

Trumpets – A Day of Joy, A Day of War

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Today is a very unique day. It is the central holy day. It's the pivotal holy day because from today on we look forward and not backward. We look forward to future events. And today is unique in the sense that there was a special blowing of Trumpets on this day and that starts back one year after Israel crossed the Red Sea. Let's go back to Numbers 9 and just pick up the context. This is a year afterward and we'll notice something unique. God gave Israel some instructions but to get the context, let's just look at Numbers 9:1. This is the dedication of the tabernacle.

Numbers 9:1. *And the Lord [spoke] unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they [came] out of the land of Egypt, ... (KJV)*

And then God gave instruction. Now down to verse 15.

15) And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up the cloud covered the tabernacle, namely, the tent of the testimony: and at even there was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire, until the morning. (KJV)

Then in chapter 10 verse 1, God gives Israel instruction.

Numbers 10:1. *And the Lord [said] unto Moses, saying ...2) Make [you] two trumpets of silver; of a whole piece [you shall] make them: that [you may] use them for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps. (KJV)*

Now the Hebrew word for "trumpets" here is Strong's #2689, and it's the Hebrew word "chatsotserah" (khats-o-tser-aw'). It's a mouthful but it means literally *a trumpet (from its ... quavering note)*. This means you can make the note coming out of the trumpet different by how you vary your lips.

And these silver trumpets could make musical notes. Jamieson, Fausset and Brown's Commentary said they were made from solid silver. And these trumpets were straight. They weren't curved like the trumpets used in Egypt to worship Osiris. These were straight trumpets.

Then beginning in verse 3 and going through verse 9, there are listed various reasons for the blowing of trumpets. They include assembling together, starting on a journey, an alarm of danger, an alarm for war. And the best that we can speculate is that the men blowing the trumpets made a different sound for each one to let the people know whether it was an alarm or whether they were to assemble or whether they were to journey.

Then in verse 10, there is another reason.

10) Also in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days [meaning “your holy days”], and in the beginnings of your months, [you] shall blow with the trumpets [these silver trumpets] over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; that they may be to you for a memorial before your God: I am the Lord your God. (KJV)

So we’re told here “in the day of your gladness.” The Hebrew word for “gladness” is Strong’s #8057 and it means *a religious or a festival glee, exceeding joy* in a religious festival; or *a gathering for religious purposes, great joy*; obviously referring to the holy days.

The Hebrew word for “solemn day” (It’s all one word.) is Strong’s #4150 and it means *a place of solemn assembly*. And the word “solemn” is interesting. Webster’s 1828 Dictionary, which gets us closer as to how it was translated in the King James Version, says this about “solemn,” *religiously serious, piously grave, devout, marked by reverence to God*.

So we see here that silver trumpets were blown on holy days and especially today, but in addition to the silver trumpets, another type of horn was blown today. Let’s go to Psalm 81 where we’ll see that and we’ll begin in verse 1. This was a totally different kind of trumpet, literally a trumpet but this was a natural one, not a manufactured one. Psalm 81 is a psalm of Asaph.

Psalm 81.1 *Sing aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.*

2) Take a psalm, and bring [here] the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery.

3) Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day. (KJV)

We have a song; Dwight Armstrong penned a song to this very verse.

3) Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day [especially today, the Feast of Trumpets].

4) For this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob. (KJV)

Now here in verse 3, the Hebrew word for “trumpet” is a different word. It is Strong’s #7782 and it’s “showphar” (sho-far’). The Baker and Carpenter Complete Word Study of the Old Testament says this about this word, “... *it refers to a trumpet or a horn made out of a curved ram’s horn. It was used to signal a time of meeting together, of a significant event*” Obviously, the holy days would fall into that category. He goes on to say, “*It also warned of approaching danger.*”

Now the Talmud tells us that in addition to the silver trumpets blown on this day, this ram’s horn was blown on the Feast of Trumpets, but that it had a blast or a “shout” the

Bible calls it—one note. It was just a blat that goes out. It was not a musical sound. Some Jewish scholars have speculated on this day that the ram's horn was in the center of where the performance was, where the priests were, and the two silver trumpets were on each side and they would blow appropriately and accordingly at the time appointed. But it is clear that the ram's horn was an instrument of warning because it was not musical at all.

So, we see here that the silver trumpets and the shofar were blown to celebrate gladness on a holy day, but also as an alarm of war. Now, with that in mind, let's go to Leviticus 23 and begin in verse 23, which talks about this very day.

Leviticus 23:23. *And the Lord [spoke] unto Moses, saying, 24) Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month [today], [you shall] have a Sabbath, ... (KJV)*

Now this is different than the other Sabbaths, the other holy days.

*24b) ... a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation [a religious gathering].
25) [You] shall do no servile work therein: but [you] shall offer an offering made by fire unto the [Eternal]. (KJV)*

Now the Hebrew word here where it says “a blowing of trumpets,” the word “trumpet” isn't actually mentioned. It's the Hebrew word “blowing,” Strong's #8643 and it means *a clamor*. That is, *an acclamation joy or a battle-cry; especially clangor* (That's not a word we use normally today). If you look it up in the dictionary, it means *a continuous loud or banging sound. So, especially clangor of trumpets, as an alarm.*

So we see here, again, that the blowing of trumpets on this day is a combination of joy and gladness, extreme joy, and, yet also of alarm on this day. So therefore, the title of the sermon is:

The Feast of Trumpets - A Day of Joy, A Day of War

We're going to explore both sides of this unique holy day because on the one hand you have joy and on the other hand you have war and alarm.

1. The first point we're going to make is that at this time in the fulfillment of this day, Christ is going to bring war.

Let's go to Isaiah 11 and look at verse 4. In the fulfillment of this day, Christ is going to bring war upon the earth. The earth is going to have to pay; mankind is going to have to pay for the way mankind has chosen to live.

Isaiah 11:4. *But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: ... (KJV)*

Notice the latter part of the verse.

4b) ...and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. (KJV)

Smiting the earth, slaying the wicked on this day.

Now let's go to the end of the Bible, Revelation 19 and look at verse 11 talking about this very time. First, we had an example from the Old Testament and, now, an example from the New Testament about Christ is going to bring war. John says:

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 does] judge [Notice this.] and [in righteousness He does] make war.*

15) And out of his mouth [goes] a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he [treads] the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. (KJV)

Scary, scary, scary times! Such violence and destruction is the only way to get humanity's attention. Humanity has had the Bible. Humanity has had examples down through the millennia from time to time, but it hasn't made any difference at all. Man insists on following Satan. Man insists on making his own choices. And this extreme violence and destruction is the only way to get mankind's attention.

2. Now that leads us to the second point. Question: Why will Christ bring war?

Why will He do that? The answer is obvious. All we have to do is just look around us and see our national sins and see our worldwide sins. We are completely polluted as a world. Let's go to Jeremiah 4 and we'll begin in verse 19. This is the way God sees His children. And, ultimately, all people are His children; all people will have an opportunity to be His children forever in the Kingdom of God.

Jeremiah 4:19. *My bowels, my bowels! ... (KJV)*

What Jeremiah sees and what he's experiencing vicariously and directly gets his stomach churning. We've all been there when our bowels were just in turmoil. Jeremiah says:

19b) ... I am pained at my very heart; my heart [makes] a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because [you have] heard, O my soul [or O my life], [Notice this.] the sound of the trumpet, ... (KJV)

This particular word that is translated "trumpet" is shofar. It is the Hebrew word "shofar."

19 continued) ... the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war.

20) Destruction upon destruction is cried; for the whole land is spoiled: suddenly are my tents spoiled, and my curtains ... (KJV)

Meaning the curtains to the tents are also spoiled.

20b) ... in a moment.

21) How long shall I see the standard, ... (KJV)

What the word “standard” refers to is that most armies of that day and the armies today when they are marching, they have a staff with a flag on it. Today, the flag would indicate a company or a squadron of men. In modern terms it’s called a “guidon.” I used to carry one in military school. The guidon is out front and as you’re marching along the guidon would indicate the direction you are turning or whether you are going to stop or whether you are going to start. So, Jeremiah is looking out seeing a sea of armies with guidons, standards with little flags on them, scattered out in front of him. And his bowels are crying inside. He says:

21b) ... I see the standard [Notice.], and [I] hear the sound of the trumpet [shofar]? (KJV)

Verse 22, out of the New King James, is the reason.

22) "For My people [God's people] are foolish, they have not known Me. They are silly children, and they have no understanding.... (NKJV)

Notice this next sentence. If this doesn’t apply to us today, I don’t know what does.

22b) ... They are wise to do evil, ... (NKJV)

That describes our modern society in a sentence.

22b) ... They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge." (NKJV)

Israel, as well as all mankind, is completely Godless today and in this country doing everything to push God out of the picture. We see that over and over and over. With that in mind let’s go to Hosea 8 and we’ll start in verse 1. Again, why will Christ bring war? Because of what’s going on in the world, what’s going on in the remnants of Israel. It’s just sad. Notice what Hosea says.

Hosea 8:1. Set the trumpet [shofar] to [your] mouth. He shall come as an eagle against the house of the Lord, because they have ... (KJV)

What has the house of the Lord done?

1b) ... they have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed against my law. (KJV)

Ancient Israel did it and the world today—the United States, Britain, Australia, Canada—are doing it again. Never learning.

*1b) ... they have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed against my law.
2) Israel shall cry unto me, My God, we know (you). (KJV)*

“You’re on our coins; You’re on our dollar bills. We know you.” Verse 3, notice this.

3) Israel [has] cast off the thing that is good: ... (KJV)

We see that from government; we see it in society; we see it in the media; we see it on television, read it in books—casting off everything that is good. And as a result:

*3b) ... the enemy shall pursue him.
4) They have set up kings [God says], but not by me: ... (KJV)*

God didn’t elect our President. We did. And we’re reaping what we sow.

4b) ... they have made princes, and I knew it not: ... (KJV)

Underlings, administrators—all of those corrupt to the core!

4 continued) ... and I knew it not: of their silver and their gold have they made them idols, that they may be cut off. (KJV)

We have indeed cast off everything that is good and we have made materialism our idol. In all the modern nations, materialism is the idol of the people. Our nations, as I said, the USA, Canada, UK, Australia, New Zealand, so on, plus the rest of the world are too deep in sin to repent—too deep into it. It has lasted too long. It’s gone too deep into the hearts and minds of people that they will not repent and they are too influenced by Satan to turn it around. The only solution to man’s problems is the return of Jesus Christ in this day of war. It is the only thing that will get their attention.

I can remember Mr. Armstrong saying on numerous occasions on the radio and television, but he also said it at ministerial conferences: man is so good in dealing with things. We can make airplanes and car and computers. And we can build buildings and bridges and all of that. Man is really good at dealing with things, but mankind can’t deal with mankind. And he said that mankind cannot solve his own problems. That is becoming all too apparent today.

This world cannot be rehabilitated. It cannot be refurbished. It cannot be remodeled in any sense. It has to be torn down. Let’s go to Joel 1 and look at verse 15. This is why

Christ must bring war. A remodeling won't do any good. We are too far gone, too far collapsed, too much in Satan's pocket. Joel is lamenting here in chapter 1 verse 15.

Joel 1:15. *Alas for the day! for the day of the Lord is at hand, [Notice this] and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come. (KJV)*

A destruction—tearing down. Chapter 2, verse 1:

Joel 2:1. *Blow [you] the trumpet [shofar] in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord [comes], for it is [near] at hand; (KJV)*

And, as we're going to talk about a little down the road, it is nearer than what maybe any of us think. The only solution is for Christ to come and to tear this world apart. That is the only solution. It must be torn apart so that there is nothing left.

So why does Christ bring total war? Because Satan's world must be totally destroyed—totally destroyed. And then the world can be rebuilt from the ground up. That is the only solution. That leads us to the third point we want to make.

3. Why is this a day of warning? Not just a day of war, but why is it a day of warning about war?

The direct answer is: Because God is a merciful God. God is so merciful that He wouldn't bring this to pass unless He warned mankind and warned His children. Let's go to Exodus 20 and see what God says when He gave the Ten Commandments. He makes a comment about Himself. Exodus 20, we'll start in verse 1 just to get the context. Moses is telling us:

Exodus 20:1. *And God spoke all these words, saying,
2) I am the Lord [your] God, which have brought [you] out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. (KJV)*

But notice what He says in verse 6.

6) And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. (KJV)

This is God's nature. And this is a day of warning because we have a merciful God and He wants to warn His people by the blowing of trumpets on this day as He warned Ancient Israel by the blowing of trumpets in their day.

Now with that in mind, let's go to Ezekiel 33 where it talks about a warning, and we'll begin in verse 1. God spoke to Ezekiel and He said, "Ezekiel, I want you to speak to the children of Israel and here's what I want you to tell them."

Ezekiel 33:1. Again the word of the [Eternal] came unto me, saying,
2) Son of man, speak to the children of [your] people, and say unto them, ...
(KJV)

This is what Ezekiel is to say.

2b) ... When I bring the sword upon [the] land, ... (KJV)

Now think about this for a minute. Today the sword has already come on our land in so many different ways. Think about today versus even ten years ago, much less twenty or thirty or fifty years ago. The definition of “mass shooting”—there is a group called “The Mass Shooting Tracker” and their definition of a mass shooting is *four or more people shot in one event*. How many mass shootings have there been in the United States this year? Just this year, how many? Through 204 days this year there have been 204 mass shootings in the United States.

When God said He was going to bring a sword upon the land, sometimes we think of an invading army, but the sword on the land is already here. Look at what is happening in Phoenix. People are scared to death to drive up and down the Interstate. This is going to happen more and more and more because the sword is coming to the nation of Israel—and, indeed, is already here.

Let’s go on in verse 2.

2 continued) ... if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman:

3) If when he [sees] the sword come upon the land, he [blows] the [shofar], and warn the people; (KJV)

Let’s stop here again. Who is the watchman? A lot of people claim to be watchmen, but the fact is Christ is the ultimate watchman. Christ is our ultimate watchman as we’re going to see a little bit later, but the fact is Christ is the one who is warning us today through His word. Christ is warning us today when we pray and when we have thoughts of conscience. He is warning us. He is the ultimate watchman and the Bible carries His words, the words that a watchman says. We have a watchman already. It’s in the word; it’s in God’s word.

Go on in verse 4.

4) Then whosoever [hears] the sound of the trumpet, and [takes] not warning; if the sword [comes], and [takes] him away, his blood [is going to] be upon his own head. (KJV)

And the sound of the trumpet can come from the Bible just as easy as it can come from the blowing of a trumpet. Begin in verse 5.

5) He heard the sound of the trumpet, and [he] took not warning; his blood shall be upon him.... (KJV)

And that tells us that some people are going to hear but they're not going to heed. They're not going to change. They're not going to become pure. They're going to keep doing what they were doing. Going on in the latter part of verse 5:

5b) ... but he that [takes] warning shall deliver his soul [or his life]. (KJV)

So our job is to heed when we hear. It's one thing to hear, one thing to listen. Sometimes we hear but we don't listen. We need to hear. We need to really listen. Then we need to take heed to what is said and change our lives.

Look at the warning Christ gives, the trumpet that He is blowing through His word to the church at the end time. Revelation 3, we're going to begin in verse 14. This is a very familiar scripture, but read this scripture as though these words were coming out of a shofar. They're being blasted out of a shofar to each and every one of us. Revelation 3, beginning in verse 14, a very familiar letter to the Church of Laodicea.

Revelation 3:14. *And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things [says] the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;*

15) I know [your] works, that [your works aren't hot; they're not] cold: ... (KJV)

What that really means is in that area of Laodicea there were hot springs and there were cold springs. People used the hot springs for medicinal purposes much like we used to use Soap Lake here. It's a warm lake with all kinds of minerals in it and people used to take baths. Then there were cold springs that were refreshing that gave you fresh water on a hot day. What He's saying is that when you want to take a medicinal bath or when you want to have a cold drink, the worst thing in the world is lukewarm water. It just doesn't satisfy; it just isn't good for anything. That is the reference He is making. If you lived in Laodicea in those years, you would know. He says:

15) I know [your] works, [you're not hot; you're not] cold [you're not useful for anything]: I would [you were one or the other]. (KJV)

Because, if you're hot or cold in this context (as water for medicinal purposes or for a refreshing drink), it's useful. He said, "I wish you were one or the other, but not lukewarm."

16) So then because [you are] lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I [am going to] [spew you] out of my mouth. (KJV)

"Because you are satisfying Me not. You are not pleasing Me at all."

17) Because [you say], I am rich, and increased with goods, and [you say, I don't] need [anything]; ... (KJV)

And there are too many today of God's people who are puffed up by saying, "We're the only ones God is dealing with." "We're the only true group," or "This minister is the only true minister." We see it, hear it over and over and over. They have this attitude rather than tremble before God and ask for mercy.

We should be trembling before God on our knees and asking for mercy because our hearts are not perfect; our hearts are not pure. None of us! And we should be on our knees, with our head down on the ground saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner," rather than stand up beating our chests saying, "Look at us because we're so wonderful!" That is Laodicea.

17b) ... [don't you know] that [you're] wretched, and [you're] miserable, and [you're] poor, and [you're] blind [spiritually blind], and [you are] naked [spiritually naked]: (KJV)

You're just wide open to Satan. You don't even realize it. Don't realize it at all! Christ says:

18) I counsel [you] to buy of me gold tried in the fire, ... (KJV)

Once gold is purified and it has gone through the fire, the contaminants rise to top and they're skimmed off. Christ says:

18b) ... buy of me gold tried in the fire, that [you may] be rich; and white raiment, that [you may] be clothed, and that the shame of [your] nakedness [does] not appear; (KJV)

And we were told earlier that Christ said, "You are naked. You need to cover yourself with righteous white garments." He says:

18 continued) [you need to] anoint [your] eyes with eye salve, that [you may] see [so that you cure your spiritual blindness].

19) As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: ... (KJV)

The Father and Christ are going to bring circumstances and are bringing circumstances on His people to do that very thing—to rebuke us and to chasten us so that we get our heads on straight and we look to Him rather than human beings. We look to Him and not the world. We look to Him and not physical possessions. He says:

19b) ... be zealous therefore, and repent. (KJV)

Notice the beginning of verse 20; here is the key. He says:

20) Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: ... (KJV)

And today Christ is standing at the door and He is knocking very loudly indeed. Our question—the question we should all be asking ourselves today is: Am I listening? Am I listening to the knocking and am I heeding the message in God's Word, the message that comes through the shofar of God's word? Verse 22:

22) He that [has] an ear, let him hear what the Spirit [says] unto the churches. (KJV)

But sadly, that is not happening as often as it should today. Many people who contact me by e-mail or through the phone, what they want to do is they want to teach some obscure bit of doctrine and if you let them, they will take up hours on the phone trying to teach some obscure, way off, twiggy thing of doctrine. At the end of the day, you ask and say, "Let's say I believe what you tell me? How does that change my day to day living? How does that change my relationship to God and Christ? Can you tell me?" "No, but God's people need to know this." No they don't. It doesn't change anything of how we live our day to day lives. Others call and make subtle accusations because we don't do this thing or we do that thing. And all of it has nothing to do with the core of Christianity, because in reality we need to remember what Christ said in Matthew 23 talking to the scribes and Pharisees. "You blind guides! You try to strain out a gnat and you swallow a camel." And that is exactly what we need to avoid.

These modern-day Pharisees don't see God's big picture. And all of us now have been studying the Bible for decades. We of all people should see the big picture. We should see God's picture of what He's trying to accomplish in us, in His children to prepare us to be the Bride of Christ.

Yet, these people are blind to their own conduct. Let's go to 1 John 2 and verse 10. This is all under the point of "Why does Christ give us a warning?" We can't be blind to our own conduct. Here is where we want to be.

1 John 2:10. He that [loves] his brother [abides] in the light, .. (KJV)

Do we want to abide in the light? We abide in the light by loving our brothers.

10b) ... and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. (KJV)

Meaning: Because he is in the light and because he loves his brother, he behaves in a way so as not to cause or place a stumbling block for his brothers or sisters. He's there to encourage and uplift and help and not throw Claymore mines at the feet of his brothers and sisters in the church.

11) But he that [hates] his brother is in darkness, ... (KJV)

And there are people in God's church who hate other people in God's church. There are people in God's church that use the cop-out "We're Philadelphians and they're Laodiceans. Therefore, it's okay for me to hate them." That's a cop-out. That's not what the Bible says.

11) But he that [hates] his brother is in darkness, and [he walks] in darkness,

Meaning: His conduct is in darkness.

11b) ... and [knows] not [where] he [goes], because that darkness [has] blinded his eyes. (KJV)

This is just as Christ said in Revelation 3, they are blind, the Laodiceans. They look at the sins of others and not their own sins while their personal lives are a wreck.

I have people who call me complaining about this or that or trying to point out this thing and when you look at their personal lives, their personal lives are disasters. Yet, they never make the connection that "Maybe my personal life is a disaster because of the way I'm thinking and what I'm focusing on." Let's look at the repeated warnings Jesus Christ gave each one of us. Let's go to Matthew 25. We know what Matthew 24 says. This is Matthew 25 and the first thirteen verses is the Parable of the Ten Virgins. We don't have time to go through that parable. We've don't that before, but we want to look at verse 10 of Matthew 25. Look at Christ's repeated warnings.

Matthew 25:10. *And while they went to buy [those who were running out of oil and whose lamps were going out], the bridegroom came; and they that were ready [who had prepared themselves, who had listened] went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.*

11) Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. (KJV)

They're banging on the door with all their might! But notice what Christ said through the banging on the door.

12) But he answered and said, [Truly] I say unto you, I know you not. (KJV)

"I don't know you. I don't recognize you because you're not like Me. You haven't prepared yourself to be like Me." Our job is to be transformed through the indwelling of the holy spirit so that we begin to behave and think and act like Jesus Christ so that Christ will recognize us! If He's going to marry us, we want to be like Him. Nobody marries somebody they're not compatible with. And Christ is saying, "I don't even know you. You're not like Me. You don't represent anything that I stand for."

13) Watch therefore, for [you don't know] the day nor the hour where the Son of man [comes]. (KJV)

And that is a warning to us saying, "It could be tomorrow and we had better be ready." We don't have much time left.

Now verses 14 through 30 is the Parable of the Talents. Look at another strong warning from Christ in verse 30.

Matthew 25:30. *And cast [you] the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (KJV)*

That day is going to happen and we don't want to be there. We don't want to be an unprofitable servant. The way we become profitable is to please God by being like Him, thinking like Him, acting like Him, speaking the words He would speak if He was here.

God and Christ today through the word of God are pleading with their children to come out of this world that we are in. Let's go to James 1 and look at verse 27. We're going to focus on the last part of verse 27, the last four words, but we start off normally talking about pure religion.

James 1:27. *Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, ... (KJV)*

This is pure religion. Not to know some obscure point of doctrine.

27b) ... to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself [these four words] unspotted from the world. (KJV)

The Greek word for "unspotted" means *unblemished either physically or morally*. And God is concerned about us being morally blemished. "Unspotted" means *unblemished morally*. So what we need to do is purify ourselves to make our garments white and righteous, to be clothed with the righteousness of the saints with white garments.

So, today is a day of warning and it is necessary because of the sinful world we live in, but also because of the current state of the greater Church of God. It's not a good state. Christ is warning us and saying, "You had better heed because at some point the door is going to be shut and some people are going to be knocking on the outside. You had better heed what I say."

That is the alarm, the warning, the war part of this holy day. Now we come to the joy of this holy day.

4. Why is it a day of joy?

Why should we rejoice on this day? What does it signify that we should be so exuberant about and so happy about with "exceeding glee" as the Hebrew said?

Today is the day that represents a time when God's people will be changed. We will finally, finally get rid of this physical body. To get rid of this physical body that betrays us. As we get older, every day we find some new way our physical body is betraying us. Let's go to Matthew 24; we'll begin in verse 30. This is a day when God's people will be changed. This is what we have to look forward to. What a time this is going to be! When we see these things happening, can you imagine the relief that will flow over all of us? "It is finally here. It's finally happening after all these years. I'm here to see it happen."

Matthew 24:30. *And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*

31) And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall [This applies to us!] gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. (KJV)

What a day! What a time, miraculous things happening! Then jumping to 1 Thessalonians 4 talking about what happens on this day. We'll start in verse 16.

1 Thessalonians 4:16. *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, ... (KJV)*

And that shout is the shofar.

16b) ... with the voice of the archangel, and with the [trumpet] of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: (KJV)

Those who preceded us; it's just gratifying to think of all of those, our friends in God's church who have died and those in ages past who were martyred, shall rise on this day.

17) Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. (KJV)

Verse 18, this is something we need to never forget.

18) Wherefore comfort one another with these words. (KJV)

This is the end result. This is how it all ends—together with God and Christ as eternal beings forever! Today is the day when God's people are rewarded for the life they lived in this physical flesh. And it is a major reason for Christ to return—to give His children their reward on this day. Let's go to Revelation 11 and look at verse 18.

I don't know if you have ever thought about that but one of the reasons Christ is returning is to present a reward to each one of us. We don't deserve it. It's through God's grace and God's mercy, but, nevertheless, we are promised a reward.

Revelation 11:18. *And the nations were angry, and [your] wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that [you should] give reward unto [your] servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear [your] name, small and great; and [should] destroy them which destroy the earth. (KJV)*

So we're seeing here a combination; Christ is going to destroy those who are destroying the earth, physically, mentally and spiritually destroying the earth in the sense of the people on the earth, the minds and the hearts of the people on the earth, but at the same time giving reward unto "Your servants, the prophets, the saints and those who fear You, those who reverence You."

Look at the reward we get. The Bible is specific about some of these rewards. Let's go to Revelation 3. Chapters 2 and 3 are obviously the letters to the seven churches but here in chapter 3 verse 20 we're at the very end and the letters of all seven churches have been read. Notice what Christ says.

Revelation 3:20. *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man [hears] my voice, and [opens] the door, I will come in to him, ... (KJV)*

The King James says, "I will sup with him." The Greek word for "sup" means to *take the principle or the evening meal, the main meal*. Christ says, "I will take the big meal of the day, the marriage supper, with those that I come to present a reward to."

21) To him that [overcomes] will I grant to sit with me in my throne, ... (KJV)

Can you imagine that? The description of God's throne is mindboggling to begin with, but for people like us to be invited to sit at the throne and just kind of "hang out" in that sense, just to sit there and see what goes on. Most of us would be dumbfounded, shut our mouths and watch with big eyes just to see what's going on, to hear God talk, to hear Christ talk, to hear the twenty-four elders, to hear the angels singing!

21b) ... I [will] grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. (KJV)

He says, "I'm sitting with God right now and your reward is to come sit with Me." Can you imagine! What a reward! And then, if that wasn't enough, look at the reward in Revelation 20:4. If that wasn't enough! This is why this day is a day of joy.

Revelation 20:4. *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls [the lives] of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; ... (KJV)*

These are people who rejected the world. These are people who say, "No, I'm not going to do that. You want me to work on the Sabbath. No, I'm not going to do that. You want

me to stay home during the Feast of Tabernacles. I'm not going to do that. I'm going to be there. I'm going to honor God."

4b) ... and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

5) But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This [referring to verse 4] is the first resurrection.

6) Blessed and holy is he that [has] part in the first resurrection: on such the second death [has] no power, ... (KJV)

Look at the reward.

6b) ... but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and [they] shall reign with him a thousand years. (KJV)

Priests! It's hard for us to imagine us being priests of God and Christ at the throne of God. We need to get that vision in our head because that's our reward. That is what is promised to us if we overcome and if we endure.

Now, today also marks the re-establishment, thankfully, of God's government on this earth. You look at what is going on in the world today and you just cringe at the decisions that are made by the President, by Congress, by leaders around the world. You just grind your teeth and say that common sense doesn't exist. God Law certainly doesn't exist. God's way doesn't exist. All they're doing is feeding their own bellies. Christ is going to rule starting with this day and not Satan. Let's go to Revelation 11 and begin in verse 15. This day marks the change in the government of this earth. What a reason to be happy. What a reason to be joyful. We don't have to sit and grind our teeth anymore at what we see on television or read in the newspaper.

Revelation 11:15. *And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying [at long last], The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; ... (KJV)*

What a day!

15b) ... and he shall reign forever and ever. (KJV)

Never to go back to the old way, never to go back to Satan's way or man's way.

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

17) Saying, We give [you] thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which [is], and [was], and [is] to come; because ... (KJV)

Here's why; this is why we rejoice on this day.

17b) ... [you have] taken to [you your] great power, and [have] reigned. (KJV)

Not Satan. Not man.

After today, after what this day of war represents, after today marks the beginning—just the beginning—of world peace. We all want peace. We all want tranquility. We all want quietness and rest. The Bible talks a lot about that. Most of us have had too much turmoil and trouble and fighting and upset. After this day, after the fulfillment of this day it marks the beginning of world peace. Let's go to Isaiah 11. We read this normally at the Feast of Tabernacles, but let's understand that, so to speak, the day after the Feast of Trumpets marks the beginning of world peace because mankind's rule, Satan's rule no longer exists. Therefore, we're going to see that peace breaks out all over. It begins to; it doesn't happen overnight.

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, ... (KJV)

And what is that spirit?

2b) ... the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; (KJV)

That spirit rests on Jesus Christ.

3) And [He] shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the [Eternal]: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: (KJV)

Why? Because He knows our hearts; He knows what's inside us.

4) But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. (KJV)

That is referring to today.

5) And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. (KJV)

Then after mankind's rule is put down, Satan's rule is put down, verse 8. Then, this is what starts. It will carry forth into the Millennium. It will carry forth for an eternity.

6) The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. (KJV)

What a time! A little kid leading these animals around. Nobody is afraid.

7) And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. (KJV)

Last night on one of the news programs they had a video of a woman walking two pit bulls and they attacked a man—just literally ripped him to pieces. You never know when it's going to happen. You can walk down the street and something like that can happen. That will not happen from this day forward.

8) And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.

9) They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. (KJV)

After this day, peace begins to break out all over the world.

We're in Isaiah; let's go to chapter 27 and read verse 13. Notice what we're told here referring to this very day.

Isaiah 27:13. *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the [Eternal] in the holy mount at Jerusalem. (KJV)*

Now this is dual. There are physical human beings living in Assyria and in Egypt that will, yes, come and worship the Eternal, but there is a spiritual application of this too because Assyria and Egypt, we know when we read the Bible, are places of sin. We see here that we live in modern-day Egypt. We live in modern-day Assyria and we will be taken out of that on this day. We will rise never to look back to this kind of world that we live in. We know that Christ's return is going to usher in a type, a physical type, of the new heavens and the new earth because for a thousand years mankind will get to practice the right way living physical lives. And then, the new heavens and the new earth will change everything to spirit.

So, with that in mind let's go to Revelation 21 and look at verse 4. This is the day we look forward to. God will begin to do this the day after this day for mankind. He will do it on this day for us.

Revelation 21:4. *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. (KJV)*

I think of so many that are in pain every day. And this day means it's all over with; never again will you feel pain!

There are many other reasons. We could have a whole sermon on why this is a day of joy. Now, we have one final point, the fifth point. Let's pose the big question.

5. What are we going to do between today and the literal fulfillment of this day?

What about us? What are we going to do? What are we going to do with our lives and do with our time between today and the fulfillment of this day?

Now the trumpet was a warning to all the people of Ancient Israel, but we understand we're spiritual Israel. We talked about that a while back. We are the Israel of God; we are spiritual Israel. Therefore, the trumpet is a warning for spiritual Israel just as much as it was a warning for physical Israel as we've already pointed out the many warnings Christ has given us. Now the body of Christ is being judged. We know that from 1 Peter 4:17.

1 Peter 4:17. *For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: ... (KJV)*

This is the time. These are serious, serious times and I grieve because I witness beloved brethren with the same old salvational sins and problems today that they had ten years ago and twenty years ago, the same problems—no change, refusing to change. Not taking responsibility for their actions, blaming other people for their problems. Not totally blind to their own sins, refusing to change. It keeps me awake at night thinking about these people. It's like sitting there with a hammer just hitting yourself over the head time after time after time and then whining about the pain. I see brethren do that because they are spiritually blind and they refuse to take responsibility for what they are doing to themselves, to their families. It does keep one awake at night.

Now is the time that we have to confirm and stand up for what we believe. We're going to be tested on what we believe and we have to confirm it now through our study and through our prayer to know exactly what the truth is, exactly what we believe and exactly what we're ready to die for because we should be ready to die for the things that we believe. We cannot give in to outside pressure and it's going to get stronger and stronger. In many ways you see this whole gay marriage thing, you see all of those pressures coming to bear. It's going to come on God's church too. It's going to come on individuals too. That's just one of many pressures. We can't give in to outside pressure. We can't give in to lust or weakness. We can't make excuses.

I've said before the man that told me "Well, I just can't overcome this. God's just going to have to change me in the Millennium." No, He's not. You've had decades to change and what you're proving to Him is "I'm not going to change. I want it the way it is." God is going to say, "Okay, then you're on the outside. You can pound on the door all you want. You can yell and scream all you want. I'm not going to open the door. I don't know you."

So, we have to make sure that we overcome our weaknesses, our sins, our personal lusts. And we have to resist the outside pressure from Satan and this world to cave in. It's long past time to make excuses for one's behavior. We can't kick that can down the

road any longer because the road is not very long and it comes to an end at some point in time on this day.

So, in conclusion, let's realize that this is a day of warning. It's a day of war, but it's also a day of incredible joy for those who are acceptable to God, for those whom God and Christ recognize. Let's go to James 1 and look at verse 12, for a closing scripture. It's talking about those who will be acceptable to God, who will be approved by God.

James 1:12. *Blessed is the man that [endures] temptation: for when he is tried, ... (KJV)*

And we know we're going to be tried. We're tried every day

12b) ... when he is tried, he shall receive [a] crown of life, which the Lord [has] promised to them that love him. (KJV)

The key here is the Greek word for "tried." It is Strong's #1384. We have talked about it so many times. It is the Greek word "dokimos." It applies to coinage. And, if the coin is dokimos, it is a legitimate, approved, tried, tested coin.

So what this is really saying to us is that when he is tried, that's dokimos. When he is found approved by God or legitimate by God or acceptable by God (all the meanings of the word "dokimos"), he shall receive a crown of life.

So, between now and whenever this day is fulfilled, now is the time to prove to God that He made the right choice in calling us. He made the right choice because we prove to him that we are approved; we are legitimate and we are pleasing to Him. Then, this Day of Trumpets will, indeed, be a day of joy!