

The Restoration of the Banished

by Horatius Bonar

God's banished ones can be restored through a substitute, His Son Jesus Christ, who takes our place of banishment and offers us His place of honour and glory in the home of God.

Scripture: Genesis 3:19, 2 Samuel 14:14, Isaiah 53:5, Luke 15:20, John 3:16, Romans 5:8, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Ephesians 2:12-13, Hebrews 9:27, 1 Peter 2:25

Topics: "Divine Love", "Restoration"

Description

Horatius Bonar emphasizes God's desire for the restoration of His banished people, drawing parallels between King David's estrangement from Absalom and humanity's separation from God due to sin. He highlights the inevitability of death and the hopelessness of humanity without divine intervention, likening mankind to water spilled on the ground, irretrievable and lost. Yet, Bonar reassures that God, in His justice, devises means for reconciliation, sending His Son as a substitute to bear the penalty of sin and restore the relationship with the banished. The sermon calls for a response to God's invitation to return, emphasizing His love and longing for the lost.

Transcript

"For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect any person; yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from Him."--2 Samuel 14:14

SUCH is "the wise woman's" argument, or rather Joab's, addressed to king David, in order to persuade him to be reconciled to Absalom. God does not deal with us as you are dealing with your son, though we have deserved his anger. He punishes, yet he, devises means for the cancelling of the punishment and the restoration of his exiles. He is just, yet the Saviour. Mark the woman's statement.

I. We must needs die. This is the law, the inevitable, inexorable law; not of nature or fate, but of God. "Unto dust shalt thou return;" "It is appointed unto men once to die." This is no probability, but a certainty, a necessity; greater than that the sun will rise and set to-morrow. "He died," is the conclusion of each man's history. Our world's story is one of death. It might be Methuselah's nine hundred or David's seventy, but it is death at last. Even when the Son of God took our nature, he must die. None have escaped this, save two; none shall, save those who shall be alive when Christ comes. You may have health, friends, riches, honours, but you must needs die. When, where, how, you know not.

II. We are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. Man lieth down and riseth not. He is not like some building, which when ruined may be re-erected; nor like fallen fruit, that may be gathered up; but like water, which mingles with the soil and cannot be laid hold of. He mixes with the earth, and cannot raise himself, nor be raised by his fellows. He passes away and returns not. Look at the churchyard, there is the water spilt on the ground. Look at earth's battlefield, there is the water spilt. Look at the depths of ocean, which have swallowed up tens of thousands, there is the water spilt. Not one drop has yet been gathered up of all that has been spilt since the world began, save one drop, one precious drop,--even Him who saw no corruption. No grave has given up its dust. Each slumbering atom lies till the great morning. We may walk among and weep over them, and raise monuments with names and epitaphs, but we cannot gather them up. There they remain till He comes, who is the resurrection and the life, to put forth His hand and take up each forgotten particle.

III. God doth not respect persons. In His sight all are alike, as sinners, as creatures, as sons of Adam, as dying men,--young or old, low or high. He cannot be bribed to spare. He accepteth no man's person. The sick-bed and the death-bed are spread for all. The tomb opens for all; the simple turf it may be, or some rich marble monument, but still it is a tomb, a receptacle for human bones and dust. No ornaments can make it otherwise. Thou must die, is the recorded sentence, and God makes no exceptions.

IV. He deviseth means for the restoration of His banished. He is righteous, and will not palliate sin, nor repeal His sentence. Yet He does not leave us without hope. Mark here,

1. His banished. We are God's banished ones, no longer in our father's house or the king's palace, cast out like Adam from Paradise, or Cain from God's presence, or Absalom from Jerusalem, or Israel from Canaan. Sin has done it all. The brand of exile is upon us; it is God himself who has banished us. Elsewhere we are described as prodigals leaving our Father's house, here as criminals banished from His presence. O man, thou art an exile! Perhaps thou dost not feel thy loneliness, thou hast got familiarised with the place of exile, nevertheless thou art a banished man, banished from Him who made thee and in whose favour is life.

2. God's love to the banished. He has expressed His displeasure against their rebellion by banishing them, yet He has not forgotten them. He pities them, yearns over them, beckons them back. Distance has not erased their names from his paternal heart. No other may pity them, but he does. The Father sees his prodigals in the far off country; their misery, loneliness of heart, weariness, call forth his pity. He stretches out his hands, and the words of his lips are, "Come unto me," return, return.

3. God's design to restore them. He has a purpose of grace. The good pleasure of his goodness shews itself in a gracious design, a plan of mingled sovereignty and goodwill, righteousness and grace. He has resolved that they shall not remain afar off. His purpose shall stand.

4. His means for this. These are not stated here, but the Bible is the revelation of these. He spares not His Son, but sends Him in quest of the exiles. He comes into the land of banishment, lies in an exile's cradle, becomes a banished man for them, lives a banished life, endures an exile's shame, dies an exile's death, is buried in an exile's tomb. He takes our place of banishment that we may take His place of honour and glory in the home of His Father and our Father. Such is the exchange between the exile and the exile's divine substitute. Though rich, for our sakes He becomes poor. Though at home, He comes into banishment, that we may not be expelled forever. And here, in connection with our restoration through a substitute, there are three questions.

(1.) Will the Father accept a substitute? Yes, He will; nay, He has. His purpose of grace has been carried out by His providing the Substitute. He has sent His Son! He has sent Solomon to seek Absalom, to bear Absalom's penalty. He has not spared His Son that He may spare us.

(2.) Is the Son willing to become a substitute? Will Solomon quit Jerusalem and David's palace, and take the place of the banished Absalom? He will. Nay, He has done it. He has come down in quest of us. He has borne our sins.

(3.) Are you willing to take this substitute? He has come. He offers the exchange. Give me thy guilt and take my righteousness. Thou rebellious son, thou banished Absalom, thou hater of thy heavenly Father and conspirer against His government, wilt thou not return? Thy Father's heart yearns over thee, He longs to have thee back. Return, return! If not, He weeps over thee as over Jerusalem; and when thou diest He cries out, O Absalom, my son, my son.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/horatius-bonar/the-restoration-of-the-banished/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net