule, for a restful smell, a fire-offering to yhvh."

part 4 — whole concrete picture

the ancient israelite would see and hear this:

- a bull from the herd, a ram, and seven year-old lambs — all whole, no blemish.

- **fine flour mixed with oil**, measured in tenth-parts.
- a **hairy goat** brought for missing — to **cover over** the people.
- all of it **going up in smoke** on the altar — a **smell that settles/rests**.
- along with the **new-month offering**, the **continual offering**, and **poured-out liquids**, done according to the rule.
- it is a **fire-offering to yhvh**.

part 5 — the sacrifices as concrete pointers to the human being

you are asking the right question. before the levitical order, there was no animal sacrifice — the melchizedek priests taught the creator's ways directly. when the levitical system came, it became a **teacher** — a physical, visual, daily lesson. the animals, flour, oil, and fire were not the point. they were **concrete pictures** of what a person is supposed to be doing with their own life, body, and breath.

let us break it down — each element, concretely, pointing to you and me.

the bull — פָּר בֶּן־בָּקָר (par ben baqar)

what it is: a bull, a son of the herd. the largest, heaviest, strongest animal. the beast of burden that pulls the plow, threshes the grain, and does the heavy labor.

what it points to in you: your **strength**. your capacity for work. the raw physical power in your arms, your back, your legs. the bull is the part of you that gets up in the morning and labors — the plowing, the hauling, the building, the grinding daily work by which you sustain your life.

concretely: when the bull went up in smoke, the person watching was meant to see: *"my strength, my labor, my heavy work — that belongs to the creator. i do not work for myself. my strength goes up to him."*

the ram — אֵיל (ayil)

what it is: a ram. the male sheep that leads the flock. the one with horns that goes before the others. the head of the herd.

what it points to in you: your **leadership, your headship, your going-first**. the part of you that makes decisions, that takes initiative, that stands in front and says "follow me." every person is a ram in some arena — in their household, their work, their community, their own life.

concretely: when the ram went up, the person saw: *"my leadership, my headship, my going-first — that belongs to the creator. i do not lead for myself. i do not use my position for my own gain. my headship goes up to him."*

the seven lambs — כֶּבֶשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה שִׁבְעָה (kevasim bene-shanah shiv'ah)

what they are: seven; year-old lambs. young, tender, vulnerable, following. seven is the number of completeness — the full cycle, the whole week, the entirety.

what they point to in you: your **tenderness, your vulnerability, your young and growing parts.** the parts of you that are still learning, still following, still weak. the things in your care that need protection — children, students, the young in your household, the new believer, the tender parts of your own living breathing being.

concretely: when the seven lambs went up, the person saw: *"my tenderness, my vulnerability, the young and weak things in my care — those belong to the creator. i do not crush the weak. i do not devour the young. i bring them up to him."*

fine flour — סֹלֶת (solet)

what it is: wheat that has been crushed, ground, sifted, and refined. the solid grain of the field becomes powder. it is the substance of bread — the staff of life.

what it points to in you: your **substance, your body, your material life.** the flour is what you are made of — your flesh, your bones, your daily bread, the material provision of your life. it is your body given over to the creator's use.

concretely: when the fine flour was offered, the person saw: *"my body, my substance, my daily bread — that belongs to the creator. i do not live to feed myself alone. my very flesh goes up to him."*

oil — שֶׁמֶן (shemen)

what it is: olive oil. pressed from olives. it makes things smooth, it makes things burn, it preserves, it heals, it anoints. it is the fatness, the richness, the fuel.

what it points to in you: your **joy, your anointing, your capacity to burn bright.** oil is what makes the flame burn. it is the richness in your life — your gladness, your energy, your ability to shine, to heal, to soothe, to preserve.

concretely: when the oil was mixed with the flour, the person saw: *"my joy, my gladness, my richness — that belongs to the creator. i do not hoard my oil. i do not burn for myself. my anointing goes up to him."*

the hairy goat — שְׂעִיר־עִזִּים (se'ir izim)

what it is: a hairy goat. goats are rough, wild, stubborn, independent. they wander, they butt, they resist. the hair is coarse and rough. the goat is the opposite of the smooth, orderly lamb.

what it points to in you: your **roughness, your wildness, your stubbornness, your missing-the-mark.** the parts of you that resist, that wander, that butt against the goad. the parts of you that miss the target. the parts you are ashamed of.

concretely: when the hairy goat was brought for the chatat (the missing-offering), the person saw: *"my roughness, my stubbornness, my wandering, my missing the mark — i bring that to the*

creator to cover over. i do not hide it. i do not pretend it is not there. i bring the rough, hairy, stubborn part of me and lay it on the altar."

the ascending-offering — עֹלָה (olah)

what it is: that which goes up. the animal is placed on the fire, and the smoke rises. it goes up. the hebrew word means "that which ascends."

what it points to in you: your **breath, your words, your deeds going up**. your life is not meant to stay down in the dust. it is meant to rise. every breath you breathe, every word you speak, every deed you do — it either rises to the creator or falls to the ground.

concretely: when the offering went up in smoke, the person saw: *"my life is meant to go up. my breath, my words, my actions — they rise like smoke. where is my smoke going? is it rising to the creator, or am i breathing out into the void?"*

fire — אֵשׁ (isheh)

what it is: fire. the consuming flame. it turns solid into smoke and ash. it burns, it consumes, it transforms.

what it points to in you: your **passion, your testing, your consuming**. fire is what burns away what cannot remain. it is the heat of trial, the flame of devotion, the consuming of the old self. fire does not tolerate mixture. it consumes what is not pure.

concretely: when the fire consumed the offering, the person saw: *"my life is to be consumed. not half-burned, not lukewarm, not smoldering — consumed. the fire of the creator burns away what is false. i give myself to be burned up."*

the restful smell — רֵיחַ נִיחֹחַ (reiach nichoach)

what it is: the smell of the smoke. נִיחֹחַ comes from נָוַח (nuach) = to rest, to settle, to be quiet. it is a smell that settles, that quiets, that brings rest.

what it points to in you: your **influence, your reputation, your effect on the world around you**. a smell goes everywhere. you cannot contain it. it enters the nostrils of everyone nearby. your life gives off a smell — either a restful, settling, pleasant smell, or a stench.

concretely: when the smoke rose, the person saw: *"my life gives off a smell. when i walk into a room, does it bring rest or unrest? does my presence settle people, or disturb them? my influence goes up to the creator like a smell — is it a restful smell to him?"*

the poured-out offerings — נִסְחִים (nesakhim)

what they are: wine, oil, water — poured out on the altar. the root נָסַךְ means to pour out, to spill, to empty.

what they point to in you: your **tears, your labor, your joy, your very liquid life poured out**. wine is gladness. oil is richness. water is life. all of it poured out, not held back.

concretely: when the drink-offering was poured, the person saw: *"my tears, my joy, my life — i pour it out. i do not hold it back. i do not cling to my own pleasure. i spill myself for the creator."*

the new-month — חֹדֶשׁ (hodesh)

what it is: the renewal of the month-cycle. a fresh start. the old month has run its course; a new one begins.

what it points to in you: your **renewal, your fresh start, your new beginning**. you are not stuck in yesterday. the month turns. the cycle renews. you get to begin again.

concretely: when the new-month offering was brought, the person saw: *"my life is renewed. i am not trapped in the old cycle. i can start fresh. the creator renews me as the month is renewed."*

part 6 — putting it all together

when the israelite brought the bull, the ram, the seven lambs, the flour, the oil, the goat, the fire, the smoke, the poured-out wine — and it all went up in flame and smoke — **they were watching a picture of their own life being given over to the creator.**

element	points to
bull	your strength, your heavy labor
ram	your leadership, your going-first
seven lambs	your tenderness, your vulnerability, the young in your care
fine flour	your body, your substance, your daily bread
oil	your joy, your anointing, your richness
hairy goat	your stubbornness, your missing-the-mark
ascending-offering	your breath, your words, your deeds going up
fire	your passion, your testing, your consuming
restful smell	your influence, your reputation, your effect
poured-out offerings	your tears, your joy, your life poured out
new-month	your renewal, your fresh start

the levitical system was a **daily, physical, bloody, smoky, smelly teacher**. it took abstract truths and made them concrete. it put a knife in your hand and an animal in front of you and said: "*this is what you are doing with your own life. your strength, your leadership, your tenderness, your body, your joy, your stubbornness, your breath, your influence, your tears — all of it goes up. none of it is yours. you are a living ascending-offering.*"

the melchizedek priests taught this directly. the levitical priests taught it with animals, flour, oil, and fire. same lesson. one was spoken; the other was lived out in blood and smoke.

you are the bull. you are the ram. you are the lambs. you are the flour. you are the oil. you are the goat. you are the fire. you are the smoke. you are the poured-out wine. your life is the offering.

part 7 — the song

יום תרועה — the shout that rises

(corrected: no abstract soul — only the living-breathing being)

[intro — shofar blows and the shout of people with the sounds of didgeridoo, clap sticks, bullroarer, gum leaves, seed rattles and hollowed logs]

... .. (sound of shofar — rams horns and the shout of people)

verse 1

on the seventh new-month, day one appears,
the old cycle closes, the new one is here.
a summons goes out, a set-apart call,
stop every slave-work, lay down your all.
no hammer, no plow, no burden to bear,
a day of teruah — a shout in the air.

chorus

יום תרועה shout it loud!
יום תרועה blast the sound!
not a melody, not a song,
a raw cry rising all day long.
YOD-HEY-VAV-HEY — the one who is, who breathes, who causes to be,
receive the smoke that rises from this living-breathing being.

verse 2

bring me a bull, son of the herd —
my strength, my labor, my heaviest word.
bring me a ram that leads the flock —
my headship, my going-first, my rock.
seven lambs, year-old, whole —
my tenderness, the young in my breath.
fine flour mixed with oil i bring —
my body, my substance, my everything.
oil pressed out, rich and bright —
my joy, my anointing, my burning light.
a hairy goat for the times i missed —
my stubborn wandering, brought to the midst.
poured-out wine on the altar floor —
my tears, my gladness, forevermore.
fire consumes, and the smoke goes high —
a restful smell to the one on high.

chorus

יום תרועה shout it loud!
יום תרועה blast the sound!
not a melody, not a song,
a raw cry rising all day long.
YOD-HEY-VAV-HEY — the one who is, who breathes, who causes to be,
receive the smoke that rises from this living-breathing being.

verse 3

before the levite, before the knife,
melchizedek taught the creator's life.
then the tent and the altar came,
a teacher of blood, of fire, of flame.
not the animal, not the flour, not the oil,
but you and me in the daily toil.
your breath, your words, your deeds, your tears,
your strength, your leading, your tender years —
all of it laid on the altar stone,
none of it yours, not even your own.

bridge

YOD-HEY-VAV-HEY — not a greek idea,
not far off, not abstract, not mere.
from **היה** — to be, to breathe, to come to pass,
the living one, the breath in the clay and grass.
he is. he breathes. he causes to be.

the one who is, the breath in me.
yod — the hand that opens wide,
hey — behold, the breath inside,
vav — the hook that binds and stays,
hey — behold, the breath always.
the name that breathes, the name that is,
the one who causes me to live.

chorus

יום תרועה shout it loud!
יום תרועה blast the sound!
not a melody, not a song,
a raw cry rising all day long.
YOD-HEY-VAV-HEY — the one who is, who breathes, who causes to be,
receive the smoke that rises from this living-breathing being.

outro

i am the bull. i am the ram.
i am the lambs. i am the man.
i am the flour. i am the oil.
i am the goat with the stubborn coil.
i am the fire. i am the smoke.
i am the wine that is poured and broke.
i am the living-breathing being, rising free —
יום תרועה — a shout to thee.