

Feast of Trumpets Fulfilled

This is the fourth in a series of articles about the end times - the last seven years until Jesus Christ establishes His Kingdom, here on the earth. Those who have been interested to read so far, will recognise that you have been reading and understanding some scriptures unvisited by most of the Churches of God.

God has said that He will reveal new truth as we approach the time of the end of the age. Daniel 12:9, *'And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.'*

Today we examine the events surrounding the **final return** of Jesus Christ, *with* His Saints.

Each of God's Holy Days, mentioned in Leviticus 23 pictures a stage in God's Plan. Leviticus 23:24-25, *'And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation. Ye shall do no servile work therein: but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.'* This day pictures God's servants blowing the trumpet of alarm to the world, warning of great troubles ahead if men do not repent, as well as Christ's return.

Jesus Christ will return to establish His Kingdom, with His Saints, on the day of Trumpets, as the seventh and last angel sounds, and all men will hear the announcement that their Saviour has returned at last, to claim His Kingdom - Revelation 11:15, *'And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.'*

Why is it so important that men should repent? God's word tells us that sin is the transgression of the Law, and that the wages of sin is death. It tells us that none of us is without sin, and we see the results around us in this deeply troubled world today. We are warned of deeper troubles ahead during the six Seals of Revelation 6, but these will be as nothing compared to what will happen after God's Church flees from Jerusalem, Revelation 12:6-12, *'And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days. And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.'*

Satan then vents his fury upon the world and in particular any of God's people he can find, verse 17, *'And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.'*

This is the start of the Great Tribulation, the last 3 ½ years before Christ's final return which you can read of in Revelation chapters 8, 9 and 16. The Great Tribulation is the seventh seal.

The only two of God's people left in Jerusalem are the Two Witnesses, and they have Divine protection. The Beast tries in vain to kill them, for they warn the world to repent and not to worship him, but his attempts only result in spectacular deliverance, which draws world-wide publicity : Revelation 11:3-5, *'And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.'*

Their pronouncements of the judgments of God upon the earth for its sins, remind us of the plagues which Moses poured out upon Egypt, verse 6. *'These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.'* They may well be the ones to announce the trumpet plagues of the seven angels listed in Revelation 8 - 16, which comprise the seventh seal, so, though the world will listen to them and watch them via the media, it will hardly be with affection!

At this point, at the start of the last 3 ½ years, the Beast is the subject of an assassination attempt that fails: Revelation 13:3-5, *'And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.'*

Inspired and led by Satan, the Beast then extends his power worldwide, including a total rout of the Islamic combine led by the King of the South in the Middle East, giving him control of much of the oil there: Daniel 11:40-43, *'And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps.'*

However, the success of the two witnesses worldwide, in encouraging some to repent and refuse to join in the world's adoration, doubles his determination to stamp out such rebellion, Revelation 13:7, *'And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.'*

Many of these Christians, some from the Laodicean Church, and some converted only during the Great Tribulation, pay with their lives for their faith and witness, but they will receive a great reward in the future – Revelation 7: 4,9, 13-15,17, *'And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. 9, 'After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white*

robes, and palms in their hands; 13, And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? 14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, **These are they which came out of great tribulation**, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.17, the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.'

Returning to Jerusalem, some people are confused about who inhabits the land during the Great Tribulation. Scripture shows that two thirds of the Jews will be cut off and die, while the remaining one third will be brought through the Great Tribulation and refined, until the repentant remnant eventually look in faith to the 'pierced one'. Zechariah 13:8-9, '*And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.*' Zechariah 12:10, '*And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they **shall look upon me whom they have pierced**, [on Christ's return] and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.*'

In Jerusalem itself, the Jews who lived in the Arab half are sold into slavery, Joel 3:6, '*The children also of Judah and the children of Jerusalem have ye sold unto the Grecians, that ye might remove them far from their border.*' Half of its population will still remain, Zechariah 14:2, '*For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.*' The repentant remnant have greatly benefited from the presence, teaching and encouragement of the two witnesses, who continue to miraculously resist the power of the Beast.

Not one of us wants to experience the 3½ years of the Great Tribulation! It becomes so bad, with life so intolerable, that people long to die, Revelation 9:6, '*And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.*' So horrific are world conditions, that we are told that less than one tenth of Israel (mainly America, Britain, Canada and Australia) will survive: Isaiah 6:13 '*If even a tenth--a remnant--survive, it will be invaded again and burned. But as a terebinth or oak tree leaves a stump when it is cut down, so Israel's stump will be a holy seed.*' New Living Translation

In the East, the nations are so desperate for fuel and food that they rise up against the European Beast power who has plundered the world, and gather together a great army which begins to move towards Jerusalem, which the Beast has made his capital – Daniel 11:44-45, '*But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.*'

The result is carnage, in which one third of all people die, Revelation 9:16,18, '*And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. By*

these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.'

However, towards the end of the last 3 ½ years, the Beast has troubles of his own with the great false church – the religious “Babylon”, arrayed in purple and scarlet, which we read of in Revelation chapter 17. The nations of Europe have come to hate its dominion and God inspires them to destroy it once and for all, because it has so misled their peoples. Revelation 17:16, *'And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.'*

Just before the 3½ years end, the Beast is finally successful in his attempts to silence the two witnesses at Jerusalem. Revelation 11:7-13, *'And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. And after three days and an half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.'*

A great media event displays their bodies to the world, while many rejoice at the death of those who have plagued them, but after 3 days the world sees them rise again and ascend to heaven! But the celebrations are cut short by two world - shaking events. First the great army from the East, and the Beast's army from Europe, converge before the hill, Har Megiddo on the plain of Jezreel, some 100 miles north of Jerusalem. Just as they are about to fight, the seventh angel sounds his trumpet, and all hear the proclamation from heaven : Revelation 11:15, *'And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.'* [Remember that God Himself, **not an angel** sounded the trumpet just before the resurrection of the Saints!]

That is because at that point another great army is descending from the heavens upon the Mount of Olives, Zechariah 14:4, *'And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and towards the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.'*

Accompanying Christ are the Saints and an army of angels, all clothed in white and riding upon white horses: Revelation 19:11-14, *'And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called*

The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.'

This 'alien invasion' unites the other two armies as nothing else could, and they are drawn south towards the valley of Jehoshaphat or Kidron, between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives to its East. Joel 3:12, *'Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about.'*

Before the clash can take place, a tremendous worldwide earthquake rocks the planet. No such earthquake has ever happened before. It is so awesome and severe that not only is *the land of Israel* totally re-structured, but great mountain chains like the Himalayas and Rockies are levelled; continents are re-drawn and divided to remove vast deserts, squalid coastal cities sink beneath the waves, while islands are moved and new land emerges from beneath the oceans: Revelation 16:18-20, *'And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.'*

This re-structuring is necessary because in the 11th 100 year period to come, after Jesus Christ's reign starts, all who have ever lived will be resurrected and live again to have their chance to learn God's way. The land area will increase and the climate will change, even as we see starting now, for the polar ice-caps cannot be instantly melted. Almost all of the land area and its climate will need to be suitable for habitation and agriculture, to accommodate and provide for the vastly increased population.

As the surviving physical armies converging upon Jerusalem pick themselves up from the dust and look around, they are quite unaware of the fact that the world has totally changed. Their commanders gather the survivors, to continue South, but soon their ranks are cut again by a terrifying hailstorm which decimates their number. Revelation 16:21, *'And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.'* A talent weighs approximately 130 lbs!

As the remnant arrive in the vicinity of Jehoshaphat, Christ afflicts them with three different weapons.

1. A terrible plague that melts their flesh away even as they stand : Zechariah 14:12, *'And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.'*
2. In total confusion they begin to fight each other: verse 13, *'And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the LORD shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour'.*
3. The remaining Jews join the battle with superhuman courage: Zechariah 12:8, *'In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them.'*

The valley of the Kidron quickly begins to flow with blood: Revelation 14:20, *'And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.'*

The two physical armies never stand a chance against Christ's spirit followers. The battle of Armageddon is quickly over, and we are given further information from Isaiah 63:1-6. The watchman on the walls of Jerusalem then speaks first, verse 1, first half.

'Who is this who comes from Edom,

With dyed garments from Bozrah,

This One who is glorious in His apparel,

Traveling in the greatness of His strength?—

Christ replies in the second half of the verse,

" I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save."

The watchman questions, verse 2,

Why is Your apparel red,

And Your garments like one who treads in the winepress?

Christ replies, verses 3-4.

" I have trodden the winepress alone,

And from the peoples no one was with Me.

For I have trodden them in My anger,

And trampled them in My fury;

Their blood is sprinkled upon My garments,

And I have stained all My robes.

4 For the day of vengeance is in My heart,

And the year of My redeemed has come.'

The year of His redeemed has come. God's people are safely returned to Jerusalem, after their time in Petra, reunited once again with those who fled with them from the armies of the Beast, 3 ½ years before, but who were taken by Christ to the Sea of Glass, in the resurrection of the Firstfruits.

Jesus Christ is here pictured returning in His bloodstained robes from Bozrah, which was in Edom SSE of the Dead Sea – the very area to which those Christians who fled Jerusalem 3 ½ years before and were not taken to the Sea of Glass at the resurrection, escaped. There, they have been nourished and protected for 3 ½ years, as we saw in part three of this series.

Isaiah 16:4 -5, *'Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler: for the extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, the oppressors are consumed out of the land. [Israel] And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hastening righteousness.'*

'Bozrah' means sheepfold or enclosure, and it seems from Micah 2:12-13, that Christ likens His coming rescue of the worldwide remnant of Israel, to His present rescue of His protected sheep from Bozrah. Their departure needed to be enabled, their 'fold's gate needed His opening, because of the presence of Edomites, [probably Palestinians] who were attempting to hold them hostage, so that they could safely return to Jerusalem, led by their Saviour. Micah 2:12-13, *'I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together **as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of their fold: they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men. The breaker [Jesus Christ] is come up before them: they have broken up, and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it: and their king shall pass before them, and the LORD on the head of them.'***

Also in Edom, still captive and needing rescue, are the Jews sold into slavery by the Palestinians: Amos 1:6, *'Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they carried away captive the whole captivity, to deliver them up to Edom.'*

God's judgment against the Edomites is severe, Joel 3:19, *'Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land.'* They expressed no mercy to the captive Jews as well as preventing the return of those protected by God (and the Moabites), in the mountains of Edom, to Jerusalem.

What a magnificent foretaste of the worldwide re-gathering and rescue of the remnant of scattered Israel which will be (notice – future, the remnant of Israel is not gathered until after Christ establishes His Kingdom at Jerusalem) carried out by Christ's active arm, His bride, as God's people are brought with singing and rejoicing, to their promised land, now that Armageddon is over, and His Kingdom established!

Christ's next action is to punish the two men who so deceived the world into worshipping one of them, the Beast, and following Satan's destructive desires: Revelation 19:20, *'And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the Beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.'* Satan's fate is separately depicted by the Day of Atonement. The trumpets of the seventh seal fall silent. The judgment and wrath of God is over, and at last the peace of God's Kingdom, where Christ will reign for a thousand years, pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles, can begin

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