

# Letter 60

by James Bourne

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*The sermon emphasizes the necessity of recognizing our captivity to sin and the ultimate deliverance found in Jesus Christ through humility and persistent prayer.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 34:14

**Topics:** "Sin And Captivity", "Spiritual Deliverance"

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## Description

James Bourne preaches about the captivity caused by sin, using the example of Judah's destruction by the Chaldees, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites as a consequence of their sins. He emphasizes the need to recognize the spiritual desolation and darkness sin brings, leading to a separation from God's presence. Bourne urges the listener to realize that only Jesus Christ can deliver them from this captivity, not human reasoning or virtue. He encourages holding onto the fear of the Lord as a vital defense against spiritual foes, even in moments of darkness and despair, and highlights the importance of persevering in prayer despite feeling spiritually dead or unproductive.

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## Transcript

[To the Rev. W. Maddy.] Bushey, Herts, July 1834.

Dear Friend,

I exceedingly lament the time and manner of your captivity; yet I cannot understand how it is you can both see and hate that which lies hard upon you, unless it be the Spirit humbling you by slow degrees to bring you to the knowledge of that sad state to which sin has reduced you. It is written in 2 Kings xxiv. that it was the Lord who sent the bands of the Chaldees and Syrians and Moabites and Ammonites against Judah to destroy it. "Surely at the commandment of the Lord came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins . . . which the Lord would not pardon." All the vessels of gold were taken out of the temple of the Lord, and carried away to Babylon all the golden faith that should be manifest in hearing the word is carried off by temptation to the spirit of the world and lightness; no access; no sense of God's presence; all is darkness and despondency, and no prospect of a change. The Lord has given you up to the enemy for a season to show you what Babylon can do for you, and what you can do for yourself. I know you will struggle long to labour for life, and to get from under the yoke, not knowing that a great ransom cannot deliver you none less than Jesus Christ. Him you reject, and put carnal reason, human virtue, and pious resolutions in his place; but the Lord will carry away all these mighty men of valour, all these craftsmen, and cunning workmen, and artificers; not one shall remain. And when ALL your strength is gone, and

NONE shut up or left, then will the Lord appear.

I hope the Lord will continue that fear which you speak of, for by it we depart from evil. It is that remaining spark of life by which we contend, though but weakly, against our desperate foes. Pray cherish this; it is your best jewel; do not break through this hedge; fight hard, and give not up prayer, however dead and unprofitable it may appear.

I have had some sweet seasons, and only wonder at the goodness of God to me.

Yours &c. J. B.

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