

is, "are His commands in themselves, capable of accomplishing His purposes, in effecting the thing whereunto He sends them?" If so, to what purpose could His commands be without human auxiliaries? Hence, the supposed assistance, rendered the Holy Ghost, by those blind guides or false zealots, under the title of benevolence, spurred up by appeals to christian duties, falls under the following caption: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." Eccl. 12: 13. Hence fearing God and keeping his commandments, is the whole duty of man; this embraces every thing necessary for us to do, believe or practice. And we suppose the *blowing* of Joel's trumpet, was to *blow* God's commands in Zion, and *blow* multiplied altars, self-worship, human traditions, and men's commandments out of Zion. And wherever this trumpet is *blown*, God has a Joel and a Zion. The mystery of this trumpet is, that it *blows* out as well as in. *First*, it *blows* God's commands in Zion, and those commands drive every thing out but the commands, even to the slaying of false prophets, the hewing to pieces of Agag, the driving out Ishmael, hating Esau, rejecting Cain, and the slaying of Uzziah. No wonder false prophets dislike this mysterious trumpet, and cannot abide its sound nor those that blow it. But while the rage of wicked men and devils is heralded forth at this trumpet, and while it speaks in terrific peals of thunder to all the enemies of God, yet, it speaks in accents mild and musical as the voice of God, when He speaks to Moses in Horeb, to all the inhabitants in Zion, saying, "fear not little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." But this trumpet has a peculiar sound that no other trumpet ever had, and none fully understand its peculiarity but God's peculiar people. Hence the King of Zion says,

"my sheep know my voice," &c. But how mysterious this *blowing*; it gathers the poor and makes them rich, the blind, and gives them sight, the deaf, and opens their ears to hear, the hungry, and feeds them, the naked, and clothes them, the lame, and heals them, the humble, and exalts them, in short, it raises the dead and kills the living, and sends the rich empty away. But we will proceed to the second part of our subject, that of "sounding an alarm in God's holy mountain." No doubt but the poor prophet, Joel, trembled, and awaked as he ascended the Mount of God, with his trumpet in hand and a full knowledge of Israel's sins, of omission and commission. But the greater burden no doubt, was Joel's unworthiness of so high a calling; perhaps he felt as if he never could *blow* a single sound, but as he reached the sacred summit, a voice shrill and loud, reached his trembling heart, saying, "woe is me if I preach not the gospel." He then begins to sound the alarm, and in place of getting weaker, as he supposed, he waxed stronger and stronger, to his surprise and comfort. He could now tell them of their idolatry and of their fornication, leanness of soul, and worldly-mindedness; he could here point out to them wherein they had sinned and departed from God's holy laws. His object is to alarm them of sin, for says God to him, "sound an alarm in my holy mountain." If being worldly-minded is alarming in God's holy mount, may we not sound the alarm now? If covetousness, sound the alarm; if idolatry be in the mount, give the alarm; if coldness, sound it not abroad, but in the mount; if false doctrine, give the alarm; if negligence of duties of any kind, or any disobedience, sound the alarm, stir up the inhabitants of this mount, to every good work and labor of love.—Alarm them by telling them of God's judgments upon Israel of

old, of how He destroyed the land with his terrible army of worms, flies, locusts, &c., and of His love to them in destroying of Egypt for their sake. We now come to speak to the last part of the subject. "Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand." Trembling is an evidence of fear or weakness. Hence, the inhabitants of the land are called upon to fear, "for the day of the Lord cometh," the day when forbearance is to be turned to judgment. This is called the day of the Lord, or the day when He will enroll his great and terrible army of swarming insects to consume the substance of the land; a day when He will take vengeance upon the inhabitants for their sins. Oh, has not sin spread itself in our land to an alarming degree; is it not truly a day of darkness in our midst. The simplicity of the gospel is turned to vain philosophy. The name of Christ is disgraced in ten thousand ways by professors of religion. Infidelity is making gigantic strides over our boasted land of religious advantages, catholicism is fast rising, her deadly wound is being healed in the consciences of many professed protestants, and the once sacred morals of our youths, has fallen, and vice is now winked at. May not this then be called a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spreads upon the mountains. "A great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations." When nations become strong they grow proud, and Solomon says, "pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Prov. 16: 18. And although God has with a single man, as with Samson, subdued nations, yet He chooses at times, to resort to more insignificant means of chastisement for our sins, and thereby displays His sovereign power, at the same

time, humbles our pride, by making detestable things, our victors and destroyer. Such was the judgments announced by the prophet Joel, in reference to God's terrible army. But the Prophet calls for solemn assembly to be held in Israel, and for the people to sanctify themselves unto the Lord, with a promise of returning plenty, and that God would yet comfort and bless Zion. Then let us be solemn in our assemblies, devotional in our worship, humble in our lives, upright in our walk and patient in tribulation, and our God, in whom we trust, will deliver us in due time, from all our enemies of every kind, or give us grace to enable us to glorify Him in our bodies and spirits which are His. Then blow ye the trumpet in Zion; blow the same trumpet, the same doctrine, the same faith and the same practice, until Christ shall come in his glory, to be admired by all His saints, and had in reverence by all that are about him.—Ed.

DECATUR, ILL.,  
February 7th, 1869.

Dear Brother in the Lord:—I avail myself of the present opportunity of writing you a few lines to let you know that I received two of your papers some time since, and I am well pleased as far as I could judge. . . . I would like to hear from the various portions of the borders of Zion; and I have a great desire to hear from those of my kindred in Christ that are located in the South. Some would have us believe that you Southern people are perfect man-eaters or cannibals; but I don't understand that there is any sectional lines in Christ's kingdom: all my people shall be taught of the Lord; and none shall say know ye the Lord, for they all shall know him, from the least to the greatest; and the world by wisdom knows not God. During the war I was made to wonder if Zion's God would suffer those locusts and caterpillars, yes, and abolitionists, to entirely devour the sunny South; and while our Northern armies was doing their souls delight, in destroying you as a people, those that fought you on paper at home, how they would rejoice over your downfall. But I never saw anything to rejoice over; on the contrary, a many hours sleep I have lost, in meditating over your situation. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord is able to deliver them out of them all in his own time and way.

JOHN H. MYERS.