

The Trumpet and the Whirlwinds

A SERMON – Preached on Sunday morning July 9th, 1865, by

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"The Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south,"- Zechariah ix. 14.

The trumpet here; of course, must be understood to mean God's word, and the Lord God blowing the trumpet teaches us that he alone can make the word what no creature can-effectual. See the hundreds of years that the latter part of the 2nd of Joel stood upon record, but it was not until the day of Pentecost that those words were carried into effect, I mean not in that extensive way in which they were at that time, so that when the apostle Peter on that day preached he preached by the mighty power of the eternal Spirit of God. And here is an essential and a mighty difference between a letter religion and a real living religion. Most professors are content with the letter, and great sticklers, too, for the letter,-sort of matter-of-fact people, full of formality and contention for the mere letter. But then this is only a letter religion, and only natural, for unless the Lord hath rendered the word a living word to the soul, then we are not in that secret into which the Thessalonians were brought, for the apostle says," Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us,"-followers of the true ministers of God. If any of them previously to that had followed false ministers, they would now cease to follow them, because those false ministers would be to the convinced soul forgers of lies. "Ye became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word with much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost." I think this is the meaning, then, here, that the power of the Lord shall attend his word, for he will magnify his word above all his name, and that whatever may come to naught, his word never shall.

We have, first, the trumpet of God's holy word, "The Lord God shall blow the trumpet." Secondly, the Lord's government, "And shall go with whirlwinds of the south."

First then, the trumpet of God's holy word. And I shall take a twofold view of this. I shall notice first the trumpet of the law, and secondly the trumpet of the gospel. And I do this because the first suggests very important matters. When the Israelites were gathered unto Sinai there was the trumpet that sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, and when it did so the people were to come up to the mount as near as they dare to come. Can you not see some Christian experience in this, when the trumpet sounded long? For instance, suppose the Lord saith to a sinner dead in sin, and saith it with quickening power, "Prepare to meet thy God;" there is the trumpet of the law, and the dreadful sound is in the sinner's ear, "How shall I prepare to meet my Judge, the Judge of all, that cannot in any way be misled or deceived?" And the sinner sets to prepare himself by his prayers and tears and duties and doings; but, to his astonishment, the trumpet waxes louder and louder: "Prepare to meet thy God." And the sinner is ready to say, "Am I not prepared yet?" No; you have done nothing towards it. "Prepare to meet thy God." Or whatever scripture it may be. "How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" "Cursed is he that continueth

not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." And then, again, here is the barren tree; cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground? Whatever scripture it may be that may enter into the sinner's heart that is nothing else but the Lord God, as it were, blowing the trumpet of the law, and sounding conviction into that sinner's mind. And this was to bring them to the mount, where they had never been before, and so such a one now will come into such a knowledge of God in his law as he never had before. When they came up to the mount, what were the things they saw, I mean as it pertained to their welfare," Then the trumpet thus summonsed them? And I can hardly forbear throwing in a parenthetical remark or two here. It is a wonderful mercy to be summonsed to the bar of God while we are in this world; because if thus summonsed there is in close connection with this summons to the mercy-seat, and we may say, while feeling the force of this summons, "God be merciful to me a sinner." But at the last great day, when the dead, the wicked dead, shall be summonsed to God's bar, there will be no mercy-seat for them then. So you read that "in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him." When the door of the ark was closed it was in vain for any or all of the wicked world put together to cry to God for mercy; the ark was shut; no more mercy; down they must sink, to arise no more. But if we are, while in the world, summonsed in our conscience to the bar of God, then in close connection with that there is the mercy-seat, as you find at Sinai. The mercy-seat and sacrificial service was given out of Sinai; it came out of Sinai; see the close connection. So Jesus Christ, he was at Sinai mystically; he was under the law, and when he came out he brought a righteousness with him by which he had authority to justify the condemned; when he came out from under the law he brought a salvation with him able to save to the very uttermost all that came unto God by him. So, then, the blessedness of faith, judgment, and mercy being made to sink down into our hearts while we are in this life; while we are "here there is a mercy-seat, where a Saviour is proclaimed, and where it is written that God delighteth in mercy. Now one thing they would see when brought to the mount would be an impassable barrier. They could not get through the lightning's, the blackness, the tempest, the darkness; there was an impassable barrier; there was no access to God. They were thus summonsed to see how they were shut out from God, and could gain no access to him by anything they could do. And, secondly, they would see that there was no similitude at Sinai. And so there was nothing there to which we can be conformed. If we want a pattern to which we are to be conformed, we must come to Zion, where Christ Jesus is; he is the pattern to which we are to be conformed. Also, they saw that the fire burned in the midst of heaven. Christ is heaven's center; and the fire burning in the midst of heaven is, to my mind a type of Jesus Christ. The fire burned to the top of the mount, in the midst of heaven. Christ is heaven's center, and the wrath of God reached Christ when he was at Calvary; and there was then and there an end to that wrath. And in this mount Moses stood; just see the difference. In this mount Moses stood, when the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder. Moses stood as the representative of the people, and God answered him by a voice. Now, what did Moses say? Why, he said something very different from that which the Saviour said. And this is no doubt recorded for our instruction, that we may thus, by contrast between the servant and the Son of God—Jesus Christ, see and learn that that is for our good. Now, then Moses spoke, and what did Moses say? "So terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake." Is that all, Moses? That is all. I can bring in no righteousness, I can bring in no sacrifice; "I exceedingly fear and quake." And yet the Pharisees in the Saviour's day said, "We be Moses' disciples;" just as though Moses had caused the mountains of sin to flow down; just as though Moses had hushed into eternal tranquility the wrathful elements that there displayed the terrible majesty of the great God, and his wrath against all ungodliness. We come to Calvary's cross, and we find the Saviour speaking very differently indeed. Moses spoke, and the Lord answered him by a voice, and sent him down from the mount; and Moses left things as he found them. But Jesus Christ spoke on Calvary's cross, and God answered him by a voice. What did Jesus say? He said, "It is finished." And what voice did God answer by? A resurrection voice; God the Father raised him from the dead that is the answer, or at least a part of the answer, that God gave. So Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake;" Jesus Christ said, "It is finished." God answered Moses by a voice, sent him

down from the mount; and Moses left the law unfulfilled, left sin unremoved, and sin unatoned for, and the curse untouched. But the Saviour said, "It is finished;" God answered him by a voice, first, by raising him from the dead; second, by receiving him into glory; third, by sending down the Holy Spirit, as he has done from that day to this; and fourth, by committing all things into the Saviors hand. Thus, then, this trumpet of the law waxes louder and louder. And I make in this part no hesitation in saying that the oldest Christian upon the face of the earth is ten thousand times farther from justification by the works of the law than he was when he first began to make his profession of religion. Ever since you were regenerated, from that day to this, your wicked heart has gone on sinning every day in spite of all that you have ever done. Evil thoughts will arise, and evil feeling will intrude; and the Christian is sensible of this, and therefore he says, If I am left to the law, the trumpet, notwithstanding the law take me up after the flesh, apart from my faith in Christ, and apart from Christ ever since I have known the Lord, that trumpet would sound on, how long? To all eternity; and would wax louder and louder; for the devils and lost men will never cease to sin, therefore can never so suffer as to mitigate or reach the end of their sufferings. Thus, then when the Lord God blows the trumpet of the law, and brings this solemn conviction into the mind, and shows what an awful state we are in, then it becomes a weighty matter; then such an one becomes that which every Christian must become, or every one that shall be savingly taught must become, -a poor, needy, trembling sinner. I will leave you to judge whether you see that the law is an impassable barrier; whether you see that there is no image there to which you can be conformed; whether you see that there is nothing but wrath there, and whether you see that Christ, and Christ only, is the end of that law. I trust nearly all of you see this. Some of you have been made to feel it more than others; don't be discouraged if you have not felt it as much as some; if the Lord has enlightened you, and given you to see that this is the truth that I am stating, then you will know more go to the law now than those will that have deeply felt its terrors; for the Lord, in teaching his people, teaches them all the same in kind, but not all the same in degree; he doeth as he pleases in this matter.

I now notice the trumpet of the gospel; and in so doing, the first I shall notice is that of revolution. When the seventh trumpet sounded, the kingdoms of this world, we read in the Book of Revelation, became the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ. When the gospel comes in there is a complete revolution. There is a dethronement of the powers that have hitherto reigned, and an enthronement of new powers. Now what are the powers that have reigned, and that are now dethroned? Revolution means the upsetting and overturning of the existing government, and substituting another government in its place. The apostle gives us to understand what these powers are. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world;" and let the last clause explain the whole, "against spiritual wickedness in high places." Now, then, what is this spiritual wickedness in high places? Why, it is this; here is a system that puts down God's sovereignty; that is spiritual wickedness in high places. The man untaught of God sets himself above God's sovereignty; he says, away with election; away with the dreadful doctrine of election; away with that uncharitable, unjust doctrine of election. Now that is a power that reigns over that man. But when he is called to Sinai, and the gospel comes in, down goes the man. Ah, I used to set myself above that truth; but I am now brought to see the solemnity on the one hand, and the blessedness on the other, where it is written that "whosoever was not written in the Lamb's book of life was cast into the lake of fire;" and that all people shall be deceived except God's elect. Saith such a one, If I am interested in Christ, I am indebted to election; and God chose because he loved. And thus he is brought to bow down; and now that pride and enmity against God's sworn covenant are dethroned, and humility reigns over the man, and not enmity, but love, now he is brought to love the Lord, and his prayer is, "Visit me with thy salvation, that I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice with the gladness of thy nation, and glory with thine inheritance." Then, again, this spiritual wickedness in high places is that that sets itself above the perfection of Jesus Christ. Be not angry with me if I tell you we cannot dwell too much upon the perfection

of Jesus Christ. If thou art wounded by the blessed God, nothing wilt thou ever recognize as the real and perfect remedy but the absolute perfection of the work of Christ; remembering that his atonement hath in it all the virtue and power of his complex person-Immanuel, God with us. Now, then, where the gospel trumpet comes there is a revolution; it will bring you down to the feet of Jesus, and you will say with David, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God; I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only." Here, I say, there is a revolution. Satan reigned over us in his enmity against God, in keeping us ignorant of God's truth; but now the ignorance is gone, free will is gone, duty-faith gone, the enmity is gone; and we can say, "Other lords have had dominion over us, but by thee alone will we make mention of thy name." In the next place, it will signify attraction or ingathering. Now you must distinguish between these two parts of experience. It is one thing to be brought down into submission to the truth, and another thing to be gathered into the enjoyment of the truth. Hear the word of God upon this matter. "In that day the great trumpet"-and when we look at the great salvation it sounds out the great and eternal mercy it sends forth, it may well be called a great trumpet-"shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish;" and who is the man that is ready to perish? He who is brought down to the Saviour's feet, who feels there can be no hope but by the boundless grace of God in Christ Jesus. "They shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria," that is, the world, "and the outcasts in the land of Egypt." The Lord has given us in the 11th of Revelation a very instructive interpretation of those Old Testament scriptures that speak of Egypt under that form; not the land of Egypt literally, but figuratively: it says in that chapter, "Which spiritually is called Egypt, where our Lord was crucified." Now, then, you used to crucify Christ; you used to join with those that spoke against religion; or if you could not do that, you did not side with those that spoke for God; but now that the gospel has got hold of you, and you side with God's truth, they cast you out; you are a condemnation to them, a burden to them yes, you know what the proverb saith, which ought to be instructive to some of the people of God not to be too free in the company of every professor or person in telling some of your experiences; "The righteous falling down before the wicked is as a troubled fountain and a corrupt spring;" they cannot understand you. You tell them of your downward experiences; the fountains of the great deep in their hearts have never been broken up; why, they would think you one of the greatest monsters possible. So be a little bit careful in that. The disciples were charged to keep some secrets sometimes; and therefore choose your company in this matter. Now, then, "the outcasts in the land of Egypt." The world will cast you out of their esteem and respect, especially when they begin to have an idea that is perhaps the greatest stigma that can fasten upon you in the eyes of the world. Persons say, "Do you know so-and- so" "Yes" "Very nice man." "Yes, I think he is; very sober, steady, industrious; very nice man." "But," says the other, "do you know one thing, though?" "What?" "Why, that he is one of those election people." "You don't say so! Is he really? Well, then, I do heartily hate him." Henceforth, from that very day, you may live and think and speak as an angel, and you will never be able to please them. John the Baptist was one of these; and he was both a teetotaler and a vegetarian, too; and they said he had a devil; that is because he was one of those election people, and said no man could receive anything except it was given him from above. Jesus Christ preached election, and though, as we rejoice to say and sing,-

"His life was pure, without a spot,
And all his nature clean,"

Yet what did they call him? Oh, what an offence it is to the world to exclude all its pretensions, and receive the great God in his rightful sovereignty! "They shall come, which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount of Jerusalem." What is the holy mount? First the work of Christ; his work lifts you up above sin, and death, and the curse, and the power of Satan. They shall come and sing in the height of Zion. Jerusalem there means the New Jerusalem. Secondly, it means heaven itself. You shall first worship God on earth by the

mountain of the Saviour's perfection, and you shall worship him in heaven, on Zion's beautiful hill of eternal glorification. Here is the in-gathering, - "He shall send his angels with the great sound of a trumpet to gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." I need not here dwell upon the infinite welcome we have in this ingathering. I hardly need remind you that the scripture I have just quoted, not the last, but the other-" They shall come which were ready to perish "-is in the last verse of the 27th of Isaiah, which chapter begins with the slaying of the enemy; it then goes on describing Christian experience, and how the Lord casts out the enemy; so that that chapter is a kind of sample of what this trumpet shall sound out. Then the next that I notice is victory. The gospel will give us the victory. There are the walls of Jericho, and all the Canaanites; and if I could always be as sure that the Lord was on my side as the right-minded Israelites were on that occasion, and always hear the voice of God as clearly in his truth as they heard his voice in the sound of the ram's-horn trumpets, I should smile at all my troubles. But, alas! alas the enemy comes in and says, "There is such a thing as presumption; God is giving you up; you never had the Holy Spirit in his grace, only in his gifts; God has taken care of you, and kept you alive, made use of you as a kind of scaffold-pole, and bye-and-bye you will be thrown into the fire of hell; that will be your end." Well, then I feel afraid to hope; I feel as though my hope and strength were perished from the Lord. But then if the Lord is pleased to bring home the word with power, and to make me comfortably hope, and feel that I am one of his, and I can hear his voice, then I can say, I will measure all my troubles by what he is. When my troubles are set by the side of the Lord, they are mere grasshoppers, and just one blast of his breath shall send them all away, and put everything right. But-

When gloomy doubts prevail,
I fear to call thee mine."

Nor can the scolding's of ministers drive my doubts and fears away. When Ether said to Mordecai, "Put off your sackcloth," Mordecai said, "What is the good of that? You tell me to take off my sackcloth, but I want salvation;" but when the king sent, then he saw salvation. "Now," he said, "I will part with my sackcloth, because I can see the hand of God." "Thou," said David, "hast put off my sackcloth, girded me with gladness, to the end that my glory should sing praises unto thee." Now the Israelites got this victory, then the Lord God, as it were, blew the trumpets: there was a power that felled the walls to the ground; and blessed is the people that know the joyful sound. And however much I may be tried, I know what the truth is; and I know the Lord is the same now that he ever was; his love, his counsel, his promises, do not alter; the Holy Spirit does not come and say, "I shall take out that positive promise from the Bible, and put a conditional one in its place;" the Lord has written the book, and it is perfect, and he will never alter it. So, then, this glorious trumpet of the gospel gives us the victory, just as in olden time, when the silver trumpet sounded, why, it was the voice of God to denote the certainty of victory. Then, also, there is freedom, the jubilee; that I must not touch upon, though a very beautiful subject. But before I pass on to the next I must say a word more upon this victory by the sound of the gospel. And here I will say a word for ministers; there are plenty that speak against them, and I will give them their due, they are very often ready to speak against each other; not deficient in this; nevertheless I will say a word for them. Do not ministers, by the sound of the gospel, bring many victories to the people of God? Have you never gone to hear the word when some great trouble has had such dominion over you that you have been ready when you woke in the morning to curse the day that you were born; stagger off to the house of God so confused that you hardly knew where you were going to, or what you were going for? A word shall come just suited for you, and shall minister such comfort for you that were as you entered God's house in chains, you go out in royal robes; were as you entered full of wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores, oil and wine have been poured in, and you say it was good for you to be there. Ah, when I can hear God's blessed word, then I can say, behold, it is the voice of my beloved; behold, I am coming to him upon the

mountains, skipping upon the hills." Why, say you, it does not read like that. I know it does not, but that is the way it should read according to modern gospels, that we ought to leap over the mountains and skip over the hills; the old-fashioned way was that he did that. "Behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills," these mountains shall flow down at the presence of the blest Redeemer, and he will give us the victory.

I now come to the whirlwinds of the south. There are four things I notice here. The 1st verse of the 21st of Isaiah will be a key to begin as to the meaning of these whirlwinds. You read there, "As whirlwinds in the south pass through, so it cometh from the desert, from a terrible land." What is the first thing meant by these whirlwinds? Your iniquities. In the 64th chapter of Isaiah you are compared to leaves autumn leaves, fallen leaves, fallen from the original tree; "we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away" Whence come these whirlwinds of iniquities? From a terrible land; the land of hell; the land of apostate angels, from this terrible desert. The rich man in hell found it to be a terrible desert, not a drop of water to be found. And our iniquities, like the whirlwinds from that terrible land, have carried us away from God. But it says the Lord shall go with them. Did not Jesus Christ take our iniquities; did he not go with them to Calvary's cross; did he not there bear our sins in his own body on the tree? Did he not there pour out his soul unto death?

Now go to the 30th chapter of Proverbs. Agar saw himself a poor brutish creature; "I am more brutish than any man." And after expressing this humbling view of himself, which every Christian has, he looks around, and asks these questions upon this very subject we have now been handling: -"Who hath ascended up into heaven?" Jesus Christ hath; he ascended up into the heights of the law and the demands of justice; climbed to heaven by his own work. "Or descended?" Jesus Christ did, and overturned the mountains by the roots. "Who hath gathered the wind in his fists?" Jesus Christ hath. Our iniquities, like the winds, have carried us away; he has gathered those winds in his almighty fists, and grasped them, and they could not get away; held them in the omnipotency of his grasp. Ah, when the devil saw our sins in the Saviour's hands, said the devil, If I could but get one of those sins out of his hands, and lay it to the charge of one of his people, I would get that soul to hell in spite of all. But no; he could not get one of those iniquities out of the Saviour's grasp. "Who hath bound the waters in a garment?" Jesus Christ hath limited the waters by his righteousness to the wrath of God itself, "Hitherto shalt thou come to but no farther." I will never let these waters run away from me to any of my people; no, I will dry up this flood. "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts;" waterspouts are formed by whirlwinds; all the waves and billows of God's wrath went over Christ; he grasped the whole and endured the whole. When my soul is brought sometimes into the embrace of these things, were it not for two interests I have in this world- my family and the people-nothing would delight me so much as to breath my last, and enter into that scene where infirmities, frailties, troubles, sorrows and grief's, and losses, and pains, agonies, and bondage, are no more but, nevertheless, he who will make us happy in heaven can sustain us on earth till we got there. "Who hath established all the ends of the earth; what is his name?" Jesus Christ. "And what is his son's name?" That is the prophet could find none among men that could do it; but the Son of God did all of this. Again the whirlwind means all the judgments of God, sweeping everything before them, and he goes with them. He was with Sennacherib; or rather, I should say, with the after kings of Assyria; and he was with Nebuchadnezzar, and made use of his army as a whirlwind to sweep the Jews away. He was with the Romans; they were as a whirlwind with which God swept the people away. The judgments of God; he goes with them, to see that they execute their mission. Third, it means the tribulations of the people of God. Circumstances come whirling along. 'Well, Job, how do you feel after what has befallen you? Well, it is very distressing; one trouble after another, one after another. Presently comes a trouble that Job never got over, not in his natural feelings. When Job's captivity was turned, and he had a new family, I do not believe he ever got over his trouble; I believe it was a wound in

his spirit that he never lost; I believe that the abundance of wealth he afterwards had never made him forget that trouble. And what was that trouble he never got over? Job did what every Christian parent does-felt deeply for his children, and sighed and groaned before God in their behalf, and offered sacrifices expressive of his faith in Christ for them. Suddenly there came the tidings that a great wind from the wilderness had come, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and killed them. Mysterious-we sing the words, and they contain a vast amount of spirituality,-

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His words is to perform."

I do not believe that Job ever felt, naturally, perfectly happy after that. We know he had a father's feelings. Tribulation, then. But we must remember that the Lord hath his way in the whirlwind- we should like to have ours, but we cannot-and in the storm. The disciples tried to have their way in the storm, but they could not; at last they cried, "Master, save us; we perish." He arose, and very soon had his way in the storm. Fourth and lastly, the whirlwinds also mean the counteracting of the movements of the enemy. Do your tribulations threaten your very ruin? God shall so work as to bring whirlwinds against those things, and work your deliverance, to your unbounded astonishment. "Fear not, thou worm Jacob "-if you are taught of God you would not be offended at that scripture; you will feel what a poor worthless creature you are, - "and ye men of Israel; will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument, having teeth," that is, the gospel, the new covenant; "thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shall make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them; and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel."

Thus, by the trumpet of the law, a way is made for the great trumpet of the gospel, bringing us near to God; and so by the gospel sounding out good tidings. So may each Christian say, "I heard a voice, which was as it were a trumpet talking with me, saying unto me, Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter," and the Lord will stay the rough wind in the day of the east wind, and thus doth the true Christian travel a path that others know not, even the narrow way that leads to everlasting life.

May the Lord, then, lead us thus to trust in his blessed name; so shall we be constrained to bear testimony that he is good, and that his mercy