



But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. – Matthew 15:9

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For Whom Does the Tootle Tootle?

True story: Once upon a time, I went to a church leader and asked a question about something I had read in the Bible. What the question was is long gone as my memory isn't that good, but the answer I received was something I haven't forgotten. Given what I had been taught in the Adventist system, what I read didn't make any sense at all. The response to my question was that I needed to realize and accept that there are people who are much smarter than me who have already studied these issues. They have figured out what it all means and all I have to do is accept and believe their interpretation. If I didn't then God would give me the ultimate punishment.

That didn't satisfy my curiosity but it did tell me that the person I had asked didn't want to be bothered with my questions so I kept quiet. Asking questions could lead to insights that differ from what the church founders had concluded and that was a crime that could not be tolerated.

In other words, the church is more interested in maintaining their authority over interpreting the Scriptures than to allow their members their God-given right of spiritual growth. And just so you'll know, that encounter with that particular church official was not an isolated incident.

Why does a church insist that its doctrine not be questioned? What is it afraid of? Could it be that the leaders of today recognize that their dogma is fallible but they fear losing face if they should admit it?

I digress. The subject of church authority is not my intended topic of discussion tonight. What I want to write about is an encounter I had with the Bible in the middle of last night. It was in the wee hours of the night and I was wanting to get sleepy but having no luck. There has been so much of my focus on the errors of the church when I study and write that I decided to accept that I cannot change the system that satan has corrupted and stop focusing on it. Instead, I want to focus on getting to know Jesus better. In an attempt to do that, and also in an attempt at getting sleepy, I turned out the lights, turned on an audio version of the Bible starting at 1 John, then sat here doing a counted cross-stitch on Facebook while I listened to the actors as they read this dramatized version. (It's available at biblegateway.com)

It didn't take long for the actors to get through the books of John and even Jude, then they started on Revelation. Long ago I gave up on understanding that book. Nor do I understand the reasoning behind the way the Adventists interpret the book. They believe that if you can understand something then you need to interpret it literally, and if you don't understand it then you need to view it as symbolic.

But as many of their teachings, that is another one that just does not compute. If you can't understand it then maybe it's a good idea to study into it and try to figure out what it really says. It's not a good idea to take the stand that it's simply one of those things that God doesn't want us to know and we'll have to wait until we get to heaven to ask him. As Elkanah once said to me, "If God didn't want us to know it, He wouldn't have put it in the Bible."

So, back to last night. I was sitting here at my computer doing a counted crossstitch on Facebook while listening to an audio version of the last few chapters of the Bible. When the actors read something that was in Revelation my ears perked up. Suddenly I was even more wide awake than I already was. I opened the browser window that was playing the Bible and backed it up to where I could hear it again. By now I don't remember what it was but I do remember it had something to do with stars. The church was teaching that that particular passage was talking about literal stars but it occurred to me that it might be symbolic. Revelation is a book of symbols and should be interpreted symbolically. So why was this passage about stars interpreted literally when it had the capacity to be interpreted symbolically. If you think of the stars as angels and place angels in that passage then you get an entirely different meaning. You may wonder why I would place angels in place of the word stars and I respond that Revelation gives the interpretation of stars as angels.

The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of

the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels[e] of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches. – Revelation 1:20

You can see there is a reference after the word angels. The translators are suggesting that the word angels might mean messengers.

When I finally went to bed in the morning, as I was falling asleep, I had the idea that it might be interesting to study Revelation for myself and see what I could find out about those stars. I slept an entire 2 hours then was up and ready to go for the day. I made several phone calls, did a little housework, then sat down with my Bible, notepad and pen, bowl of vegetables and a protein drink, then began to make notes as I read the first chapter of Revelation while eating my lunch.

Before finishing the first chapter of Revelation I ran across something that I have never heard anyone, not an Adventist nor any other denominational preacher discussing. Over the next several pages I'll share with you what I found. But as you read this, understand that this may be something new to you, not what you are used to hearing. And I'm not promoting it as solid truth. Who am I to do such a thing? What you are about to read is simply what I discovered and my thoughts about it.

When Elkanah got home from work I shared it with him. He wasn't too interested at first but when he heard where it was going he began showing interest. We both ended up going to bed before completely exhausting the subject. He has to get up at 3 a.m. and I was badly in need of sleep. We did come up with a plausible solution to the question I uncovered and it will probably surprise you.

Dear, Sweet, Holy Spirit: As always, we thank you for your presence within us and for your guidance throughout our lives. We love you and want you with us always, for now and forever. Please be with us as we delve into this book of Revelation. Open our eyes that we may discern the truths that you have in store for us. This book, Revelation, has been misused and misunderstood by so many and it's been going on for centuries. Please, show us what we need to know and filter out what is untrue or what we aren't yet ready to hear. I ask this within the guidelines of Jesus' beautiful and loving character, Amen.

Like I said I began at Revelation 1 and wrote questions that I wanted an answer to. My intent was to search out information on the stars but I never got that far. I had a few questions initially but I'll pass on those for now. They may become a subject for later writing, or they may not. When I reached the description of this

person that John had the encounter with, I became focused on that and my study zoned in on a particular aspect of this description.

Here's how John described this person:

1. The person who is like a son of man has a voice that sounds like a trumpet and it also sounds like rushing water.
2. He stands among the 7 golden lampstands
3. He's dressed in a robe that reaches his feet
4. There is a golden sash around his chest
5. His head and hair are as white as wool/snow. (His head is white?)
6. His eyes are like a blazing fire
7. His feet are like bronze that is glowing in a furnace
8. He is holding 7 stars
9. Coming from his mouth is a sharp, double-edged sword
10. His face is like the sun, shining in its brilliance (see #5)

For starters, look at number 1. It was interesting to me that John described this person as someone “like A son of man” instead of “like THE son of man.” Jesus frequently referred to himself as “the son of man” yet this person John had the encounter with was like “a son of man”. Maybe I'm being a bit too picky here but I am wondering about the choice of the word “A” rather than the word “THE”. But my study didn't focus on this question. I became more intrigued with the description of his voice which was like a trumpet and also sounded like rushing water.

How can a trumpet sound like rushing water?

I decided to do a search on trumpets and typed into the search engine at biblegateway.com the words “sound of a trumpet” and found something interesting. It appears to me that the sound of a trumpet is something that is used to announce the presence of God and the use of a trumpet is another attempt of satan to take the place of God.

When Elkanah got home I was ready for him and we sat down at the table and went over the list while he ate his sandwich. Many of these we were able to know what was going on just by the single text but others we had to look up and read the context. I suggest you do the same. We saw a pattern that a trumpet sounded to announce the presence of God. This is a proper use of the instrument, however, there are times that the trumpet is used in battle. Mrs. E.G. White had something to say about war.

Through spiritualism, Satan appears as a benefactor of the race, healing the diseases of the people, and professing to present a new and more exalted system of religious faith; but at the same time he works as a destroyer. His temptations are leading multitudes to ruin. Intemperance dethrones reason; sensual indulgence, strife, and bloodshed follow. Satan delights in war, for it excites the worst passions of the soul and then sweeps into eternity its victims steeped in vice and blood. It is his object to incite the nations to war against one another, for he can thus divert the minds of the people from the work of preparation to stand in the day of God. – The Great Controversy, 589

When the trumpet is used in battle it is a usage that is probably not announcing God's presence therefore it is an act that is not ordained by God. Let's take a look at the texts that the search engine found and we can see the pattern.

As the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and the voice of God answered him. – Exodus 19:19

The usage of the trumpet in the above text indicates that God's presence was with Moses. In fact, God spoke to Moses.

Then have the trumpet sounded everywhere on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement sound the trumpet throughout your land. – Leviticus 25:9

The original usage of the word “atonement” was at-onement. When two people were at odds with each other someone who was going to act as a mediator might state that he was going to go at-one them. That meant he would work to bring them back to unity with each other. The very name of the festival “Day of Atonement” would indicate that this was a time that God was trying to bring his people back to a loving and knowing relationship with him. Naturally they would be sounding trumpets on this day. It was a proper usage of the instrument.

Also at your times of rejoicing—your appointed festivals and New Moon feasts—you are to sound the trumpets over your burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, and they will be a memorial for you before your God. I am the Lord your God.” – Numbers 10:10

[The Festival of Trumpets] “On the first day of the seventh month hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work. It is a day for you to sound the trumpets. – Numbers 29:1

A Festival of Trumpets in which the Israelites were to do no regular work would clearly be a day set aside as holy. Remember that in the fourth commandment the only instructions given on how to keep the day holy was that we aren't to do any work. This usage of trumpets would be a heaven-ordained usage.

When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, have the whole army give a loud shout; then the wall of the city will collapse and the army will go up, everyone straight in.” – Joshua 6:5

The armed guard marched ahead of the priests who blew the trumpets, and the rear guard followed the ark. All this time the trumpets were sounding. – Joshua 6:9

The seven priests carrying the seven trumpets went forward, marching before the ark of the Lord and blowing the trumpets. The armed men went ahead of them and the rear guard followed the ark of the Lord, while the trumpets kept sounding. – Joshua 6:13

When the trumpets sounded, the army shouted, and at the sound of the trumpet, when the men gave a loud shout, the wall collapsed; so everyone charged straight in, and they took the city. – Joshua 6:20

The above texts are an instance where the trumpet is used in a war setting. A little background here is that it was God's original plan to give the land to the Israelites without them having to fight for it. God was intending to empty the land himself (Exodus 23:27-30, Joshua 23:5). But the Israelites had just been delivered from a long period of slavery. On the scale of moral development they were operating on the level of a very young child and had some growing to do. When they were ready to take over the land that had been promised to them, they were wanting to act in ways that they saw other nations act. They wanted to show their might. This may have been a way of self-preservation. If they were able to show their God to be mightier and more powerful than the god of those

who were currently living in the land, then perhaps this would give them a sense of security. It was their way of using God for their own benefit and trusting in their own merits.

God was willing to reach down to them at the level on which they were operating and acted in ways to show them that He was the true God and the One to be followed. So God had the Israelites march around the city for 7 days and on the seventh day they blew their trumpets. When the trumpets sounded the walls of the city collapsed.

I don't know the science behind such a move. Perhaps there is a scientific explanation that the act of all those Israelites marching around the city for that period of time may have somehow weakened the structure of the city wall by somehow displacing the ground underneath. If this is true it doesn't make it any less of a miracle because God would have known that would happen and that the trumpet blast which signified his presence would be all that was needed to cause the walls to fall.

Yes, the trumpets were used in a satanic act which was the act of destruction and death. Despite that, because of their ignorance God was with them and worked with them at their level in order to try to gain their trust.

When the three hundred trumpets sounded, the Lord caused the men throughout the camp to turn on each other with their swords. The army fled to Beth Shittah toward Zererah as far as the border of Abel Meholah near Tabbath. – Judges 7:22

I didn't look up the context on the above text but I had a little fun with it. Let's use our imaginations and place ourselves into the camp of those who were at war with the Israelites. And if you tell me it's a sin to use my imagination I'll not listen because you've just told me to not use my brain. Our brains are non-stop thinking and we are always imagining something. What we need to do is allow the Holy Spirit to train our brains to focus on those things that will be beneficial to others and also to keep our thoughts heavenward.

But like I said I used my imagination and placed myself into the camp of the army that was occupying Israel. Suppose you were there and you know that war is imminent. Suddenly and without warning you hear the blaring sound of 300 loud trumpets. The sound is so loud that you hear it in all directions. You think you are surrounded by a massive army and you panic. In your panic you try to run and start pushing others who are also in a panic. That pushing and shoving causes fighting to start among those who are in your camp and you end up

fighting and killing your own comrades.

I have been told that in those days people were unaware there was a devil. God took credit for much of the evil that was happening in order to keep the Israelites from becoming aware there was a devil. Those people were so prone to worshiping strange things that if they knew of Satan's existence they would have begun worshiping him. The idea of the people panicked and confused which caused them to start fighting among themselves and killing each other and then the credit given to God is a plausible explanation.

while he and all Israel were bringing up the ark of the Lord with shouts and the sound of trumpets. – 2 Samuel 6:15

And this text indicates a proper usage of trumpets because they are proclaiming the presence of God.

Then Absalom sent secret messengers throughout the tribes of Israel to say, "As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpets, then say, 'Absalom is king in Hebron.'" – 2 Samuel 15:10

This is an improper usage of trumpets. Trumpets should be used to proclaim the presence of God not to expound upon a sinful human's self-professed glory. Furthermore, Absalom was not God's anointed.

[Sheba Rebels Against David] Now a troublemaker named Sheba son of Bikri, a Benjamite, happened to be there. He sounded the trumpet and shouted, "We have no share in David, no part in Jesse's son! Every man to his tent, Israel!" – 2 Samuel 20:1

Then the woman went to all the people with her wise advice, and they cut off the head of Sheba son of Bikri and threw it to Joab. So he sounded the trumpet, and his men dispersed from the city, each returning to his home. And Joab went back to the king in Jerusalem. – 2 Samuel 20:22

These are more improper uses of the trumpet as they were used in acts of destruction which are satanic acts.

Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the sacred tent and anointed Solomon. Then they sounded the trumpet and all the people shouted, "Long live King Solomon!" – 1 Kings 1:39

Solomon was God's anointed as king of Israel, but the trumpets were used to proclaim Solomon's glory. I have my doubts about this one being a proper usage.

Adonijah and all the guests who were with him heard it as they were finishing their feast. On hearing the sound of the trumpet, Joab asked, "What's the meaning of all the noise in the city?" – 1 Kings 1:41

This is where Adonijah proclaimed himself to be king. It's the same as with Absalom. The trumpets were used in self-promotion. He was not God's anointed and God was not a party to this. It was not a heaven-ordained usage of trumpets.

So all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with shouts, with the sounding of rams' horns and trumpets, and of cymbals, and the playing of lyres and harps. – 1 Chronicles 15:28

Heman and Jeduthun were responsible for the sounding of the trumpets and cymbals and for the playing of the other instruments for sacred song. The sons of Jeduthun were stationed at the gate. – 1 Chronicles 16:42

All the Levites who were musicians—Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun and their sons and relatives—stood on the east side of the altar, dressed in fine linen and playing cymbals, harps and lyres. They were accompanied by 120 priests sounding trumpets. – 2 Chronicles 5:12

The texts above indicate that God was present so these were proper usages of the instrument.

God is with us; he is our leader. His priests with their trumpets will sound the battle cry against you. People of Israel, do not fight against the Lord, the God of your ancestors, for you will not succeed." – 2 Chronicles 13:12

The whole assembly bowed in worship, while the musicians played and the trumpets sounded. All this continued until the sacrifice of the burnt offering was completed. – 2 Chronicles 29:28

and each of the builders wore his sword at his side as he worked.

But the man who sounded the trumpet stayed with me. – Nehemiah 4:18

God has ascended amid shouts of joy, the Lord amid the sounding of trumpets. – Psalm 47:5

Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre, – Psalm 150:3

This one is a praise to God using trumpets and it's a proper usage of the instrument.

All you people of the world, you who live on the earth, when a banner is raised on the mountains, you will see it, and when a trumpet sounds, you will hear it. – Isaiah 18:3

Oh, my anguish, my anguish! I writhe in pain. Oh, the agony of my heart! My heart pounds within me, I cannot keep silent. For I have heard the sound of the trumpet; I have heard the battle cry. – Jeremiah 4:19

How long must I see the battle standard and hear the sound of the trumpet? – Jeremiah 4:21

I appointed watchmen over you and said, 'Listen to the sound of the trumpet!' But you said, 'We will not listen.' – Jeremiah 6:17

[An Army of Locusts] Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy hill. Let all who live in the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming. It is close at hand— – Joel 2:1

[The Lord Will Appear] Then the Lord will appear over them; his arrow will flash like lightning. The Sovereign Lord will sound the trumpet; he will march in the storms of the south, – Zechariah 9:14

in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. – 1 Corinthians 15:52

This is a prophecy of what will happen when Jesus returns to rescue his people, his bride. There is the sound of a trumpet indicating that Jesus is there. It is not only a proper use, the use is done by means other than humanity.

The first angel sounded his trumpet, and there came hail and fire mixed with blood, and it was hurled down on the earth. A third of the earth was burned up, a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up. – Revelation 8:7

The second angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a huge mountain, all ablaze, was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea turned into blood, – Revelation 8:8

The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a great star, blazing like a torch, fell from the sky on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water— – Revelation 8:10

The fourth angel sounded his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them turned dark. A third of the day was without light, and also a third of the night. – Revelation 8:12

As I watched, I heard an eagle that was flying in midair call out in a loud voice: “Woe! Woe! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the trumpet blasts about to be sounded by the other three angels!” – Revelation 8:13

The fifth angel sounded his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from the sky to the earth. The star was given the key to the shaft of the Abyss. – Revelation 9:1

The sixth angel sounded his trumpet, and I heard a voice coming from the four horns of the golden altar that is before God. – Revelation 9:13

But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he announced to his servants the prophets.” – Revelation 10:7

[The Seventh Trumpet] The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign for ever and ever.” – Revelation 11:15

And now we have a problem. We need to realize that God is love and as love he

only acts in ways that convey His love. Yet here Revelation indicates that trumpets are proclaiming God's presence in situations that are disasters. And the implication is that God is responsible for these disasters.

I can see two ways to view this discrepancy. The first is that it is improper usage of trumpets. That it is the evil angels who are blowing the trumpets and pawning it off as acts of holy angels.

After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth to prevent any wind from blowing on the land or on the sea or on any tree. Then I saw another angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm the land and the sea: "Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God." Then I heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel. – Revelation 7:1-4

Angels are now restraining the winds of strife that they may not blow until the world shall be warned of its coming doom, but a storm is gathering, ready to burst upon the earth, and when God shall bid His angels loose the winds there will be such a scene of strife as no pen can picture. – Education, 179, 180

Mrs. White indicates that angels are holding back the evil that is about to burst upon the world. But when you recognize that God is love and his act or wrath is simply the act of letting go and letting you have what you've been begging for which is your own destruction, you've been asking him to leave you alone, you've separated yourself from the source of life, then it is satan who is responsible for the evil that is looming upon our planet. But this is a literal translation.

The other theory for these trumpets that would fall into the symbolic realm would be the possibility that these seven acts of destruction are God's act of revealing to us the imperfections in our own characters. How will we feel/react when we are facing another character defect? Will we allow the Holy Spirit to make those changes necessary to fit us for life in the heavenly realms or will we act to deny and spurn his offers of healing? It's our choice.

The music of harpists and musicians, pipers and trumpeters, will never be heard in you again. No worker of any trade will ever be found in you again. The sound of a millstone will never be heard in

you again. – Revelation 18:22

And it's fitting that we end with the absence of God's presence for those who have continually rejected him. There are no trumpets to sound now. He is gone. The final rejections have been made. History as we know it will finally end.

No, I didn't comment on every text that I referenced. We did look them all up and made a decision between the two of us whether or not the usage of the trumpets was a heaven-ordained usage or not. But I didn't place all those explanations here. One reason is that it would be good for you to look these passages up and make the decision for yourself whether or not the trumpets were used in the proper manner. The other reason I omitted comments is that I am badly needing sleep and have forgotten what we decided.

And with that, I bid you good night. It's 4:20 a.m. Sweet dreams to you who sleep and also to those of us who have red eyes because we can't sleep but need to.

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