

Letter. 133.

by James Bourne

James Bourne emphasizes the importance of heeding God's counsel, the promise of restoration, and the call for unity among believers in his sermon 'Letter. 133.'

Scripture: Psalm 133:1, Proverbs 15:22, Zechariah 8:10, Zechariah 8:16, Ephesians 4:3, Colossians 3:13, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Hebrews 10:24, 1 Peter 3:8

Topics: "Spiritual Transformation", "Obedience To God"

Description

James Bourne preaches about the importance of heeding the cautions and admonitions in the word of God, emphasizing the consequences of not laying them to heart. Through the eighth chapter of Zechariah, God's jealousy against Jerusalem is highlighted, along with the need for true spiritual transformation and obedience to God's counsel to avoid spiritual desolation. The chapter concludes with cautions on godly simplicity, transparency, and the unity of the Spirit, leading to the sweet effects of the communion of saints.

Transcript

London, 25 October 1837.

To the little hill of Zion, at Pulverbach, M. and J. G., Mrs. Oakley, Sukey Harley, E. P., with all others whose names are written in the book of Life.

There is no end of cautions and admonitions in the word of God, and it denotes sad darkness and confusion of mind not to lay them to heart.

The eighth chapter of Zechariah begins with God's jealousy against Jerusalem, and his fury poured forth for many evils, some of which are pointed out in the chapter before; such as making a profession, bearing the name of spiritual life, yet walking under the influence of spiritual death; going through all the outward ceremonies of religion with the heart not changed; not taking heed to the counsel given, lint always falling into some fresh matter to damp the spiritual ardour which now and then appears. These repeated charges not being attended to, God lays his heavy hand upon the people, and says, Now they shall call, and he will not hear, for they set their heart against all the counsel he gave them; therefore he will scatter them, unhinge them, unsettle them; they shall seek but not find, till he shall have laid their spiritual land waste. Then the Lord will remember his covenant with Abraham, and will return to Zion, and it shall be called "the city of truth." The Lord will save his people, and "they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem," the church of

God, and they shall be his people and he will be their God "in truth and in righteousness." "Let your hands be strong, ye that hear these words," saith the Lord of Hosts.

If God has impressed your hearts with these things be sober and watchful, and very minute in your attention to what the Spirit whispers within. He will all the day long be teaching you one lesson or another. Let no legal pretensions present themselves to keep you out; this will cause the Spirit to depart. Beg to be kept as little children. Let no idle visitor intrude into your houses; let your words be few, and your petitions unceasing.

Call to mind, Mrs. Oakley, that before these days you had no rest, going out or coming in, because of the continual hand of God upon you one way or another; for whatever you touched it seemed to turn to bane, and every hand seemed turned against you. But now you, in a measure, see a promised change. This afflicted vine shall now "give her fruit," which till now always appeared untimely. "The ground shall give her increase" after this long desolation, and "the heavens shall give their dew," and my people shall possess these things. It shall be that as my people were a curse, "so I will save you and ye shall be a blessing. Fear not, but let your hands be strong; for thus saith the Lord of Hosts, As I thought to punish you, so again have I thought in these days to do well unto Jerusalem . . . FEAR YE NOT." [Zech. viii. 10-15].

This chapter finishes with many cautions and warnings that you and I have continued need of; especially let godly simplicity and transparency be seen, and no more of that native duplicity that is so abundant in us all; let truth, peace, and judgment now be seen in our gates. At last it sets forth indirectly the unity of the Spirit, and then shows the sweet effects of the communion of saints.

May the Lord give you all power to see eye to eye with me in these things, which I have been scarcely able to write for the sweetness and power I felt. May you press on in this unity. I am persuaded that in the exercise of these things will be found the increase of fruit spoken of in this letter.

I am, dear friends, your willing servant in the Lord, J. B.

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