

## The Feast of Trumpets

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Before we actually get into the sermon today I think it's important to go back and mention some things that we read from time to time, that are discussed as a matter of something that needs to be covered. In this particular case it's back in Deuteronomy 16. We just finished not too long ago a series having to do with tithes and offerings and both were mentioned because for some, not a lot, but for some it seems that there was a lack of understanding or willingness to grasp, comprehend the depth of the importance of some of this. But it's important that we grasp and understand that there are certain things given to us that have to do with our relationship to God; it reflects the *genuineness* of our commitment and our relationship with God, and our love to God, and our love *toward* God and how we express it. And it has to do with the sermon series we've just started here this past Sabbath now having to do with thankfulness, being grateful to God and giving thanks to God.

There's a response in our life by what we see that God is doing in the calling He's given to us and what He's doing in our life and the favour and the blessings and the *awesomeness* of what He's placed before us; and yet sometimes if we let up, if we don't fully respond to what God has given to us we do great damage to the opportunity and the blessing of a relationship that He's placed before us. And I know there's been much repentance in some areas, especially when it comes to 2<sup>nd</sup> tithe, that people haven't been faithful. And there's been a lot of repentance and there's been a lot of mercy shown by God in all this for this year; and it's good that we remember those things where we've gone astray, where we haven't done what we should, when we haven't responded to God like we should because it doesn't show gratitude and thankfulness and it causes a great deal of suffering, hurt and pain and it is sin; and sin cuts us off from God.

We can't deceive ourselves into thinking somehow we have a relationship with God when we don't love Him as we should. To love God means we're thankful and grateful. To love God means we *want* to obey and do what is right, that we fear doing anything different, that we have the right kind of fear of God: to fear to do anything opposite or different from what God says, that we want to repent of sin when we see it, that we continually repent of sin when we see it, that we fight that fight and that also in the definition of that that we show reverence and respect and love God for what He's given to us. And again, that's a spirit and an attitude.

I want to emphasise that what is here in Deuteronomy 16:16 is not something that we might choose to do or not choose to do; it is a *command*, it is a *law*, it is established within the Church that we do this. It is a matter of something that's bound on earth and bound in heaven that we should live by it. And that's why then in **Deuteronomy 16:16** it says - **Three times in a year shall all your males appear before the Eternal your God in the place which He shall choose**; and so God, just like in the Feast of Tabernacles, there are places where it's organized that we be, or means that we're able to observe. And certainly we know where God is, we know where the Church is – we're very blessed in that. And so we understand that, but as far as that which is a sponsored site, that which we have from Sabbath to Sabbath in different areas that are sponsored sites for observing even the weekly Sabbath, that we be there when we're able to, if we have ability to. Now if distance and cost and so forth is such that we can only do it on occasion, then that's fine, but if we are *able to*, or if we can work toward it to be able to go a certain distance, and that we budget that into our lives, then that's a great goal. But to not do it because we're tired, to not do it because we had a tough week, to not do it because we don't recognise the value of it, or we don't place the kind of value we should into it and that driving an hour or half an

hour is just too much, two hours is too much...well, we need to rethink that and realize, no, here's an *opportunity* of a *lifetime*, of many lifetimes because there are millions and billions of people who in their lifetime have never been *blessed* to know *any* of the truth, let alone the ability to know it and to live it and to be a part of something so great.

This is something that's commanded, that *everyone* in the Church is to come before God, baptized and unbaptized. We're to come before God. We teach our children that before they're ever baptized that they're to come before God. And specifically for those who are baptized, you have a responsibility before God, and those who are growing in maturity and so forth have a responsibility before God. Even children can begin to be taught this, especially in their teen years. They *must* be taught this in their teen years; especially if they work, that they're to set aside whatever it is – doesn't matter... it's between you and God. It's just like how prayer is between God and yourself, as a whole, unless you're not doing it and then that's another matter. God brings sin out and there are things that have to be dealt with in life.

But if we don't understand this, like some haven't understood 2<sup>nd</sup> tithe, now is the time to understand it, now is the time to repent of anything that's been done wrong in the past because the reality is we've had some that just haven't done these things and the reality is *it's not an option*, it's a requirement before God. It reflects our love to God to obey Him in this way because it has to do with the response to God. This is something of a personal relationship with God as to how we appreciate and whether we see His blessings in our life and to what degree we see them and how much we love those things that God has placed before us and our love to Him.

So again, we come before God in three seasons; we know what the three seasons are – it's the Passover season which is about the Days of Unleavened Bread. There are two high days there. And then there's the season of Pentecost, the Feast of Weeks, or the Feast of Firstfruits; it's called many things throughout the scriptures. But in that particular period of time we recognize there's one High Day. And then there's the fall Feast season with several High Days; with this being the first one, The Feast of Trumpets; in what we generally refer to as the Feast of Tabernacles season and sometimes we refer to it as just the Feast season. But it's the Feast of Trumpets, it's the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles, the first day is a High Day, and then of course the Last Great Day. And so it's those three seasons, but on *seven* specific occasions we're to come before God, as it says; **in the Feast of Unleavened Bread**, that season of the year; **in the Feast of Weeks**, in that season; **and in the Feast of Tabernacles season: and they shall NOT appear before the Eternal empty**, as it is, **handed**.

And it means that we're to bring an offering. The context is one of offerings. It follows up the subject matter in Deuteronomy regarding tithes; and this here is about offerings and we're to bring an offering before God. It doesn't give a specific amount; it's not like a tithe. The tithe is very specific, it's 10% of our adjusted gross income, whatever that is; and there's a 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>. The 1<sup>st</sup> to be given is to be given to God to use for the service of God, to care for the Church, to do the work of God. And then there's that which He gives us for the High Days, to be able to observe them in a greater way with more abundance – especially at the Feast time. And that's what God has given to us; to observe that period of time in. But it's something we're to faithfully keep and it's not a matter of, "Well, I don't need that much this year. I only need half of that so I'm only going to save half." No, that's not what God says. God says it's a specific amount...and so we do it; and to do less is *sin*, great sin, and it's a total lack of appreciation for the plan and purpose of God.

And so it is with an offering. Whatever amount it is is between you and God. *Anyone* can save aside a dollar, 50 cents, whatever it is... but in our lives, those of us who have jobs and so forth, it's between us and God what we give and it's not a matter of a tithe at all. That's specific. This is just whatever that offering is as something we want to give from our heart, from our desire to God, as a matter of appreciation, a thankful offering to thank God for what we have. And that's what this is about.

So again, it's not a matter of an option and it's not a matter about the money, or the amount of the money. It is about our relationship with God; and that's important, and that's why it's being preached. **Every man/person shall give as they are able according to the blessing of the Eternal your God which He has given you.** In other words, as to how we feel about the blessings God has given us. What do we see? How are we thankful? Are we thankful? And if we're without work and so forth and we have to sacrifice in order to do this, we're still *thankful* to God. That's what it's about, it's about an attitude.

So in all your areas, wherever you are, if it's a group that's meeting together on the Feast of Trumpets, and just like on some of the other Holy Days wherever you're gathered together - if there's a ministry there that gathers that together and sends it in, then that's how you collect it, you'll be told there in that group wherever you are. If it's a group getting together in a house or whatever and people are just meeting together, just do like you would normally do with your tithes, just send them in in advance or send them in right away tomorrow or whatever as a matter of a response to God to do what God says.

And then, of course, be prepared then for Atonement. If you haven't been doing these things God is telling you that you better do it because you have a *desire* to be in a new age, you have a *desire* to come through these things and continue on with what God has given to you...and I believe that, I truly do. So that means we want to love God and to reverence God; and this is a part of how you do it, this part of worshiping God and being thankful to God.

I want to mention that in a stronger way today as we prepare for the other High Days that are coming; that we prepare for those as well in this manner. It's something you're to prepare for and think about throughout the year – what you do and how you do it. I wanted to mention those things before we actually began the sermon for this particular day in the Feast of Trumpets.

So getting into this particular sermon now... Ever since 1969 when I first came into God's Church, the Feast of Trumpets has always been understood as picturing the Trumpeting announcing the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings. And that's *always* been understood. God has always given that to us as a matter of understanding. It's about the return of Jesus Christ; it's about His coming to this earth; but it's about the Trumpets that announce that, it's about that which leads up to His very return and announces His very return.

With the last two Feast of Trumpets this has taken on even deeper and more profound meaning and we find that we're now living *during* the time of the Trumpeting that this very Feast of Trumpets pictures! And I think, "How *incredible* is that?" Jesus Christ experienced Passover. What an awesome thing! In one day, everything that the Israelites had done year to year to year in observing Passover and the setting aside of the lamb on the 10<sup>th</sup> day and then the killing of the lamb on the 14<sup>th</sup>, on that *day* of Passover, preparing it and roasting it and observing the Passover in the manner that God gave to them, all that time. And then Jesus Christ on that particular night of Passover observed it with His disciples; He ate that meal with them and kept that Passover meal with them. He ate of the roasted lamb as all of them did as well, they did the same thing, and they kept it together there. And *then* after it was over, after they'd finished eating, Jesus Christ instituted the keeping of the Passover that the Church was to

observe from that point forward that was more spiritual in nature, that reflected the greater meaning of what it was all about as He gave them of the wine and of the bread, the unleavened bread that pictured His body and His blood and His sacrifice and everything that we talk about on that night of observing the Passover itself.

So again here, on that particular night Jesus Christ washed the disciples feet and we follow that example. And then later in the day He went through the betrayal and all the things that took place that Passover pictured; fulfilling it by dying and *being* our Passover. What an incredible thing that Jesus Christ lived that, experienced that; a horrible thing that happened to Him but what an incredible thing that He lived through and then *died through* fulfilling the Passover day. And then all of us, everyone who has ever been called lives what's pictured in the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Days of Unleavened Bread – coming out of sin when God begins to draw us and that journey of coming out of spiritual Egypt; but that's over a *long* period of time. It's a lifetime.

And sometimes because of that it doesn't carry with it the kind of impact that something that happens more quickly does in a person's life. Just like Pentecost: I think of the apostles when they were able to experience Pentecost, at least a portion of the fulfillment of it, because we understand that even the Israelites – they didn't grasp that - but when God gave the commandments to the Israelites on that particular day there, when God did that they experienced a part of the meaning of Pentecost – when the law was given. But then there was that which passed through time and finally another portion of the Day of Pentecost was fulfilled in 31 AD when God poured out His holy spirit, showing how we're able to live His way of life, how we're able to live the law; but we can't do it without His spirit. And the *miracles* that happened on that day, the *signs* that happened on that day – God was showing in a very powerful way the *meaning* and the experience that the apostles had; that Peter had as he preached, speaking in different languages as they did. That was a profound day for them! They experienced, they lived Pentecost in a profound way – very inspiring and very moving for them.

And then, of course, we live Pentecost because of the giving of the holy spirit and things that are pictured in our life, but not in a profound fulfillment like what happened on that particular day. And then, of course, we understand the things about Pentecost which also carries the name of the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Firstfruits and we recognize then the greater meaning of that as well, of what it points to, to receive the holy spirit and the purpose of the holy spirit in one's life – to bring them to a point, especially in the first great calling that took place on the earth, of the early harvest, of those who are going to be a part of the first great resurrection when Jesus Christ returns: a part of the Government of God when it comes to this earth. So we have a greater understanding of that now than ever before, of Pentecost and its fulfillment. And so *that's* going to be experienced by some in a greater way when that's accomplished as well and have *incredible* meaning to it.

But right now we are experiencing the Feast of Trumpets. *All* of us today are experiencing the Feast of Trumpets – we *have been* for a while now as we live through this time and we're going to continue until it's fulfilled completely. And that is so *incredible* and incredibly unique that we're able to do this. And you need to look on this day as *something you're living!* We're living this right now and it's profound, it truly is.

Let's begin going back here in Leviticus where we have the command to keep this particular day. Leviticus 23, going back in the Old Testament where we find the weekly Sabbath mentioned and all the Holy Days mentioned as being holy convocations and the time that is set aside weekly and annually by God to observe specific times before Him in holy convocations, a holy convening of His people. Holy

because God's presence is there and convening together with God, and with one another because that's what fellowship does as well. It's a part of that fellowship; it's a part of that ability to come together and share on a spiritual plane with one another and with God in fellowship. That's why the Sabbath is so important, that if we have the ability of being there that we don't deny ourselves of a greater relationship on the Sabbath with God.

**Leviticus 23:24 - Speak to the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first *day* of the month, you shall have a Sabbath**, so again, we understand that is an *annual* Sabbath, an annual High Day and not a weekly Sabbath; **a memorial of blowing of Trumpets**, 'of blowing of Trumpets' – it's plural. It's not just a single Trumpet, it's not just a shofar, it has a lot of meaning to it as we're going to see here. There are words used to signify shouting as well, not just the blowing of a trumpet, it has to do with the air that actually goes through our own vocal cords. So there's that which is a blown instrument and so forth. So whether it be human or something that's blown through, it's the sound, it's the rejoicing, it's the noise that is made that is so powerful on this particular day.

It's a **memorial of blowing of Trumpets, a holy convocation**. So again, plural here. It has a lot of meaning to it, a lot of different things that are meant by this and candidly every year as I address this, I find it impossible to talk about this day without talking about the three uses of trumpets that are pictured in this particular day as you go back in the Old Testament with ancient Israel and look at some of that. At times we focused in the past more specifically in the use during the period of the Old Testament but I want to mention those again today because they're powerful in what they teach us on a spiritual plane.

First of all, what we're shown in the Old Testament regarding the use of trumpets is to call to an assembly. Trumpets are used to call together for the purpose of giving direction, so we're able to hear the sound in order to be brought together, to understand the sound of the trumpet, the direction that's given. And I think of that which is spiritual for us that we've mentioned in times past; do we have ears to hear the sound of what God is giving to us, of what He tells us, of the direction? He tells us how to live and what to live. It's so important that we do things the way God says to do it and that's a part of the meaning then that's contained in this particular day and the direction that's given to God's Church, especially here in this period of time that we're in right now, because of the fulfillment that we're experiencing in our own lives. An important part of the message that God's been giving to us is that we follow things exactly as they're given; not to deviate to the right hand or to the left. An important part of what we're doing right now has to do with following *exactly* the way God says to do it, to have the ears to hear it – an assembly, to be called together to do a job, to do a work when called together to do so – whatever that is that we hear, that we *follow* the instruction, the guidance that God gives us.

Another purpose of a trumpet is to sound an alarm, especially to war. And we're in war right now! We are in a great battle! And especially right now; we're going into a time when we're going to have literal war on the earth. The world has experienced many wars, but right now especially in what is pictured in the Feast of Trumpets... the coming of God's Kingdom to this earth... the greatest times of conflict the earth has ever experienced are before us. It's the *greatest* time of conflict. Greatest time because of the kind of weaponry, the kind of mass destruction that will take place on the earth to end man's world, to end man's age of rulership, to end an age of rulership by Satan and the demons, to end it. And that's a great conflict, that's a great war. And we have to see it in that light, we *need* to see it in that light.

These trumpets that sound throughout this period of time, everything that's taken place from the time of the 1<sup>st</sup> sounding of the Trumpet, that we'll talk about later, until now, until it's fulfilled and finished,

has been a call to war, an alarm as to what we're living in, the time we're living in, to recognize the importance of what we're in, the midst of what we're in and what's coming in front of us – especially if you understand what's happening in the spiritual world. That world is *stirred* up right now and it has been for a time; but it's really getting stirred up and it's about to get stirred up a whole lot more as we go forward. And we'll hear about some of that at the Feast this year. Very, very powerful of what God has been telling that world, telling those who are now demons and Satan himself, those things that are coming to pass shortly. They're coming to an end as far as their rulership and their reign on this earth; and so it's a time of great conflict and great battle and you're in that battle and you have to wage it and recognize what's being waged now.

Another use of trumpets is to proclaim a time for rejoicing, thankfulness and praise. We just started a sermon series on that very subject, about being thankful to God, of giving thanks to God, of focusing on those things that lend themselves to praise and gratitude in a spirit that we have toward God and a response toward God that has to do with a great love toward God then as we respond, because we see what He's doing and are so deeply thankful for what He's doing. It's a rejoicing inside of us, it truly is. And the more we see it the more we'll rejoice, the more we'll be thankful and grateful to God. It's a very timely sermon series that we're going through right now. We'll have the next part of this new series this coming Sabbath coming up here in a couple days.

So it's a time of thankfulness, especially of proclaiming a time of rejoicing of the return of the King of kings, of proclaiming, of announcing, that heralding, if you will, of the approaching of the King of kings, of a new age, a new world, a new Government on this earth. What an awesome time we live in. We're living in the time that is announcing that. We're living in an age that's *revealing* that, that God has blessed us to live in. It is more profound than what we can grasp, but as we grow and as we go through this time we're going to see it more and more, we're going to come to understand it more and more and respond more. So we have those opportunities before us.

It needs to be pointed out that in Leviticus 23, that this term here concerning the blowing of trumpets is a word that's so often translated as 'shouting with loud voices', so that goes with it because that's going to come out as we go through some of the different examples here of what this day is all about, some things that actually happened then picturing this period of time here in this day that is being accomplished, that's being fulfilled. It has to do with 'loud shouting' that comes from people as well as that which has to do with that done through the blowing of wind instruments.

So let's take a look now at the particular example here in scripture, to look at some of how trumpets are used and especially with what they have to do with this particular period of time, the Feast of Trumpets. Again, there are different uses that are used, but 'alarm' and 'trumpets of war' are used, again, prior to the return of Jesus Christ and *at* the return of Jesus Christ. So it's all through the meaning contained in it over and over again. We're going to look at that a little bit later, but first let's focus on a story that is of growing importance to us, that we just went through recently, that has tremendous bearing on the meaning of this day. And this particular example then is going to even have more and more meaning to us as we go through it but the type that it is here of what it pictures is profound.

Let's go over to the book of Joshua because there's still more things to be gleaned out of this and to be reminded of and to be inspired about concerning the tie in with what the Feast of Trumpets pictures, with the period of time that we're living through right now; and of the little bit of time that's still in front of us, of what we're to go through yet. It is indeed most profound.

**Joshua 5:13 – And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, a man stood, it wasn't a human being but in the form of a man, stood opposite him and with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went to him, and said to him, Are you for us, or for our adversaries?** In other words, "Are you our enemy?" **And so he said, No; but as commander of the army of the LORD I have now come.** A very powerful event that took place here, **And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and he worshipped,** worshipped God because he had this event happen in his life that humbled him mightily, that dropped him to his knees and so he wanted to know of this 'commander of the armies of the Lord', **What does my LORD say to his servant?** What message does He have for me? What am I to do? **Then the commander of the LORDS army said to Joshua, Take your sandals off your foot; for the place where you stand is holy.** And so, in other words, God's presence is here and God has this information for you, this is what is to be given to you. A very moving experience. And it says, **and Joshua did so.** Because of the importance of what was getting ready to be told to him and the attitude he needed to have toward his God, which he did.

When I read something like this, I think of the importance of remembering the symbolism of this story, beginning really with Joshua's name; and it's the same as Jesus Christ's, of Jesus meaning 'the Eternal is salvation' or 'the Eternal's salvation'; which is really a better translation here, 'the Eternals salvation' when you talk about the name 'Joshua' and 'Ye-ho-shoo-ah'; that's really the name. I'll talk about this at the Feast in one of the sermons here. Sometimes people get all bent out of shape and think you have to pronounce things a certain way and they don't understand the change of language or the use of language in different languages too. I'll save that for the Feast.

Understand that what Joshua was fulfilling was the Eternal's salvation in the sense of what was getting ready to take place as God was leading the Israelites into the Promised Land, finally, and saving them from their enemies, and giving them a place to live and to dwell and to grow in. All picturing something far greater that we're going through and preparing for now, entering into a different Promised Land, a greater one, far, far greater when we talk about what God has prepared. Those were physical things that pictured things for the future that were going to be done on a greater plane, on a spiritual plane, in a far greater way on the earth and in the Kingdom of God. But again, they all have such great meaning with what Jesus Christ fulfilled, 'the Eternal's salvation' – that's *indeed how* we're able to receive salvation – in and through Jesus Christ and all that is given to us through that knowledge.

Continuing in **Joshua 6:1 - Now Jericho was securely shut up,** closed down in other words, the whole place; **because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in.** They were on high alert. Here is a nation of people that's coming up to you and things don't look real friendly. They know what's happened and what God has done with some of the wars and battles that have taken place in some of the surrounding areas there; a reputation that was here. They were prepared for a battle and Jericho was a fortified city, and walled in.

God said this to Joshua. **And the LORD said to Joshua, See, I have given,** in other words as it means here, 'delivered', **Jericho into your hand, it's king and the mighty men of valour.** It was a great fortified city. They had warriors, a military presence there around the walls of the city and they had shut it up; they shut it up because they were prepared for conflict, they were prepared for battle and war. And yet this is what God told Joshua. "See! I've given it to you. Here it is, the king and all the mighty men of valour." It hadn't been given to him literally at that point in time, but God said it was. God tells us things, "They're yours; I've given this to you. This is for you." Now, if we look at the carnal, the physical side of it, we see something else if we're not careful, we see obstacles. If he just looked at the physical part of it, he saw great military might there, an incredibly powerfully fortified city and how was that

already ours? But he didn't question that, he believed God. And so do we. God gives us and places things in front of us and He says, "This is yours." When God tells us something, it's as good as ours. Now, we have things to do of course. We have to enter into the battle, we have to enter into the fight if need be, whatever it is that's before us, we have to be willing to do that, we have to be willing to march, we have to be willing to go forward and do whatever God gives to us; but He's saying, "It's yours." He's going to give it to us by His great power, by His great might. And so we believe that just as much as Joshua believed God. He believed God and did it. He followed Him. He did what God told him to do.

**Verse 3 – You shall march around the city, all you men of war and you shall go all around the city once. And this shall you do for six days.** In other words, you're going to go around the city once every day for six consecutive days; just march around it. They were told very specifically how to march around it, exactly how to do this, exactly the order. There's a lot to learn here if we'll seek out lessons sometimes...how important it is to follow God's instruction to the letter. Don't deviate from it. Joshua followed it *exactly* as it was given to him. It's so important for us to do that. Just like the trumpet, do we hear the sound of the trumpet? Do we follow the sound to assembly? Are we listening to the *instruction* that's given to us? Do we have an ear to hear?

Sometimes it's easy for presumptuousness or our own reasoning to enter in sometimes and we can do things differently. I think of the things that God has given to us, leading up to this time we're in, of the Feast of Trumpets being fulfilled in our lives, in this world. Because it is; we're living it. And I think of what God has done and one of the most profound and powerful and strongest things He's given to us is the importance of the need to do things *exactly the way He says to do it*, not to deviate from the right hand or to the left, to recognize that what is on the website that God has given to us...that that is the information all of us need to be filled with, to be in unity with it, and to do things the way it's said to be done.

All the elders in the ministry have been told that there's a certain way to do things, there's certain information to give and certain information not to give and to recommend. And yet every once in a while I hear of someone that's recommended something that's not on the site; and that's a big error, and it's caused problems and it's caused pain and it's caused hurt. And sometimes you think, "Well, yes, but wasn't this written by..." blah, blah, blah... and you think, "No, there's a reason for some of those things and an age we live in and a time we live in of why things are done the specific way that they are and you don't want to deviate from that. There are some things that are right for a specific moment in time and some things that aren't. And so God has given to us that which we have now; that is expedient that we do it His way, through the power and the way of His holy spirit that's working; because if we work contrary to it or in different manner than the way His spirit is working in people's lives that are being called we can cause great harm and damage. And we don't want to do that, truly, *we don't want to do that*; we want to do things *exactly* the way God has said to do it.

And so Joshua and the Israelites did this exactly as they were told as they came into the Promised Land. They didn't question. They didn't deviate from it. They followed it, meticulously so. And what an incredible lesson if we can learn that: that we're to follow, meticulously so, *all* the guidance and direction and instruction that God gives to us, to understand the importance of doing it *exactly* the way God says to do it.

Going on here it says - **And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets;** seven priests – seven trumpets... that which is complete; the number for being complete. 7,000 years, the 7 day week, the Sabbath, the 7<sup>th</sup> day showing God's complete plan and purpose and how it's being worked out – and **seven priests**...

showing that God is in it and God's doing it. **And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark:** before God, that's what it pictured; before God's presence and that God was doing it. That's what the ark showed; it showed God's presence, that the victory was accomplished by God, not by them. And just like what's given to us, the victory that we have, what God has placed before us that He said is ours; but we're able to share in it. God wants to share with us. It's a powerful thing.

Then it says here... **but the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times**, what a beautiful picture: completeness, 7<sup>th</sup> day, 7 times. I think of 7 Seals, 7 Trumpets and 7 Last Plagues showing that God is the one doing all this by *His* great power, by His design. But we share in it and we're able to be a part of it – that's the way God wants it to be. What an incredible thing that God has given to us.

And then it says, **and then the priests shall blow the trumpets**. So God told them *exactly* how to do it all the way through. God could have done this as a matter of a split second. *He* could have taken down the walls; but He's teaching, He's leading, He's guiding, He's directing, He's moulding, He's fashioning and giving things for the future, for us today. These things that happened back then, so much of it is for right now. We're blessed to live through it right now. So much that's written in Joshua is for *now!* We're living it, in a spiritual way, that which is pictured here! So much of it is about that which God was going to do later; because it's not about the physical Promised Land that was important. Those things are a type and they teach much; but the *fulfillment* of it, *that* is what means so much more, and we're blessed to share that, to be a part of that, to live it.

Just like today, we're living the Feast of Trumpets that we're observing today! And so we learn that God desires to share with us the spiritual significance of what is pictured here; and it's not a matter that He could do it quickly, it's a matter of His desire to share, and our desire to be a part of it, and the process whereby we're able to have something *awesome* built and moulded and fashioned within us that we're going to hear more about at the Feast this year in a better way, in a stronger way, in a clearer way than we've ever seen it.

I want to read a scripture to you in I Corinthians 3; want to read this to you because it shows this desire, it talks about this desire of God to share with us and how we can be a part together. It's a unique fellowship and relationship. And that's what God is building here, it's a Family, and it's a relationship within a Family. He doesn't do everything *for* us. He says, "It's yours." But there are things we have to do to be a part of it and we *want* to because it's a matter of the sharing in it together and what is gleaned as a part of that process. But it's *always* about the relationship and the fellowship that we have with one another and with God through all of this. It's so important to understand.

**I Corinthians 3:9 - For we are labourers together with God:** it's God's work, it's God's purpose, it's God's plan; and I'm so thankful that He wants to share it, that His purpose and plan has always been to share. Everything is about sharing. That's what Family is; Family is about sharing life together, it truly is. An incredible environment of peace and love that we experience from time to time in this physical life, on a plane that is beautiful and wonderful, but not continuously; especially in the magnitude and in the way God has it planned for us.

So we're labourers together with God. I remember Mr. Armstrong referring to some as co-workers. He referred to people who were a part in sharing in what God was doing, that helped in prayers, in offerings and tithes and so forth, as co-workers working together. And people's prayers were involved, just as today. Your prayers are involved in what God is doing; and so are our finances because it's a part of

helping to bring it about. We're *thankful* to be a part of it. We're *thankful* for that opportunity that God has given to us to share in this. I looked forward to getting a letter month by month – the co-worker letter, that's what it's called. And he said, "Dear Co-Workers," ...and began to tell us about things that were taking place within what we referred to as 'the work of God' in the Church and what was happening with magazines, 'The Plain Truth', or different publications, or telecasts and radio broadcasts and Ambassador College campuses, and all the different things that were happening at headquarters. Whatever was taking place at any moment in time, whether it was something being accomplished then or a plan and a purpose that Mr. Armstrong had, or admonitions he had to give as well that God was giving in and through him at that time – things that were always timely; whatever was needed...but always a Family; co-workers together. And many baptized and many were not but they were co-workers together.

**...for we are labourers together with God, you are God's husbandry, you are God's Building.** And so we benefit by being labourers together. If we share with God, it's something that God is building that's *greater*. What they were doing in Jericho was not all about Jericho. It was about what was being moulded and fashioned in Joshua and maybe a few others at that time, a very few. But again here, primarily it was what God was doing in their life and their being moulded and fashioned to be a part of 144,000. It's about what God is building and what God is constructing that was important. And so to work together in that, to be a part to share in that – that's how we're moulded and fashioned, that's how we're made: and it's a great and a wonderful thing to be a part of.

It's a wonderful thing to be a part of the Feast of Trumpets, to experience it. Who else throughout time, through 7,100 years, can say, "I *experienced*, I *lived* the Feast of Trumpets!" Not very many. *Not very many!* Just a few... you who are listening. You're able to experience the Feast of Trumpets. We're living it right now and those who are going to be brought in toward the end here and as we go forward, and those who are awakened and brought *back*. It's exciting, truly is, and this day has *so much* meaning in it for us. We're blessed to live it!

So, I thought before we'd continue here in the symbolism of Joshua 6 that it's important to note that the Church in the Old Testament was to take the offensive, to go forward and conquer. That's what they were being shown here, that they were going to go into a conflict. They knew there was a battle coming! God says, "I've given this to you. This is your land." They had enemies there, they knew they were going to be a part of helping to root them out, to get rid of them; and they saw a great conflict and a great battle here; and they had *no idea* what God was getting ready to do, they truly didn't...to fight *for* them, to give Jericho to them in the manner that He was going to do this; to give them such a great victory indeed in such a powerful way.

It's important for us to note those things too because there's that which God just places before us and says, "It's there. The victory is there – just do, follow, listen to the Trumpet, listen to the sound, listen to the instruction, the guidance and direction and do it and the victory's there. It's yours, you can conquer it!"

So again, although God's doing it we're able to share in it, we're able to be a part of it because there's that which we have to do in marching forward and at times it's more difficult than others, at times there's great warfare and great battle, but we are in the midst of great warfare and great battle that this period of time pictures anyway.

Let's turn over to I Timothy 6 and consider some of what's written right here because this is a part of it, this is a part of our life, it is a way of life with us, it is a way of life with anyone who becomes a part of the Church; but we're entering into a unique time even more so now in what we're living. It's unique to us because how many have lived the Feast of Trumpets? How many have lived through, or are going to live through, what's in front of us? Not very many in time.

**I Timothy 6:12 - Fight the good fight of faith**, it's a good fight God says. Why? Because it's by being a part of the battle, by sharing with God that things are moulded and fashioned within us that otherwise we'd never see, never learn, never grow in, that would never happen in our life; but we're able to share in it because it's about a Family, it's about what God is doing in our life. And so it is a fight; *it is a war*, it truly is. You're going to hear more about that at the Feast this year too because this is such an important vital part of the change that's taking place in us – it's about this fight. That's why so often I mention to all you new people; if you want this way of life *you have got to fight for it*, you truly do, to fight with all of your being, to throw yourself into this, not to take it casually, not to try to escape any of it, to take it easy, or to get away from it. On the contrary, *fight! Fight!* And so much of the fight is against our own nature – against self, it truly is.

It says, **Fight the good fight of faith**, we're fighters *in faith*, we believe God, we believe His promises, we believe the blessing of being able to be forgiven of our sin if we'll repent. That's a fight and it's a fight against our own nature, to humble ourselves, to acknowledge our own personal responsibilities in life and accept the consequences when we've done wrong. Just because we're forgiven of sin doesn't mean we don't have to pay a penalty. And so we have to *fight*; and it's a struggle. **...lay hold on eternal life, grab a hold**, that's what it's talking about. You lay hold on something, you grab a hold of it – especially for us, it's for *our life*, truly is. **...whereunto you also are called**, that's what we're called to; we're called to lay hold of it, to grab a hold of it and fight – to fight! **...and have professed a good profession before many witnesses**. The world sees, and our example in what we live carries with it tremendous impact. Sometimes we don't recognize how great it is and how much it's going to be used and how important it will be in other people's lives, by how we live our life. We can so thwart that or we can so aid that and help that to be even greater.

So again, it's a great fight! That's what we've been called to and we're to lay hold of it, and grab hang on with all of our being. So fight for it!

**Hebrews 12:1 - Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and sin which does so easily beset us**, I think of 'every weight' and what this is telling us. Sometimes we just weigh ourselves down; we carry more weight than what we're supposed to. We reflect a way of life and we should strive to live it, to be a good reflection of what is right and sound and balanced in life; and sometimes because of metabolism and because of what people have inherited and because of some of the things of this age we live in right now, because of the kinds of foods we have and so forth, this becomes an even greater battle and sometimes it's beyond some people's battle to a point. But everyone can do better to one degree or another in some of these things and we should strive to; but that's a physical thing. But if we even see in that something that is spiritual in our lives and how we strive to do certain things, we should strive to do it because of what we reflect. And again, I recognize there are some things that are medical in people's lives and some things are a matter of what's inherited, but too, we don't want to use that for an excuse either. We should strive to be a good reflection of a calling that we have. So even in physical weight, we weigh ourselves down.

We make burdens out of life sometimes and we carry these great burdens of life and we let ourselves be weighted down and sometimes we weigh down other people's lives, we add to their burden of their life, make it harder for them, make things harder for other people, and we shouldn't do that. That's why some scriptures talk about, 'don't take, have anxious thought', to worry *so much* over things that you have no power to change anyway. We have a big enough battle in our life just dealing with our own human nature and without excessive worry about some things in our life that you can't change.

So much of faith is recognizing the calling God is giving to us and being able to put things in their proper perspective *of that calling*. And that's something we have to cry out to God for help in. You'll grow in that and just like Christ said, 'His burden is light'. ...and sometimes we make it heavy, we truly do; and we become so overly concerned and worried about certain things in life and carry that burden that we shouldn't carry. And so we have to look to God to help us to ease that weight, that we not carry things that we're not meant to carry.

**...and the sin which does so easily beset us**, so even there; these things are about a battle and fighting; **and the sin which does so easily beset us**, so easily tripped up in life. We have to be *so careful*, and especially now because of a spirit world that's so stirred up out there; and you have to be alert, you have to be on guard because they're out to trip you up, they truly are. And sometimes if we're not careful, we can lend ourselves to do something toward another brother or toward someone else that just... we say something foolishly and it stirs things up because there's a spirit world out there wanting to stir things up and wanting to cause dissention and hardship and problem within the Body in relationships.

**...and let us run with patience**, sometimes we have to be *patient* with God and His great plan. That means we have to be patient because He is *perfect* in what He's set out to do and how He's doing it and how He's moulding certain things in our life. And we have to be *patient* with what God is doing in our *own* life because it doesn't happen overnight; and what He's doing in other people's lives – to be *patient* with that and not to be impatient with people. Sometimes we become impatient with people because we're not patient with God, we're not patient with what *He's* doing in people's lives and how He's moulding and fashioning His way within them. We are a Family and we're to exercise patience; and to exercise patience in what's happening in this world right now. We'd like to see certain things take place but they will, everything will fall in its place and time. It's better that certain things definitely have not happened. But we do have a desire to see it all through, to be through it all, to get through it all indeed; but we must be patient for what's being worked out on the earth.

It says, **let us run with patience the race**, it's an interesting word. It's the word 'fight' that we just read about in 1 Timothy 6 – same word as 'fight'. **...run with patience the fight that is set before us**, it is a race and 'a race' is a good translation too because it's talking about running; but it's also in the meaning and the definition of a 'fight'. You have to fight yourself. You have to fight against this world. The fight you have, the fight you wage is really about self first and foremost because you're fighting against the world; but it's about self. You can't conquer the world in the sense of changing it. God's going to change the world. God's bringing in a new age and there are things that God is doing; but we have no ability to change people's lives, to change the world. God has that ability and we're able to share in that because He's changing it. But again here, when you fight against the world you're fighting against the pulls of this world in society and you're establishing that you *disagree* with this world and that way of life and you're fighting it. You don't want to be a part of it, you don't want to be a part of its culture, you don't want to be a part of some of the things of its entertainment – most of entertainment is not good and not healthy. Most of the things having to do with some of the kind of music that's out there;

there are just some things that aren't healthy. Just like we addressed before the Feast regarding some things of fashion. We don't want to be a part of that. We are the pace setters for a new age. It's going to be built in and through the Church into a new age, not the world.

Much of the patience in life that we have to exercise is to pace ourselves in this race and to continue to fight, is to fight *indeed* as we run, but we must run, we mustn't take it easy, the easy way. We have to address the battles that are there and fight them.

I relate in a very powerful way to our long run that I had one time; 10 miles. There are people who've run much farther than that, but not with my lungs and not with my legs. I have a specific kind of build that as I was in races I could run a short distance fast, a lot faster than a lot of people, a lot faster than most who could ever run long distances; but I couldn't run the long distances they ran because my lungs are different and my legs are different; I'm built differently. And because of that which I inherited I was good for a short spurt and I was able to run a short distance fast; 400m, 100m – especially 400m, that was my race that I did the best in, I excelled in that one. Beyond that and I started having difficulty and a struggle in the battle to keep the pace of a faster speed.

So when a friend of mine who did cross country talked me into it, finally, to run around Big Sandy one time, it was a well established route – 10 miles - I wouldn't have made it if he hadn't of been there. I wouldn't have made it. I wouldn't have been able to continue on. It was such a battle in my mind... *in the mind*, that's where the fight is: a race. When you run a race, if you're pushing against self, if you're fighting... if you just do it casually then there's not much of a fight in it and it's not a difficult thing for you, but if you really seek to excel, you're going to be fighting, you're going to be fighting your mind that wants to quit, that wants to let down, that wants to stop for a little while and relax for a little while. There are a lot of lessons in that, there really are, because too often in life every once in a while in sermons I get stirred up about certain situations and matters that I hear about, and just like individuals sometimes when they get just a little bit too tired, or get too involved in the world, their lives, their family, whatever, to come to Sabbath services and be there – I get stirred up about some of those things and think you're letting down, you're coasting, you're not focusing, you're not *racing*, you're not fighting in the race. You've got to throw yourself into it and put first things first. It's a battle, it's a fight.

**...let us run with patience the race that is set before us.** There is a *fight* that's in front of us, that was set before us from the beginning of our calling, and you have to wage war from that point on. And right now, we're in a greater battle because of the time we live in at the end of an age when a spirit world is going to be stirred up, when a great war is going to take place physically upon the earth. And yet we're going to be so incredibly focused on those that are being called in the Church during that time, that is going to produce such great fruit in the great calling that God has given to us.

**Verse 2 – Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith.** It begins through Him, He was the focus of God's creation, He's *always* been the focus of God's creation, the focal point. The chief cornerstone of everything that God is building from the beginning of time, it's been in and through Jesus Christ. God is accomplishing it through Jesus Christ. It's a very powerful thing.

**Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured...** the joy; that's what we have to look at, the joy of what's in front of us, of what's coming, of what this is all about. What suffering? What is it that can be compared to what's in front of us?

...who for the joy that was set before Him endured being impaled on the stake; that's what it's talking about here, His willingness to go through that because... *Yes, it was hard. Yes, what a horrifying thing to live through, to experience.* And we go through some difficult things in life, we truly do, but with a big picture of what God is doing, with the race, with what is set before us, the way of life that is set before us. What an incredible *thing* that God has given to us! That's why...

I just quickly thought of Romans 8 – I'm going to come back to this and finish this but I'll just read this to you, you know the verses, but if you just want to jot it in your notes that's fine, then we're going to come back to Hebrews here; but it says **Romans 8:34 - Who is he that condemns? It is Christ who died, yes rather, who is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.** You know the work that He continues to do for us, in and through us...

**Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?** ...from the plan that God has for us, for the *purpose* of our calling, for what is in front of us – a Kingdom that's about to come to this earth; the *life* that God desires to share with us for eternity. So he says, what's going to separate us? What can be compared to it we should ask. **Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For your sake we are killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter. No, in all these things we're more than conquerors through Him who loved us.** Fighters! Conquerors! That which we can do that God has made possible for us. He'll fight the fight in front of us, around us, beside us. And if we'll just enter into it and share in it... and sometimes it's just not pleasant, but get in there and fight and do it the way God says because it's a matter of sharing with God, then we have the victory, we truly do.

He says, **for I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.** And so again here, it's about a matter of what we see, it's a matter of what's there before us, of what we grasp of what's ahead of us. And so that's why it says here...**for the joy that was set before Him,** and that love of God that God has, and Jesus Christ, that we're able to share with them of a plan and a purpose that's being fulfilled here, that we're able to be a part of...and what's almost to this earth now. We're willing to go through whatever it takes to get there, we truly are.

It says here, for Him, **despising the shame,** the shame that goes with this way of life in the world...because the world isn't attracted to this and they don't *see* who you are, they don't grasp what you're doing; and they don't understand such a small group of people that God is working with, whom God is working with and that which was associated in Christ's life here with being impaled on a stake... the shame as the world looked upon that as being a *shameful* thing. It wasn't at all. It was a glorious thing He did for all the world. And yet the world looks at certain things in a shameful way and they're ashamed of us and they don't understand. They look down upon us, upon God's people, of what we say, of what we believe, of what we live. And they go far beyond that sometimes, they truly do. But one day... one day...

And it says, **and set down on the right hand of the throne of God.** And so we go through a lot of things sometimes to get to where we're going; and it's not easy.

I think of 1 John 4 – we need to realize we're in a great fight right now and things are getting stirred up more and more and more in this spirit world that's around us in this earth, the demonic world. They *hate* what's taking place. Satan is stirred up and angry because of what's taking place, he knows he

doesn't have much time and more is being told to him about himself and about the demonic realm that rebelled against God, and they're stirred up out there. You've got to be careful, you've got to be on guard, especially now. You're in a great fight and you need to recognize how they are attacking and wanting to destroy and wanting to thwart and wanting to hurt you more than ever before. And that's why you have to do as I've mentioned so many times in 1 John 4:4. That's why this verse is so incredibly important, especially in the context here of what it's saying about *fighting!*

**1 John 4:4 - You are of God, little children, and have overcome them:** here in context it's talking about that which works against the Church, works against God, anti-Christ, that which does not yield itself to God's spirit living and dwelling within them. And you have to fight against that so that sin, the things that so easily beset you, the things that can so easily trip you up, the battles that are there... don't let them! You've got to conquer them! You've got to overcome them! That's what this word 'overcome' means. It means 'to conquer'. It's about battle – that's what it means in the Greek language. To overcome means 'to conquer, to have the victory over something', and to have that means you've got to *fight*, you've got to enter into battle; and we have to battle against self, we have to battle against the ways of this world and it says here; **because greater is He that's in you, than he that's in the world.** And we have to yield ourselves then to God, to God dwelling within us – because that's our victory, that's how we conquer and overcome.

**1 John 5:4 - For whosoever is born of God overcomes the world:** we have God's spirit living within us, we're begotten of God's spirit, we can conquer! ...because it's about self, it's about being able to resist what's in this world because we see it, we don't want it, we want to yield ourselves to God, to God living within us; and Jesus Christ living within us and we in them; because that's our strength and that's our power. ...**and this is the victory that overcomes/conquers the world, even our faith.** We believe God. We believe what He's shown us of a way of life to be lived and so we're willing to do those things.

Let's return to the flow of Joshua 6 – going back there now again and continuing on with that which parallels the Feast of Trumpets and *this* period of the Feast of Trumpets, the *fulfillment* of the Feast of Trumpets because this is what we're living right now and some of the analogies and parallels of what is pictured here in coming into a physical Promised Land is very much about what we're doing and going into that which is a spiritual Promised Land and to a new age or new time period of a Millennial period for the earth where God's Kingdom is going to reign on the earth for the rest of mankind.

**Joshua 6:10 - Now Joshua had commanded the people, saying, You shall not shout, or make any noise with your voice, nor shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I say to you shout; then you shall shout.** So, when they were marching around it wasn't a matter of having casual conversation and different ones talking. They were *focused* on what they were doing because it wasn't a matter of talking to each other and not concentrating and not focused on what they were doing. He said, not a word out of your mouth! That's explicit instruction! We have to be careful of the words that come out of our mouth, don't we? How *closely* do we watch that? Sometimes we don't as we should. And so ours is over a longer period of time, but that period of time is getting shorter right now of what we must be focused on because we are fulfilling this day, we are living this day right now.

And so it says here again, **you shall not shout or make any noise with your voice, nor shall any word proceed out of your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you shall shout.** So it's that thing of very specific instruction, explicit instruction; and we need to take everything that we're given in that vein, in that light, as very specific instruction from God, we truly should. To be that diligent about it, not to be haphazard about things, not to take things lightly; but to be stirred up because of the times we're

in and as running a race – that you *watch*, that you're *alert* to what's taking place, that you're truly fighting against your nature to do what needs to be done.

**Joshua 6:15 - And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and marched around the city seven times in the same manner:** so this time they were told, now you do it seven times on the seventh day; **and on that day only they marched around the city seven times. And the seventh time it was so, when the priests blew the trumpets, that Joshua said to the people Shout; for the LORD has given you the city.** Now they were in the same situation here; they'd been prepared for this, they knew they were going to come up to a battle here and there was going to be a war; but they had no idea what God was getting ready to do.

**Verse 20 - So the people shouted,** and this word here having to do with 'an action of shouting of war, of alarm, triumph'. It was a matter of a victory cry and going into battle. And so they did it in unison before the walls ever started coming down; they just saw a battle in front of them, and this shows the spirit and the attitude and they're sharing in something that God had given them to share in. They just believed what Joshua told them. They did it *exactly* the way Joshua gave to them as being from God and they did it.

It says, **so when the people shouted and when the priests blew the trumpets: and it happened,** so it says this is what they did; **and it happened that when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat,** It didn't just fall down and crumble in certain areas - the walls around the city, a fortified city, fell down flat. What kind of strength and encouragement do you think that gave to them fighting? ...To realize that *God* has given them the victory. And what kind of fear do you think that put into the enemies when they saw these things come to pass?

We're going to see *incredible things* take place that are going to so *move* us and give us such *boldness* and *confidence* in what's ahead for us, we truly are. I think of things that are coming, that we do by faith. It says there are things here that are done as a matter of faith. They did it as a matter of faith in what they believed. They just did it because they believed, they'd already been stirred up and encouraged, pumped up a great deal because of what happened as they crossed over the Jordan river and the waters stopped; and something that reminded them in such a powerful way of what happened at the Red Sea; because some of them never experienced that. A few did, those that were 20 and younger, they went through the Red Sea. Those who were born in the wilderness, they'd never experienced that but they knew the story well, and so when this happened what an inspiring thing! That when Joshua told them that God has spoken to him and given him certain guidance and direction; and their desire to do it... there was a boldness and a confidence there.

And I've been amazed in the last couple of years of the boldness and the strength and the confidence that God's giving us, more and more and more. Do you know what so much of it has to do with? Truth! Truth from God; the way God works in our lives and inspires us to see and know things. Just like this Feast of Tabernacles coming up.

I am so excited and moved by what God is giving us; 4 truths... 4 powerful truths at *one time*, at one specific season, the Feast of Tabernacles 2010. And it puts the finishing touches; it magnifies the story in a very powerful way of 'The Mystery of the Ages'. It truly clarifies things far more for people that are going to be called, and gives us greater inspiration. These are things that give us greater boldness and confidence. I see this in such a profound way and I'm *so* moved by it that it gives me greater boldness,

as much as, on a spiritual plane and more so, than what the children of Israel had as they came across the dried up Jordan. And it's inspiring because it's a matter of seeing God and having the boldness and the confidence that comes from God.

I've seen us grow and become strengthened in faith in the last couple of years. And more is going to happen. I think of how we've been organized and how God has prepared us within the ministry for *massive* baptisms; the change in the things that are there are *so profound* and I see them so clearly, so powerfully. And I know that we do at different levels, many of us, but we don't grasp yet the magnitude of what's going to be accomplished, and I'm really excited and moved by this because I think of what's being prepared for the return of Jesus Christ the *Messiah*, the King of kings; of *people* that are a part of the Church into the hundreds of thousands being made ready just before His return, for His return. It's an awesomely beautiful and *powerful* thing that God Almighty is doing and we get the opportunity to share in the opportunity of a lifetime, because in 6,000 years nothing so *profound* has ever taken place!

And so, again here, it says, **and the people shouted with a great shout and the wall fell down flat; then the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.** They had totally surrounded it and now they went straight forward and took it with great power and great might, and that's what God has given to us. We're taking what God has given to us; His Kingdom, the Millennial Period, a new age, it's right in front of us. And to have the kind of boldness and the kind of confidence to *know* we're living the Feast of Trumpets is incredible; the shofars, the trumpets, the shouting, everything that takes place to give the victory. So what happened then in a physical way is happening with us in a spiritual way, in a very *powerful* way; really physically and spiritually for us – both.

As I mentioned several times; *we are in the Feast of Trumpets* just as Jesus was in the day of Passover that He fulfilled. Two years ago the meaning of the Feast of Trumpets *began to be fulfilled*; that's when it started. That's when we started living the Feast of Trumpets. It began to be fulfilled at that time. That Feast in 2008 was the first great blowing of a Trumpet in heaven that fulfilled the trumpeting, the announcing of the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings; that was a beginning of the countdown. And every Trumpet... even after the 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet of 7 Trumpets that are to sound...all the way to the end. So this started with a Trumpet in heaven on the Feast of Trumpets which today pictures.

I am in *awe* of what God has given to us, of the tie in with Pentecost and the Feast of Trumpets; and you should be as well – you truly should be. I mention these things, but to mention it again and again and again of what we have been given; because it is so incredible. What an amazing thing that happened two years ago – that the 1335 days prophesied by Daniel in Daniel 12 began on the Feast of Trumpets exactly two years ago. Something that Daniel wanted to know more about and you know God just told him, “Daniel, it's not for your time, it's not for you to know; just shut up the book Daniel.” And how many people since then, how many prophets, how many people of God, how many apostles, how many evangelists, how many teachers, how many members of the Body of Christ have wanted to know? I think of the period of Philadelphia and how the scripture had been talked about in sermons that I'd heard in times past, how people wanted to know what it means. Some wondering what it might mean and sometimes speculating about what it might mean – the 1335 days, the 1290, the 1260, what does it all mean? You know what, the answer to every one of them was the same as it was to Daniel, “Shut up the book, it's not for you; it's not for your time. You're almost there! ...but it's not yet. It's not for you.” And *then* we came to a time when it *was* given to us and the time was here.

Even when the 1<sup>st</sup> Seal was opened we didn't know the exact timing of things, but we knew it was about the Church, that we were in the end-time now, that a countdown had begun. We didn't know

specifically what that count down was, but when the 1<sup>st</sup> Seal opened in December of 1994 when the apostasy took place, incredible things began to happen, they truly did. And we knew that we were in the end-time, and then more Seals were opened and we began to learn from those, we began to see and we began to understand; but we still didn't know the 1335 days and we didn't know the final countdown. And then it happened, the final countdown began, 2 years ago, the final 1335 days and on the Feast of Trumpets. What a marvellous thing that on the Feast of Trumpets 144,000 were sealed. Who are they? They're the firstfruits. They're Pentecost.

So the great Trumpet was blown two years ago on the Feast of Trumpets and a countdown began for the return of Jesus Christ; on *that day* the announcement was made in a very powerful way that the King of kings is coming. And every Trumpet that will blow from that time forward that takes place announces the return of Jesus Christ, that brings about the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings, speaking of those 7 Trumpets that will sound. Only one sounded so far; but all those that will sound will add to the power. Just like what happened around Jericho: day 1 and day 2 and on through the process as they blew the trumpets; and then finally on the 7<sup>th</sup> day in a very powerful way the trumpets were sounded.

There are many types and analogies that are there, things that are pictured for something in the future that was to happen in a greater way, in a more profound way – that we're living now, it is so incredible, that leads up to the final day that a Trumpet is sounded. Not on a Day of Trumpets, *but on the Day of Pentecost*. Because it started on Trumpets, the announcement was made on Trumpets about those who are going to return with Him, the 144,000, they were sealed. And so the very day that the announcement of His return is made, that first great Trumpet in heaven that sounded on the Feast of Trumpets of that year, that started the whole process, also announced the 144,000 who would be with Him. And so He returns with them on that day, Pentecost of 2012. It's a beautiful, beautiful, awesome picture, it truly is; things we really didn't have understanding of in times past, and because we didn't fully have that some mocked and made fun of. But that's the way God's Church is, we do what God gives us when He gives it to us; then we know.

And so again, it truly is a profound thing. I marvel how beautiful it is; that which pictures Jesus Christ being received of the Father – took place on the *very day* that He fulfilled it, the Wave Sheaf to be waved before God to be accepted and then the wave loaves that have leaven in them, that picture the 144,000, the firstfruits that when they're waved before God...and what day are they waved on? The day Jesus Christ returns, the day that they're resurrected. It couldn't happen on any other day. And so I marvel at the *power* that God has given to us in the truth, because there is *power in the truth*, power of *strength* and confidence and boldness and great faith that God has given to us in a very great way as we live these days and as we go into what's in front of us now. I think of what's already behind us now – *2 years already* behind us. We have one more Feast of Trumpets. How we'll observe it? No one knows. Maybe it'll be together, maybe it'll be with a lot of new people, maybe it'll be the beginning of something awesomely great. I don't know! But I know the Feast of Trumpets has been great! The first one was *great*, last year's was *great*, had great meaning in it, the timing of things. This one is *great* and *inspiring* as we're led into the Feast of Tabernacles when 4 great truths are going to be given to us that are going to *magnify* all of this even more.

The next Feast of Trumpets? I look forward to it, I truly do, because I think, even when that takes place, *there isn't much time remaining before Pentecost of the following year*. We get closer and closer and it becomes more inspiring and more inspiring.

So again, I think of that 50<sup>th</sup> Truth that God gave to us; so profound, and now by the end of the Feast of Tabernacles - 57 truths in total. 36 to this Church; 36. It's a profound thing, it truly is.

Now let's go to the book of Revelation that reveals more about the meaning of this day where so many of these things are done and accomplished and fulfilled in a very powerful way in what's pictured here in the book of Revelation. We've gone through so many of these things in times past but with the Feast of Trumpets here and everything that's being pictured it's *important* to go through the meaning of this day as it's revealed to us, as God has given us so much to understand.

**Revelation 1:3 – Blessed is he who reads and they who hear the words of this prophecy**, I love that because the hearing, just like the sound of the trumpet, the ability to be called to assembly –whether we hear the sound of the trumpet, whether we have ears to hear. And we've been given ears to hear the words of the prophecy of the book of Revelation *more than any other people have ever had* since it was written by John so long ago. God has given it to us because it was for our time. It was written for this time, not for any time previous to this. Oh, there is a little bit here and there about the different eras of the Church and so forth, but the *book* is written about and leads up to primarily what we have been living and what is still ahead of us, it truly is.

**Blessed is he who reads and they who hear the words of this prophecy and keep those things which are written therein**: we keep them, we live by them, we live by the truth that's here, and by that which is revealed: **for the time is at hand**. When it's revealed, especially when things are given to understand and grasp in their greater fullness. The time is at hand, *we're living it! We're living it!*

I think of a Psalm that goes with this right now, Psalm 81; because it's about the Feast of Trumpets, it reveals more about the Feast of Trumpets. It's kind of difficult sometimes to go through the Feast of Trumpets without going through this one as well.

**Psalm 81:3 – Blow up the trumpet in the new moon**, now, it's not any ole new moon; it's the new moon of the seventh month, it's the new moon at the time appointed. There are times appointed, annual Holy Days, *time's* appointed. It's about a Holy Day; it's about a High Day. As it says, **in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn Feast day**. Happens once in a year. It's this day today, the Feast of Trumpets.

**Verse 8 – Hear, O My people**, so much about the Feast of Trumpets is the ability that God gives to us and the admonition as well, to listen. To hear, we have to listen and to do it. It has to do with the doing of it as well. Those who listen to Joshua had to do *exactly* as he said. The ability to hear and do. Hearing has to do with listening and doing. **Hear, O My people and I will testify unto you: O Israel, if you will listen unto Me**; so to do what God says we have to first listen, take it to heart, apply it, think about how it applies to our life, examine ourselves to see if we're doing it the way God says to do it; precisely, accurately, as we see in the example of Joshua and the children of Israel, circling around *exactly*, meticulously so, how God told them to do it.

**Verse 9 – There shall no strange god be in you; neither shall you worship any strange god. I am the Eternal your God/I am Yahweh your Elohim who brought you out of the land of Egypt: open wide your mouth**, for the Israelites this meant much, for us it means *much* more. God is the one – because when He calls us He gives us the ability to begin to hear on a spiritual plane. It's up to us whether we listen as we should and apply what we hear as we cry out to God for the help to apply and to live what He's given to us as He's called us out of Egypt, as He's called us out of sin.

...**open wide your mouth and I will fill it.** What an incredible thing God says! All we have to do; **open wide your mouth** – there are certain things you have to do to receive it; and whatever that is God says in order to receive it, then do it and He will fill our life with His way of life, with the truth, with power and might. So again, we have to *seek* God's guidance and His will in our life. You have to seek it; that's what listening is about. You have to seek it out; you have to think about it, the ability to listen. I think sometimes as people listen to sermons; I don't mean for people to go to an extreme in this either, but you know, I appreciate it at times when I see somebody jotting down a note, because when you write something down it's another avenue, another means that God has given for something to be cemented into our mind. If we just lounge back in our chair and we just rest and we kind of get a little sleepy, there's not too much listening sometimes that goes on. You have to think about, you have to apply yourself to listening even...and seek to hear Him.

**Verse 11 – But My people would not listen to My voice; and Israel would have none of Me.** It's the way of Israel, it's an example. We do though, we've been given the ability; but we must apply ourselves, we truly must. And this is about the Feast of Trumpets so that we can become a part of what God has offered.

**Verse 12 – So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels.** What a horrible thing! Don't let that happen to you! Fight for this way, seek it; it's a fight indeed.

**O that My people had listened unto Me and Israel had walked in My ways.** That's what God desires for us; to walk in His ways. And so the Feast of Trumpets in a very powerful way has to do with our ability to listen to what God gives to us, to hear it in order to do it. We have to listen closely to be motivated, to be moved by the power of God's spirit to do it.

Let's go back to Revelation 1 because it was about hearing the words of the prophecy and *keeping*, doing it, living it; see, it's about listening and then *doing it*; because the time is at hand. So more is upon us, more has been given to us of a specific job that we now have. Philadelphia had a work to accomplish and we have a work to accomplish as well. We've been prepared for that work; it's in front of us now, it truly is; and much has been done to prepare us for this time: all that we've gone through. I think of what I've gone through in my calling; but I think *especially* since the apostasy what I've gone through to make me who I am, to mould and fashion within me specific things that have made me who I am today and I marvel... I marvel at what God has done. I would never, could never have *dreamed* of what was in front of me, would not have believe it if I was told it; but I have lived it and I am in awe. Of all that God has given to us, of all the truths – *36 incredibly powerful truths* that God has given to us. I think of that and I'm moved by that; I'm *dumbfounded* by that; because the time is at hand, because of where we are, and we're able to live this then in a very powerful and profound way.

Going on here; **verse 3 – Blessed is he who reads and they who hear the words of this prophecy and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand. John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you and peace, peace from Him which is, which was, and which is to come; and from the seven spirits who are before His throne; and from Jesus Christ who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten from the dead; the first of the firstfruits as is spoken of; and the Prince of the kings of the earth. Unto Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priest unto our God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever.** And so again, that which is happening in our lives, especially what has happened in the lives of the firstfruits, and the purpose of the Church in the last 2,000 years, of that which is going to return with

Jesus Christ, that which has been sealed already and that which is going to be resurrected on Pentecost in 2012 to return with Jesus Christ to reign and rule on the earth.

**Verse 7 – Behold He comes with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they *also* who pierced Him;** because there's coming a time of a resurrection... they're not going to see Him returning, but they're going to see Him. It's talking about that which goes on into the future when every eye will see Him, those of the earth who are resurrected to life at the last 100 years. **...and all kindred's of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen.** This is very much about His return and those things that even go beyond that.

The world will be in awe when it grasps and recognizes it's all being taken from them. You know, people want what's here, they'll believe anything to think that they're going to have it back again. Sometimes I am so dumbfounded by listening to the news, I truly am. Every day that goes by and things happen; some things are so upside down now, things that under normal times in the past would have sent the stock market plunging, would have crashed, and in today's world it just keeps going up, they keep talking about, "Oh this is happening, but it's coming back, it's doing this, it's doing that." And you think, everything is there against you and they *see* and they *talk* about the things; but their eyes are so blinded and they don't grasp and so it's not going to be a pleasant thing as it's taken away from them, it truly isn't because they don't like what's happening, they don't recognize that Jesus Christ is returning until He returns – those who are able to see it. But they wail because of what's happening that's being taken away *from* them.

In chapter 2-3, they go on and talk about some of the things, the different era's of the Church and the things that take place.

**Revelation 4:1 – And after this I looked and behold a door *was* opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard *was* as it were a trumpet talking to me and said, Come up here and I will show you things which must be hereafter.** And so, again, things were told about what would happen in the previous 2,000 years to the different eras of the Church and then it brings us up through time and what's going to take place.

Coming up to **Revelation 6:1 – And I saw the Lamb open one of the Seals**, and the things that began to happen that so many of us in the Church have experienced, the apostasy. There aren't a lot. There aren't a lot here today who experienced the apostasy. When you want to look at the scattering of the Church and who is here today, there are not *a lot* of people who experienced that apostasy; and yet, there are those who did, who are witness of it that God has brought, and there are going to be more who are going to be brought back who lived through that as well, who haven't yet been brought back but will and they will be a part with us.

Now we come to a very distinct moment in time toward the end of the period of the 6<sup>th</sup> Seal when things are held up for a short time in order to accomplish a final great task concerning the Church that leads up to the fulfilling of the most awesome event in all of earth's history – which in large part was the announcement of the very special Feast of Trumpets in 2008 – truly.

**Revelation 7:1 – And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor upon the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels,** isn't that an amazing thing here - so much of the

message about the return of Jesus Christ is about the Government of God, it's about that which is being revealed right here, about the seal of the living God, the importance of certain ones being sealed – *Pentecost*, tied in directly with Trumpets. You can't separate them they are so *powerfully* tied together. It's beautiful! It's just downright beautiful! It truly is!

**Verse 3 – Hurt not the earth, nor the sea**, in other words, there are certain things that couldn't begin, couldn't even start until this event happened, and then the time of a countdown could begin; when it was God's time – things to be accomplished, things to happen on the earth. And we could go through many of the things there because then it starts talking about the 144,000 and who they are and I feel sorry as I was going through some of this. I thought about different ones who've come along... it's difficult sometimes for some who are awakened to realize some of these things because there were certain things taught at one time where people thought about different ones that were going to become a great multitude and they didn't realize that it's not some other separate group, it's the same ones being spoken of over and over again here, an innumerable multitude, innumerable because it happened over a period of 6,000 years and man can't count it and man doesn't know who they all are. Innumerable because if you saw a sea of people like that you couldn't count them anyway when they're all together like that. But God is making it very clear and telling us the number of the count and telling us even toward the end of the chapter *who* they are; those who have washed their robes and been made white. Those who have gone through the same process of conquering and overcoming and coming out of the world and living God's way of life with His favour, with His help, and the change that takes place in their life. And so all that takes place there.

Finally Revelation 8, moving forward and we know so much of the story so so well, we truly do. But what a powerful thing when you realize all this over and over again is about the Feast of Trumpets and that which started two years ago that began to be fulfilled; that we're living it, the meaning of this day.

**Revelation 8:1 – And when He had opened the seventh Seal there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and there were given seven Trumpets;** so again here, all those Trumpets that sound to the return of Jesus Christ, the first 4 Trumpets about the demise of the United States; of Ephraim and Manasseh especially; and the other Israelite nations, scattered nations that will follow; and the rise of other powers on this earth.

And then we come to verse 13, the time of the 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet. It's says, **and I beheld and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven saying with a loud voice, Woe, Woe, Woe**, they're referred to as the three last woes, the three final woes here, **to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the Trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!** So all the way through, just getting closer and closer and closer to the final Trumpet.

So after the great trumpet in heaven was blown two years ago, we've had one Trumpet blow that is a fulfillment of this period of time that leads up to the return of Jesus Christ, that brings it about. Because these are the ones that *cause, that bring about* the transformation on the earth when Jesus Christ will be brought back, when He will come back.

And so, it's all such a beautiful picture – all the way through the entirety of the story; and the 7 Trumpets that lead up to the 7<sup>th</sup> Trumpet which is recorded in **Revelation 11:15 – And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices/loud voices**, again, what a beautiful thing that just like was pictured in Joshua when we read about their being in Jericho, for six days having the trumpet sounding; and then on the seventh day after marching seven times the trumpet sounded and they *all* shouted.

The Feast of Trumpets – that’s what it means, that’s what it’s about, the fulfillment finally of going into the Promised Land, the fulfillment *finally* of the Kingdom of God coming to this earth to reign and to rule.

It says, **and the seventh angel sounded and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms... the victory sound, The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever.** Just causes a chill to go up and down my spine it’s so awesome and so powerful, it truly is. **The kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms of our God*;** have become. And see, even at this point, when this happens... it hasn’t happened yet; but it’s just like what God told to Joshua, “See, I’ve given you the city.” But here so much has already happened; but now the final phase of it and the final 7 Vials, the final 7 Plagues that are poured out upon the earth in one day...in one day; to bring about the victory, the crumbling of the entire wall of Babylon. Babylon has fallen! That’s what it says in chapter 18 as you read through that.

**Revelation 18:2 – And the angel cried mightily,** that mighty cry, all this crying and the *victory* sound and what is said that takes place at that time. **And the angel cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great has fallen, has fallen.** The *world*, the system of the world – 6,000 years of it; *confusion*, ruled by Satan, twisted and distorted by Satan – *finally ended*, finally brought to an end.

And so there is victory that God finally gives that’s pictured in the Feast of Trumpets and the return of His Son as King of kings.

I want to read one more here because (it’s in 1 Thessalonians) it shows again the shouting and the Trumpets and all this that goes together about Jesus Christ. It’s about His return, knowing when He returns too because He brings His Government with Him, He brings the firstfruits with Him. And what a beautiful picture: Trumpets and Pentecost, so *awesomely tied together*. It is a profound and beautiful picture and words can’t describe it. We’re going to conclude here today with this scripture.

**1 Thessalonians 4:14 – For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so also them who sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For those who say to you unto the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord,** when He returns as King of kings and that Trumpet is blown, **shall not precede them who are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend,** notice this, when Jesus Christ returns, **He’ll descend from heaven with a shout –** just like what happened in Jericho when the *shout* went out, **and with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God:** this is *powerful* of what takes place; to witness that in a spiritual realm, that’s the time the resurrection takes place – that’s when I’m resurrected. I look forward to that day, I truly do, and so many others, at that moment, specific moment even right there.

**...And the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we who 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.** So in other words, there’s still going to be a few who are not dead; and there are going to be a very few who fulfill that and I think I know some of those. I feel pretty confident about a couple that are going to witness some things; that started a witness in the beginning and they’re going to see it through to the end; that God has given. Not two witnesses. They are two in number and there’ll be others as well because there are going to be some others with them, not necessarily with them in the same location on the earth, but there are going to be others that fulfill this. There aren’t too many who fulfill this moment in time; who are alive, still alive at the time that the Trumpet blast takes place that fulfills the Feast of Trumpets, the

blowing of the Trumpets and the shouting that takes place and the dead and the firstfruits that are resurrected immediately.

And then as soon as that's accomplished, right on the heels of that, *right behind* that, all of a sudden certain ones who are alive are going to change. And I don't know how it's going to look, or how it's going to appear, or what's going to happen. Whether they're going to be there one moment and all of a sudden the only ones who can see them are in a spirit realm, spirit world... but all of a sudden they're going to be changed from physical to spiritual and we're all going to be together and returning to the earth with Jesus Christ, with incredible power.

What a beautiful picture: the Feast of Trumpets. The various Trumpets that God gives us of a new world that's going to be here with Jesus Christ as King of kings and the 144,000 to rule and reign with Him a thousand years.

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