

The Shouting Pulpit and the Shaking Pews

by Ian Paisley

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the trumpet in the Old Testament and the role of the preacher as a trumpeter, calling for a revival of true religion and a return to the cross of Calvary.

Duration: 33:40

Scripture: Numbers 10:1-7, Judges 7:6-7, Psalm 115:2-8, Isaiah 52:9, Hosea 8:1-2, Romans 14:11, Ephesians 6:12

Topics: "Preaching"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher reflects on the decline of a once thriving church in Birmingham, UK. The church, which had a rich history of faithful preachers, now has only four members, one of whom is 90 years old. Despite the sadness of the empty pews, the remaining members are determined not to give up and pray for a revival of true religion. The preacher emphasizes the importance of gospel preachers being honest, true, bold, faithful, outspoken, and plain spoken. He urges believers to wake up, get into God's vineyard, and start laboring instead of loafing. The sermon also highlights the certainty of judgment and the need for repentance. The preacher calls for fervent prayer for a great revival and quotes from the Bible to emphasize the power and mercy of God.

Transcript

In front of you in the pew, and turn to the book of Numbers. To the book of Numbers. Page one-five-eighth in that Bible, the front of that Bible.

Page one-five-eighth. And we're looking at the chapter ten. It's one-sixty, rather.

And the chapter is the chapter ten. Tenth chapter of the book of Numbers. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Make thee two trumpets of silver, of a whole piece shalt thou make them, that thou mayest use them for the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps.

And when they shall blow with them, all the assembly shall assemble themselves to thee, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And if they blow but with one trumpet, then the princes, which are heads of the thousands of Israel, shall gather together unto thee. When ye blow an alarm, then the camps that lie on the east parts shall go forward.

When ye blow an alarm the second time, then the camps that lie on the south side shall take their journey. They shall blow an alarm for their journeys. But when the congregation is to be gathered together, ye shall

blow, but ye shall not sound an alarm.

And the sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow with the trumpets, and they shall be to you for an ordinance forever throughout your generations. And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresses 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. Also in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginning of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifice of your peace offerings, that they may be to you for a memorial before your God.

I am the Lord your God. Ending our lesson at verse 10, and God will stamp His own Word from His very own infallible book with His very own blessing. Hosea chapter 8, verses 1 and 2. Page 900 in the first part of your Bible, the Old Testament.

Hosea 8, 1 and 2. Set that trumpet to thy mouth. He shall come as an eagle against the house of the Lord, because they have transgressed my covenant and trespassed against my law. Israel shall cry unto me, My God, we know Thee.

In the Bible, which in many ways is a music book with musical instruments, there are frequent mentions of the use to which these instruments were put. The true prophet, the true priest in the Old Testament, had to know how to handle such instruments. He had to handle the ram's horn.

The walls of Jericho could not fall before the sound of the ram's horn was heard. Oh, to be skilled as a preacher, to know how to use the ram's horn for the destruction of the walls of the enemy's castles. The true preacher had to play the harp.

Those disquieted like Saul could only find quietness from satanic conflict by the music of the harp strings. The preacher must be the master of the timbrel. It was the music of the timbrel that gave the joyful thanksgiving and praise to Almighty God for all His lavish benefits upon His people.

He had also to handle the high sounding of all musical instruments. The cymbals to exalt the mighty God of Jacob and praise Him for His amazing work. He must be skilled in blowing the trumpet.

And the trumpet seemed to be the most important instrument of all. It is my bounden duty as a preacher to blow the trumpet, set the trumpet literally to the roof of my mouth. It is my permanent task to be continually and unceasingly sounding the trumpet.

This is the constant employment of the true minister of God. Preacher, God commands, blow my trumpet with all your strength. Preacher, blow it with all your might.

Preacher, blow it with all your fervor. Preacher, blow it with all your energy. The preacher that blows the trumpet of God is but obeying the order of the Most High God.

Blow, blow, blow, God says to the man of God who carries God's message. There must be this shout from the pulpit. The blast must be absolutely clear.

No muffling. No inconsistency. It must be clearly discernible.

We were reading tonight in the book of Numbers of the one piece of silver. Cut in twain and true to gospel, trumpets, silver trumpets, made. And we were reading about all the blasts that they were to sound.

If the trumpet's blast is not clear, then it will only be utter confusion and the enemy. Well, the enemy will win the day. The top priority is clearness, clarity.

It is all important. Alas, how the pulpits of the twenty-first century have utterly failed. Today the pulpits of apostate Protestantism give an uncertain sound.

And because they do that, no one prepares himself for the great battle. The clear message of divine and sovereign truth is hard to find in modern sermons today. The blast is uncertain.

It is unclear, and therefore it is largely ignored because it has robbed itself of divine authority. But the blast must not only be clear, it must be convincing. As Mr. Spurgeon said, most preachers are like a man with a Jew's harp in his mouth.

You hardly know whether he's making any noise or not. And we have a lot of Jew's harp preachers today. God save us from Jew's harp preaching.

We must blow a convincing blast so that all can hear and all can understand. The true preacher, if he prays his virtue, the congregation will know. If he condemns vice, they will know what he's getting at.

If he points the way of salvation, the way of salvation will be as clear as the midday sun. If he warns of hell, the fear of death and judgment will come. The blast must also be compassionate.

Those who do not see the trumpeter must still hear him. The preacher must make himself heard. He demands to be heard.

He doesn't walk in the environment of religious silence. He walks in the environment of the shout of God the Holy Ghost. The pulpit must be a sounding board, not a lullaby cradle.

The trumpet is in the field of sound, not in the field of slumber. Let every gospel preacher be honest. Let every gospel preacher be true.

Let every gospel preacher be bold. Let every gospel preacher be fearful. Let every gospel preacher be outspoken and plain spoken.

The true preacher's message needs to scabble the whole world. Every art and part must hear its blast. From the land mass of every continent in this world to the islands of every ocean in the world.

Let the preacher get the trumpet to the roof of his mouth as the text has told us. And let him blow and blow and blow yet again. And when he is tired and weary, let him sleep and be refreshed and come apart and rest a while.

And then go out again with the same trumpet to his lips, blowing the message of God in clear notes. Sound the high praises of Jesus the King. He came and He conquered.

His victory sing. Sing for the power of the tyrant is broken. The triumphs complete over death and the grief.

The end is there boasting. Jehovah has spoken. And Jesus proclaimed as the mighty to save.

Praise to the conqueror. Praise to the Lord. The enemy quealed at the might of His word.

To heaven He ascends and unfolds a glad story. The hosts of the plethora exult in His name. In love He looks down from the throne of His glory and rescues the ruined who trust in His name.

Sound the loud praises of Jesus the King. He came and He conquered. He came and He conquered.

O that we might blow that trumpet of the victory of Christ over the devil, the flesh and the world. O that we might awaken souls to flee from the wrath that is to come. But we not only have in this text the sounding of the trumpet from the pulpit.

There is a shaking in the pure. Alas today the purest which once were filled with supplicators are now filled with sleepers. Awake sleeping Christians for as you slumber men and women every second of time are dropping Christly, Christlessly into hell.

Oh for a great awakening amongst us. How cold we get. How worldly we become.

How careless we are. On Wednesday of this week I travelled to the second largest city in this United Kingdom. The city of Birmingham.

A city with a great history of preachers and people. I was brought there at the request of a church. A church with a great history.

A church that had a line of very successful faithful preachers of the gospel. The membership of that great church, beautiful building, is now reduced to four people and one of them is ninety years of age. When I stood in those empty pews this week my heart was sad.

But it was made glad by those members, just four of them, who were not prepared to close down. There was anguish upon their faces. I left them as they prayed and indicated to God to give them a revival of true religion and the things that seemed impossible to do for them.

Alas, how soon is Ichabod, the glory departed, written over a place that once knew the blessing of God. Would you pray for those people that God will send them a fiery evangelist who can take the trumpet and blow the blast of gospel truth in that great city. The curse of prayerlessness is the result of sin.

Where there is no real praying and no real supplicating it is because there is a state of sinning in our hearts. Sin bars the way to the throne of grace. And of course God turns his back upon prayerless people.

We must halt the leprosy of prayerlessness. Only Christ can heal us from it. I would say, O God, shake the pews until from every one of them there arises a cry to God for the spirit of prayer.

As Mr. Spurgeon once said, O Christian Church, if thou shalt fall from thine integrity thou wilt soon cause us to feel from our prosperity. Suspend prayer and thou wilt suspend success. Break down our hedges, let in the hypocrites or let them even come in by stealth.

And the wild boar out of the wood will soon waste God's house. And where are the goodly clusters now? Where are the grapes of Eschol? And where are the wine presses gushing with new wine in the church of Jesus? Famine has devastated the land. Black death has covered the vineyards and the vines lament.

And they are burned up with fire. If God Almighty forsakes us, and he will do so if we turn aside from him as a church, then that will be the dreadful result. His people, his church, and the souls of the lost, then these saints have become the downward path of spiritual decay and deadness.

Lovelessness cannot be hidden. It is a leprosy, and all it touches is seriously infected. God himself will forsake such a people and leave them in the pit of the misery of hypocrisy into which they have fallen.

O my dear believer, start praying for the cleansing of the powerful blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Start praying for the baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire, so that we all may be renewed, reinvigorated, and refreshed to go out and work for God as we have never worked before. Revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee.

Let, O God, the wind on the top of the mulberry trees blow upon our souls. Blow upon our homes, blow upon our churches, blow upon our peoples, blow upon our nation. Let us love one another fervently, and the souls of the lost even more fervently.

Finally, I want to say a word about the shattering of this old sinful world of ours. If you turn over to the book of the Revelation, you will find the history of seven churches in the first three chapters. They were great churches, such as Sardis, Pergamos, and Thyatira.

Today, the ruins of their past grandeur eloquently delivers the message that God departs from those that depart from Him. And what of the city of Rome itself? The caricums bear glorious testimony to the glory of the Church of the Martyrs. Every day there was a graveyard in the Colosseum.

Christians were burned and stabbed and slaughtered for their love and faith in Jesus Christ. But every day the Church of the Caricums swelled its growing numbers. If only to go to those miles of underground passages under Rome today, and you have the witness of the love of those people for Christ written on their walls.

Down there in the darkness, beyond the light of the natural sun, but not beyond the light of the Son of Righteousness, the martyred Church of the Caricums swelled and flourished. The Church was glorious. God dwelt in the midst of her.

But today the harlot sits upon her seven hills, and God's candlestick has been removed out of its place. After the greatest of all revivals since the day of Pentecost, which was the glorious Reformation, Europe freed soon became again Europe bound. Luther's Germany apostatized shortly after the Reformation, and sad was its declension and ruin.

The great evangelical awakenings should have their fires put out. And today as I look across the world, what do I see? Ecumenism, Atheism, Romanism, Mohammedanism and Paganism triumphs. Look at the House of Commons this week.

Only 41 MPs opposed gay marriages, while the gays in membership of the House attacked those who dared to raise their voices against it. O God I would cry, God of Luther, God of Calvin, God of Knox, God of Cranmer, God of the Apostles and the Prophets and the Preachers of the Gospels, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, come to our aid, come speedily. Our land needs your help.

Forgive us our sins. Cleanse our hearts. Restore to us the joy of God's salvation.

Anoint us with holy fire, so that we may be faithful unto death. Be thou our God ever, till the coming of our Lord Jesus. Believer, soon shall your sojourn on earth be over, and your last work for God on earth will be done.

We were hearing this morning of the stars in our cry. I am thinking today of that beautiful land. I shall reach when the sun goeth down, when through wonderful grace by my Saviour I stand.

Will there be any stars in my cry? In the strength of the Lord let me labor and pray. Let me watch as a winner of souls, that bright stars may be mine in the glorious day, when His praise like the sea billows roll. Oh, what joy it will be when His face I behold, living gems at His feet to lay down.

It would sweeten my bliss. In the city of gold, should there be any stars in my cry? Will there be any stars, any stars in my cry? When at evening the sun goeth down, when I wake with the blessed in those mansions of rest, will there be any stars in my cry? Dear believer, arouse yourself. Get into God's vineyard.

Stop loafing and start laboring. Weep first for yourself before you start weeping for others. We need to weep for ourselves.

This text of scripture that I have read tells me that judgment is certain. He shall come as an eagle against the house of the Lord. The eagle with all its speed seeks its prey, swoops upon it with all its mighty power.

How swift its judgments come. How swift are the judgments of Almighty God. With what irresistible strength they strike the impenitent heart.

God's judgments on His church are terrible. You have only to read history and you will learn that God is a jealous God. They come with suddenness and strength and all unjust ones perish under the slaughter of their divine justice.

Let us learn the lesson. Let us repent of our sins and turn for a mission and restoration to the cross of Calvary. Finally, there is a glorious confession here.

Israel shall cry unto me, my God, we know thee. Gideon could only get 300 lappers out of 10,000 men. Oh, that we may not only get 300 but 3,000 souls to pray to God night and day for a great revival of true religion.

Arm of the Lord, awake, awake. Put on thy strength the nation's shape and let the world's adoring see triumphs of mercy wrought by thee. Say to the heathen from thy throne, I am Jehovah, God alone.

Thy voice their idols shall confound and cast their altars to the ground. No more let human blood be spilt. Be in sacrifice for human guilt, but to each conscience be applied the blood that flowed from Jesus' side.

Arm of the Lord, thy power extend. Let Muhammad's imposture end. Break people's superstition's chain and the proud scoffers' rage restrain.

Let Zion's time of fever come. Oh, bring the tribes of Israel home and let our wandering eyes behold Gentiles and Jews in Jesus' fold. Almighty God, thy grace proclaim.

In every clime of every name, let adverse powers before thee fall and crown this Saviour Lord of all. May we personally this night as believers crown Christ Lord of all and go out of this meeting absolutely determined to blow the trumpet for God and stand true in an evil day. Loving all that God loves, separating from all that God would have us separating from and dedicate it to all that God is for.

Not just for a day, not just for a week. For the days and weeks we still have this side of the great eternity. And I say to you when you come to your deathbed, you will have no regret that you spent time in prayer.

You will have no regret that you read your Bible and meditated on it. You'll have no regret that you were looked on as a fool because you urged men and women to turn to Christ. The happy deathbed of the saint is a deathbed that has no blood of his family or neighbors upon it because he's cleared his skirts of their soul's responsibility.

Oh, that God would love some soul and love that soul through me and help me to do my part to win that soul to thee. May God do it for Jesus' sake.

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