

# Headed for Captivity

#0585

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When I was asked if I would take this service I sought the Lord that He would help us to have what He has planned. During the night some things were vividly impressed upon my heart I want to share with you. I don't wish to preach a sermon in this young people's meeting, but I want to talk some things over with you about what is ahead and what it means to you and me.

God has a royal line in which the youth of the present generation are called to take their part. It has been characteristic of the people of God to suffer persecution, to have tribulation. The glory we share with Jesus in this world is the glory of self-sacrificing love. John the Baptist perished in a dungeon, and Jesus said none greater had been born.

Let me state frankly what I want to place before you, and then we will read some references. What are you headed for? I say you are headed for captivity. You are headed for bondage. Some of you are headed to be slaves. You are headed for a great time of trouble. This is not to scare you or frighten you. There is nothing to be scared about. It is the greatest privilege you could have. But it is a good thing to know what is ahead.

We speak a great deal of the glory of the loud cry, and it is glorious. But one of the most glorious things about the loud cry is the character the young people of the Advent movement are going to display when they are made slaves. I suppose many of you have thought of the possibility of going to prison, perhaps dying a martyr's death. But I don't know if you have pondered long over the possibility of being a slave. I don't mean just a home assistant as a slave is sometimes spoken of today. I mean a slave.

We will support this with some statements, but first I want to go back to the type. What happened to Israel is a type of the experience of the remnant people of God. Paul tells us these things happened for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come.

God chose Israel to be His peculiar people. He intended through them to bless and save the world. He intended that through them His saving help would be known among all nations. He intended that they follow His plan of education, His plan of diet, His plan of country living, His plan of religion, His total plan, and that the resulting prosperity would cause all the nations of the earth to look at Israel and say, They have the answer to the world's problems.

To a limited degree this was accomplished. When the Queen of Sheba came to Solomon to see his glory and hear his wisdom it was a fulfillment of this. But

unfortunately, Israel under Solomon came to glory more and more in their prosperity instead of the principles of simplicity.

Great wealth caused them to copy the nations God intended should copy them. The fashions of the world, the customs of the world came into Israel. The high wages, educational practices, worship of idols, customs of amusement and recreation, all borrowed from the heathen, corrupted the native simplicity. As the result Israel had one problem after the other. The kingdom was divided immediately after Solomon. The ten tribes went headlong into apostasy, ending in Baal worship, the most abominable of heathen religions. And Juda finally became a hotbed of heathenism instead of a bulwark for the message of God.

Nevertheless, God's purpose must be carried out. God is the great ruler who looks at things from the advantage point of eternity. He is never taken by surprise. He has things in reserve.

I want to read a little story about a young woman. I don't know how old she was. She is called a little maid. She wasn't a child. She was old enough to work and do a good job. She waited on one of the leading families of the great kingdom of Syria which was lording it over Israel.

"Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper. And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife" 2 Kings 5:1-2.

She was what? A captive. How did she get there? The soldiers came and took her away from her father and mother. I don't know if they killed her father and mother. I don't know if they burned the house down. The Bible doesn't say anything about that. All we see is a little maid from the land of Israel, and she is a captive and a slave. She has been forced to serve in the home of the general of the great alien army.

What does she do? She doesn't pout. She doesn't steal. She doesn't fritter away her time. As the story pictures, she is a perfect model of devotion. Devotion to the interests of those who have carried her away captive. She is God's ambassador to an enemy land. And what God could not do through a whole nation of apostates, He accomplished through one little girl who was a captive and a slave.

You know the story. You see her saying to her mistress:

"Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy" 2 Kings 5:3.

To put it simply friends, this young woman believed in the Spirit of Prophecy. She didn't dismiss it as something that belonged to a by-gone age. She believed in medical missionary work under the direction of the Spirit of Prophecy. She believed God was pleased through following the instructions of the prophet to grant healing

power. And she longed that it might be revealed and manifested in this man who was the general of the army that had snatched her from her home and made her a slave.

What did she have? She had love for God. She had a simple trust in divine providence. She knew God had put her there through strange circumstances she would not have chosen. And she did her best.

These words of the little maid reached the ears of the king. Isn't it strange that this heathen king had more faith in the possibility of healing through the medical missionary program of the Spirit of Prophecy than all Israel did. Do you hear of any other lepers coming to Elisha either before or after this happened and saying they would like to get on the program?

Jesus referred to this incident in His first sermon in Nazareth. He said there were many lepers in Israel in the days of Elisha, but none of them was healed but Naaman the Syrian.

What faith was in the heart of that little girl. What faith it awakened in her mistress and her master, and the king of Syria, leader of the enemy.

Naaman went down with a letter from the king, and he finally reached the prophet. He reached the Jordan. There were delays and bulky experiences along the way, but he finally carried out the prescription of the Spirit of Prophecy, and went home not only a healed man but a converted man. Think of it. The general of the enemy army became a converted man and worshiper of the true God.

How did it happen? Through a girl. I would assume from the story that she was a teenager. She was young enough to be called a little maid. She was old enough to be worthwhile, kept as a servant in the home of the general of Syria. That is where some of you girls are headed for.

Let's go to the book of Daniel. This is a bit later. Juda had gone down the same road Israel led in, and God allowed the terrible scourge of the Babylonian army under Nebuchadnezzar to reach Jerusalem. A little later Jerusalem was destroyed. The beautiful temple was burned and the walls were broken down.

On this particular occasion a number of the royal family were carried into captivity:

“And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skillful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans” Daniel 1:3-4.

A hundred years before Daniel was born the prophet Isaiah had foretold this. When Hezekiah was blessed by God in healing, instead of telling the story of what God had done, he showed those ambassadors from Babylon all his treasures.

God said to the king that those Babylonians were coming back and would take everything they had. It wouldn't happen in their day, but their descendants were going to be carried captive into Babylon, and from among their own sons would be those who would be servants in the court of the king of Babylon. Again God is seeking to accomplish through tragedy what Israel would not let Him accomplish through prosperity.

How old was Daniel when this happened? The Spirit of Prophecy tells us he was eighteen. A teenager, if you please. What did he do as a slave down there in Babylon? Did he eat the king's meat? No. Did he drink the king's wine? No. Did he worship the king's gods? No. He kept himself unspotted from the world. He was death to the applause and the subtle sophistries of Babylon. He was dauntless before any hint of threat.

Daniel and three other men were witnesses for God over many decades. In fact, throughout the entire reign of Babylon, in one way or another the influence of these four men was felt.

In the first chapter God used Daniel to tell the king his dream. In the third chapter those three associates of his stood when all the world bowed down before the golden image. They were put into the fiery furnace, but God rescued them. In both of those experiences the king of Babylon acknowledged the God of heaven, first as the great revealer, second as the great rescuer. But the lesson was not yet learned.

In the fourth chapter we see the king of Babylon strutting. He looks over all that has been accomplished and says, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built." God in mercy has already given him warning in his dream of the big tree. Daniel has interpreted it. And now, in fast fulfillment, sure and certain the axe falls. The tree is cut down. The king loses his reason. But he goes out to a re-conditioning program.

That is exactly what happened. Study it in the fourth chapter of Daniel. And don't miss it. As a result of this three-fold message, given by these four young men who were captives in Babylon, the king of Babylon becomes not only healed but saved. Like the general of the army of the Syrians generations before, he is won by some young people who, as captives, revealed their loyalty to God and their conscious knowledge of the superiority of heaven's way of life.

Do you know who wrote the fourth chapter of Daniel? Daniel didn't write it. He copied it down. But if you will look you will see who wrote it:

"Nebuchadnezzar the king, unto all people, nations, and languages, ... I thought it good to show the signs and wonder that the high God hath wrought toward me" Daniel 4:1-2.

The king told his experience. He gave his witness.

If the Devil were not so crazy he would have put down his weapons and surrendered long ago. But he is insane. Again and again the Devil has been checkmated, counter balanced, naturalized, defeated. God allows him to chose his weapons. He falls like Goliath of old, hit with a little stone, and his head severed with his own sword.

Yes. When we get to the kingdom of God we are going to see Naaman, the captain of the host of Syria, the general of the enemy army. I hope his wife will be there too. I think she will. And can you imagine the joy of that little maid all through eternity?

We are going to see Nebuchadnezzar there. The king of Babylon. The leader of the organization of the Devil in this world, snatched as a brand from the burning, coming over on the side of the government of heaven, and sending to all the world through a royal edict the good news that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. And how was he won? By a young man who loved health reform instead of dodging it. By a young man who believed in the gift of prophecy instead of being taken with worldly education. By a young man who was simple enough to have a prayer band with his young friends, and believed God would hear them.

These are the young people through whom God accomplished in captivity what Israel failed to accomplish in prosperity.

I read you something now so you will see why I am studying this with you:

“The Lord called out His people Israel and separated them from the world that He might commit to them a sacred trust. He made them the depositaries of His law, and He designed, through them, to preserve among men the knowledge of Himself. Through them the light of heaven was to shine out to the dark places of the earth, and a voice was to be heard appealing to all people to turn from their idolatry to serve the living and true God. Had the Hebrews been true to their trust, they would have been a power in the world. ... But they did not keep their covenant with God. They followed after the idolatrous practices of other nations” *Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 5, page 454- 455.

They had to keep up with the Jones of their time. Dare I say it? Dare I fail to say it? They wanted accreditation. And I mean that in a much wider sense than just education. They wanted to be accepted. They wanted a king like all the other nations. That was their problem.

“They followed after the idolatrous practices of other nations, and instead of making their Creator’s name a praise in the earth their course held it up to the contempt of the heathen. Yet the purpose of God must be accomplished. The knowledge of His will must be spread abroad in the earth. God brought the hand of

the oppressor upon His people and scattered them as captives among the nations. ... Scattered throughout the countries of the heathen, they spread abroad the knowledge of the true God" *Ibid*.

Not all of them. Not many of them. But enough. And these stories I have told you eloquently speak of the fact that God does not have to have a multitude, but He does have to have a few.

"Thus the work which God had given His people to do in prosperity, in their own border, but which had been neglected through their unfaithfulness, was done by them in captivity, under trial and embarrassment" *Ibid*.

Now notice:

"The same disobedience and failure which were seen in the Jewish church have characterized in a greater degree the people who have had this great light from heaven in the last messages of warning" *Ibid*, page 456.

We look back at the things they did and think surely what we are doing couldn't be as bad as that. We don't get down and put our heads before a senseless idol. We don't put our children in the red hot arms of a burning idol.

No. We have other ways. The same disobedience and failure which were seen in the Jewish church have characterized in a greater degree the people who have had this great light from heaven in the last messages of warning. Shall we let the history of Israel be repeated in our experience?

"Shall we, like them, squander our opportunities and privileges until God shall permit oppression and persecution to come upon us? Will the work which might be performed in peace and comparative prosperity be left undone until it must be performed in days of darkness, under the pressure of trial and persecution?" *Ibid*.

On these pages the prophet raises these questions, and what is implied here is stated in plain English:

"The work which the church has failed to do in a time of peace and prosperity she will have to do in a terrible crisis under most discouraging, forbidding circumstances. The warnings that worldly conformity has silenced or withheld must be given under the fiercest opposition from enemies of the faith. And at that time the superficial, conservative class, whose influence has steadily retarded the progress of the work, will renounce the faith and take their stand with its avowed enemies, toward whom their sympathies have long been tending" *Ibid*, page 463.

The chaff is going to be blown out. The wheat is going to remain. But listen, the wheat is going to be scattered over this world.

Let me give you another picture of it. This is speaking of the glorious loud cry, but what I am about to read may not seem so glorious. There is a glory in it if you have eyes to see it.

“Conscientious obedience to the word of God will be treated as rebellion. Blinded by Satan, the parent will exercise harshness and severity toward the believing child; the master or mistress will oppress the commandment-keeping servant. Affection will be alienated; children will be disinherited and driven from home. The words of Paul will be literally fulfilled: ‘All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.’ 2 Timothy 3:12. As the defenders of truth refuse to honor the Sunday-sabbath, some of them will be thrust into prison, some will be exiled, some will be treated as slaves” *Great Controversy*, page 608.

I don’t have to infer what I am giving you this afternoon. I am reading it in plain English. Correct? Do you see what I meant when I looked into your young faces and said you are headed into captivity? “Some will be thrust into prison, some will be exiled, some will be treated as slaves.” The prophet adds:

“To human wisdom all this now seems impossible; but as the restraining Spirit of God shall be withdrawn from men, and they shall be under the control of Satan, who hates the divine precepts, there will be strange developments. The heart can be very cruel when God’s fear and love are removed” *Ibid*.

Friends, do you want to get off the boat before it gets into those troubled waters? Thank God, No. It is a good thing to know what is ahead.

I want to ask you something. Why do you suppose Daniel was true down there in Babylon? I will tell you why. He learned to be true in Jerusalem. Why do you suppose he was different in Babylon? He had learned to be different in Jerusalem.

I put it plain to you, dear young friends. If you cannot stand for principle where you are, you will not stand for principle in Syria or in Babylon. Never. God wants you to have a personal experience with Him.

I want to ask you another question. What do you suppose the parents of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego were doing as their boys were growing up?

They had read in the Spirit of Prophecy the writing of the prophet Isaiah about a hundred years before Daniel’s time that some of those boys from the royal family

would be taken as slaves to Babylon. They didn't know just when the tornado would strike. They didn't know when would be the last day they would see their boys. But I can see those dear fathers and mothers, the few of the remnant of Israel who cherished the Spirit of Prophecy, gathering their children about them morning by morning, day by day, and saying, "Boys we want to give you now, what we will wish we had given you when you have to go to Babylon as slaves."

Do you see? Ah friends, if parents today could see this it would spoil the tinsel of this world. It would spoil the glamor of professionalism. It would kill this selfish, covetous desire to have my boy make the top, have my girl carry off the honors, have my children shine out in the world and the denomination.

Let me tell you were they are going to shine if their shining ever means something. They are going to shine as slaves in faithful service, in medical missionary service, in the coming time of captivity.

Conventional education will never get them ready for that. What is borrowed from the world must lead to the world, for what is borrowed must be paid back.

But there is something that comes from heaven. It is the light of the knowledge of the glory of God as seen in the face of Jesus Christ's self-sacrificing love. Listen:

"God's purpose for the children growing up beside our hearths is wider, deeper, higher, than our restricted vision had comprehended. From the humblest lot those whom He has seen faithful have in time past been called to witness for Him in the world's highest places. And many a lad of today, growing up as did Daniel in his Judean home, studying God's word and His works, and learning the lessons of faithful service, will yet stand in legislative assemblies, in halls of justice, or in royal courts, as a witness for the King of kings" *Education*, page 262.

These are familiar words, but I venture that many a heart here this afternoon is going to see something strangely new in them. It is going to happen, friends. It is happening. God is going to have a remnant who follow the law and the prophets, who have no interest in the fashions, customs, education, recreation, music, or anything else of this world. God is going to have a remnant who only want one thing, and that is to please the Master.

And they will have so learned the lessons of faithful service in their homes and communities that when they are taken by the enemy and thrust as slaves into any situation, God will see to it that every honest heart on the enemy's side is contacted through the loving ministry of those young people. And from the leading men and women of this earth, there will be a few who will step out and stand with God's people through the time of trouble.

Are you willing? What is the training? I read it here.



“And many a lad today growing up as did Daniel in his Judean home, studying God’s word and His works, and learning the lessons of faithful service” *Ibid*.

That is the program. To know God’s word, the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. To know His works, the book of nature. To know especially this masterpiece of creation, the human body. And to know the joy of loving service. To be faithful in the job God has given us to do.

These are the triumvirates which will make it possible for the little maids of today, finding themselves captive in heathen homes, to witness for Jesus. These are the lessons which will make the Daniel’s of today shine as stars, and will win from the ranks of Babylon some of the leaders on His side to stand with God’s people in the triumph hour.

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