**THE SILVER LINING - MESSAGES OF HOPE AND CHEER BY JOHN H. JOWETT**

**17. LIFE WITH WINGS by JOHN H. JOWETT**

*"They shall mount up with wings as eagles."*

*Isaiah 40:31*

"They shall mount up with wings as eagles." Who shall? "They that wait upon the Lord." And waiting upon the Lord is not merely a passing call, but an abiding in Him. Waiting is not so much a transient action as a permanent attitude. It is not the restless vagrant calling at the door for relief, it is rather the intimacy of the babe at the breast.

They who thus wait upon the Lord shall obtain a marvellous addition to their resources. Their life shall be endowed with mysterious but most real equipment. They shall obtain wings. We do well when picturing the angel presences to endow them with wings. At the best it is a clumsy symbolism, but all symbolisms of eternal things are clumsy and ineffective. And what do we mean by wings? We mean that life has gained new powers, extraordinary capacity; the old self has received heavenly addition, endowing it with nimbleness, buoyancy, strength. We used to sing in our childhood, "I want to be an angel." I am afraid the sentiment was often poor and unworthy, and removed our thoughts rather to a world that is to be than to the reality by which we are surrounded to-day. But it is right to wish to be an angel if by that wish we aspire after angelic powers and seek for angels' wings. It is right to long for their powers of flight, their capacity to soar unto the heights. We may have the angels' wings. Wing-power is not only the reward of those who are redeemed out of time and emancipated from death, and who have entered into the larger life of the unseen glory, but it is the prerogative of you and me. "They that wait upon the Lord ... shall mount up with wings." Waiting upon the Lord will enable us to share the angels' fellowship, to feed on angels' food, and to acquire the angels' power of wing. "They shall mount up with wings as eagles." Now let us see what are some of the characteristics of life with wings.

It is life characterised by buoyancy. We become endowed with power to rise above things! How often we give the counsel one to another, "You should rise above it!" But too often it is idle counsel, because it implies that the friend to whom we give it has the gift of wings too frequently he is only endowed with feet. If, when we give the counsel, we could give the wings, the things that bind him to the low plains of life might be left behind.

How frequently we are held in bondage by grovelling to the mean and trifling! Some small grievance enters into our life and keeps us from the heights. Some disappointment holds us in depressing servitude. Some ingratitude paralyses our service and chills our delight in unselfish toil. Or some discourtesy is done to us, we cannot get away from it. Or, perhaps, it is "the murmur of self-will," or "the storm of passion" which prevents our emancipation. Whatever it may be, and there are a thousand such tyrannies, life is separated from the heavenlies, and becomes utterly mundane, of the earth earthy. Well, now, when we get the wings we have the power to rise above these trifles, and even above the things that may be larger than trifles and may appear like gigantic hills. Wing-power gives buoyancy, and we are enabled to look down even upon the hills and see them beneath our feet. The life with wing-power is not the victim of "the spirit of heaviness." It does not creep along in deep, heavy melancholy. In the day of difficulty and disappointment it can soar and sing at heaven's gate.

Life with wing-power is characterised by loftiness. "They shall mount up!" You know how we speak of the men and women endowed with wings. We speak of a "lofty character," as opposed to one who is low or mean. There are men with low motives, and they move along the low way. There are men with mean affections which do not comprehend a brother. Now, it is the glorious characteristic of the Christian religion that it claims to give loftiness to the life. There is no feature that the Bible loves more to proclaim than just this feature of "aboveness." It distinguishes the disciples of Christ. See how the ambitions of the book run:--"Seek the things that are above"; "Set your mind on things above." It speaks also of dwelling "with Christ in the heavenly places." All this describes the life that looks at everything from lofty standpoints and approaches everything with high ambition. We know these men when they appear. How often one has observed the power of their presence in public meetings! Other speakers have addressed the assembly, and the thought and life of the meeting have grovelled along a mean and questionable way. And then the wing-man comes! He lays hold of the subject, and what happens? Everybody says, "How he lifted it up!" A pure atmosphere cam round about the assembly; everybody felt the inrush of a purer air and a finer light. We had mounted up with wings as eagles.

The wing-life is characterised by comprehensiveness. High soaring gives wide seeing. Loftiness gives comprehension. When we live on the low grounds we only possess a narrow outlook. One man offers his opinion on some weighty matter and he is answered by the charge, "That is a very low ground to take." The low ground always means petty vision. Men who do not soar always have small views of things. We require wings for breadth of view. Now see! The higher you get the greater will be the area that comes within your view. We may judge our height by the measure of our outlook. How much do we see? We have not got very high if we only see ourselves; nay, we are in the mire! "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." It is well when we get so high that our vision comprehends our town, better still when it includes the country, better still when it encircles other countries, best of all when it engirdles the world. It is well when we are interested in home missions; better still when home and foreign work are comprehended in our view. We cannot do this without wings, for without the wings we cannot get into the heights. The higher we get the more we shall see of other parties beside our own. "Lord, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name, and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us." How narrow the outlook! One day the vision of the disciples will be immeasurably enlarged, and that will be when they are dwelling in the heavenly places with Christ. If we remain locked up in an --ism we shall never see our brethren in the other --isms. If we rise up into Christ we shall meet our brethren there. Unity is coming by the use of wings! "They shall mount up with wings as eagles."

The wing-life is characterised by proportion. To see things aright we must get away from them. We never see a thing truly until we see it in its relationships. We must see a moment in relation to a week, a week in relation to a year, a year in relation to eternity. Wing-power gives us the gift of soaring, and we see how things are related one to another. An affliction looked at from the lowlands may be stupendous; looked at from the heights it may appear little or nothing. "This light affliction which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." What a breadth of view! And here is another. "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to usward." This is a bird's-eye view. It sees life "whole."

All these are characteristics of the life with wings. And does it not sound a strong and joyful life? "As eagles!" How mighty the bird from which the picture is taken! What strength of wing! And such is to be ours if we wait upon the Lord. We shall be able to soar above the biggest disappointment and to wing our way into the very presence of the sun. "They that wait upon the Lord" shall have all this. Let us abide in waiting and find our joy and our power in the heights.