

7 people. God wants you to go out and rebuke sin. He wants you to go out and
 resent the great call of His gospel, but one of the great things He wants you
 to do is to comfort his people. People need comfort, and you bring them the
 comfort they need, and then they are apt to be ready to listen to the message
 of their need, the answer to their need that God wants you to give them. It is
 a great thing, and needed for the Christian worker to comfort God's people.
 And here is the theme of comfort. And then the next. Speak ye comfortably
 to Jerusalem, and cry unto her. What are we to cry unto her? We cry unto
 her that the redemption is at hand. That the punishment has been borne out,
 that the exile is about over. Cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished,
 that her iniquity is pardoned, for she has received at the Lord's hand the
 equivalent, the double for all her sins. Not that God has punished it twice,
 double never means that. The double.....ll.....punished them twice as
 much as their sin has required. Not at all. He has ~~not~~ given them the ~~an~~ equi-
 valent. He has given them the double. He has given them that which is proper
 in relation to their sins. God has fulfilled the purpose of the exile. The
 exile is ready to come to an end. But we haven't specifically spoken of exile
 here. We are not dealing with predictive prophecy in this chapter in the
 sense of specific events of the future. We are dealing with these great
 emotions. And we are saying that God wants His people comforted because there
 is going to be an answer to the sin question, and to the exile and all the
 other terrible things that come as a result of the sin question. They have
 received the equivalent for their sins. We have received it. The ransom for
 our sins has been paid, through Christ. We have been saved. It is a general
 verse touching upon this emotion. But the reader very specifically has the
 exile in mind. And the first thing related to it. Now, he goes on, "the voice
 of him that criess in the wilderness." Why do you have the wilderness? Because
 the people in exile are way over there on the other side of the wilderness. They
 can't get home to Jerusalem unless they go ~~thru~~ through the wilderness. The
 wilderness is one of the great things that keeps them away from ~~the~~ returning
 to their homes, and in the wilderness there, which is in the way of preventing