

Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham
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"Also in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; that they may be to you for a memorial before your God: I am the LORD your God"

The use of trumpets under the old dispensation was clearly a very important part of the worship of the people. In this chapter, wherein the making of the two trumpets of silver was ordered, there are four uses of those trumpets. First they were to be blown for the gathering of the people to the door of the congregation of the tabernacle; and the people were to be called to worship, the whole congregation; the trumpets were to be blown. And the second use was that there was an alarm to be blown when the camp was to move. When the people had been long enough in one place, and God would have them move to another place, then the trumpets were to be blown. The third use is in the 9 verse. "And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that pursueth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets and ye shall be remembered before the Lord your God and ye shall be saved from your enemies." And the fourth use is in the text: "Also in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets".

The first use of these trumpets is very much to be observed, and may be said to represent, or set forth, the blessed sound of the gospel whereby people are gathered together and especially in a spiritual sense the sound of the gospel in the hearts of the Lord's people for they are gathered together to Shiloh from whom they receive the law. There is such a great thing, such an infinite mercy as this then, the gathering together by the sound of the holy gospel, the glorious gospel of Christ, of the people of God to Him to whom the gathering of the people is to be. Shiloh has come, has died, has

risen, has ascended and is in heaven and to Him, according to ancient prophecy, the gathering of sinners is to be. They are to come to Him for salvation; they are brought to Him by the decree of His eternal Father and when they are brought so then that is fulfilled in each one of them: "And him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out". Look then - let me say to you here - look into this great point of vital religion, whether you hear in your hearts that divine voice that the sheep of Christ are said to know, whereby you individually, as the children of the living God, gather to Christ, come to His footstool, come to worship Him; come for salvation, for righteousness, for mercy, for peace, for love divine. Come that He may help you, deliver you, guide you, comfort you, teach you, hold you up, and at last take you to be where He Himself is. That is the first use of the trumpet. The type is blessedly answered in the antitype when the Holy Spirit sounds the word of God in the heart of a sinner.

The second use is equally observable, much to be remarked, namely the moving of the camp when God would have them continue their journey and this sets forth the moving of the Lord's people, sometimes in providence, and mostly in grace, when they go from strength to strength and every one in Zion appears before God. When they go from one experience to another. From an experience of the waters, the sweet waters and the palm trees, they go to learn warfare, learn the hardships of a pilgrim, and learn that here they have no continuing city. They are not always in the same condition. The people of God have their changes, their seasons, their motions, and the Holy Spirit moves again and again upon them, and causes them to move, saying ye have been long enough here; go and learn another lesson, take another step forward, move in this direction, seek the Lord in this thing, ask Him to do that for you, and this is very important to observe. While we are in the wilderness we are not to remain in one place. If people have no changes it is a painful evidence that they fear not God. If professors are always remaining in one condition and never grow, never move, have no different experience of God in Christ, then it looks bad; it has not a good appearance. And I would say to you who are perhaps in such a state now, may God move you to seriously consider how you are, how matters stand between God and your souls.

The third use is very important. A sound to go out to war; that some enemy is coming, that he is meditating an invasion, that he has started already that attempt of his to invade the land. Then the trumpets were to give a shrill sound, a sound that should thrill through the whole of the camp and declare to them that they should put on their armour and go forth to battle. And what does this say in the gospel? Why, it says to the Lord's people, you wrestle not against flesh and blood. It says to them, you must have opposition. The enemy will seek to invade you, to trample under foot every good thing that is in your heart and mind. Now put on the whole armour of God that you may withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand. The trumpet here must give a certain sound, for if the trumpet give an uncertain sound who shall prepare for the battle. That certain sound is this - "Here have we no continuing city". Here we wrestle not against flesh and blood. Here we must take up our cross and follow Christ. Here we must find a mighty enemy and seek, by divine grace, to resist him. Fight against prayerlessness, unbelief, hardness of heart, ingratitude, wanderings, vain, base, horrible thoughts; vanity, turning your eye to, and fixing it on, some improper object whereby you will be turned into an idolator. The trumpet tells all these things, that is to say, it declares distinctly that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. When you hear this sound it will tell you that there is an armour for you. It will tell you that you are not to patch up an inglorious peace; that your great Captain Jesus Christ will go before you and fight your battles. And sometimes it will tell you, and enable you to do exactly as king Jehoshaphat did - do it in spirit - namely set singers before you and sing as did his army - Praise the Lord for He is good; His goodness endureth for ever. These uses of the trumpet you will find, as God may lead you to regard them, instructive.

And now we come to the fourth - "In the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; that they may be to you for a memorial before your God: I am the Lord your God". It would seem that in all these things there was to be gladness. As the trumpets called the people together, as the trumpets told them when to journey, as the

trumpets called them to war when an invasion was attempted, or they were to go out to overcome some enemy, so the trumpets here would indicate gladness, thankfulness, and praises to the Lord, that there should be a memorial for them before Him. And the times or occasions are here specified. "Also in the day of your gladness". Evidently, in the life of God's people Israel, there was ordained to be a good deal of gladness, and the type being, that it will be a mercy if we, in a good degree, realise it in our souls. The day of gladness. What would be a day of gladness to some of you? Perhaps if you were honest and that Scripture were quoted to you - "There be many that say, who will show us any good" - you would say, it is exactly our case, and your eye would look round and you would say, well, if I could get that that I see others have, it would be good to me. If I could have great prosperity in my business, if I could enjoy uninterrupted health, if I could live in the good opinion of my friends, then I should have good. Any good would evidently satisfy the people who craved it in that verse in the Psalm. Bless God, there are some here who would not be able now honestly to say that. Although they may fear about their standing before God, and their interest in Him, they could unite with the Psalmist - yea we can do it, some of us perhaps at this moment - and say: "Lord lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us" And getting that they would say to Him: Thou hast put more gladness in my heart than in the time when the corn and the wine of the wicked increased. And what is the light of God's countenance? This, if we can answer it, will bring us to the very root of the matter. The Apostle Paul by the Holy Ghost says to the Corinthians - having spoken of the god of this world blinding the eyes of them which believed not - he says to them - "But God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." This then brings us to a day of gladness. There was a feast, a perpetual feast - above other feasts as one would judge, to the Jews - and that was the Feast of the Passover. That great day, that wonderful month in their national life and experience, that month of Abib when, after 430 years of oppression in Egypt, they broke forth. As the seed in the ground sends forth its bud, its green leaf, so the month of Abib was the springing forth into a new life of that oppressed and afflicted people. God, when He entered the house of every Egyptian and slew the firstborn therein, passed over those afflicted people, His own

people, chosen to be before Him a peculiar treasure; passed over all their houses. And the reason is this; a lamb was slain, its blood caught in a basin, and the blood was sprinkled on the door posts, and lintels, and, said the Lord - "When I see the blood I will pass by you". The antitype is thus spoken of by Paul - "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us" Now when this is seen by precious faith there is to be a blowing of the trumpets over it. Blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings, that is to say in gospel language there is to be a rejoicing in Christ, a rejoicing in the precious atonement which He made, in the infinitely valuable blood which He shed, in the pouring out of His soul unto death when He was numbered with the transgressors. And then faith sees the holy God passing over a guilty creature. Then faith sees wrath, death, and hell overcome, and swallowed up. Then faith sees every reason why that great and just God should be merciful to a sinner. Faith then sees there is a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, a righteousness brought in for justification. A sufficient reason for God to be pleased with the poorest and the vilest and the most wicked of all creatures. Faith sees how, in this atonement, a new and living way is made to God, and access given to Him, a right of access given to a sinner. And O, when your little faith, poor, weak believer - and who is a strong believer? today you can hardly find one - then I say, your little faith, having this precious Passover sees that there is a way even from your felt hell, a life out of your felt death, a deliverance from your felt bondage, and light to be in your dwelling while darkness covers the whole earth and gross darkness the people. Did you never sing over the atonement? Did you never sing a song to God over the death of Christ? Did you never bless God that Jesus Christ died? Did your eye never look into the infinite worth of the death of Christ? Some of you must say, indeed we have sung there. We went groaning but we began to sing. We went mourning but we began to rejoice. And though we mourned, and do still mourn, there are moments when we can, and do, and must, rejoice over that one great sacrifice. For by one offering Jesus Christ hath perfected for ever them which are sanctified. Blow the trumpet my friends, sing over the atonement. We are to mourn when we look on Him and see how we have pierced Him, but we are to sing when we see that He loved us and gave Himself for us; when we have that wide open door, wide indeed, yet narrow, but wide when you see your own infinite unworthiness, and God opened it. "I have set before thee

an open door and no man can shut it". This is the way to perfection, this is the way to salvation, this is the way to all revivings. This is the way to all victory, this is the way from death to life, from hell to heaven, from filthy garments to blessed righteousness divine put upon the sinner; from all pollution to a precious cleansing. Therefore blow the trumpet. It is a great thing; brethren there is only one sacrifice for us; one offering was sufficient. One offering will be made sufficient to the faith of every child of God. One offering will be his plea, his ground of hope, his reason for praying, his door of hope for glory. One offering will tell him of victory that is to come; that God will give it, and so he is to blow the trumpet. Every child of God is in this sense made a priest unto God and he is to blow the trumpet in this day of gladness.

There is a day of gladness when Christ is revealed and when the sinner crowns Him in the house of her that conceived him; when a sinner and Christ meet and praise each other. Each praises the other. O what an amazement is this. O there is such a thing as a manifestation of the Lord Jesus in the heart of a sinner; when he can say, now I have seen the Lord. He came to me. I did not think He could, and when I thought He could, I did not think He would. But it was not that I went to Him, He came to me, He blessed me, and I saw Him by the eye of faith, and I saw Him to be perfection. Then you entered into what good John Bunyan says that on one occasion he saw that his righteousness was in heaven. Said he then, "rich men carry their treasures in their trunks; my treasure is in heaven". Well dear friends, when Christ met you, came to you, spoke to you, blessed you, what did you do? Why, you praised Him. There was a blowing of the trumpet, there was joy. "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord" Says Paul to the saints - "Finally my brethren rejoice in the Lord; and again I say rejoice," and there is much to rejoice over when it comes to that. Rejoice when you see transgression removed, righteousness brought in. Rejoice when you feel that precious blood is not only a plea to you, for you before God, but that it does remove guilt from your conscience, and pollution from your heart and mind. When you feel that you are reconciled to God in the body of the flesh of Jesus through death. Yes, there is a rejoicing. You can make your boast in the Lord then. "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord" Blow the trumpet in that day of gladness when Christ and your soul

become friends, when there is no quarrel prevailing in your heart against Him. When the terrible prejudices of your nature, so fallen, are broken as to their dominion. When your heart and soul go out to Him, and you find a boldness within you to say - "Come in, come in Thou blessed One whom I have longed to receive and entertain". In this there is a blowing of the trumpet. There is to be a blowing of the trumpet when a sinner is brought in this gracious way to Shiloh and he receives the law from the lips of his High Priest. Blessed is everyone that sits at His feet and learns of Him; when you get some word on your spirit, some holy gospel, some part of the gospel expressed into your heart; when it is with you that you sit at His feet and receive of His words, and you understand that - "Do not My words do good like a medicine?" The word meets you, talks to you, comforts you, heals you, guides you, strengthens you; is as a girdle to your loins, a light to your feet, a lamp to your path; that it says in you, this is the way to God, this is the way from sin to holiness, from earth to heavenly things. This is the way whereby you are to set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth, and your soul can go with Dr Watts who says - "My soul obeys the almighty call". You run to Shiloh and Shiloh receives you. Have you never rejoiced at His footstool? Have you never sung a song to Him as He received you, and received your petitions; received your humble and honest submission to His divine rule. Have you never sung a song to Him as you perceived Him giving access to you and giving you confidence in measure that your petitions were received and He gave something out to you to tell you and let you know that He was favourable to you. It is a day of gladness. It is a day of gladness when some victory has been obtained. Yes, there is such a thing as victory obtained, but it is always this way, a victory given. "Resist the devil" - who gives power to do that? - "and he shall flee from you". Sweet is that experience. "Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life". Who gives faith? Christ is the Author of it. Who gives it its power? He nourishes it by discoveries of Himself. Who gives it direction to go out to battle? The blowing of the trumpet that gives a certain sound. "Fight the good fight of faith". Have you never blessed God for a deliverance from some predominating lust? Have you never thanked God that He delivered you from some persistent, and distressing, and distracting temptation? Have you never blessed God that He has given your faith a victory over unbelief? so that while

your unbelief has been distracting you, day after day, and bringing you to say, how shall I get through? faith rose in the power of Christ and you said, I shall come through. I will make my boast in the Lord, I will sing of His mercy, I will sing that His mercy endureth for ever. You have looked into the fullness of Christ, you have believed it would be sent forth in streams of supply. You have looked into His power and have felt sure that that power would engage itself for you and bring you a conqueror and more than a conqueror. And when you praised Him, it answered to this, blow the trumpet, blow it over this blessed One who sacrificed Himself for you. Blow the trumpet in the day of your gladness. It is a day of gladness - O who can express it - when a sinner perceives that God is on his side; is his friend. That he can say humbly before the Lord, yet definitely by faith to his enemy - "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me," and you could say then: "I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against Him, until He plead my cause". Here is faith moving, here is a sinner boasting, here is a sinner at peace with God. Blessed peace, the comfort of it can never be expressed. The sweetness of it is never fully spoken of. Blow the trumpet then in the day of your gladness.

"And in your solemn days". Now a solemn day in the old dispensation was a day when the holy convocation was kept. And in that day of convocation, day of assembling, there was the atonement, the burnt offering, when the sin of the land was typically removed, when God showed Himself gracious to that nation in accepting that sacrifice. My friends, do not you, some of you, keep a solemn day? Is there not in your spirit a keeping of this day when you perceive the Lord Jesus, the Passover, sacrificed for you? How can you be sad in that day, yet sadness is in your hearts. "They shall look on Me whom they have pierced" And here a sinner learns that two things are beautifully consistent in his spirit - sorrow over sin, and joy in the Lord Jesus, his sacrifice. If there is anything to rejoice over it is a crucified Saviour. If there is anything in this world to make a sensible sinner glad, and happy, it is to see Christ, His Passover, sacrificed for him; a burnt offering. Blow your trumpet over your burnt offering. It is not a meaningless thing, nor is it in the gospel meaningless when a sinner says, O blessed day to me when I saw

Christ crucified. O blessed day when I looked upon that sacrifice as being accepted by God, infinitely pleasing to God, a sweet-smelling savour to divine justice, and I saw how I, a vile creature, could also be accepted in that sweet savour, as says the Lord in Ezekiel - "I will accept you with your sweet savour". The ill-savour of your sins will make you sick, but the sweet savour of Christ's death will make you whole and happy. The sweet savour of His death will be a life, and a peace, and a joy, and a strength, and a hope, and a prospect in your spirit. Blow the trumpet over the death of Christ, the burnt offering.

And in this day of solemn assembly there was this, that the people afflicted their souls, that is to say, they were brought into the dust of self-abasement, hated themselves, took up the cross of self-denial, and clave, with all their heart and spirit, to the Lord Jesus.

Following the day of Passover in the old dispensation were the days of unleavened bread. There were to be seven days in which no leaven was to be found in their houses and in their coasts. Diligent search had to be made to find any leaven that was there, and all of it was to be put out. And what does this mean in the gospel? It means this, my friends, that the leaven of nature, pride, vanity, unbelief, and every evil that you have found by the discovering light of the truth, put away, and you eat the Passover, Jesus Christ, with bitter herbs and find that there is nothing mixed with it. Nothing mixed. Old nature put down, its prevalence broken, confidence in it destroyed; as says Paul - "Having no confidence in the flesh"; and you cleave singly and alone to Christ, with all the nakedness, and ruin, and destruction of your old nature put down, brought under your feet. And this was to go on for seven days. There was to be a perfect renouncement of self, a denial of self. The hardest thing you will ever have to do in the whole of your pilgrimage, the denial of self.

After this, there was to be the week when the people were to dwell in booths. The Feast of the Tabernacles, the Feast wherein they were to declare in this manner that here they had no continuing city. No easy thing to nature this. Why my friends, we must die. Says Paul,

our earthly house of this tabernacle must be dissolved. Is it not wonderful to sing a song over your mortality, to blow a trumpet and say, bless God I am not to be here always. Bless God that I have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens to go to. Keep the Feast of Tabernacles; indeed you will when you have had the Passover Feast, when you have been brought to have no leaven in your house, but singly and alone to hang on Christ. Then you will say, far from this world of sin and grief let me fly, and though you have grace at times, to say, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come", yet again and again you will find your soul drawn out to Paul's language and spirit - "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." For in this, that is in this tabernacle, we groan, being burdened. In that we shall be absent from the body, present with the Lord. Here we have sorrow. There God will wipe away all tears from our eyes. Here we have an enemy in our heart, There he will not exist. Here there is a devil to tempt and destroy, walking about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. There all will be well; peace like a river; God the fountain; the living fountains of waters sending forth the eternal streams of life and glory to fill us. Blow the trumpet in that solemn day when you declare you have no continuing city but that you seek one to come. Declare also by your song and your separation that you would not live alway.

In these days, says the Word of God by Moses to the Israelites, in these days you are to blow the trumpets, and in the beginnings of your months, the new moons, which were very solemn and great days to the Jews, a part of their national life. And in these days, when the Lord would appear to them and they should come before Him, the trumpets also were to be blown. The blessed trumpet of the gospel says to the Lord's people from time to time, God is your God. He will be your Guide even unto death.

And this blowing of the trumpet says Moses shall be a memorial before your God for ever. It shall bring you, as it were, before Him in your songs, in your joy, and rejoicing in Christ Jesus, in your having no confidence in the flesh, in your viewing your mortality without terror, in looking upon it as that which, when the end of it

shall come, shall ensure your entrance, be your entrance, into eternal bliss.

"For I am the LORD your God" O, what a mercy to have this. "I am the LORD your God". We have then, while so much reason in ourselves for sorrow, and mourning, and shame, in the Lord much more, infinitely more, reason for blowing trumpets, for singing songs, and singing to the praise and glory of that sovereign grace which has been magnified in calling us while so many millions have been passed by. May the Lord cause us to follow this heavenly direction.

AMEN.