

When The Trumpet Sounds

God told the prophet Ezekiel that if the Israelites appointed a watchman, it was his responsibility to sound a trumpet if he saw an enemy army approaching:

Ezekiel 33:2-5: "Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman: If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people; Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul."

It was very important for the watchman to sound the alarm if an enemy came against the land. If he failed to sound the alarm, and people died as a result, then it was his fault and God would hold him personally responsible. However, if he *did* sound the alarm and people ignored it, then it was their own fault.

It's possible that people would ignore the watchman's alarm. They might hear it and think it was nothing (which could cost them their life). It's also possible they would take it seriously and flee to a place of safety (or prepare to fight). Either way, it was the watchman's job to sound the alarm, regardless of whether people paid attention to it or not. God Himself was going to hold him responsible for doing his job.

How did the watchman sound the alarm? By blowing a trumpet. The Israelites were supposed to *listen for the sound of*

the trumpet. If they heard the city watchman blow the trumpet then that meant an invasion was at hand and the people needed to prepare accordingly.

Now, it's true the Mosaic Law stated that the sound of a trumpet could mean other things as well. This isn't intended to be an in-depth study of all the different things the sounding of a trumpet could mean. Instead I want to look at the specific situation that's found in Ezekiel, because I believe it's relevant in a way that many people may not realize.

There's another famous passage that involves the sounding of a trumpet, and I believe it's directly related to Ezekiel 33. That passage is this one:

1 Corinthians 15:52: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

In this verse the apostle Paul is talking about the rapture. One day the Lord Jesus Christ will return to this world. On that great and glorious day when He appears, a trumpet will sound. The righteous will be raised from the dead (or transformed into immortals if they're still alive) and will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

This same teaching can also be found in Paul's first letter to the Thessalonian church:

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which 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."

What many people don't realize is what is going to happen immediately *before* and *after* the rapture. That information can be found in the book of Revelation:

Revelation 12:3-5: "And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne."

This passage is also talking about the rapture. The child isn't Jesus (Revelation is a book of prophecy, not history); instead it's a reference to the church. What's the birth referring to? The day the dead will be raised and the saints will be "changed". That's the day we will become who God intends for us to be:

1 Corinthians 15:42-44: "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

The devil is aware that the rapture is going to happen. Shortly *before* the rapture occurs, the devil is going to invade this world in a highly visible way, bringing with him his entire army of fallen angels (demons). His plan is to attack the church the

moment *after* the resurrection. However, he is going to fail. The Lord Jesus Christ is going to remove us from this world the moment after the resurrection and bring us to the throne room of God. This means that although the devil will try to attack us after the resurrection, his attack will fail.

Since the resurrected church will be in Heaven, the devil will then attempt to invade Heaven itself:

Revelation 12:7-9: "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."

The War in Heaven is a *future* event, not a past one. (Revelation is a book of prophecy, not a book of history.)

As you can see from the passage, the devil's attempt to invade Heaven (in order to harm the church) will fail. He and all of his demons will be cast out and lose their access to Heaven forever. Although the devil currently has access to Heaven (which he uses to accuse people, just as he once accused Job), he will lose that ability after he loses this war:

Revelation 12:10: "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."

In other words, shortly before the rapture takes place the devil is going to invade this world. What will happen next? *The*

trumpet will sound. The Lord will then *personally* save us from that attack, and take us to a safe place while His angels fight against the devil and cast him out of Heaven once and for all.

That means the sounding of the trumpet is telling us that war is at hand and it's time for us to go. The trumpet is telling us that the church needs to leave this world because the devil is about to attack it with everything he has.