

Work, Rest, and Recompense.

by Horatius Bonar

The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a simple life, persevering in work, and looking forward to the promise of rest and future glory in the resurrection.

Scripture: Genesis 15:15, Psalm 1:5, Isaiah 26:19, Daniel 12:13, Matthew 25:21, 1 Corinthians 15:58, 2 Timothy 4:7-8, Hebrews 4:9-11, Revelation 3:11, Revelation 21:4

Topics: "Hope in Resurrection", "Perseverance"

Description

Horatius Bonar emphasizes the importance of perseverance in our daily work as Christians, drawing from Daniel 12:13, which encourages believers to continue their journey until the end, promising rest and future glory. He outlines three key aspects for God's saints: the present work that requires diligence, the coming rest that awaits after life's toil, and the future glory that will be revealed at resurrection. Bonar reassures that while life may be filled with challenges, there is a divine promise of rest and reward for those who remain faithful. He encourages believers to remain steadfast in their duties, knowing that their labor is not in vain and that they will ultimately receive their inheritance.

Transcript

"Go your way until the end be: for you shall rest, and stand in your lot at the end of the days." - Daniel 12:13

"As for you, go your way until the end. You will rest, and then at the end of the days, you will rise again to receive the inheritance set aside for you." - Daniel 12:13

Daniel reminds us of John. The one was the "man greatly beloved," the other "the disciple whom Jesus loved." The one had frequent revelations and visions, specially of the times and seasons, so had the other. The one fainted and was without strength at the sight of Messiah's glory; the other fell at Christ's feet as one dead. Both were comforted by the hand of Jesus laid upon them. Both were exiles in a Gentile land. Both were very aged men. In our text we are reminded of the last words of our Lord to John, "Follow me." To Daniel it is, "Go your way until the end."

Here we have three things for God's Daniels, God's saints, in these days:

- (1.) a saint's present work;
- (2.) a saint's coming rest;

(3.) a saint's future glory.

I. A SAINT'S PRESENT WORK. "Go your way until the end be." This reminds us of, "If I will that he tarry until I come." These visions are not to make you remiss in duty, heedless of common things, neglectful of daily work. No, go your way until the end be- work while it is day. It was meant-

(1.) TO CALM. That which he previously had seen and heard was fitted to trouble, and excite, and discompose. He had been in the presence of God, like Paul, in the third heaven. He had been carried forward into the marvelous events of the latter day. He needed a calming word. And here it is, "Go your way until the end." Do your ordinary work; walk in the simple way of common life. In the midst of this age's convulsions, and storms, and heat; in the prospect of what is coming on the earth in the last days, we need calming words too. Let us listen to the calm, holy voice that speaks to us ever from heaven, "Be still, and know that I am God;" "Let not your hearts be troubled;" "Keep yourselves in the love of God;" "What is that to you? Follow me."

(2.) TO EXHORT. The words are those of command or exhortation, like those of Jesus, "Follow me." It is not that we are permitted to attend to our daily duties in the midst of all these vast events, present or to come; we are commanded to do so; to work while it is day. Sow your seed. Do not be slothful in business. Be careful and scrupulous in filling up the common daily outline of life. Do its little things well, no less than its great.

(3.) TO CHEER. The word speaks of an end. It is not perpetual toil- endless weariness. There remains a rest. The end comes! It may not be long. Life will soon be done. Or the Lord may soon be here. Do not be weary or disheartened. Be of good cheer. What are a few years of toil in prospect of the eternal rest! How needful to keep in mind these words, "Go you your way until the end be." Let us not be turned aside from the plain path; nor troubled in mind; nor disconcerted in plans; nor led to slacken our diligence. Let us press on, fight on, work on, run on; steadfast and unmoveable in the work of the Lord. We have a daily work to do in the sight of God; let us do it well. Let us be faithful in all things; men in earnest; bent on doing the work which lies to our hand.

II. A SAINT'S COMING REST. There remains a rest! Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; yes, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors. The great rest is when the Lord comes. But there are two other rests. There is present rest in Jesus; and there is rest in the grave. And it is this rest in the grave that seems the one promised to Daniel, as to Abraham, "You shall go to your fathers in peace" (Genesis 15:15). He was to live long, but not always; and as soon as his time here was done he was to rest. This rest is the same as that which is called "sleeping in Jesus." He that sleeps in Jesus rests.

We are warranted then to set this rest before our eyes. Though death is our enemy, not our friend; and though death is not the same as the Lord's coming, still death does introduce the saints into rest. It is the "saint's rest," an pledge of the saint's everlasting rest; when we shall toil no more, and be vexed no more, and be weary no more, and be pained no more, and be burdened no more. Work well, then, for the work-day is not long, and the rest-day comes! "You shall rest," is God's promise to us as well as to Daniel.

III. A SAINT'S FUTURE GLORY. "You shall stand (or rise) in your lot at the end of the days." Here we have,

(1.) THE DAYS. The days are those mentioned in the previous verses; the end of these days is the beginning of blessedness; "blessed is he that comes to the 1335 days." It seems intimated to Daniel that

the end of these days is not to be in his lifetime. As for us, we know not when the end shall be; we know not the times and seasons; we know not when the Lord comes.

(2.) THE STANDING. To "stand" or "rise" are used as synonymous. "The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous" (Psalm 1:5). This "standing" is evidently resurrection, in both passages, as in Daniel 12:2. "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake." It is of resurrection that God here speaks to Daniel. He shall arise! This is the great promise, so often reiterated in the New Testament: "You shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." Intermediate blessing there is; promises of intermediate rest abound; but the final glory is yet in reserve; both for Daniel and for us. Resurrection. The first resurrection! Resurrection unto life! The better resurrection! Corruption exchanged for incorruption; dishonor for glory!

(3.) THE LOT. Daniel has a lot, or portion, or special recompense of his own. To this he shall arise after he has rested in the grave from his weary work on earth. There may be a twofold reference here-

(a) General. The first resurrection, or resurrection of the just, or "resurrection from among the dead," or resurrection unto everlasting life, or the better resurrection; these expressions refer to the saint's reward when the Lord comes. "Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection." This glorious resurrection is held before Daniel's eyes as his recompense. It is held before ours! "My dead body shall you arise" (Isa. 26:19).

(b) Special. There seems something more special promised here to Daniel (as to Zerubbabel, Haggai 2:23); some personal and peculiar reward. What that may be, we know not. "A prophet's reward" is referred to by our Lord as something special and great. Each saint shall have his own crown, his own weight of glory, his own inheritance, "your crown" (Revelation 3:11). The message, then, in these last days (days of excitement, and change, and darkness), is, labor on- perseveringly, calmly, joyfully, hopefully. The Lord is at hand. The resurrection comes. The glory of that day will be an ample recompense.

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