

THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,
**I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God
IN CHRIST JESUS.**
(Philippians 3:13-14 NASB)*

#04-1053

When the Saints Go Marching In

May 18, 2010

Oh, when the saints go marching in
Oh, when the saints go marching in
Lord, how I want to be in that number
When the saints go marching in

Oh, when the trumpet sounds its call
Oh, when the trumpet sounds its call
Lord, I want to be in that number
When the trumpet sounds its call

Oh, when the new world is revealed
Oh, when the new world is revealed
Lord, how I want to be in that number
When the new world is revealed

Oh, when the saints go marching in
Oh, when the saints go marching in
Lord, how I want to be in that number
When the saints go marching in

These are part of the lyrics of the American gospel hymn often called “When the Saints Go Marching In” that was made into a popular jazz tune by Louis Armstrong in the 1930s. For obvious reasons, it has special meaning to Christians who are longing for the coming of the Lord. I particularly like these verses. Frankly, until googling for its lyrics in order to write this issue, I only knew of the first verse.

Now, I am sure you are asking why I am writing an issue on this song.

Well, the answer is simple: On April 30, 2010, at exactly 1:53 am, I heard this tune being played on a trumpet. This is no joke; I believe the Lord sent a trumpeting angel to play *The Saints Go Marching In* for my encouragement, and I trust for the encouragement of others. In particular, I sense that this song goes hand-in-hand with the word for the year: “**I have come.**” See issue #04-1001, January 1, 2010.

I share this experience not to bring attention to myself but, hopefully, to encourage those with hearts that are longing to meet the Lord personally and to see His kingdom established among the nations.

The evening of April 29, my wife and I went out for dinner. We went to a restaurant that serves a fish dish that I especially enjoy. Unfortunately, about half-way through the meal, my stomach did not seem to enjoy it as it had in the past. I didn’t get sick but felt sort of a general discomfort. I didn’t finish the meal as I usually would have done.

When I went to bed that night, I felt that I had an overly acidic stomach. About an hour later, I was jolted awake with acid reflux; not a very pleasant experience. I felt I was going to choke, so I immediately jumped out of bed and decided to sleep in a recliner in our living room so that my head would be elevated. Perhaps this is more information than I need to share; nevertheless, it explains why I ended up sleeping in a recliner that night.

Sometime close to 1:53 am, I heard a trumpet playing *When the Saints Go Marching In*. I feel like Paul when he was snatched away to Paradise and could not say whether he was in the body or out of the body. I cannot say whether I was awake or not, or how long I had listened to the trumpet sounding. All I remember is hearing this song being played on a trumpet and me stretched out in a recliner as I wondered why someone was outside our house, specifically on the east side, playing this tune. I do

recall sitting there with my eyes open as I looked to the east part of our living room. I thought it was strange, but it did not panic me nor make me anxious. I sort of enjoyed it. Then, I heard very clearly and demonstrably: **“Look at the clock, NOW!”** So, I did, and it was exactly 1:53 am as recorded on our atomic clock that was a few feet from where I was sitting. I have no doubt that this is significant; the Lord wanted me to know that there is a connection between the song and the numeric value of the time. The clocks in the other rooms of our house might not have been reading the exact atomic time at that moment. He wanted me to know that 153 is a precise number.

The key to understanding the meaning of what I experienced is discovered in the bitter stomach from eating fish, the trumpet, the song, the easterly direction, and the number 153. When all of this is put together, we are given the message that the Lord Jesus is coming. Let me show you.

First, the bitter stomach is likened to John in spirit on the isle of Patmos: **I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and in my mouth it was sweet as honey; and when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter** (Revelation 10:9-11). The sixth trumpet had already sounded when John was given the book to eat and told that he must prophesy again of the bitter events to be faced by **many people and nations and tongues and kings** (Revelation 10:11).

Second, John was a fisherman by trade, and my stomach was made bitter by fish, which was sweet in my mouth but bitter in my stomach. But, as we will see, the number 153 also refers to a specific catch of fish that signifies the saints that will go marching in.

Third, after John's stomach settled, the **seventh trumpet** sounded and he heard the loud voices in heaven saying: **“The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ”** (Revelation 11:15). In other words, after eating the book and prophesying further, the kingdom arrived. My bitter stomach was a sign that more is to come, but more importantly, the glorious kingdom is not far behind. It is no coincidence that this verse is repeated quite often in my writings.

Fourth, I was asleep, at least part of the time, but the trumpet woke me, which refers to the sounding of the last or seventh trumpet. Those asleep (dead) in Christ will be awakened from their state of sleep by the sound of the trumpet, and they will rise from among the dead in the first resurrection (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 20:4-6).

Fifth, the song refers to the saints of the Most High receiving and possessing the kingdom for the ages to come (Daniel 7:18). The kingdom of Christ is the new world of righteousness as administered through His conquering saints.

Sixth, the Lord is coming from the east: **“For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be”** (Matthew 24:27 NASB).

Seventh, the number 153 refers to the number of fish that were in the net that Jesus told His disciples to cast on the right-hand side of the boat: **Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not torn** (John 21:11 NASB). This took place after Jesus' resurrection, right before His last ascension to His Father.

I cannot offer the full explanation of 153 in this issue, so please see issue #02-08153, December 31, 2008, *The Number of the Sons of God—153*. What is important is that, as the title of this past issue indicates, the number signifies **the sons of God**. In fact, the gematria for *sons of God* is 153.

The casting of the net is something beyond initial salvation. It is a gathering of the called and chosen and faithful in Christ, the first fruit anointed, the conquerors (both asleep and alive) who will be the first to experience **Tabernacles** as they are transfigured into the image of Christ and snatched away to meet Him in air. In that day, the Son of God Himself will cast the net to gather together His prized possession that will reign on earth and among the celestials as **a kingdom and priests** for 1,000 years (Revelation 5:10; 20:6). They are the **joint heirs** with Christ (Romans 8:17, 23), the many **sons brought to glory** (Hebrews 2:10), **the sons of God, the sons of the resurrection** (Luke 20:36).

Be encouraged; it won't be long until the manifestation of the sons of God. Oh, when the saints go marching in; Lord, how I want to be in that number! May this be the song of your heart as well!