

The Cry of the Spirit

~Other Speakers S-Z: Smith Wigglesworth:

Behold the Lamb of God!

--John 1:36

Scripture reading: John 1:6-36

John the Baptist's clothing was camel's hair, his belt leather, his food locusts and wild honey (Matt. 3:4). No angels, shepherds, wise men, or stars heralded John's birth. But the heavenly messenger Gabriel, who had spoken to Daniel and Mary, also spoke to John's father, Zacharias.

In the wilderness, John was without the food and clothing of his earthly father's priestly home. He had only a groan, a cry--the cry of the Spirit. Yet from John's place in the wilderness, he moved the whole land. God cried through him. It was the cry of the Spirit--oh, that awful cry. All the land was moved by that piercing cry.

God spoke to John and told him about a new thing--water baptism. It was clean cut; it was a new way. He had been with those of the circumcision; now he was an outcast. It was the breaking down of the old plan.

The people heard his cry--oh, that cry, the awful cry of the Spirit--and the message that he gave: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" (v. 2). Make straight paths--no treading down of others or exacting undue rights. 'Make straight paths for your feet' (Heb. 12:13)." All were startled! All were awakened! They thought the Messiah had come. The searching was tremendous! Is this He? Who can it be? John said, "I am a voice, crying, crying, making a way for the Messiah to come" (John 1:23).

Individuals were purged; they found purpose. God pressed life through John. Through him, God moved multitudes and changed the situation. The banks of the Jordan were covered with people. The conviction was tremendous. They cried out. The prophet Isaiah had predicted, "The rough ways [will be made] smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God" (Luke 3:5-6). The people, the multitude, cried out and were baptized by John in the Jordan, confessing their sins.

Oh, to be alone with God. God's Word came to John when he was alone: "The word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (Luke 3:2-3).

Alone! Alone!

Jesus bore it all alone!

He gave Himself to save His own.

He suffered--bled and died alone--alone.

Oh, to be alone with God, to get His mind, His thoughts, and His impression and revelation of the need of the people.

There was nothing ordinary about John--all was extraordinary. Herod was reproved by him because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils that Herod had done. Herodias's daughter danced before Herod, who promised her up to half his kingdom. She asked for John the Baptist's head. (See Matthew 14:3-11.)

This holy man was alone. God had John in such a way that he could express that cry--the burden for the whole land. He could cry for the sins of the people. God is holy. We are the children of Abraham--the children of faith. Awful judgment is coming. Cry! Cry!

John could not help but cry because of the people's sin. John had been filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb (Luke 1:15). He had the burden. He was stern, but through his work, the land was open to Jesus. Jesus walked in the way; He came a new way.

"John came neither eating nor drinking" (Matt. 11:18)--John came crying. John's father and mother were left behind. His heart bled at the altar. He bore the burden, the cry, the need of the people. The only place he could breathe and be free was in the wilderness--the atmosphere of heaven--until he turned with a message to declare the preparation needed. Before Jesus came, repentance came to open up the place of redemption.

Like John, there must be a working of the Spirit in you; then God will work through you for others.

The Cry of the Spirit

Thought for today: God is with a person who has only a cry.