

(Power From on High) 28. the Holy Spirit's Last Message

by A.B. Simpson

The Holy Ghost is preparing the world for Christ's return by giving us the predictions of His second coming, interpreting and illuminating the prophetic Scriptures, awakening the desire and expectation of Christ's return in the hearts of His disciples, and enabling and sending forth the disciples of Christ to fulfill their great trust in witnessing for Christ and evangelizing the world.

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Second Coming Of Christ"

Description

A.B. Simpson emphasizes the Holy Spirit's final message in Revelation 22:17, which is a prayer for Christ's return, highlighting the Spirit and the Bride's longing for His second coming. This message serves as both an invitation to sinners and a reminder for believers to prepare for the Lord's return, as the Holy Spirit has been actively guiding and preparing the Church throughout the ages. Simpson illustrates how the Holy Spirit has revealed prophecies about Christ's return and is currently awakening a desire for His coming in the hearts of believers. He encourages the Church to be spiritually ready and actively evangelize, as the Holy Spirit empowers them to fulfill the Great Commission. Ultimately, the sermon calls for a collective cry of anticipation,

Transcript

"The Spirit and the Bride say, Come." Rev. 22: 17.

This is the last message and the last mention of the Holy Ghost in the New Testament. It is usually interpreted as an appeal to the sinner to come to Christ, but it is really a prayer on the part of the Spirit and the Bride, for Christ to come back again, in His promised second advent. It is answered by His gracious message, "Behold, I come quickly," and the response of the apostle and the church, "Even so, come Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen."

It is very striking and beautiful that the last word of the Holy Ghost in this great Apocalypse, which is devoted to the unfolding of the Lord's return, should be a cry of prayer to Him to come. The great business of the Holy Ghost since Christ's ascension has been to prepare for His return. The two last messages of our departing Master, recorded in the first ten verses of the Acts of the Apostles, are the promise of the Holy Ghost and the promise of His second coming. Between these two promises lies the whole Christian age, and the object of the first is to fulfill the last.

The Holy Ghost has now unfolded the prophetic vision, and as He closes it until the end of time, He pours out one ardent prayer and unites the beloved Bride of Jesus in it, "Come Lord Jesus." And then He sends the message forth to all around and adds, "let him that heareth say come." And, turning to the world and the sinner, He utters the last message of inviting mercy to come to Jesus. "Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will let him take the water of life freely."

This passage suggests the connection of the Holy Ghost with the Lord's return.

I.

The Holy Ghost has given us the predictions of Christ's second coming. It was He that whispered to Enoch the first testimony respecting the advent in antediluvian times. It was He that gave to dying Jacob his vision of Shiloh's reign. It was He that revealed, even to double-hearted Balaam, the glory of the latter days, until he longed to have a part in it. It was He that enabled Job to speak of the day when in his flesh he should behold his living Redeemer and see Him for himself and not for another. It was He who inspired the heart of David to sing so often and so sublimely of the Prince of Peace, whose name should endure forever and whose sway should reach from shore to shore. It was He who gave to Isaiah his prophetic fire, and revealed to Daniel and Zechariah the panorama of the ages. Through the lips of the Master on the side of Olivet He foretold the fall of Jerusalem and the end of the Age.

It was He who taught the early Church this blessed hope, as the comfort of her sorrows and the inspiration of her labors. It was He who gave to the first apostolic council at Jerusalem its clear outline plan of the Christian age, and revealed to Paul the great apostasy, and the glorious messages of the advent in the Epistles to the Corinthians and Thessalonians. And now to the last of the apostles, He has unfolded with a clearness far surpassing all former visions the glorious truth of the Lord's return, and as He sums it all up He turns heavenward in one last prayer, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly."

By and by, when we read this book in the light of heaven, we shall find that every incident and detail of the Lord's return has been unfolded. Much of it we have misunderstood; much of it may remain somewhat obscure until the time of the end, but nothing has been left unsaid that we need to know to fit us for the meeting with our Lord. The Holy Ghost has made the testimony clear and plain. One word of every twenty-five of these New Testament Scriptures is about this great theme.

He is a very foolish man who reads his Bible without seeing it, and who misses the benediction pronounced in this very book, on "him that readeth and on them that keep the words of the prophecy of this book."

II.

The Holy Ghost has interpreted and illuminated the prophetic Scriptures.

It is not enough to have the prophetic word, we need some one to enable us to understand it.

Daniel uttered these advent visions, but he dimly comprehended them, and was told to seal them up until the time of the end. But he was also told that, as the end drew near, the wise should understand, and this is just what is happening today.

The most remarkable sign that we are in the last days and that the mystery of the ages is about to be finished, is the wondrous light which the Holy Ghost has shed on the interpretation of prophecy in our time.

Mistakes there have doubtless been; obscurities still there are; much yet remains to be made plain, but the great landmarks of the future are clear and plain, and the church of Christ knows enough to be able to be true to her trust and ready for the coming of her Lord.

The brightest and soundest scholarship of the age is on the side of pre-millennial truth. The light of science has become tributary to the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, and the truth respecting the Lord's coming has been so widely published and so simply illustrated and proclaimed, that no earnest Christian today need be in darkness with regard to that day. Nor need the most illiterate and simple disciple of Christ shrink back from the study of prophecy because it is mysterious and obscure. The Holy Ghost will make it plain, and will bless us in its study, as we earnestly read and faithfully keep the words of this prophecy.

III.

The Holy Ghost is preparing for the Lord's coming by awakening the desire and expectation of Christ's return in the hearts of His disciples.

When the Lord Jesus was about to come to earth for the first time, His faithful people were waiting for redemption and for the consolation of Israel, and at the proper time, they were there to welcome Him. It needed no special note of invitation to bring Simeon and Anna to the temple when the infant Jesus was to be presented there; but, through the simple and unfailing guidance of the Holy Ghost, they were both on time, and Simeon took the holy Babe in his arms and blessed Him, and Anna went forth from that joyful scene, womanlike, to tell of His coming "to all that waited for redemption in Jerusalem."

And so will it be at the last. Christ's Simeons and Annas will be waiting too. And already they have caught the first rays of dawn, the first intuitions of the Bridegroom's drawing near.

As the hour draws near this will become more uniform and universal among the little flock, and when He appears His Bride will not be left "in darkness that that day should overtake her as a thief," but she will be found ready and waiting to go forth to meet Him.

This blessed hope, which is taking possession of so many of our hearts, is one of the signs of our time, and its sympathetic throb is felt even among the votaries of false religion, who, with an instinct that they cannot understand or explain, are also looking for the appearing of some great One in the present generation.

Sometimes these holy intuitions are truer and more unerring than the conclusions of our science and philosophy. The little bird makes no mistake when, following an impulse in its little heart, it spreads its wings on the air and sails away to southern lands as winter is coming on. It knows that the springtime is there and it finds it true.

The little fellow was right as he stood holding the string of his kite which had gone far out of view in the lofty firmament, when the boys laughed at him and told him it was gone, who answered firmly, "No; 'taint neither, it's all right. I know it 'cause I feel it pull."

Ah, beloved, can you feel it pull? And, although worldly wisdom may scoff, and human ambition may plan for the coming generations, and the self-centered world roll on around its little axis, yet our eyes are upon the east, and our hearts tell us with an intuition that we know is true that the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

It is the blessed Holy Ghost. Let us listen to His whisper; let us catch his full meaning; let us, as the day draws near, be found "bending ourselves back," and "lifting up our heads" and, like the bird upon the branch, with fluttering wings and uplifted eye waiting for the signal of its mate, let us be ready at His earliest call to rise to meet Him in the air.

IV.

The Holy Ghost is preparing for Christ's return by the spiritual enrobing of His children.

The call is going forth. "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready; and it was granted to her that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints."

The Holy Ghost is preparing a people today for the coming of Christ. There is a marked movement in all sections of the Christian world for an entire consecration to Christ, that we may receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost and be transformed and conformed to Christ.

This is the very time that the Bridegroom is near at hand. When the Bride is found robed and ready, her Lord will not be long behind. This is one of the special religious movements of our time. Call it by what name you please, sanctification, the second blessing, the higher Christian life, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, entire consecration -- it is the call of God today to His own people, and it is the precursor of the Master's coming.

Our Lord's beautiful parables of the wedding robe and the ten virgins are founded on this great truth, the need of special preparation for the coming of the Lord. In the former parable it is personal holiness that is implied, and in the latter the indispensable need of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Both these qualifications are freely given in the grace of God. To the Bride it is "granted that she should be arrayed in linen, clean and bright." She does not have to make her own apparel but simply to put on the beautiful garments of her King, and like Rebecca of old, go forth arrayed in the robe which He has given, and covered with his veil to meet Him with acceptance at His coming.

Beloved, have we received the wedding robe? Have we made sure of the oil in our vessels with our lamps? Are we arrayed in raiment not only "clean" but also "bright," not only without the stain of sin, but with all the beauty and glory of the priestly garments? There is an inner and an outer robe. The inner robe must be spotless, the outer must be glorious. This is why the Holy Ghost is leading us through the discipline of life.

The word for "white" here in Revelation means bright, and it is the same word used about the transfiguration garments of our Lord. Beloved, let us put on the white robe and the beautiful garments, and, through the grace of the Holy Ghost, be robed and ready for His coming.

V.

The Holy Ghost gives the earnest of the resurrection.

We have already referred to this in former chapters, in connection with the physical life of Christ manifested in the believer through the Holy Ghost. This is an anticipation of the resurrection life. This is a foretaste and first fruit of the physical glory which is awaiting us at his coming.

Divine healing, rightly understood, is just the life of Jesus Christ in our mortal flesh and a foretaste of the resurrection. It is the work of the Holy Ghost to "quicken our mortal body" as He dwelleth in us. Beloved, do we know this supernatural life? And are we thus already tasting the fountain of immortality which is to supply our life eternally from its exhaustless spring?

VI.

The Holy Ghost is working in the providence of God among the nations, to prepare for the coming of Christ.

The wonderful events of our time are the beginning of those overturnings which are to bring in the kingdom of Christ and His millennial reign. The Ancient of Days is already working among the nations, and through the power of the Spirit of God is breaking down the barriers and opening up the highway for Christ's return. The same Holy Ghost that of old touched the hearts of heathen kings and made them God's instruments in accomplishing His purpose, is calling out today the various providential agencies which are but part of God's plan for the approaching end of the age. Surely, the extraordinary events that are so rapidly happening around us in every quarter of the globe are full of portentous meaning.

The wonderful progress of knowledge, the running to and fro of men, with their commercial activities and their methods of transportation and communication by land and sea, wars and rumors of wars disturbing the whole political realm, revolutions and upheavals of society and political institutions -- all these are full of meaning and promise, and through them all moves the steadfast purpose of the Holy Ghost, whose "eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth," and whose hand is moving men to the fulfillment of His higher will.

VII.

The Holy Ghost is enabling and sending forth the disciples of Christ to fulfill their great trust in witnessing for Christ and evangelizing the world.

This is His greatest work of preparation for the coming of Christ. In direct connection with the promise of the Spirit is the great commission, "Ye shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto Me, . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth."

And so today we witness the mighty workings of the Holy Ghost in sending out the message of the gospel to the neglected at home and the heathen abroad. The Holy Spirit is more than a delightful sentiment in the believer's heart. He is a mighty influence of practical, missionary zeal and world-wide evangelization, and the heart in which He is saying, "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly," will always be heard crying, "Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Beloved, if we are truly filled with the Holy Ghost and longing for the coming of Christ, we shall be active witnesses and workers in preparing for Him. We shall be found faithful to our trust wherever God has placed us. We will be soul-winners at home, and if we cannot go abroad we will help others to go and give the gospel quickly to all the world.

How much of our religious life is comfortable sentimentalism, taking the pleasant part, enjoying the selfish luxury, doing as much Christian work as is agreeable, and yet knowing little or nothing of the ceaseless self-sacrificing and intense devotion of the Lord Jesus Christ to finish His work and bring this revolted world back to His Father!

O, beloved, are we wholly in earnest? Have we, too, "a baptism to be baptized with, and are we straitened until it be accomplished?" Are we going forth "as much as lieth in us" to give the gospel of the Kingdom to all nations that the end may speedily come?

Perhaps, dear brother, as you read these lines, God may be calling you to go forth and call home the lost disciple who shall complete the number of the Bride and then bring back our adorable Redeemer.

Nay, perhaps, dear sinner, as you read these lines, you may be the soul for whom Christ is waiting to complete His glorious Bride, as He calls, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

There are three little words that seem sweetly linked together here. The first is "come, Lord Jesus," that is the Spirit's cry, and that will be the cry of every one who is filled with the Spirit. "Let him that heareth say, Come."

The second is, the word, "Go." If we are truly saying "come, Lord Jesus," we will go with the Gospel of salvation to the lost at home and the heathen abroad. And the third is the same word, "COME" again. For this will be our message, as it is the Spirit's, to a lost and dying world. "Come to Jesus." "Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

It is said that when Queen Victoria first visited Scotland, it was arranged that the tidings of her arrival should be signaled from Edinburgh, and by beacons on the mountain tops should be flashed all over the land until it reached from Leith to Stirling, and Stirling to Inverness, and Inverness to distant Caithness, and from mountain to mountain, the beacon blazed forth its joyful welcome, "The Queen has come."

So this text seems to be a cry from the watchtower. Oh, let us haste to plant the watch fires on all the mountain tops of earth; let us station the watchmen for the morning; let us as make ready for the beacon blaze; and, some sweet morn, the nearest watcher shall catch the signal, flash it from post to post, and tower to tower, and land to land, till all around the globe he that heareth shall say "Come," and the shout shall go up from the meeting ranks of earth and heaven, "THE LORD HAS COME." EVEN SO COME LORD JESUS, COME QUICKLY.

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