**“Personal Experience for this Time” The Home Missionary Extra 5.**

E. J. Waggoner

**Readings for Sunday, December 31.**

“Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field; The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it; surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever. O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.” Isaiah 40:1-10 (marginal reading of verse 9). {HOMI November 1893, p. 39.1}

In this scripture we have the message which is to prepare for the coming of the Lord. That the coming referred to is the second coming in glory, to reward the saints, is evident from verses 4, 5, and 10. Please read them again, and compare them with Matthew 16:27; Mark 13:26; and Revelation 22:12. It is a message of good tidings, for it announces redemption. {HOMI November 1893, p. 39.2}

The message in Isaiah is the same as that set forth in the fourteenth of Revelation. It is the gospel (good tidings); it prepares the way for the coming of the Lord, and proclaims the nearness of that event; and it is to be given with a loud cry. See Isaiah 40:9. It also comforts by calling attention to God as creator; he saves by his creative power. In the fortieth of Isaiah, therefore, we have set forth the loud cry of the last message. {HOMI November 1893, p. 39.3}

But this message is identical with that given by John the Baptist. Compare Isaiah 40:1-5, and Luke 3:2-6. John the Baptist was the Elias that was to come before the great and terrible day of the Lord. See Malachi 4:5 and Matthew 17:14. But the work did not end with him. His message did not exhaust the prophecy. He simply began a message which will not end until the Lord appears in glory. {HOMI November 1893, p. 39.4}

It needs no argument to convince any one that the Lord’s work is not going to diminish in power as the end approaches. “He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth.” Isaiah 42:4. Therefore the gospel of the kingdom must be announced in these last days with at least as much power as it was in the days of John the Baptist. We cannot set any limit to the power attending it, but we know that it will not be less than in the days of John. {HOMI November 1893, p. 39.5}

How was it in those days? Read Matthew 3:5: “Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan.” The whole country was stirred, and such was the power of the message, that for a little while all acknowledged that John was a prophet of God, and accepted his message as truth. Even so it will be in the closing of the message. The glory of the Lord is to be revealed not simply in the clouds of heaven, but in the form of his righteousness which he will put within and upon his people, “And all flesh shall see it together.” The message of salvation is to “all the ends of the earth.” Isaiah 45:22. “The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.” Isaiah 52:10. As the multitudes flocked to see John the Baptist, so they will yet gather to hear the message, when it is proclaimed with the same power. {HOMI November 1893, p. 39.6}

And when will that be? It will be when those who have the message to proclaim have the same experience that John the Baptist had. It will be when they have a personal experience of the power and glory of God working in them. This is the testimony of the word of God. {HOMI November 1893, p. 39.7}

In the first place, who are they who have the message to proclaim? The answer is, “Let him that heareth say, Come.” Revelation 22:17. “For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and *to every man his work*.” Mark 13:34. {HOMI November 1893, p. 39.8}

The message is God’s message, but he proclaims it through his servants. It is God that is going to work with a strong hand, but it is through his people that his power is to be manifested. The wisdom and power of God are to be made known in earth and heaven also, through the church. See Ephesians 3:10. {HOMI November 1893, p. 39.9}

“The gospel is the power of God unto salvation, *to every one that believeth*.” Romans 1:16. It has to do with men not as a race, or as a society, but as individuals. The power by which God works is according to the riches of his glory. See Ephesians 3:16. “Strengthened with all power, according to the might of his glory.” Colossians 1:11 (R.V.). It was by the glory of God that Christ was raised from the dead. Romans 6:4; 1:3. Therefore the power of the glory of God is the power of the resurrection; and this is what all the heirs of God must know. Read Ephesians 1:18-20; Philippians 3:8-10. {HOMI November 1893, p. 39.10}

The apostle Paul writes: “For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” Philippians 3:20, 21. The glory of God, which raised Christ from the dead, will at his coming raise from the dead all who are Christ’s, and will change the living righteous. The bodies of all the saints are to exhibit the glory of God. See Daniel 12:3; Matthew 13:43; Romans 8:18. {HOMI November 1893, p. 40.1}

But the power by which this is done is “according to the working by which he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” The power by which the bodies of the righteous are to be raised and changed, is the power by which they will have been made righteous. “We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 3:18. “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” {HOMI November 1893, p. 40.2}

This is the power of salvation; but all who are saved, are saved by the same power; therefore the glory of God must be revealed to the whole world, in order that all may have the same opportunity of salvation. Now no one can describe to another the glory of God. No mind can comprehend it, and no words can be framed that would convey any idea of it. “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork;” but it is not by words. “There is no speech nor language; without these their voice is heard.” If they depend upon articulate speech, they could not declare God’s glory that God has given them. We are also the workmanship of God, called out of darkness into his marvelous light, that we should show forth his excellencies. If we depend upon words alone, we shall make a failure. Our words will be powerless, if the glory of God is not revealed in our lives. {HOMI November 1893, p. 40.3}

Remember that the last message-the message which proclaims the power and glory of Christ’s life as the deliverer from sin-is a message of comfort. But no one can comfort another unless he has been in the same need, and has received comfort. Bear in mind that it is not enough to know that we are needy sinners, like all the rest of mankind. That alone will not enable us to give a message of comfort. The man who is perishing can derive no comfort from a knowledge of the fact that somebody else is also perishing. Comfort can come only through the announcement that there is help at hand, and the confident assurance from our own experience that the help is sufficient to supply all the need, “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.” 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4. {HOMI November 1893, p. 40.4}

This, then, is the personal experience necessary for this time. The measure of the power of the message in the world, is the measure of the power that works in the hearts of those who have the message to give. Therefore if the message is not going with the power that it ought, it is simply waiting on the professed people of God. God could do the work without man’s help. In fact, he does do it without man’s help; for we are not able to add anything to his power. But he could do it without man’s agency. His spirit could move on the hearts of men, even as in the beginning it moved on the face of the waters, before there was a man. But he has determined to show to the universe what he can do through puny man, and thus be the more glorified by his own work. {HOMI November 1893, p. 40.5}

The experience here set forth is not an impossible one to obtain. Christ is standing at the door and knocking for admittance. He will dwell in the heart of every one who will unquestioningly believe him. And when we by faith admit Christ into our hearts, he brings in the power of God, for he is the power of God, and the wisdom of God. “As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” John 1:12, 13. {HOMI November 1893, p. 40.6}

Let every one, then, yield to the Lord, so that with confidence he may say, “I know him whom I have believed,” and then when his people cry with one voice, “Behold your God,” all flesh shall speedily see the glory and the salvation of God. E. J. WAGGONER. {HOMI November 1893, p. 40.7}