

5

BLOWING OF THE TRUMPET

We are continuing in our introductory consideration of the theme: our blessed hope. We will be looking again at the blowing of the trumpet. Our starting text will be Isaiah 61. This passage of scripture that we will be interesting ourselves with is also quoted in Luke 4. Accordingly, we will be looking at the two texts, Isaiah 61:1-3

¹THE SPIRIT of the Lord God is upon me, because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the Meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to Proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound ²To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; ³To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

Now, if we turn to Luke 4, we find that Isaiah's prophecy here relates to the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Luke 4:16-21, there is an event recorded at the very beginning of the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ in the days of his flesh.

¹⁶And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and as, his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read. ¹⁷And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when he had opened the book, he found the Place where it was written, ¹⁸The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, ¹⁹To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. ²⁰And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister,

and sat down, and the eyes of all then that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. 21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

Now, you will notice if you have followed the first reading that the portion that the Lord Jesus Christ read in Isaiah 61 is the first verse and the first part of the second verse. In other words he stopped in the middle of verse 2. But why did the Lord stop his reading in the middle of a verse? The reason is because he was reading out in Luke 4, the aspect of Isaiah 61 that pertained to his ministry in his first advent.

From the first verse of Isaiah 61 to the point in verse 2 where Luke 4:19 stops refer to the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ in the days of his flesh, while the second part of verse 2 down to the end of Isaiah 62 refer to the ministry he fulfils in his second advent. This is important. We read again that part of Isaiah 61 that defines the ministry of the Lord in his first advent, in the days of his flesh. Isaiah 61:1-2.

¹THE SPIRIT of the Lord God is upon me, because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the Meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to Proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound ²To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

We find that it is at this point that the Lord stopped the reading as recorded in Luke 4. So, that punctuation (the comma) shows the limit of the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ in his first advent, seen from the standpoint of the prophecy in Isaiah 61.

But we are interested in that phrase that we find in Luke 4:19 which is also the first part of Isaiah 61:2 – to preach the acceptable year of the LORD. In Isaiah 61:2 it says, "to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord". What does this phrase mean?

The "acceptable year of the Lord" relates to a special season that comes up in Israel every fifty years. The reference is to the Jubilee. The record concerning it is in Leviticus 25. The jubilee was proclaimed during the celebration of the feast of Tabernacles. We know that the feast of Tabernacles consisted of three parts: the feast of the blowing of the trumpet, the feast of Atonement and the feast of Tabernacle proper.

In Leviticus 25, we are shown that at the end of the forty-ninth year, during the time of the feast of Tabernacle, specifically on the day of atonement, after the atonement sacrifices have been completed at about 6 p.m., just when the fiftieth year sets in, the priests were to take the trumpets and blow out a great proclamation saying all captives are set free, all debts are cancelled.... If you read Leviticus 25, you will be greatly impressed about the times of great joy that comes upon the children of Israel on such occasions. Every man returns back to his possession.

So much is packed into that Leviticus 25, but our purpose in this consideration is this. Under the Old Testament, men blew physical trumpets to announce the arrival of the year of jubilee, a time of great joy. But all that they did in these several circles of fifty years were a shadow of something to be fulfilled in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. Here in Luke 4, Jesus proclaims the acceptable year of the Lord. He proclaims the Jubilee first to the church, and through the church, jubilee will be proclaimed to the nations.

So what in the Old Testament was the blowing of the trumpet is here referred to as the sounding of the gospel of the kingdom of heaven. Jesus Christ by his voice did sound the trumpet of release to sin captives, to captives who are bound by various maladies and diseases, who have mental and social

problems. So, Jesus Christ proclaimed the acceptable year of the Lord. And we are using this passage to introduce us to the thought we finished with in the last edition. That is, the blowing of the trumpet is the proclamation of the gospel in the power of the Spirit, to fulfil prophecy.

Still confirming this point, let us turn to Revelation 1:10-13. John says

¹⁰I was in the spirit on the Lord's Day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet. Then verse 11 tells us what the great voice was saying. The voice was ¹¹Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first, and the last: and, what thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodocia.

Then in verses 12 and 13, John says concerning this great voice as of a trumpet

¹³And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

Notice that in verse 10, John says he was in the spirit and he heard the voice of the Son of God as of a great trumpet. So, what the Old Testament priest did in the blowing of physical trumpet is under the New Testament fulfilled in the sounding forth of the voice of the Son of God in the gospel, ministered by persons who have come to the estate of ministry (the ministry of the Apostles, Prophets, Evangelist, Shepherds and Teachers) and who in coming to this estate walk faithfully with the Lord and are raised up further to become a voice gift to the church. This is important. These ones (typified by the sons of Aaron) are those who blow the trumpet.

Again in 1 Corinthians 14:8,9, we read something that shows clearly that the blowing of the trumpet under the New Testament is the proclamation of God's will in redemption by men and women suitably anointed to do so. 1 Corinthians 14:8 says

⁸For if the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? ⁹So likewise you, unless you utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how will it be known what is spoken?

The context is the proclamation of the gospel, moving in ministry within the local congregation. And Paul is here saying when we seek to minister, let us minister for the edification, the building up of the people. That it is important to God and to His purpose that the word of God comes forth clearly, stirring up the people unto obedience. Verse 6 of the same chapter will give us that indication.

But in verse 8 that we read, we find that there is a play on word. Paul, drawing his inspiration from the provisions in the Old Testament concerning the blowing of the trumpet, says "for if the trumpet gives an uncertain sound who shall prepare himself to the battle". That is a play on words, because, the two Hebrew words that translates "trumpet" gives the following distinction; one, the Hebrew word 'Yobe,"

which is used in Leviticus 25 and translates the word trumpet in that chapter is the same that gives the word "jubilee" so, the word is a derivative of the word "Yobe" and is the Hebrew word for trumpet.

The emphasis in the word "Yobe" is that there is a continuous sound, a continuous blast of the trumpet, until all that are intended to be reached by that message have heard the voice of the trumpet and understood it. That is important. Also, in the Old Testament, we often find the phrase "blow the trumpet and say..." meaning that in the blowing of the trumpet, there is a proclamation of words declaring what the voice of the trumpet is all about. For example Joel 2:1 says *BLOW ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain*. Again the fifteen verse of the same chapter says *Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly*.

So, the word "Yobe" is about the going forth of the continuous sound of God's word for a divine purpose. Then again, in a transference of figure, what is blown is shown in the effect it produces on the people: the jubilee, the great time of release, the release of humanity from the power of sin and death.

Then the second word translated trumpet in the Old Testament is "Shofa". The reference is to the fact that it must be incisive, clear, distinct, bold and serving the Lord's purpose. There must be clarity, there must be boldness, and there must be a distinction to the sound. And that is what Paul is here saying in 1 Corinthians 14:8, "if the trumpet does not trumpet, if the trumpet does not give a distinct sound, if the trumpets give an uncertain sound, who shall prepared himself to the battle".

So, the sound of the trumpet is the proclamation of the gospel by anointed vessels, persons who have walked with God, who having been called to the estate of ministry, have held on to God in faithfulness until they have been given effectual entrance into God's plans and purposes.

Just one more reference and we will conclude this meditation. Whenever we see the word trumpet used in the New Testament, the reference is to the proclamation of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus in its entire ramification. Please turn with me to Isaiah 58. There, we are shown two things that reveal that the blowing of trumpet is symbolic of the ministry of God's word. Isaiah 58:1

¹Cry aloud, spare not, lift up they voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression...

So, it is clear here. The prophet was to lift up his voice like a trumpet. And we saw in the last edition that the trumpet sound is simply for amplification, what is important is the message that goes forth.

Now, we take a second thought. We will be looking at this matter of the blowing of the trumpet and the events that will transpire at this last hour. We would come gradually to a clear appreciative understanding of what Christ is doing in the church today and how it concerns us. The next scripture of interest is Amos 3:3-8. We shall be considering these scriptures in the light of Revelation 10:7, seen contextually.

Now, recall that in the reading of Numbers 10, we showed clearly that it is the sons of Aaron, and not Aaron, and not Moses, that did blow the trumpet. We shall see the importance of that when the time comes. Now we shall read Amos 3:3-8.

³Can two walk together, except they be agreed?

There must be communion and compatibility between the messenger and the message. God is not interested in the demonstration of his power merely, but also in the manifestation of his character. And,

here, we are told that those who are called into the service of God, in the passage of time, if faithful, are called into this aspect of the ministry, being a voice gift to the church, ministering with distinction, pointing the Lords people to these things that He is doing among his people. May we be faithful, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 4 reads

⁴Will a lion roar in the forest, when he hath no prey? Will a young lion cry out of his den, if he have taken nothing? ⁵Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth where no gin is for him? Shall one take up a snare from the earth, and have taken nothing at all? ⁶Shall a trumpet be blown in the city and the people not be afraid? Shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not don it? ⁷Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but hath he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets. ⁸The Lion hath roared, who will not fear.

Here the word "Lion" is used to represent the majestic personage of the Lord Jesus Christ and his ministry. He says, "The Lion hath roared, who will not fear" Then he goes in a parallelism to explain the import of the first part of verse 8. He says

⁸The Lord GOD hath spoken who can but prophesy?

So, we see the twin purpose in the release of God's word. God speaks to effect something in His plan; man hears it in his spirit (remember the experience of John in Revelation 1:10), and by what he has heard, he is enabled to prophesy. Other elements appear, but we shall pick them up from verse 7 after we have read Revelation 10. Now come straight to Revelation 10:1 – 7. John says

¹And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: ²And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth

Revelation 5 tells us that the little book has to do with the final aspects of the work of redemption. It must be so, for John cried when there was no one worthy to open the book. And he was told "behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof". And, we notice that praises went up unto God on account of this, attesting to the fact that he the Lamb, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, hath redeemed us to God by his blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.

So, the opening of the little book and the final acts of the work of redemption are related issues. Here in Revelation 10, the book is already opened in the right hand of this glorious personage, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Lord Jesus Christ. He places his right foot upon the sea (He owns the nations) and his left foot upon the earth (He owns all of mankind). And we are told in verse 3 that he "cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth".

Of course, John was in the spirit when he was seeing and hearing all of these things. If somebody were sitting next to him he would hear nothing. These are spiritual realities made visible to John's sight and audible to his ears by the operation of the gifts of the spirit. So we are told that he cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth:

³and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices. ⁴And the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. ⁵And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, ⁶And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer.

The phrase "time no longer" means that God will not place His work under any delay at the time when so much of the promises of redemption are to be fulfilled for the waiting church. There is time no longer. God is doing a terrific and a swift work in the midst of his church. However, many of His people are bound to traditions and empty church practices. But God in His great mercies will deliver us, clean up our eyes and stir up our spirits to begin to look unto Him for the great work of perfection that He will bring about in the church.

Now let us read Verse 7 of Revelation 10.

⁷But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets

Notice in the above verse that there is a reference to the ministry of the seventh angel. From Mathew 24:31, we understand that his seventh angel is a many membered body. That is, it is speaking of plural ministries, men and women raised up by God, anointed to serve His interest at this last hour; persons who are voice gifts to the church.

They will be few, compared to the many confused voices upon the earth today. But there would be many who go forth as God's angels. They would be known by their humility and selfless devotions to God's purpose. Only one person is exclusively important in relation to the Father's plans and purposes, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is raising up a many-membered body of servants and pouring His spirit and power upon them to speak his words and to turn many unto His righteous cause.

Notice the scriptures says in Revelation 10:7, "that the mystery of God should be finished". What is a mystery? A mystery in the context of the Bible is something in the plan and purposes of God previously held secret but now opened to the understanding of the Lord's people. It is a mystery of God when it is a revealed matter and when it answer to redemption. So all the prophecies in the scriptures relative to the Lord setting up the church, overthrowing the nations and setting up his kingdom over all the earth, all those prophetic declarations, constitute the mystery of God. The body of Christ is the mystery of mysteries, being God's instrument for bring about all the above mentioned things.

And here, in saying that the mystery of God should be finished, it means that the mystery of God would be completely fulfilled. But, we must know that these things relate to redemption. That is the meaning of mystery here. Notice, it says, "As he hath declared to his servants the prophets". And, if we turn to Amos 3:7, we will find the same thing mentioned. It says,

⁷Surely, the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.

So, the mystery consists of divine activities in redemption. When He sets out to do these things that are His secret He makes known His mission unto His servants (not a servant as of one individual but His servants, as a many membered body) the prophets. His servants receive these things as the revelation of God's words, plans and purposes, and what they begin to declare of this plan is called prophecy, as we find in the closing part of Amos 3:8. "The Lord GOD hath spoken, (as of a sound of a great trumpet,) who can but prophesy".

So, the provisions in all scriptures, all prophetic writings, all writings in scriptures, point ultimately to Christ's enthronement over the nations. But all that the Lord hath spoken as of his plan (for known to God from the foundation of the earth are all his works) have been committed to writing. And, the ministry of God's servants today as they hear him in the spirit, will consist in declaring things that are already written. And the final authority for all they will have to say is as the written word bear them witness. May the Lord bless you, in Jesus name. Amen.

6

BLOWING OF THE TRUMPET

We will continue in our meditation on the Blowing of the Trumpet, an ordinance that the Lord instituted for the children of Israel, which ordinance was observed throughout the one thousand five hundred years of the Old Testament history. It was during their journey through the wilderness into the Promised Land that Moses gave this ordinance to the children of Israel as he was commanded of God to do.

We have previously observed that the blowing of the trumpet answers to the proclamation of the message of the kingdom in the power of the Holy Spirit, by persons that have come to the estate of voice gifts. We have said that the five fold ministerial gifts of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Shepherds and Teachers are the starting line in ministering Christ first to the world, and, as the church is birthed, to the Lords

people principally. But what constitute another level of walk with God sets in when those that are called to the estate of ministry are habitually faithful.

So, a voice gift enables a servant of God to proclaim the Lord's message for the season in such a way that it might be called the sound of a trumpet. In a general usage, every teaching and preaching of God's word, is like blowing a trumpet, in as much as Christ is preached. But, when we look closely, the blowing of the trumpet may be reserved for the prophetic word coming forth to direct the Lord's people in their walk with God, in their preparation to receiving the fullness of Christ at this time of the end.

The prophetic lesson covers so many issues. But these several things can be divided into two broad lines. We find the closing verses of Numbers 10 assisting us in this classification. Numbers 10:33

³³And they (that is the children of Israel) departed from the mount of the LORD three days' journey and the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD went before them in the three days' Journey, to search out a resting-place for them...

To help our understanding, the phrase "resting place", is the term used to describe the glorious encampments that the children of Israel had in those forty years of their wilderness journey. Strictly speaking, from the time they were delivered from Egypt after crossing the Red Sea, there were forty-two stations they encamped in. And each of the forty-two stations speaks of something in the walk of the believer with Christ. Each resting place was a rest indeed. But we find that the Lord moved them from one resting place to another. The Lord was in effect moving them from one realm of walk with Him to a higher realm.

It was not possible then for any of them to stay back in a particular resting place and say, "Oh this resting place is beautiful enough". The journey was to the land of promise, the land that flows with milk and honey. So, no matter how wonderful an experience may be in the wilderness, it was only part of the great purpose of God. And, in any case, if some of the children of Israel had stayed back in any resting place, refusing to move forward, they would discover that the manna that fell to feed them was not a property of the wilderness. God gave it to them in His compassion; it was a divine provision for them during those forty years. And wherever the cloud of glory is, there the manna fell.

If we turn this over to the New Testament times, we will find that the Lord's people having known God to a measure, are quite often prepared to settle down. So we may say that there are forty two resting places, spiritually speaking, in which the Lord's people have settled down, some just near the "red sea" others setting at various points in the wilderness, some coming so close to the land of promise but never entering.

May the Lord assists us to know that whatever we have known of redemption in the Lord Jesus Christ is only a measure. Until there is evidence in our lives of perfection of character, knowledge, wisdom, understanding and deliverance from corruptibility and death, we have not yet reached that rest that the Lord Jesus Christ has provided for us in Himself. Fullness of life, fullness of union with Christ in all of his glory is the ultimate rest God has provided for us.

So, there were various resting places, but there was the resting place in the land of promise. Paul says we who have believed do enter into rest. But he says again, there remaineth a rest unto the people of God (Hebrews 4:3-9). Each time the cloud of glory lifted and moved to a new resting place, God was moving His people into a new experience in him. It would always be in relation to their understanding of His plans and purposes and their enjoyment of the redemptive blessings He has provided for them.

That is the background, and with that, we read the thirty-third verse of Numbers 10 again. Take note of the fact that it was the Ark of the Covenant that searched out a resting place for the people. The resting place they were taken to from time to time was related to their situation, to the conflicts they were having and the need to lift them up out of their adverse circumstances into a higher level of enjoyment of God's blessings where they would have more satisfaction, more fulfilment.

If you are not having fulfilment in your Christian life, it is because God wants to take you up to another realm in him. There can be no ultimate satisfaction until perfection sets in. The Lord has promised He would perfect His work in us before the close of the church age. So, let us read again from verse 33 to 36

³³And they departed from the mount of the LORD three days' journey: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD went before them in the three days' journey, to search out a resting place for them. ³⁴And the cloud of the LORD was upon them by day, when they went out of the camp. ³⁵And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moses said, Rise up, LORD, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee. ³⁶And when it rested, he said, Return O LORD, unto the many thousands of Israel.

When the Israelites moved from one place to the other, it was the Ark of the Covenant that led them, going before them to search out a resting place. It was the Shekinah glory, that column of light that was in the holiest of all that lifts up and gives indication to Moses that they were to break camp. God leads them to yet another resting place where they are to experience more of the Lord's gracious provisions for them. Every such movement was fraught with danger, because there was always opposition from the nations. So, when they moved forward, Moses was taught to say "Rise up Lord, let your enemies be scattered, let them that hate thee flee before thee". That is the prophetic prayer that Moses brought before the Lord.

The blowing of the trumpet, which heralded each of their journeyings, was for the welfare of the people. God goes into warfare for the deliverance of His people. The enemies of God's people are sin, unfaithfulness, uncleanness, lusts, oppression, sicknesses, death, worldliness and all such things that remind us of the fall. These are the enemies of the Lord's people. There are also institutionalised oppositions, persons who are ever creating hostile environments for the Lord's people to operate in.

To the extent any individual, body of people, group, nations, state, institutions etc set themselves against God's word, to that extent they become the enemies of God's people. But what principally are the enemies of God's people are what we identified earlier on: worry, unbelief, oppressions, sickness, death. All of these things are enemies of the Lord's people.

So, when the ark moves forward, it is in order to bring God's people to a greater enjoyment of victory and rest. Then next, when they got to a new encampment, something additional happens. Moses would have to lift up another prophetic prayer unto the Lord saying "Return O Lord to the many thousands of Israel". This speaks of the Lord empowering His people to know those experiences that belong to the new resting place.

Generally we may say that the journey of the children of Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land stands for the deliverance of the church from the world, and the Lord increasingly making Himself known to His own until they are brought into the land of promise. The land of promise speaks of the fullness of the Lord's mind and purpose in redemption, as they are made known to the church. It is the fullness revelationally.

But you will notice that when the children of Israel got to the land of promise, they fought battle before they could take possession of the Land, before they could enter into their rest. So, rest in the land of

promise refer to experiential entrance into the fullness of the mind and purposes of God in redemption. So, one is revelation; enabling the Lord's people to pray aright, worship aright, seek the Lord aright and fight aright, while coming into perfection and glorification in actual experiences is the fullness of the rest that God has prepared for us. This distinction should be noted carefully.

We can say in a summary that the blowing of the trumpet was both for the warfare and the welfare of the Lord's people. Or, putting them into one, we can say that the blowing of the trumpet is for the warfare of the Lord's people preparing, enabling them to enjoy the blessing of redemption. That takes us straight to what we began with in the last edition.

Recall that we saw in Isaiah 61 and 62 a detailed summary of the ministry of the Lord Jesus in his first and second advent. It is particularly important to note that just the first verse and the first part of the second verse of Isaiah 61 covers the ministry of the Lord in his first advent, while the remaining verses of Isaiah 61 and all of Isaiah 62 reveal his post-resurrection ministry, more especially his ministry in His second advent.

It is because so much of the prophecy of scripture had to do with His Second Advent that the children of Israel made a very costly mistake during the time of his first advent. They reasoned that if he were the Messiah then, as the scriptures have shown, he would be overthrowing the kingdoms of this world and establishing Israel as the premier nation over all the earth. But all of that work belonged to the post resurrection ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, not to be fulfilled in the first advent

The first phrase in this scriptures that reveal the ministry of the Lord in his Second Advent (Isaiah 61:2(b)-63:6) is the proclamation of the day of vengeance. Why vengeance? Because the Lord will avenge his own. They have been made to operate in a hostile environment; they have had certain contradictions in their lives. But when He comes, He would manifest the fullness of His saving power, first, for the overthrow of His enemies that dwell inside of His people (the enemies of sin, fear, worry, unbelief, error, worldliness, death etc), then He releases that same power for the over throw of systems, institutions and kingdoms that are set against His will.

So, "vengeance" is a principal character of Christ's end-time ministry. And that is why when we talk about the blowing of the trumpet and we go to the book of Revelation, we find that each trumpet sound is usually accompanied by judgement. The warfare of His people is to ensure that His people enjoy more and more of His redemptive blessings.

If we go to Isaiah 63:4 and Revelation 19:11-16, we see this same thing. The Lord in His coming goes to destroy. He destroys to save his people. We read from verse 1 of Isaiah 63, and as we read, recall the picture given in Revelation 19:11-16. There, we are shown one clothed with a vesture dipped in blood and we are told his name is the Word of God. So, we read Isaiah 63:1-4, with emphasis on verse 4.

¹WHO is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save (In Revelation 19:11, it is said that in righteousness he judges and make war) ²Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments Like him that treadeth in the winefat? ³I have trodden the Winepress alone...

These are strong spiritual imageries used to depict divine judgements. Just as grapes are pressed to squeeze out the juice, so does the Lord trample upon the kingdoms, dominions, systems, institutions and persons that are against His will to break their strength and squeeze out their pride. So, he says in the next verse

³I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. ⁴For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.

So, the day of vengeance coincides with the year of his redeemed. And though quite a lot of activities will be taking place among the nations, we shall be concentrating on the Lord's activities among His people (the church). He seeks to open them up to a greater understanding of His will; His plans and purposes. He leads them into more and more experiences that make them overcomers indeed. He comes leading them to perfection, delivering them from the power of death causing them to stand in the glory of the fullness of Christ. Thus empowered, the people are enabled to bring about a new age. For the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our God and of His Christ. That is what accompanies the full blowing of the seventh trumpet.

Now let us go to Revelation 10. There are a few things we need to tidy up as we bring this meditation to a close. In the seventh verse we read the following

⁷But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

In Revelation 8, we are shown seven angels given seven trumpets who prepared themselves to sound. But here in Revelation 10:7 we are shown the sounding forth of the voice of the seventh angel. From the last meditation, we saw that each angel represents a body of servants. They refer to human persons, washed in the blood of Jesus, filled with His spirit, apprehended for the ministry of the word, found faithful and brought into fuller service in the kingdom of God. So, an angel here would stand for human persons in divine service, bearing divine glory as a burden.

Of course, there are spirit angels, angelic spirit creatures under the service and administration of God, but the Greek word "angelos" which is here translated "Angel" accommodates both spirit and human persons. The emphasis in the word is that the person so described carries a message. He is a messenger. And we know that in relation to the proclamation of the message of the gospel of the kingdom to men, human messengers in the church are in reference.

So when John was commanded to write to the angels of the churches (Revelation 1:20; 2:1), he was not told to write a physical letter to spirit angels but to the plural leadership of the various churches that God targeted for an expression of His will to all the church. That is important.

Each of the seven trumpets in Revelation 8 relates to the final acts of redemption. More so, the seventh. And in Revelation 10:7 we are told "in the days of the voice of the seventh angel...." So, the trumpet is not just a physical trumpet sounded for ten minutes, one hour, one day or one week, but something that proceeds for a long time. That is why verse 7 reads: "in the days of the voice of the seventh angel".

God has provided that through the proclamation of Christ unto His people, faith will be stirred up to lay hold upon that which has been revealed of His saving power. By faith we are saved, by faith we shall be perfected. But that faith must draw upon something revealed of Christ. The Bible says faith cometh by hearing and hearing by Christ preached.

So, recall: "when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished. That is, all the prophecies in scriptures detailing God's purposes in redemption would be fulfilled. Possibly, at the

present time, over forty percent of the prophecies in scriptures are not yet fulfilled. So, we are in a momentous period in the history of the church when there will be great unveiling of God's power and great things wrought in the midst of God's people. He says, "When he begins to sound, the mystery of God would be finished as he hath declared through the mouths of His servants the prophets".

The next thought is in the fifteenth verse of Revelation 11 showing that the sounding of the trumpet when it terminates ushers in the kingdom of Christ. It says

¹⁵And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven saying the kingdoms of this world are Become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever.

Now let us take two passages out of the so many passages that deal with our blessed hope and see the place the blowing of the trumpet occupy in the realisation of that hope 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17

¹⁵For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we, which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. ¹⁶For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. ¹⁷Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air.

In 1 Corinthians 15 we are shown also the place that the blowing of the trumpet occupies in the final acts of the redemption of the Lord's people, bringing those who walk with him faithfully to perfection. 1 Corinthians 15:51-53

⁵¹Behold, I shew you a mystery...

We have seen in the last edition that a mystery does not make the believer a mystic. A mystery is a revealed fact in redemption speaking about Christ and how through him God is raising us up. So, a mystery is a revealed redeeming truth. And Paul here says

⁵¹Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed ⁵²In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: For the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

The Lord will lead us to examine how this change revealed in verse 53; the corruptible putting on incorruptible, the blessing that pertains to our perfection and glorification, would be fulfilled. God will cause the sound of the trumpet to wax louder and louder. And we say in closing that the great need of the hour is for men and women to be raised up of God for the church, who are voice gifts, giving distinct sound of what the Lord wants to accomplish among His people in this last hour. And the Lord by His power shall realise this in a willing, humble and faithful people, in Jesus name. Amen.

