

~Other Speakers S-Z: George Warnock:

The Day of Trumpets was really an introduction to Israel's third Feast, the Feast of Tabernacles or of Ingathering. Like the Feast of the Passover, the Feast of Tabernacles is of a threefold nature. The Passover included (1) the Passover itself, (2) the Unleavened Bread, (3) the waving of the Sheaf. Then Pentecost stands alone, between the Passover and Tabernacles. And finally Tabernacles is observed, likewise in a series of three ordinances, (1) Trumpets, (2) Atonement, (3) Tabernacles.

It might be interesting to consider the three Feasts of the Lord in the light of the creative work in Genesis. When God commanded "let there be light,"--light sprang forth out of darkness, and we had the beginning of the old creation, the first day. And so it was said concerning Israel at the time of the Passover, "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you." (Ex. 12:2). Then on the third day, God commanded the earth to bring forth her produce, "the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself." (Gen. 1:11) Hence Pentecost occurred in the third month, the time of harvest and fruitfulness, when the precious fruit of the earth was to be gathered in. And finally we come to the seventh day, when God "rested from all his work." (Gen. 2:2). So it was that the Feast of Tabernacles was observed in the seventh month. Furthermore it was not only observed in the seventh month, but it was the seventh event in Israel's series of Feasts and their accompanying ordinances:

1. Passover
2. Unleavened Bread
3. Sheaf of Firstfruits

4. Pentecost

5. Trumpets
6. Atonement
7. Tabernacles

In other words, it is the feast of rest for the Church--the consummation of God's glorious purposes in His people so far as this dispensation is concerned. We have much more to say regarding this rest which "remaineth for the people of God," but we will deal with it later when we consider the various characteristics of the Feast of Tabernacles.

A NEW HARVEST

From the earliest days in Israel, time was reckoned not only from the month of the Passover, but there existed what was called a Civil or Agricultural year, which began in the seventh month. It is evident from Ex. 23:16 and 34:22 that the seventh month was the end of the old and the beginning of this new year. Also, from Lev. 25:9 we discover that the year of Jubilee began in the seventh month. All this helps us to understand more clearly Joel's prophecy: "He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month." (Joel 2:23). The "first month" mentioned here is not the Passover month, but the beginning of this Agricultural or Civil year. A good translation is, "At the beginning of the season..." It was the end of the year, when the corn, the wine and the oil were gathered in, but it was also the beginning of a new Agricultural Year, when the rains could be expected.

All this is beautifully significant so far as the Church of Jesus Christ is concerned--for she has now come to the end of her long--and in many ways, discouraging career, and is about to enter a New Day in the Spirit. We thank God for her beginning at the Cross--the fountain and source of every spiritual blessing that we have ever enjoyed in the Church, or shall ever enjoy in eternity. We thank God also for the great harvest which began at Pentecost and has continued in considerable measure ever since. But the real harvest is just ahead! A harvest not only of souls, but of the fruit of the Spirit in the midst of the saints. Pentecost was a harvest of Firstfruits. This Feast of the seventh month constitutes the real ingathering of God's great harvest field: "The feast of harvest, the Firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field." (Ex. 23:16).

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TRUMPETS

"Make thee two trumpets of silver; of a whole piece shalt thou make them..." (Num. 10:2). In the verses which follow it is clear what the blowing of the Trumpets signified to Israel:

1. Calling the assembly. (vs. 2)
2. Journeying of the Camps. (vs. 3-6)
3. Preparation for war. (vs. 9)
4. Celebration of the Feasts. (vs. 10)

We will deal with each of these later; but first, what about the significance of the "silver," and the fact there were "two" trumpets? It is evident that "silver" in the Scriptures speaks of redemption. Whenever Israel was numbered, every man was required to give by way of ransom a half-shekel, and the money thus collected was used in the service of the sanctuary. (See Ex. 30:12-16; Lev. 25:48). The number "two," as we have discovered, speaks of Christ in union with His people, the "one new man" who was "created in Himself." Hence the significance of the blowing of the two silver trumpets on the first day of the seventh month. "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, a holy convocation." (Lev. 23:24). It is the day and hour of the fullness of redemption's story, proclaimed in the power of the Holy Spirit by God's people. Yes, the trumpets were blown for all the Feasts as their seasons came around; but there was a day and an hour when the blowing of the Trumpets took on what you might call a seasonal significance, hence a dispensational significance. And that hour is upon us. From the historical standpoint the Church has enjoyed her Passover and her Pentecost--and the age of Pentecost is now about to reach her glorious climax, giving way to the Feast of Ingathering. We stand now in fields "white unto harvest," when the corn and wine and oil must be gathered in, and God is beginning to send forth his ministers as never before--for this is the Day of the blowing of Trumpets. As one age or dispensation draws to a close, and another follows, there is always that overlapping and merging of the one into the other. Thus the Law merged into Grace through the ministry of John the Baptist and that of Christ. And so it is, we believe, with the Feasts. Even as Pentecost draws to its climax, the Day of Trumpets is being ushered in. And even as the full glory of Pentecost is about to break upon us--so also the Trumpets are beginning to blow, heralding the coming of a still more glorious Feast. The Trumpet ministry, as we have mentioned, is fourfold:

1. CALLING THE ASSEMBLY (Num. 10:2)

Once again is the Lord raising up a John the Baptist ministry to declare the Day of the Lord, and the approaching Kingdom. Again there is the "voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord." Again the cry goes forth from God's anointed ministries everywhere for the saints to assemble themselves together in the unity of the Spirit, to cast aside their carnal sectarian ways, and to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. John on Patmos was caught away in the Spirit and heard the words of One like unto the Son of Man calling the seven churches, and the voice "was a great voice, as of a Trumpet." (Rev. 1:10). With clarion call is the Lord now speaking unto His people through the various ministries which He hath established in the Body of Christ, calling the assembly together that they might hear "what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Not only does this refer to the seven churches of Asia, nor yet to the seven historical church periods from Pentecost until now--but it refers to the seven-fold church of this present day and hour. That is to say, He is addressing the complete Church of this day and hour in which we live, "seven" being the number of completion. With trumpet voice the Spirit calleth to His people everywhere: to patience, to love, to repentance, to endurance, to faith in Christ in the midst of Satanic opposition, to holiness of life. In this great Day of Trumpets we should all study carefully the first three chapters of Revelation, and pay heed to their trumpet-like appeal to the people of God. They constitute the burden of the Spirit to God's people everywhere, wooing them to repentance, and promising them great and mighty things if they will "overcome" the world, the flesh, and the Devil. "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness..." (Isa. 58:1, 2). This is no time for pretty sermons and soothing words to a backslidden and corrupt Church; this is the Day of Trumpets.

2. THE JOURNEYING OF THE CAMPS (Num. 10:3-6)

The Church has camped around this mountain long enough. Said God to Joshua, "Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give them." (Josh. 1:2). God is calling His people to go forward, as never before in the history of the Church. Only men who have ears to hear have been able to hear the call of the Spirit, but the Trumpet is blowing nevertheless, and many have heard the call. Thank God for the manna which has sustained us throughout our pilgrimage journey, even

unto now. Thank God for the water out of the rock, to quench our thirst. Thank God for the Holy Spirit, the cloud that has gone ahead of us, and directed us all through this great and terrible wilderness. But there are better things ahead! We must leave the manna, and the water out of the rock, and enter into a new realm, a new experience. Instead of manna there is the old corn of Canaan. Instead of water out of the rock, there are ceaseless, perpetually flowing waters from springs and rivers and lakes of the land of rest. Instead of drought there is the dew of heaven every morning, and rain in due season. Instead of barrenness and heat there is fertility and life and blessing in the realm of the Spirit, in the heritage of Beulah. Let us go forward as we see the Ark of the Covenant crossing Jordan, with the priests the Levites bearing it.

3. PREPARATION OF THE PEOPLE FOR WAR (Num. 10:9)

"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them, and behind them a flame burneth..." (Joel 2:1-3).

Joel's prophecy is the sound of a Trumpet from beginning to end. In this passage he is sounding the alarm for war: calling God's people together to prepare for battle, for the great Day of the Lord is at hand. It shall be a Day of darkness and gloominess to the unrighteous and disobedient, but "as the morning spread upon the mountains" to the people who know their God, and are therefore "great and strong."

The Church's False Hope.

The Church of Christ is literally filled with carnal, earthly-minded Christians who sit back in ease and self-complacency and await a rapture that will translate them out of the midst of earth's Great Tribulation at the beginning of the Day of the Lord. To this generation of world-conformers God speaks in no uncertain terms: "Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light." (Amos 5:18). In the vast majority of evangelical circles we are taught that any moment all God's people shall be caught up, raptured, to be with the Lord in the air--to escape the Great Tribulation which soon shall visit the earth. It is not true. The saints shall be "caught up" all right; but "every man in his own order." (1 Cor. 15:23). What that order is does not concern us right now; but the fact remains, we are nowhere taught that the saints are going to escape the hour of Great Tribulation by way of rapture.

Why where the Thessalonians Troubled?

If it is true, as we are generally taught, that the Thessalonian Christians thought they had missed the rapture because of the supposed letter they had received from the apostle Paul, then how is it that the apostle Paul must have missed it too? Apparently they had received a letter bearing Paul's signature, stating that the Day of the Lord had started or was about to start. (2 Thess. 2:2). And the common explanation is that they were "troubled," because they expected they would have been raptured when this Day began. Now if the Thessalonians actually thought that Paul wrote that deceptive letter--and it is clear that they did,--then why should they be "troubled," for if they missed the rapture, then Paul must have missed it too!

But no, Paul had never taught them that they should be taken away from the earth when the Great Tribulation started. What he did tell them was that they should not be "moved" by afflictions or tribulations of any kind, "for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know." (1 Thess. 3:3, 4). Knowing, therefore, they they were to go through the Tribulation, they were particularly "troubled" about this deceptive letter they received, because according to this letter the Day of the Lord, or the Great Tribulation, was just about to start. Paul therefore would comfort them again by informing them that this great and terrible Day of the Lord "shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." (2 Thess. 2:3). The Day of the Lord, Paul would tell them, was not imminent, because the man of sin had to be revealed before that great Day. It is not our purpose to prove, or to disprove that "the man of sin" has been revealed. The fact remains that a "rapture" is not held out to the saints as their hope in the hour of the Great Tribulation; nor are we taught that the saints who are walking in the light are going to be caught unawares when the Day of the Lord begins. On the contrary we are told, "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." (1 Thess. 5:4).

As in the days of Noah.

As for the hour of the Great Tribulation, Jesus said it would be as in the days of Noah. What happened, then, at the time of the Flood? Those who were spared the wrath of God were left right in the very midst of the wrath of God, but protected by the ark. So shall it be in the Day of the Lord. "The one shall be taken, and the other left." (Matt. 24:40). Now who were taken at the time of the flood? We read, "The flood came, and took them all away,"--all except those who were in the ark. (Matt. 24:39). In the very same way, Jesus said, would men be taken as in a "snare" at the time of the Day of the Lord. (Lk. 21:35). The powers of darkness and the wrath of God shall be poured out with such sudden fury over all the earth, that men shall be caught unawares, as if in a trap, and shall not escape. "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." (1 Thess. 5:3).

Just in what manner this sudden destruction shall come upon men, perhaps we do not understand; but it shall be as in the days of Noah. Sudden cataclysmic judgments shall fall upon the earth, the ungodly shall be "taken" suddenly as in a "snare," but the righteous shall be "left" in a place of safety. They shall be "in Christ," hidden away in "the secret place of the Most High." With their eyes they shall see and behold the reward of iniquity, for they shall be right on the earth; but they shall be in safety. What very few people understand is this: that this great event which shall constitute a snare and a trap to earth-dwellers or earthly-minded Christians, shall become a glory and a power and a means of victory to the one who is walking with God. Jesus promised "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." (Rev. 3:10). And if God's people will but study the Scriptures carefully, they will discover in what manner the Lord keeps His own from temptation and from trial. One thing is sure; it is not by carrying them aloft in celestial chariots of ease to some Elysian fields--but by becoming their shelter and protection in the very midst of trouble and distress. Behold the children of Israel in the very midst of Egypt's desolation, but protected by the glory of God and the rod of Moses. They had flies throughout all Egypt, but there were none in the homes of Israel. Frogs everywhere, but not in the humble cottages of the Israelites. Hail and pestilence on the fields of the Egyptians, but not on the fields of Israel. Darkness and gloominess throughout all Egypt for three days--a darkness so dense that it could be felt--but light in the homes of Israel. The death angel passes through all the land of Egypt, even over the homes of the Israelites, but passing or "fluttering" over the blood-sprinkled door posts of the covenant people of God. See Daniel in the lion's den, but it is no torment to him; the very beasts became his best friends. Behold the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, but they are not consumed. Yea, the very fire which was intended for their destruction became their light and their life--it consumed the cords which bound their arms and legs, and lo the form of one like unto the Son of Man was seen walking side by side with them in the midst of the flames.

Thank God for this great and mighty truth: the day of the Lord to the wicked is "not light... but darkness." But to the righteous, and those who have appropriated the fullness of the Spirit and are walking with God, the Day of gloom and Great Tribulation is not darkness, but a light and a glory. To the disobedient, "A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness." But to the great and mighty army of the Lord it shall be "as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong." (Joel 2:2).

The Day of God's Power.

The Church and the world are both going to be greatly surprised when they discover that the Great Tribulation, unleashed in all its fury, is nothing more nor less than the greatest display of Divine power and glory that this world has ever witnessed. (We should, perhaps, call this day the Day of the Lord, instead of the Great Tribulation; for it is only Great Tribulation to those who have not discovered "the secret place of the Most High.") We have heard it said that Heaven would be Hell for the sinner, if he were allowed to enter its pearly gates. And that is exactly right. The unveiling of the might and power and glory of God in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation is going to produce on the one hand the Great Tribulation, and on the other hand the power and glory of the saints.

"Yet once more," saith God, "I shake not the earth only, but also the heaven." (Heb. 12:26). And this shaking is going to cast Satan and his principalities from their heavenly throne, while the Sons of God ascend into "the heavenlies"--first of all in the Spirit--to take upon themselves the authority which belongeth to those who are overcomers. And entering into this place of power and authority, the Sons of God shall be able to administer protection, and comfort, and help, and deliverance, and blessing to such as are in need. All this is confirmed by the prophecy of Joel the Trumpeter, concerning the Day of the Lord.

"Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision, for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope (shelter) of his people, and the strength (refuge) of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the

Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim" (Joel 3:14-18).

What can be more clear than this: darkness, the shaking of heaven and earth, judgment,--but in God there is shelter and refuge and new wine and milk, and refreshing waters from the house of the Lord! And why is this? Because the shaking of the heavens is in reality, not merely the shaking of the natural sun and moon and stars, but the shaking from their celestial thrones of the powers of darkness and the hosts of wickedness, and the rising up of the Sons of God in the power of the Spirit, to take the Kingdom which Satan has usurped and occupied for so long.

That Satan's kingdom is situated in "the heavenlies" is Paul's teaching to the Ephesians (Eph. 6:12). From there he rules and reigns over the world and its many religions, as "prince of the power of the air" and "god of this world." But "the heavenlies" is also the heritage of the children of God; for God "hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places (in the heavenlies) in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6). The child of God is therefore called upon to war against these evil hosts of wickedness who have usurped the authority of Christ and His Church. Says Paul, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places (the heavenlies)" (Eph. 6:12).

The Church--Defeated.

Can you see, child of God, what a tremendous heritage is ours, and how Satan has completely usurped the authority of the Sons of God? Paul says, "We wrestle..." True, Paul did so to a certain extent, along with some of the saints through the ages--but as a whole the Church of Christ has suffered defeat from the powers of darkness for century upon century. Deceived on every hand; afflicted with all manner of sickness and disease; demon-oppressed and demon-possessed; filled with carnality, sin, bitterness, bewilderment, sorrow, fear, and torment. The surging masses of humanity, including many of the real saints of God, have been taken captive by the "god of this world," and instead of a glorious Church one needs only to visit a great healing meeting to behold a veritable Museum of the Devil displaying his exhibits: children of God twisted into the most gruesome forms; hobbling on crutches; dragging themselves; crawling on the ground; men with tortured minds; oppressed by demons; and cast into Satan's mould of deception, fear, torment and filth. Thank God for the measure of deliverance we can see beginning to come to pass, and for the mighty healing power of God that is being delivered unto mankind through His anointed servants--but Oh, how little we have seen yet in comparison with the tremendous need that presents itself! And yet the saints really think they are telling the truth when they stand religiously on a Sunday morning, and sing to the charming peal of the organ:

"Like a mighty army, moves the Church of God,
 Brothers, we are treading, where the saints have trod.
 We are not divided, all one body we,
 One in hope and doctrine, one in charity.
 Onward, Christian soldiers!
 Marching as to war!
 With the Cross of Jesus,
 Going on before."

The exact opposite is just about the truth of the situation: a defeated band of slaves, divided into a thousand sects, all having different hopes and different doctrines, and knowing nothing of charity. "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain..." Arise, Church of God, from the dust of defeat and desolation. Put on your beautiful garments, and the whole armour of God! The Trumpet call goes forth in this great hour, calling for a Gideon's band who shall be "more than conquerors" through Christ that loved us. And the bank is being prepared, for which we are thankful; an army whose power is not in themselves, but in the Sword of the Lord.

War in Heaven.

The Book of Revelation is in reality, not the Revelation of John, but as John himself stated: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ..." The word "Revelation" is "Apokalupsis," the very same word that is translated "The manifestation (apokalupsis) of the Sons of God..." (Rom. 8:19). Literally, it is the Unveiling of Jesus Christ that John was told to write about there on the isle of Patmos. It is lamentable that the Church should have become

so deceived as to refuse to believe the Book is for them; so many are teaching that just the first three chapters are for the Church. However, it is enough for us that John should have said, "The Unveiling of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass... Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand" (Rev. 1:1, 3). If you want to be blessed, then, read this wonderful book and believe it is for you. God is speaking by the Spirit to as many as have "ears to hear." If you can hear its message, then it is for you.

And so we are told in the Book of Revelation what happens when the powers of heaven are shaken: "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old (ancient) serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him" (Rev. 12:7-9). The powers of heaven shaken! Yes, and that means Great Tribulation for the earth-dwellers, but glory and honour and salvation for the saints! "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night... Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time" (Rev. 12:10-12).

And then what happens? "And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child" (vs. 13). By this time this man-child company, this group of overcomers brought forth by the travail of the Church, is in a place of power and authority in the "heavenlies;" and the Church that brought forth the man child through much pain and spiritual travail, is left in the earth. For a time she is persecuted by the Dragon who lost his heavenly throne, but soon a place is prepared for the "woman" in the wilderness, where she is nourished and protected.

The Man Child.

The whole picture is a wonderful description of the Church of this hour. We cannot deal at length with the subject here, but a few Scriptures will help us to see the picture more clearly. As we mentioned before, Satan rules and reigns over the earth from his exalted position in "the heavenlies." That is his fortress; but it is likewise the heritage of the saints. There it is that God hath blessed the Church with all spiritual blessings, even in "the heavenlies" (Eph. 1:3), and there it is that we are called upon to wrestle with Satan, as we become clothed upon with the "whole armour of God" (Eph. 6:12, 13). Now when the saints of God begin to really press into their heritage in Christ Jesus, Satan is going to object--and there will be "war in heaven." Hence the great "wrestling" that Paul speaks about. Michael the Archangel himself is going to enter the fray on behalf of God's people in this great Day of the Lord, and he is going to take up their cause in this heavenly warfare. God has promised he would. "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book" (Dan. 12:1). Then angelic hosts are ministering spirits sent forth to wait in service upon the elect; and Michael is one of their chief princes. Consequently the hosts of Satan are cast down; the overcomer takes his place of authority in the place left vacant by these evil hosts of wickedness; and hence the triumphant shout, "therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them..." But the Dragon, having lost his kingdom, roams through the earth in great wrath, tormenting men, and attempting to persecute the Church which was responsible for bringing forth the overcoming man child. But God in mercy has a place prepared for her "in the wilderness"--some secret, spiritual hiding-place, and there she is protected and nourished. God, therefore, promised Daniel: "Thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." As we shall discover later, when we deal with the priesthood of this overcoming group, they shall be in a place of power and authority with God, and shall be able to administer the help and protection and sustenance that the Church needs.

4. THE CELEBRATION OF THE FEASTS

This brings us to the fourth purpose for which the silver trumpets were made. They were also used to call the people together to observe the solemn Feasts of the Lord. Joel's prophecy is the sound of a Trumpet from beginning to end--and in addition to calling God's people to repentance, and to prepare themselves for war, he likewise call the saints to the Feasts of the Lord.

"Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation,

assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet... Yea, the Lord will answer and say unto his people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen... Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do great things. Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do yield their strength. Be glad then, ye children, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil..." (Joel 2:15-24).

The whole passage speaks loudly of the Feast of Tabernacles, and the coming glory of the Lord when the corn and the wine and the oil are to be gathered in; and at the same time, the hour of the rain from Heaven--the former and the latter rain combined.

Lamentations of the Prophets.

God's people everywhere should pay heed to the solemn exhortations and lamentations of the prophets. Jeremiah, who lamented over the desolation of the earthly Jerusalem, cried in the anguish of his spirit; "How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! How is she become as a widow! She that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary! She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks: among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her: all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies" (Lam. 1:1, 2). And again, "Remember, O Lord, what is come upon us; consider, and behold our reproach. Our inheritance is turned to strangers, our houses to aliens. We are orphans and fatherless, our mothers are as widows..." (Lam. 5:1-3).

If we could but take time to examine in detail these and similar Scriptures, how clearly we would see the true condition of the Church! Once married to Christ in the days of the early apostles, now a widow. Once a great and mighty spiritual power, now a tributary to the nations--and to the denominations. Once possessors of a rich heritage in the Spirit, now Satan holds authority in the "heavenlies" where the Church should reign. Once nourished by spiritual fathers with apostolic meekness, love, and authority; now the Church is full of orphans, having very few who really cherish her children, and the children themselves being loathe to recognize God-appointed leaders and fathers. No wonder Joel blows the Trumpet, and calls for repentance and lamentation: "The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth. Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen; howl, O ye vinedressers, for the wheat and for the barley; because the harvest of the field is perished. The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men. Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests: howl ye ministers of the altar: come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God..." (Joel 1:10-13). In other words, Pentecost has lost its meaning--because the harvest has failed. There is no Feast of Tabernacles--because there is no early or latter rain, and the vineyards and the olive trees have perished. The fruits and graces of the Spirit are woefully lacking; and the flesh practically reigns in the Church.

THE DAY OF TRUMPETS IS UPON THE CHURCH

In view of what we have seen regarding the meaning of the Trumpet, and its significance in calling the people to repentance, there is no doubt that we are beginning to see the Blowing of Trumpets fulfilled before our very eyes. Perhaps we have not witnessed much yet by way of causing an alarm: only those with ears to hear and eyes to see have been able to discern the voice of Him that speaketh with the sound of a Trumpet in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. But His voice is beginning to be heard, nevertheless, and the saints are mustering for battle.

Psalm 81 is very significant of this day and hour in which we live, for it refers directly to the Day of Trumpets. Indeed, it is thought by some to have been composed especially for the Day of Trumpets. A careful examination of this Psalm will reveal just why the Trumpet-call of the saints thus far has failed to produce any notable results.

"Sing aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob. Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery. Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day. For this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob. This he ordained in Joseph for a testimony, when he went out through the land of Egypt: Where I heard a language that I understood not..." (Psa. 81:1-5).

That seems to have been the trouble with those who have been blowing the trumpets of present-day revivals: the language has been a foreign language, and consequently there has been no genuine preparation for battle. Our language has been one that men have not understood.

The Uncertain Sound.

Says Paul, "For is the Trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to battle?" (1 Cor. 14:8). From this verse, and the verses that follow, we find that Paul is exhorting the saints to minister in the Body of Christ in such a way that the saints shall be edified. Such a ministry is the only Trumpet-call that will work a real work of preparedness in the hearts of the saints. We must have a genuine ministration of the gifts of the Spirit if the call of God is to go forth with power. For many years now the Church has enjoyed a foretaste of Pentecost, with a partial restoration of the gift of tongues. But it has been a language that we "Understood not." And that in itself would not be so bad, were it not for the fact that no one else has understood our language either. And this is not only true concerning the "tongues" which the saints speak by the Spirit as they commune with God, the unknown tongue,--but it is also true of the language which we live before men. God's plan for the saints is that they should become the veritable "epistle of Christ... written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God" (2 Cor. 3:3). On the contrary, the Church has done everything but reveal Christ from the pages of the heart and soul. Rather do men look upon us and read a story of carnality, sin, wickedness, division, disunity, bitterness and strife. They know the Church is supposed to be God's Bible, and therefore they read it intently, but they understand not the language which they read. It is absolutely contrary to their conception as to what Christianity should really be. And consequently, they turn away in disgust. The Trumpets are sounding--but to most people the sound has been one of "a blaring trumpet or a clanging cymbal" (1 Cor. 13:1, Weymouth). The Trumpet has been giving forth an uncertain sound from all the various branches of the Church, who profess to have the baptism of the Spirit, and the gifts and ministries of the Spirit, and the fruit of the Spirit--but no one prepares himself "to the battle" because of the uncertainty of the sound.

The Certain Trumpet Call of the Ministries.

This uncertainty of the Trumpet is going to cease, and in the near future. God's pattern has not been observed, and therefore we could not expect much more than confusion. But the pattern is being revealed, and God is raising up His own ministers who shall sound the Trumpet with such clarity, that men will know the voice of God and the meaning of the voice, and they will prepare for battle. God said, "The sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow with the trumpets" (Num. 10:8). Ministries of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers are being established in the Church, established moreover by God Himself, and their Trumpet-call shall not go unheeded. Their word shall be with authority, and not as the Scribes. And their authority shall not be by self-appointment, nor by human-appointment, but rather by the appointment of the Holy Spirit, and the ordination of Christ. Soon there will be a "language" uttered in the congregation of the saints which men shall understand; for it shall be the Trumpet-call of power and authority, even as the very oracles of God.

Therefore, as we contemplate the coming glory of the Feast of Ingathering, how we rejoice in what God is now doing in the Blowing of the Trumpets. For there can be no latter rain, no vintage, no ingathering of the oil and corn and wine--without the blowing up of "the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day." It is the Feast of the New Moon! The new moon! Yes, it is the same old moon that God established in the heavens from the foundation of the world, but now it doth enter a new phase! The very same Church that was established upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone...but the Church doth now enter a new phase of her existence. A new day is about to dawn! A new life is to be our portion! A new heritage in the Spirit looms before us! "Blow up the trumpet" therefore, ye ministers of God, sound an alarm in God's holy mountain of Zion, shew God's people their transgression, and call them to mourning and to repentance because of the desolation of God's heritage. It will not be long ere the Day of Trumpets shall have served its purpose, and the Church of Christ shall enter into her rest.