

# Trumpets: A Time of War and a Time of Joy

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Let's all turn to Leviticus 23 and look at why we're here today. Leviticus 23:23—this is why we're here. This is always a good place to start.

**Leviticus 23:23** *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 24) Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation. (KJV)*

Normally, the first of each month was announced by the blowing of a long silver trumpet—you can check that out in Numbers 10, but this day was different. Any time God does something different; we want to ask why. Why has God changed something or has done something different? The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 2, page 953 says: *The blowing of the Trumpet on this Feast is the blowing of the Shofar, the rams horn, rather than the silver trumpet of Numbers 10.* The Talmud says that it was like a blast or it was like a shout, it wasn't a musical sound. Someone brought a shofar here and this obviously does not look like a musical instrument. It had a different purpose. The Jewish Publication Society Bible of 1917 says, about the last phrase here in verse 24: *A memorial proclaimed with the blast of horns; a holy convocation.* There is no Hebrew word for trumpets in Leviticus 23:24, it's just the word for blowing. It's the Hebrew word, if you want to look it up, Strong's #8643. It has an interesting definition because it has a two-fold definition. It means *acclimation of joy or a battle cry as an alarm* and it's interesting when one word has the opposite meaning. It has two meanings and they are the opposite of each other. So when I was looking this word up I began to think, what is God trying to tell us here? Is there something going on here?

He commanded a shofar to be blown today, not a silver trumpet—why is that? The word blowing has these two meanings that are diametrically opposed to each other. A joy on the one hand, battle cry on the other hand. Today I thought it might be instruction and it was an interesting study for me to investigate and see why God did it this way. We need to remember what we look forward to on this day and the fact that what we are looking forward to on this day, doesn't happen in one day, it happens over an extended period of time, I think we know that. The title of the sermon is:

## Trumpets: A Time of War and a Time of Joy

Two meanings, diametrically opposed. Let's start with point number one and ask the question:

### **1. Why a time of war?**

The point is, that when God comes back to this earth and Christ comes back to this earth to establish God's government on this earth, it requires war. It's not going to be a peaceful transition. [That's] not going to happen, given the nature of Satan and the nature of mankind because mankind is going to oppose God returning, Christ returning, God coming back on this day. They will not initially repent; people won't do that. Let's go to Revelation 16:1, we'll read this out of the New King James. It's interesting that a voice comes out of the Temple of God.

**Revelation 16:1** *Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God [this is God's wrath] on the earth."*

2) *So the first went and poured out his bowl upon the earth, and a foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. (NKJV)*

Then we read in verse 3, the second bowl is poured out, the sea became blood and then in verse 4 the third bowl is poured out and the rivers became blood. You stop and ask the question, why did God turn the waters into blood? In verse 6 we have the answer.

6) *For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, And You have given them blood to drink. For it is their just due." (NKJV)*

They're worthy of God's vengeance and they spill the blood of God's people, God's children, so their reward for that is to drink blood; the water that has turned into blood. It's kind of fitting, we reap what we sow. You mess with God's children and this is what happens.

7) *And I heard another from the altar saying, "Even so, Lord God Almighty, [there's only one Lord God Almighty] true and righteous are Your judgments."*

8) *Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to scorch men with fire.*

9) *And men were scorched with great heat, [notice their reaction after being scorched with great heat and drinking blood instead of water] and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory. (NKJV)*

You would think they might, but they didn't.

10) *Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain. (NKJV)*

Obviously the Bible doesn't tell us, but there is something more than just darkness if you're going to gnaw your tongue in pain, so something else was going on with that darkness—we don't know what it is, but it wasn't fun.

11) [Despite that] *They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.* (NKJV)

This shows you the mindset of the people when God and Christ are dealing with them on this day. Let's go now to verse 13, I'll read out of the King James.

13) *And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.*

14) *For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, [this is interesting because the world is going to see these miracles] which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world [with these miracles], to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.* (KJV)

It's interesting that the kings of the earth and hence all of the people under their authority, and really the whole world, oppose God. They don't welcome Christ's return a second time, with God, as we're going to see. We see here that it's the battle of the great day of God Almighty. The battle is the Father's battle, it's God's battle and He is here taking the lead. His Son will be there doing His Father's will. Let's go back to Isaiah 11:1 and see that, that was prophesied a very long time ago—very, very long time ago. God and Christ have been together for an eternity, never having a beginning, will never have an end, they live right now and as we have marched, all of us together, through the Bible together, they are together no matter what. We know who this is referring to, but to remind everyone:

**Isaiah 11:1** *And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:*

2) *And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord;* (KJV)

Jehovah, LORD all caps, will rest on this branch and this rod. Verse 4.

4) *But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he [we know this refers to Jesus Christ, the Messiah] shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.* (KJV)

You see here, this is a prophecy of Christ being involved in this very day. Now let's jump to Revelation 11 and we'll begin in verse 19 and see where this very same event is referred to but in the last book of the Bible instead of the Old Testament.

**Revelation 19:11** *And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.*

12) *His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.*

13) *And he was clothed with a vesture [the King James says, it means a garment or a robe] dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. (KJV)*

We know who this is referring to, verse 14.

14) *And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.*

15) *And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: (KJV)*

These nations who are in rebellion and oppose God.

15 continued) *... and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. (KJV)*

We see that Christ has a very vital part to play in the events symbolized by this one day. Christ is sent to execute the will of His Father and the fact is, when God spans, He spans hard. Especially when people openly disobey Him and openly oppose Him, then God spans hard. It's not a gentle reminder, it's not, pick a little baby up and get him on his way—these are people that vehemently blaspheme God, oppose God and when God sees that, He reacts with violence, as we're going to see. If people openly disobey Him, turn their back on Him, oppose Him, you don't want to be in that position and it's obviously a huge warning for all of us today. Why will God bring war? Why will He resort to this violence? Let's go to Jeremiah 4:22, I'll read this out of the New King James. Jeremiah is speaking but God is the one putting the words in his mouth.

**Jeremiah 4:22** *“For My people are foolish, They have not known Me. (KJV)*

Let's just stop here and think about that. Israel claimed to know God, people today claim to know God, but we're told that you can claim to know God and Jehovah God Almighty is saying, My people are foolish, they don't know Me. They just don't know Me.

22 continued) *... They are silly children, And they have no understanding. They are wise to do evil, But to do good they have no knowledge.” (KJV)*

This sounds exactly like what the average person in the United States, Canada or Australia, the direction we're going, the evil that's on movies, televisions, video games, the evil we see in society, don't know God, wise to do evil but not to do good, they don't have any knowledge to do good. Now let's go to Hosea 8:1. Here, Jehovah God the Father is speaking. I'll read this out of the NIV, it's clearer out of the NIV. We don't often go there, so the pages are turning slowly today.

**Hosea 8:1** [God says] *“Put the trumpet to your lips! [Sounds like today] An eagle is over the house of the Lord because the people have broken my covenant and rebelled against my law. (NIV)*

God is speaking. Verse 2.

2) *Israel cries out to me, [This is what Israel says] ‘Our God, we acknowledge you!’ (NIV)*

Yeah, sure, right they do.

3) *But Israel has rejected what is good; (NIV)*

Applying it today, we’ve rejected prayer in public schools, we’ve fired coaches of teams that want to say a prayer before a football game, we have ripped out the plaques with the Ten Commandments on it in legislatures and in meeting places of government and the list goes on and on.

3 continued) *... an enemy will pursue him.*

4) *They set up kings without my consent; they choose princes without my approval. With their silver and gold they make idols for themselves to their own destruction. (NIV)*

Today the world is following a Godless path. The western nations who used to look to God, whether you are a farmer or a factory worker, 200 years ago the vast majority of people would look to God for help and for deliverance and comfort—not today. The world follows a Godless path. Just a fraction of people in the U.S. and Canada and Europe, attend services on a regular basis. The world makes idols of silver and gold today just as ancient Israel did back in their day. Humans that are in this frame of mind, of setting up their own idols, their own rules, worshipping the Beast and the False prophet when they come on the scene—they are not going to listen. They will respond to only one thing. When this fruit develops, when this comes to completion (and we don’t know how many years ahead, it could be really soon or it could be a little more time) when this Godless path reaches full fruit, they will respond to only one thing and that is overwhelming, terrifying force. That is the only thing that will get their attention or will get their respect.

In this world, it’s obvious to anybody that has a brain, the problems of the world are so great, they can’t be remedied. Scripture says there is no remedy. The earth can’t be remodeled or refurbished and the governments can’t be remodeled or refurbished. They must be completely destroyed through war. That’s what we’re talking about today. After that war, after that horrible destruction, then the earth can be rebuilt and cleansed, God’s way—as we’ve heard many times through recent sermons—rebuilt with a new heaven and a new earth and a new Jerusalem. This is why today symbolizes a time of war, because that is the only way to get man’s attention, that is the only way to get man’s systems and Satan’s systems off the face of this earth and start from scratch

because man opposes God and opposes Jesus Christ and everything that represents—stands for the commandments, statutes, judgements—mankind opposes that. The only way to get their attention is through terrible violence and then maybe they will respond.

We've talked about what today symbolizes, and we look forward to the fact that in fulfillment there will be a time of war. But also, there is going to be a time of joy today. So let's ask—the second point:

## 2. Why is it a time of joy today?

What is there to be joyful about? When we think about it and we know this, the answer is very simple (as God's answers are), the joy is because God's government is going to be reestablished on this earth at last. God and Christ will rule on this earth. Not Satan, not human beings and that in itself is cause for celebration—great joy. God Almighty is the one that's going to call the shots; not a pope, not a president of the United States, not a dictator somewhere. God Almighty is going to call the shots. Something that we all just ache to have happen, ache to see the day. Revelation 11:15.

**Revelation 11:15** *And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, [we can imagine millions of angels saying this together because of this momentous event] The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.* (KJV)

We see that at this juncture, there are voices—millions of voices—from heaven (to hear that, to see that) saying there's a change. The kingdoms of this world have become the Kingdoms of God Almighty and His Son is on His right hand and they are going to rule.

*16) And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God ...* (KJV)

Because of what was happening and because of His power and what He is bringing to pass.

*17) Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.* (KJV)

When Adam and Eve made the decision that they made (and obviously they were provoked by Satan), but when they made that fateful decision, from that time forward God said okay, you made the call, then you will suffer the consequences. You will decide for yourself what's right and what's wrong and of course Satan was right there involved in that. Satan has ruled the earth as a prince of this world, ever since. This time symbolizes God Almighty kicking Satan to the curb. What a joy. He gets put down, kicked to the curb, kicked aside and God and Christ rule. God assumes His rightful rule over mankind; a restoration of that rule that because of Adam and Eve's sin,

Satan came in and God allowed it, but now God and Christ are ruling this world. Christ is His very Son on His right hand.

We've already shown that God Almighty is God the Father, that's in our archives, previous sermons and papers—the point is that God Almighty reigns supreme over all the earth. Now let's go to chapter 14 and begin in verse 6, this is interesting.

**Revelation 14:6** *And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven ... (KJV)*

If you look up the Greek word for heaven, here it means mid-sky. So this is the heavens surrounding the earth and an angel is flying in mid-sky, which means that angel can be seen and that angel is going to be heard.

6 continued) ... *having the everlasting gospel* [gospel in the Greek means a good message, it can mean good news, so this angel has a good message] *to preach* [who is he going to preach to?] *unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people ... (KJV)*

This tells us, it's going to take a time I'm assuming, for this angel to literally go over the earth, mid-sky, and preach a message to every person on the face of the earth and the leadership of the nations of this earth. Along with the two witnesses, this angel is an additional way for Matthew 24:14 to be fulfilled.

**Matthew 24:14** *And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. (KJV)*

We know the two witnesses will do this but this angel, we are told very plainly right here, is going to do this also. It's interesting that the Bible does not require a great work to be done by human beings. In years past, we've heard that we have to do a great work and press forward and do this great work and it's our responsibility to do that. Well, show me that in the Bible and explain this. The fact is, that the Bible doesn't require human beings to do any kind of great work in this vein—warning the entire world. The fact is, we shouldn't flatter ourselves that God somehow needs any of us. Remember the scripture says God can raise up stones to replace any of us. It's easy to flatter ourselves that we are part of a work that's going to do this great work and we're going to be there because we are so wonderful. That's dangerous ground, that's a slippery slope to be on. The point is that between the two witnesses and this angel, the gospel is going to be preached to every living human being on the face of this earth. If God wants human beings to do something in addition to that, that's God's prerogative but the Bible does not require it.

**Revelation 14:7** *Saying with a loud voice [this is what he is saying to the people all over the world], Fear God [this is the One they oppose], and give glory to him; for the hour of his [not your idol, not your popes, not your Buddhists] judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.*

8) *And there followed another angel, saying, [this is another announcement to the world] Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*

9) *And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, [again to all of the world] If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,*

10) *The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, [Almighty God's fury] which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: (KJV)*

We see that God Almighty is taking the lead on this but His Son is right there with Him, all the mighty angels are with Him and the Father is taking the lead in giving humankind an attitude adjustment. They're having their world view changed. It is changed because of unbelievable power and force and authority that they can't oppose. It will scare them to death and it will get their attention. At long last, the Father and His Son will be in control of this earth. The Feast of Trumpets, we look forward to that as this process plays out. The point is, as with creation, as with the Garden of Eden, as with the exodus, both God and Christ are there, have been there, will be there together and Christ, as performing His Father's will, and His Father is doing His will. That was true at the creation, it was true at the creation of the universe, the creation of Adam and Eve, Israel coming out of Egypt and it is true this very day; what we look forward to on the Feast of Trumpets. Power and control are taken away from Satan and power and control are taken away from human beings and God sits on His throne. Then on this day, because of all that, we can have great, great joy. Let's go to Revelation 21:3. John hears this voice.

**Revelation 21:3** *And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, [what did he hear?] Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, [what a concept—God being with men?] and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. (KJV)*

What a concept of a Father wanting to live with His children and yet sometimes it seems like we've missed that concept somewhere down the road. God in ancient Israel had the Tabernacle built and said, I want to come and dwell among you—and the Temple the same way—you're My kids, I want to be with My children. That begins this day.

4) *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*

5) *And he that sat upon the throne said [who sits upon the throne with absolute authority?], Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. (KJV)*

God will make all things new through the new heavens, through the new earth, through the new Jerusalem. A fresh start after all of these terrible things that happened to



mankind in order to change their perspective, to change their attitude. We look forward to it on this day. We wait for God to rule and we wait for God to correct all things and it begins this very day and it brings us great joy to contemplate the prospect of all of this happening. Where God will at last dwell with His people, dwell with His children in joy and in peace and in harmony and we sitting here this day, this Feast of Trumpets, look forward to this. It is a day of joy, yes but as the first we talked about, there is some terrible times of war coming to prepare for this to happen.

The third point, this is the important point because it applies to all of us today. This is something that we need to consider very seriously.

### **3. Before God comes to rule the earth, we must allow God to rule us.**

If we don't allow God to rule us, we won't be there. We want God to come and rule the earth, we want God to wipe away men's ways, Satan's ways, come to this earth, live with His people—we can be there in the Temple with Him—and we yearn for that day but that day won't happen for us until now—here in this life—we allow God to rule us individually. God has warned the world to repent or face the consequences. Today, right now, who is He dealing with? He is going to deal with the world on this day—He will big time—but who is He dealing with today? He's dealing with the church; the ecclesia and He's dealing with us as individuals. Today He is warning the church by looking forward to what's going to happen to the world, that before I come and rule the world, those I call—My children—had better let me rule them right here and right now because I'm not going to let anybody in My Kingdom that will not let me rule them.

God understands, thankfully, that it takes time for a human being to come to the point where we say, God I've learned the lesson, my way doesn't work. Every time I try to do something on my own, I don't consult You, I don't pray about it, I don't ask for Your involvement and just go out and do something on my own, it blows up in my face every time. I am living testimony to that. I can't tell you the number of times I thought I had the power, the wisdom or whatever, the authority to do something and I went and tried it and down the road, it was a disaster, it blew up in my face. Why? God wasn't involved. I didn't ask God to get involved. God is saying to us right here and right now, look if you want Me to come and rule the earth and you want to be part of it, then you better let Me rule you right now. I need to know before we start this process that you will let Me rule you and you will do My will because you want to please Me and because you want to be like Me and want to be like My Son. Let's go to Ephesians 4:6, I'm going to read this out of the New Living Translation. We'll start to get his part of this context of this part of the passage, this part of the letter to Ephesus. Notice what Paul says, hits the nail on the head.

**Ephesians 4:6** ... *one God and Father of all, [that's a pretty definitive statement, a pretty direct statement] who is over all, in all, and living through all.* (NLT)

He's writing to the church, people with God's Holy Spirit in them. Now let's go to verse 11.

11) *Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: [what are the gifts?] the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. (NLT)*

What was their responsibility? Verse 12.

12) *Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.*

13) *This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. (KJV)*

When we're called, we don't know much of anything and then we begin a time of education. Learning what God requires and then applying it in our life. We stumble and fall like little babies and we screw up and get bruises, bumps and blood. As I mentioned earlier, God will pick us up off our feet, this little kid in diapers, pat us on the fanny and say, here's the path, walk in it and keep going. The fact is, as we know and look back on our lives, it takes time. In my case, most of my lifetime—fifty plus years. I look back and see how many times I didn't get it, how many times I knew better and still reacted carnally, how many times I let Satan provoke me and God was patient, He was kind, He was gentle, He was forbearing (forbearing means to put up with) God put up with me and my shenanigans until finally, after forty, fifty years of it, the lightbulb goes on and you finally start to (as we say) get it. My job is to please God. My job is to do His will. My job is to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ who lived a perfect, sinless life. Maybe if I want to please God and He sent His Son to live a perfect life, maybe it would be a good idea if I copy His Son on how to live, think and act. Then by doing so, maybe I could please God—that's what He wants us to do. It takes time and for slow learners like me, it takes decades. Some people get it faster than others. Now let's go to verse 14.

14) *Then [after we're mature and measuring up to the full stature of Christ at the end of verse 13] we will no longer be immature like children. [Notice this, the NLT is very interesting here] We won't be tossed and blown about [back and forth, back and forth, unstable as water, blown by winds] by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. (NLT)*

The internet is a huge contributor to this. Some people in God's church spend all their time on the internet instead of studying their Bible. They will go on the internet to see what somebody has to say about the Bible and that person that's writing a blog, you don't know who that person is. You don't know if they can put one foot in front of the other or if they have a job—we don't know anything about their character or their background and yet it's out there and people believe that. Make a lie sound like the truth—verse 15.

15) *Instead, we will speak the truth in love* [the truth that is in God's word, that's the authority but we do so in love, not hate, not vengeance], *growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church.* (NLT)

Becoming more and more like our older Brother takes time. God understands that and He is patient with us as I've said. He has given us an elder Brother who has shown us the way—how we should behave, how we should think. Let's go to Hebrews 6:19.

**Hebrews 6:19** [Our elder Brother being described here] *Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;* (KJV)

Symbolized by atonement.

20) *Whither the forerunner ...* (KJV)

The Greek word for forerunner just means *a runner who runs ahead*—he runs ahead of the pack, he's the first one of the group running.

20 continued) *... is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.* (KJV)

So we're told that Christ was the first, we know Him as the first of the firstfruits—our elder Brother. He is the one that shows us, by His example, how to live. Our job is to read the scriptures, meditate, think, pray, fast, study about it, so we can follow His example—His perfect example. By the way, when I think a human being can live thirty plus years on this planet and never sin, never have one wrong thought, never speak one wrong word—knowing me, can I do it for an hour or a day? I asked God that once; I can't remember it God but has there ever been a day that I haven't sinned? No, I don't think so. For Christ to come as our elder Brother and do it for His whole life, that is just astounding and shows the power of God's Spirit in people. Individually, we can become the image of Jesus Christ. Let's go to Colossians 3:9—this is our job description; this is what God wants us to be doing. I'm going to read this out of the New King James. Look at this emphatic statement.

**Colossians 3:9** *Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds ...* (NKJV)

I have had ministers look me in the eye and lie to me. They know that I know that they are lying but they did it anyway. We've all experienced that. He says don't lie to one another; Christ didn't lie to anybody. That's the old man, that's the old way of doing things.

10) *and have put on the new man* [man is in italics, the new person we would say] *who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him* [God and Christ] *who created him* [the new man], (NKJV)

God and Christ worked together to create a new person in us. Remember what Christ said the night He was captured? He said, We will come and make Our abode in them, referring to the apostles, this is what this is referring to.

11) *where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.*

12) *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on [this is what we are to put on] tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; (NKJV)*

Long-suffering with others, long-suffering with the world we live in, endurance.

13) *bearing with one another, [that means putting up with one another because we're not perfect] and forgiving one another [if somebody sins against us, forgive, don't hold grudges], if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. (NKJV)*

Many scriptures tell us, if we want to be forgiven, we better forgive others. If we don't forgive, we will not be forgiven. To put on the new man, to be like Jesus Christ, we can't hold grudges—we just can't. We can't have unresolved issues between us and other people.

14) *But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.*

15) *And let the peace of God [notice we talk about God's rule] rule in your hearts [rule your hearts], to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.*

16) *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom [that means Christ's words, Christ's example because He is our older Brother and we want to walk in His footsteps so we had better let His words and example rule in us and determine what we do] , teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

17) *And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. (NKJV)*

On the sermon on the Mount, when Christ told us how to pray, that we should pray to God Almighty our Father, He said when you do that and when you give thanks, do it in My name and that's repeated right here. The point is, if we do what we read here in Colossians 3, then we will indeed have the mind of Jesus Christ in us. That's what God is looking for in us. It all takes time, doesn't it? Thankfully God is patient and He is kind and He is forbearing and long-suffering. The point is though, at some point it comes to an end. God is not going to be forbearing for infinity. God's going to give us a certain amount of time to see if we will walk in Christ's footsteps, if we will put Him first, if we will honor Him before all. He's giving us time to do that but at some point, our lives stop. At some point there is an end to it and if we're twenty years old, there is an end to it. If we are eighty years old there is an end to, we don't know when thankfully. Like the world, there's a coming end that we just talked about, there is going to be an end, the

line is going to be drawn—it starts today. God says, no more remedy, enough is enough, throw the switch, it's time to go, He sends His Son and it's time to go.

The fact is, within the church of God (I'm talking now in the modern-day church of God) as with the world, the problems are so great in the world that it's going to have to be dismantled. The problems were so great in a time in God's church that God's church couldn't be remodeled, it couldn't be refurbished. It had to be destroyed. The Worldwide Church of God was over 200,000 people at one point and it has been completely destroyed—that organization, that group—God allowed it be destroyed, caused it to be destroyed to see if we can rebuild it God's way, without the faults that caused it be destroyed in the first place. The fact is though, today too many are rebuilding as an exact copy of what God destroyed. Trying to reinvent Worldwide with all it's flaws and faults, trying to reinvent it rather than learn and ask, why was it destroyed? What can we learn from that? Maybe we should avoid those things that caused it to be destroyed in the first place.

That's what God is going to do on this day as far as mankind, but mankind won't listen. Mankind should stop and say, why is this world in such a mess, what can we do about it? But mankind is too busy with football and cars and dresses and eating and everything that man is involved in. The point is, God allowed the Worldwide Church of God to be destroyed and I think He is looking for people to come together today and put Him first and to come together as an ecclesia that puts God first and say, God how do you want us to do it? We don't want to follow the ways of the past, we don't want to make mistakes, we want to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, no matter what we were taught, no matter what tradition says, we want to finally look in the book and see what You want us to do and no matter what, we will do that—we will put You first, we will listen to Your Son and what He said and what He did and the admonitions of the apostles, we will take that into account and then we will do it at long last, Your way.

The question is, I've asked myself this and I know others have to, it's not an original thought; could God be waiting on His children today—us individually I mean or the church collectively—to get our act together before He pulls the trigger, sending Jesus Christ and Himself coming? Is He waiting for the fruit to develop, good or bad, until he knows and then He said, okay, just like with the world, you've shown your fruits since Adam and Eve, there is no hope, you're going to go to destruction, you have yielded to Satan, I know that so we're going to stop it. The question is, is He waiting on us collectively and individually, to get to the point where He sees, I can trust them, they will put Me first, they will follow what they read in the Bible no matter what the consequences are and they will exercise My spirit and will treat their neighbor as they want to be treated, they will love their neighbor as themselves and they will love Me above all and will follow the example of My Son. Is God giving us a little bit more time to start acting like our older Brother? The point I'm leading to is just maybe we should have a sense of urgency that we need to get our act together. We need to be like Jesus Christ sooner rather than later. We don't have an infinite time out there ahead of us and of course as we get older, we realize that every day. The fact is, our day could end tomorrow or tonight. Is God giving us just a little more time so we can show Him that

we are going to put Him first no matter what? We have to prove to God that we will allow Him to rule us, before He and His Son come to rule the earth. So let's keep that in mind.

Fourth and last point, this is the good news—great news.

**4. Until this day comes, when the trigger is pulled, God will be with us to correct us, protect us and provide for us.**

God will be with us, yes, to correct us and show us our faults and sins, also to protect us from the evil one and the world and to provide for our needs; not our wants, our needs. If we have faith that He will correct everything in the future, then we can have faith that He's going to take care of us now. We wouldn't be here if we weren't looking forward to the future where He's going to rule the world. If we have faith in that then we should have faith that God is going to take care of us now as He will take care of the world in due course.

The world is becoming more and more dangerous with every passing day. It's scary with what's going on out there. Look at the mass shootings in our country. It was unheard of twenty, thirty years ago. To think that twenty-two young kids will be shot in an elementary school in Sandy Hook, to contemplate that. 100 years ago if you had said some guy would come in and do that in a school it would just blow people's minds. Shootings at malls, at sporting events, where people routinely congregate and come together. As of September 1, this year—September 1 was the 244th day of this year. Guess how many mass shootings have occurred during those 244 days—283—over one per day. That is according to the non-profit gun violence archive. You open your paper; you turn on the news every day and you hear of a mass shooting. It might be two or three or it might be ten or twenty or it might be fifty like in Las Vegas—it's just amazing. God is allowing Satan to create a world where no one feels safe—He's allowing it to happen. God is teaching us today, us in the church, but also teaching the world that apart from Him, nobody is safe. Not one person is safe outside of Him. God is teaching us in the church to look to Him for safety and for protection and not to be packing heat as they say, to defend ourselves. Let's go to Proverbs 20:22. This is good advice for all of us today in the world we live in.

**Proverbs 20:22** *Say not thou [in other words don't say this], I will recompense evil; [don't say I will recompense evil] but wait on the Lord [L-O-R-D, all caps, Jehovah], and he shall save thee. (KJV)*

Our job is to be patiently waiting on God to take care of the world this day, as we symbolize and look forward to it, but also to take care of us today and to keep us safe. We have faith in that. Look at 1 Corinthians 10:13, very familiar scripture, I'll read this out of the New Living Translation. We're told by Paul:

**1 Corinthians 10:13** *The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful [this is the point]. He will not allow the*

*temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure. (NLT)*

God is saying, if you will rely on Me, like He said to ancient Israel, then you don't have to worry about mass shootings or plagues or horrible things that are going to come down the road. You remember what Christ said (some people view this as trite, but it's not) let's go to Matthew 6 and begin in verse 25. Some people say, this is what the Protestants say or what they emphasize but in this world today, this set of scriptures takes on a new meaning for us. I'll read this out of the New Living Translation—first recorded sermon of Jesus Christ.

**Matthew 6:25** *“That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life [Do we? I sometimes do and shouldn't]—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn't life more than food, and your body more than clothing?*

*26) Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are? (NLT)*

That's a concept that we need to incorporate inside us. If a hair can't fall out of our head or a sparrow can't fall out of tree without God knowing, then you think maybe He knows what we need today and He will come and help us?

*27) Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?*

*28) And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don't work or make their clothing,*

*29) yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are.*

*30) And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith? (NLT)*

Sometimes I wake up in the night and can't go to sleep and I stew about things—stuff that needs to get done or what if this happens, what am I going to do or that could happen—we've all been there and we've all done that. Finally you just say, okay pull the reins up, get on my knees and get this straightened out and you go to God and say, peace comes from you, give me peace, I trust You, You're going to get us through it, don't have to worry about it and you go back to sleep.

*31) So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?'*

*32) These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs.*

*33) Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.*

*34) “So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today. (NLT)*

That is profound and Christ is saying trust God and don't trust in men, don't trust in the world, trust God and if your heart is right and you're seeking to please Him, He will take care of you and provide for you. My point is, God is testing us to see if we will look to Him to provide for our needs, to rescue us when we need rescuing. Believe me, over the last several years, Pacific has been rescued dozens and dozens of times—miraculously so. You couldn't plan in your wildest dreams what has happened and yet here we are today, we're growing closer to God, we're knowing more about God and Jesus Christ and we're this tiny little group that God has pulled our fanny out of the fire so many times because people say, God we can't do it—it's up to you and we need your help. Sure enough when we get to that point when we look to God and not human beings, He steps in and He takes care of us. God is watching us to see if we're going to do that. He's also testing us to see if we are going to allow Him to rule in our lives—to rule us—because in God's Kingdom, He's going to rule the world. Before we can help Him in God's Kingdom, He has to know that we will let Him rule us. We will not rebel, we will not get stiffed necked like Israel did, we will not turn our backs on Him as the priests did but will allow Him to rule us. We have to have faith that God will take care of all things in this life. We have to strive to change ourselves to be like our older Brother. We have a limited amount of time; hence we should maybe light a fire under our fannies and get us moving—and I'm speaking of myself—we don't know how much time we have.

Let's conclude now. God's people have waited millennia for this day to occur. Let's go to Revelation 6:9; we see an indication of that. Verse 1, the Lamb—Jesus Christ—is opening the seals. In verse 9, we're getting to the fifth seal.

**Revelation 6:9** *And when he [the Lamb] had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:*

10) *And they cried with a loud voice [they're dead but this is in a vision and metaphorically], saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? (KJV)*

As we've already read, one of the plagues is water turning into blood and men are going to have to drink the blood that they have shed over the years, of the prophets and of the saints. The point here is, in Revelation 6:9-10, these were patient (during their life) and faithful to the very end waiting on God. We're closing now so let's see two scriptures that warn us for what lies ahead for God's people. Let's go to Matthew 24:24. Christ is pretty plain about this. The disciples ask what are the signs of the end and He is telling us.

**Matthew 24:24** [Christ says very plainly, unequivocally] *For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; (KJV)*

That appear to be miracles—unexplainable—that enhance their credibility with the world. This must be Christ because he did this—this miracle. Or this must be a prophet



because what he said came true. Christ is warning us, He's saying this is going to happen.

24 continued) ... *insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.* (KJV)

He's warning us that this is going to happen, be aware of it, be ready for it, be prepared for it. Let's go to the last scripture, 2 Thessalonians 2:8. Yes, Paul is writing to the church in Thessalonica but this is warning for us, He is prophesying what is going to happen in the end times. Talking about a very wicked person that will be revealed at the end.

**2 Thessalonians 2:8** *And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:* (KJV)

So we have the time frame.

9) *Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders ...* (KJV)

So he has all the power of Satan and Satan will, through his power, give signs and lying wonders that can deceive the very elect if we are not on our guard.

10) *And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness [these aren't signs and wonders turning people to God, these are signs and wonders turning people away from God] in them that perish; [notice this] because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.* (KJV)

Do we get the idea that the love of the truth might be important to God here, in time? That He is saying that they could be saved if they loved the truth. Where is the truth? It's in God's word. Then maybe we believe what's in God's word rather than what men tell us or what institutions tell us or some booklet tells us. We better believe what is in God's word. They perish because they did not receive the love of the truth. There are people within the greater church of God that turn their back on the truth.

11) *And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion [What cause? They didn't have a love of the truth], that they should believe a lie:* (KJV)

Once you reject truth that has been given to you and you turn away, then God is saying, you're opening the door to believe lies and will get farther and farther away from Me as time goes on if you reject the truth that has been presented to you.

12) *That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* (KJV)

Do we get the idea that the love of the truth might be important to God? I don't see how we can think any other way. As the time of the fulfillment of Trumpets—of this day—approaches us; we don't know how many months, years, we don't know, but we know that the time is getting shorter and tomorrow will be a day shorter than today. Let's remember why God has to bring war; because men oppose Him, men blaspheme Him, men don't want any part of God. When He and Christ come to this earth, They will fight against him along with Satan. That's why God will bring war.

But let's also remember why we should have joy, because in having God rule the earth, His Son right beside Him, His law, His way, His way of living in every respect, being known and taught—what a joy that is going to be for every one of us. On top of that He is going to live with His children. He's going to live on earth with His kids and with our elder Brother—He'll be there too, right beside Him. What joy is that to worship a God that says, I want to be with My kids. Not in the future, not way off out there somewhere—I want to be with them. I'm going to scrape this earth clean; we're going to start all over—new heavens and new earth—and I'm going to come down and live with you. What a God is that? So let's have a greater sense of urgency in allowing God to rule us and at the same time realize He will correct us and protect us and provide for us every day of our lives, if we will turn to Him and put Him first.