

Magnificat

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon passionately exhorts believers to awaken all their faculties to joyfully praise God, recognizing their freedom in Christ and the abundant reasons for continual thanksgiving.

Scripture: Judges 5:12, Hebrews 4:3, 1 Corinthians 3:21-23, Isaiah 26:1, Psalm 100:2, 2 Samuel 6:21, Habakkuk 3:17-18

Topics: "Praise and Worship", "Christian Joy", "Faith and Trust"

Description

In 'Magnificat,' C.H. Spurgeon passionately calls believers to awaken every part of their being to praise God with joy and energy. He reminds the faithful that they are no longer captives but freemen in Christ, with abundant reasons to sing praises even amid trials. Drawing from Scripture and vivid illustrations, Spurgeon encourages Christians to make worship a continual, heartfelt response to God's faithfulness and grace.

Transcript

"Awake, awake, Deborah; quake, awake, utter a song; arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam."—Judges 5:12.

ANY OF THE SAINTS of God are as mournful as if they were captives in Babylon, for their life is spent in tears and sighing. They will not chant the joyous psalm of praise, and if there be any that require of them a song, they reply, "How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" But, my brethren, we are not captives in Babylon; we do not sit down to weep by Babel's streams; "the Lord hath broken our captivity, he hath brought us up out of the house of our bondage. We are freemen; we are not slaves; we are not sold into the hand of cruel taskmasters, but we that have believed do enter into rest:" Hebrews 4:3. Moses could not give rest to Israel; he could bring them to Jordan, but across the stream he could not conduct them; Joshua alone could lead them into the lot of their inheritance, and our Joshua, our Jesus, has led us into the land of promise. He hath brought us into a land which the Lord our God thinketh on; a land of hills and valleys; a land that floweth with milk and honey; and though the Canaanites still be in the land, and plague us full sore, yet is it all our own, and he hath said unto us, "All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's:" 1 Corinthians 3:21-23. We are not, I say, captives, sold under sin; we are a people who sit every man under his own vine and his own fig-tree, none making us afraid. We dwell in "a strong city, salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks:" Isaiah 26:1. We have come unto Zion, the city of our solemnities, and the mourning of Babylon is not suitable to the palace of the great King,

which is beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth. "Let us serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with singing:" Psalm 100:2. Many of God's people live as if their God were dead. Their conduct would be quite consistent if the promises were not yea and amen; if God were a faithless God. If Christ were not a perfect Redeemer; if the Word of God might after all turn out to be untrue; if he had not power to keep his people, and if he had not love enough with which to hold them even to the end, then might they give way to mourning and to despair; then might they cover their heads with ashes, and wrap their loins about with sackcloth. But while God is Jehovah, just and true; while his promises stand as fast as the eternal mountains; while the heart of Jesus is true to his spouse; while the arm of God is unpalsied, and his eye undimmed; while his covenant and his oath are unbroken and unchanged; It is not comely, it is not seemly for the upright to go mourning all their days. Ye children of God, refrain yourselves from weeping, and make a joyful noise unto the Rock of your salvation; let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and show ourselves glad in him with psalms.

"Your harps, ye trembling saints, Down from the willows take; Loud to the praise of love divine, Bid every string awake."

First, I shall urge upon you a stirring up of all your powers to sacred song. "Awake, awake, Deborah; awake, awake, utter a song." In the second place, I shall persuade you to practice a sacred leading of your captivity captive. "Arise, Barrak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam."

I. First, then, A STIRRING UP OF ALL OUR POWERS TO PRAISE GOD, according to the words of the holy woman in the text, "Awake, awake,"—repeated yet again "Awake, awake."

1. WHAT is there that we need to awaken if we would praise God? I reply, we ought to arouse all the bodily powers. Our flesh is sluggish; we have been busy with the world, our limbs have grown fatigued, but there is power in divine joy to arouse even the body itself, to make the heavy eyelids light, to reanimate the drowsy eye, and quicken the weary brain. We should call upon our bodies to awake, especially our tongue, "the glory of our frame." Let it put itself in tune like David's harp of old. A toilworn body often makes a mournful heart. The flesh has such a connection with the spirit, that it often boweth down the soul. Come, then, my flesh, I charge thee, awake. Blood, leap in my veins? Heart, let thy pulsings be as the joy-strokes of Miriam's timbrel! Oh, all my bodily frame, stir up thyself now, and begin to magnify and bless the Lord, who made thee, and who has kept thee in health, and preserved thee from going down into the grave.

Surely we should call on all our mental powers to awake. Wake up my memory and find matter for the song. Tell what God has done for me in days gone by. Fly back ye thoughts to my childhood; sing of cradle mercies. Review my youth and its early favors. Sing of longsuffering grace, which followed my wandering, and bore with my rebellions. Revive before my eyes that gladsome hour when first I knew the Lord, and tell o'er again the matchless story of the "Streams of mercy never ceasing," which have flowed to me since then, and which "Call for songs of loudest praise." Awake up my judgment and give measure to the music. Come forth my understanding, and weigh his lovingkindness in scales, and his goodness in the balances. See if thou canst count the small dust of his mercies. See if thou canst understand the riches unsearchable which he hath given to thee in that unspeakable gift of Christ Jesus my Lord. Reckon up his eternal mercies to thee—the treasures of that covenant which he made on thy behalf, ere thou wast born. Sing, my understanding, sing aloud of that matchless wisdom which contrived—of that divine love which planned, and of that eternal grace which carried out the scheme of thy redemption. Awake, my imagination, and dance to the holy melody. Gather pictures from all worlds. Bid sun and moon stay in their

courses, and join in thy new song. Constrain the stars to yield the music of the spheres; put a tongue into every mountain, and a voice into every wilderness; translate the lowing of the cattle and the scream of the eagle; hear thou the praise of God in the rippling of the rills, the dashing of the cataracts, and the roaring of the sea, until all his works in all places of his dominion bless the Lord.

But especially let us cry to all the graces of our spirit—"awake." Wake up, my love, for thou must strike the key-note and lead the strain. Awake and sing unto thy beloved a song touching thy well-beloved. Give unto him choice canticles, for he is the fairest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely. Come forth then with thy richest music, and praise the name which is as ointment poured forth. Wake up, my hope, and join hands with thy sister—love; and sing of blessings yet to come. Sing of my dying hour, when he shall be with me on my couch. Sing of the rising morning, when my body shall leap from its tomb into her Savior's arms! Sing of the expected advent, for which thou lookest with delight! And, O my soul, sing of that heaven which he has gone before to prepare for thee, "that where he is, there may his people be." Awake my love—awake my hope—and thou my faith, awake also! Love has the sweetest voice, hope can thrill forth the higher notes of the saved scale; but thou, O faith—with thy deep resounding base melody—thou must complete the song. Sing of the promise sure and certain. Rehearse the glories of the covenant ordered in all things, and sure. Rejoice in the sure mercies of David! Sing of the goodness which shall be known to thee in all thy trials yet to come. Sing of that blood which has sealed and ratified every word of God. Glory in that eternal faithfulness which cannot lie, and of that truth which cannot fail. And thou, my patience, utter thy gentle but most gladsome hymn. Sing to-day of how he helped thee to endure in sorrows' bitterest hour. Sing of the weary way along which he has borne thy feet, and brought thee at last to lie down in green pastures, beside the still waters. Oh, all my graces, heaven-begotten as ye are, praise him who did beget you. Ye children of his grace, sing unto your Father's name, and magnify him who keeps you alive. Let all that in me is be stirred up to magnify and bless his holy name.

Then let us wake up the energy of all those powers—the energy of the body, the energy of the mind, the energy of the spirit. You know what it is to do a thing coldly, weakly. As well might we not praise at all. You know also what it is to praise God passionately—to throw energy into all the song, and so to exult in his name. So do ye, each one of you, this day; and if Michal, Saul's daughter, should look out of the window and see David dancing before the ark with all his might, and should chide you as though your praise were unseemly, say unto her, "It was before the Lord, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, therefore will I play before the Lord:" 2 Samuel 6:21. Tell the enemy that the God of election must be praised, that the God of redemption must be extolled,—that if the very heathen leaped for joy before their gods, surely they who bow before Jehovah must adore him with rapture and with ecstasy. Go forth, go forth with joy then, with all your energies thoroughly awakened for his praise.

2. But you say unto me, "WHY and wherefore should we this day awake and sing unto our God?" There be many reasons; and if your hearts be right, one may well satisfy. Come, ye children of God, and bless his dear name; for doth not all nature around you sing? If you were silent, you would be an exception to the universe. Doth not the thunder praise him as it rolls like drums in the march of the God of armies? Doth not the ocean praise him as it claps its thousand hands? Doth not the sea roar, and the fullness thereof? Do not the mountains praise him when the shaggy woods upon their summits wave in adoration? Do not the lightnings write his name in letters of fire upon the midnight darkness? Doth not this world, in its unceasing revolutions, perpetually roll forth his praise? Hath not the whole earth a voice, and shall we be silent? Shall man, for whom the world was made, and suns and stars were created,—shall he be dumb? No, let him lead the strain. Let him be the world's high priest, and while the world shall be as the sacrifice,

let him add his heart thereto, and thus supply the fire of love which shall make that sacrifice smoke towards heaven.

But, believer, shall not thy God be praised? I ask thee. Shall not thy God be praised? When men behold a hero, they fall at his feet and honor him. Garibaldi emancipates a nation, and lo, they bow before him and do him homage. And thou Jesus, the Redeemer of the multitudes of thine elect, shalt thou have no song? Shalt thou have no triumphal entry into our hearts? Shall thy name have no glory? Shall the world love its own, and shall not the Church honor its own Redeemer? Our God must be praised. He shall be. If no other heart should ever praise him, surely mine must. If creation should forget him, his redeemed must remember him. Tell us to be silent? Oh, we cannot. Bid us restrain our holy mirth? Indeed you bid us do an impossibility. He is God, and he must be extolled; he is our God, our gracious, our tender, our faithful God, and he must have the best of our songs.

Thou sayest, believer, why should I praise him? Let me ask thee a question too. Is it not heaven's employment to praise him? And what can make earth more like heaven, than to bring down from heaven the employment of glory, and to be occupied with it here? Come, believer, when thou prayest, thou art but a man, but when thou praisest, thou art as an angel. When thou asketh favor, thou art but a beggar, but when thou standest up to extol, thou becomest next of kin to cherubim and seraphim. Happy, happy day, when the glorious choristers shall find their numbers swelled by the addition of multitudes from earth! Happy day when you and I shall join the eternal chorus. Let us begin the music here. Let us strike some of the first notes at least; and if we cannot sound the full thunders of the eternal hallelujah, let us join as best we may. Let us make the wilderness and the solitary place rejoice, and bid the desert blossom as the rose.

Besides, Christian, dost thou not know that it is a good thing for thee to praise thy God? Mourning weakens thee, doubts destroy thy strength; thy groping among the ashes makes thee of the earth, earthy. Arise, for praise is pleasant and profitable to thee. "The joy of the Lord is our strength." "Delight thyself in the Lord and he will give thee the desire of thine heart." Thou growest in grace when thou growest in holy joy; thou art more heavenly, more spiritual, more Godlike, as thou gettest more full of joy and peace in believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. I know some Christians are afraid of gladness, but I read, "Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King." If murmuring were a duty, some saints would never sin, and if mourning were commanded by God they would certainly be saved by works, for they are always sorrowing, and so they would keep his law. Instead thereof the Lord hath said it, "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice;" and he has added, to make it still more strong, "Rejoice evermore."

But I ask you one other question, believer. Thou sayest, "Why should I awake, this morning to sing unto my God?" I reply to thee, "Hast thou not a cause?" Hath he not done great things for thee, and art thou not glad thereof? Hath he not taken thee out of the horrible pit, and out of the miry clay; hath he not set thy feet upon a rock and established thy goings, and is there no new song in thy mouth? What, art thou bought with blood, and yet hast thou a silent tongue? Loved of thy God before the world began and yet not sing his praise! What, art thou his child, an heir of God and joint heir with Jesus Christ, and yet no notes of gratitude? What I has he fed thee this day? Did he deliver thee yesterday out of many troubles? Has he been with thee these thirty, these forty, these fifty years in the wilderness, and yet hast thou no mercy for which to praise him? O shame on thy ungrateful heart, and thy forgetful spirit; come pluck up courage, think of thy mercies and not of thy miseries, forget thy pains awhile and think of thy many deliverances. Put thy feet on the neck of thy doubts and thy fears, and God the Holy Ghost, being thy Comforter, begin from this good hour to utter a song.

3. "But," saith one, "WHEN shall I do this? When shall I praise my God?" I answer, praise ye the Lord all his people, at all times, and give thanks at every remembrance of him. Extol him even when your souls are drowsy and your spirits are inclined to sleep. When we are awake there is little cause to say to us four times, "Awake, awake, awake, awake, utter a song;" but when we feel most drowsy with sorrow and our eyelids are heavy, when afflictions sore are pressing us down to the very dust, then is the time to sing psalms unto our God and praise him in the very fire. But this takes much grace, and I trust brethren you know that there is much grace to be had. Seek it of your divine Lord, and be not content without it; be not easily cast down by troubles, nor soon made silent because of your woes; think of the martyrs of old, who sang sweetly at the stake; think of Ann Askew, of all the pains she bore for Christ, and then of her courageous praise of God in her last moments. Often she had been tortured, tortured most terribly; she lay in prison expecting death, and when there she wrote a verse in old English words and rhyme,

"I am not she that lyst My anker to let fall, For every drysynge myst; My shippe's substancyal."

Meaning thereby, that she would not stop her course and cast her anchor for every drizzling mist; she had a ship that could bear a storm, one that could break all the waves that beat against it, and joyously cut through the foam. So shall it be with you. Give not God fine weather songs, give him black tempest praises; give him not merely summer music, as some birds will do and then fly away; give him winter tunes. Sing in the night like the nightingales, praise him in the fires, sing his high praises even in the shadow of death, and let the tomb resound with the shouts of your sure confidence. So may you give to God what God may well claim at your hands.

When shall you praise him? Why, praise him when you are full of doubts, even when temptations assail you, when poverty hovers round you, and when sickness bows you down. They are cheap songs which we give to God when we are rich; it is easy enough to kiss the hand of a giving God, but to bless him when he takes away—this is to bless him indeed. To cry like Job, "though he slay me yet will I trust in him," or to sing like Habukkuk, "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat: the flocks shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Oh Christian, thou askest me when thou shalt rejoice, I say to-day, "Awake, awake, O Deborah, awake, awake, utter a song."

4. Yet once more, you reply to me, "But HOW can I praise my God?" I will be teacher of music to thee, and may the Comforter be with me. Wilt thou think this morning how great are thy mercies. Thou art not blind, nor deaf, nor dumb; thou art not a lunatic; thou art not decrepid; thou art not vexed with piercing pains; thou art not full of agony caused by disease; thou art not going down to the grave; thou art not in torments, not in hell. Thou art still in the land of the living, the land of love, the land of grace, the land of hope. 'Even if this were all, there were enough reason for thee to praise thy God. Thou art not this day what thou once wert, a blasphemer, a persecutor and injurious; the song of the drunkard is not on thy lips, the lascivious desire is not in thy heart. And is not this a theme for praise. Remember but a little while ago, with very many of you, all these sins were your delight and your joy. Oh! must not you praise him, ye chief of sinners, whose natures have been changed, whose hearts have been renewed. Ye sons of Korah, lead the sacred song! Bethink you of your iniquities, which have all been put away, and your transgressions covered, and none of them laid to your charge; think of the privileges you this day enjoy; elect, redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, adopted, and preserved in Christ Jesus. Why man, if a stone or rock could but for a moment have such privileges as these, the very adamant must melt and the dumb rock give forth hosannas. And will you be still when your mercies are so great! Let them not lie—"Forgotten in

unthankfulness, and without praises die." Bethink thee yet again how little are thy trials after all. Thou hast not yet resisted unto blood striving against sin. Thou art poor, it is true, but then thou art not sick; or thou art sick, but still thou art not left to wallow in sin; and all afflictions are but little when once sin is put away. Compare thy trials with those of many who live in thine own neighborhood. Put thy sufferings side by side with the sufferings of some whom thou hast seen on their dying bed; compare thy lot with that of the martyrs who have entered into their rest; and oh I say, thou wilt be compelled to exclaim with Paul, "These light afflictions which are but for a moment are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us." Come, now, I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, be of good cheer, and rejoice in the Lord your God, if it were for no other reason than that of the brave-hearted Luther. When he had been most slandered—when the Pope had launched out a new bull, and when the kings of the earth had threatened him fiercely—Luther would gather together his friends, and say, "Come let us sing a psalm and spite the devil." He would ever sing the most psalms when the world roared the most. Let us today join in that favourite psalm of the great German, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed and though the mountains be carried in the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof."—Psalm 46: I say, then, sing to make Satan angry. He has vexed the saints; let us vex him.

Praise ye the Lord to put the world to the blush. Never let it be said that the world can make its votaries more happy than Christ can make his followers. Oh, let your songs be so continual, and so sweet, that the wicked may be compelled to say, "That man's life is happier than mine; I long to exchange with him. There is something in his religion which my sin and my wicked pleasures can never afford me." O praise the Lord ye saints, that sinners' mouths may be set a watering after the things of God. Specially praise him in your trials, if you would make the world wonder—strike sinners dumb, and make them long to know and taste the joys of which you are a partaker.

"Alas!" said one, "but I cannot sing; I have nothing to sing of, nothing without for which I could praise God." It is remarked by old commentators that the windows of Solomon's temple were narrow on the outside, but that they were broad within, and that they were so cut, that though they seemed to be but small openings, yet the light was well diffused. (See Hebrew of 1 Kings 6:4.) So is it with the windows of a believer's joy. They may look very narrow without, but they are very wide within; there is more joy to be gotten from that which is within us than from that which is without us. God's grace within, God's love, the witness of his Spirit in our hearts, are better themes of joy than all the corn and wine, and oil, with which God sometimes increases his saints. So if thou hast no outward mercies, sing of inward mercies. If the water fail without, go to that fons perennis, that perpetual fountain which is within thine own soul. "A good man shall be satisfied from himself." Proverbs 14:14. When thou seest no cheering providence without, yet look at grace within. "Awake, awake, Deborah! awake, awake, utter a song."

II. I now turn to the second part of my subject, upon which very briefly. I know not whether you feel as I do, but in preaching upon this theme, I mourn a scantiness of words, and a slowness of language. If I could let my heart talk without my lips, methinks with God's Spirit I could move you indeed with joy. But these lips find that the language of the heart is above them. The tongue discovereth that it cannot reach the fullness of joy that is within. Let it beam from my face, if it cannot be spoken from my mouth.

And now the second part of the subject. "ARISE, BARAK, AND LEAD THY CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE, THOU SON OF ABINOAM."

You understand the exact picture here. Barak had routed Sisera, Jabin's captain, and all his hosts. She now exhorts Barak to celebrate his triumph. "Mount, mount thy car, O Barak, and ride through the midst of the people. Let the corpse of Sisera, with Jael's nail driven through its temples, be dragged behind thy chariot. Let the thousand captives of the Canaanites walk all of them with their arms bound behind them. Drive before thee the ten thousand flocks of sheep, and herds of cattle which thou hast taken as a spoil. Let their chariots of iron, and all their horses be led captive in grand procession. Bring up all the treasures and the jewels of which thou hast stripped the slain; their armor, their shields, their spears, bound up as glorious trophies. Arise, Barak, lead captive those who led thee captive, and celebrate thy glorious victory."

Beloved, this is a picture which is often used in Scripture. Christ is said to have led captivity captive, when he ascended on high. He led principalities and powers captive at his chariot-wheels. But here is a picture for us—not concerning Christ, but concerning ourselves. We are exhorted to-day to lead captivity captive. Come up, come up, ye grim hosts of sins, once my terror and dismay. Long was I your slave, O ye Egyptian tyrants; long did this back smart beneath your lash when conscience was awakened, and long did these members of my body yield themselves as willing servants to obey your dictates. Come up ye sins, come up for ye are prisoners now; ye are bound in fetters of iron, nay, more than this, ye are utterly slain, consumed, destroyed; you have been covered with Jesus' blood; ye have been blotted out by his mercy ye have been cast by his power into the depths of the sea, yet would I bid your ghosts come up, slain though ye be, and walk in grim procession behind my chariot. Arise, celebrate your triumph, oh ye people of God. Your sins are many, but they are all forgiven. Your iniquities are great, but they are all put away. Arise and lead captive those who led you captive—your blasphemies, your forgetfulness of God, your drunkenness, your lust, all the vast legion that once oppressed you. They are all clean destroyed. Come and look upon them, sing their death psalm, and chant the life psalm of your grateful joy; lead your sins captive this very day.

Bring hither in bondage another host who once seemed too many for us, but whom by God's grace we have totally overcome. Arise my trials; ye have been very great and very numerous; ye came against me as a great host, and ye were tall and strong like the sons of Anak. Oh! my soul, thou hast trodden down strength; by the help of our God have we leaped over a wall; by his power have we broken through the troops of our troubles, our difficulties, and our fears. Come now, look back, and think of all the trials you have ever encountered. Death in your family; losses in your business; afflictions in your body; despair in your soul; and yet here you are, more than conquerors over them all. Come, bid them all walk now in procession. To the God of our deliverances—who has delivered us out of deep waters—who has brought us out of the burning, fiery furnace, so that not the smell of fire has passed upon us—to him be all the glory, while we lead our captivity captive.

Arise and let us lead captive all our temptations. You, my brethren, have been foully tempted to the vilest sins. Satan has shot a thousand darts at you, and hurled his javelin multitudes of times; bring out the darts and snap them before his eyes, for he has never been able to reach your heart. Come, break the bow and cut the spear in sunder; burn the chariot in the fire. "Thy right hand, O Lord, thy right hand O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy; thou hast broken, thou hast put to confusion them that hated us; thou hast scattered the tempters, and driven them far away "Come, ye children of God, kept and preserved where so many have fallen, lead now this day your temptations captive.

I think that you as a church, and I as your minister, can indeed lead captivity captive this day. There has been no single church of God existing in England for these fifty years which has had to pass through more

trial than we have done. We can say, "Men did ride over our heads." We went through fire and through water, and what has been the result of it all? God hath brought us out into a wealthy place and set our feet in a large room, and all the devices of the enemy have been of none effect. Scarce a day rolls over my head in which the most villainous abuse, the most fearful slander is not uttered against me both privately and by the public press; every engine is employed to put down God's minister—every lie that man can invent is hurled at me. But hitherto the Lord hath helped me. I have never answered any man, nor spoken a word in my own defense. from the first day even until now. And the effect has been this: God's people have believed nothing against me; they who feared the Lord have said often as a new falsehood has been uttered, "This is not true concerning that man; he will not answer for himself, but God will answer for him." They have not checked our usefulness as a church; they have not thinned our congregations; that which was to be but a spasm—an enthusiasm which it was hoped would only last an hour—God has daily increased; not because of me, but because of that gospel which I preach; not because there was anything in me, but because I came out as the exponent of plain, straight-forward, honest Calvinism, and because I seek to speak the Word simply, not according to the critical dictates of man, but so that the poor may comprehend what I have to say. The Lord has helped us as a church; everything has contributed to help us; the great and terrible catastrophe invented by Satan to overturn us, was only blessed of God to swell the stream; and now I would not stay a liar's mouth if I could, nor would I stop a slanderer if it were in my power, except it were that he might not sin, for all these things tend to our profit, and all these attacks do but widen the stream of usefulness. Many a sinner has been converted to God in this hall who was first brought here, because of some strange anecdote, some lying tale which had been told of God's servant, the minister. I say it boasting in the Lord my God, this morning, though I become a fool in glorying, I do lead in God's name my captivity captive. Arise! arise! ye members of this church, ye who have followed the son of Barak, and have gone up as the thousands at his feet; arise and triumph for God is with us, and his cause shall prosper; his own right arm is made bare in the eyes of all the people, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

As it is in this single church, and in our own individual sphere, so shall it be in the church at large. God's ministers are all attacked; God's truth is everywhere assailed. A terrible battle awaits us; but oh! Church of God, remember thy former victories. Awake, ministers of Christ, and lead your captivity captive. Sing how the idols of Greece tottered before you. Say, "Where is Diana? Where now the gods that made glad Ephesus of old?" And thou, O Rome, was not thine arm broken before the majesty of the Church's might? Where now is Jupiter; where Saturn, where Venus? They have ceased to be. And thou Juggernaut—them Bramah—ye Gods of China and Hindostan—ye too must fall, for this day the sons of Jehovah arise and lead their captivity captive. "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He breaketh the bow, he cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariots in the fire. Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen; I will be exalted in the earth." Church of God, come forth with songs, come forth with shouting to your last battle. Behold the battle of Armageddon draweth nigh. Blow ye the silver trumpets for the fight, ye soldiers of the cross. Come on, come on, ye leagured hosts of hell. Strong in the strength of God most High, we shall dash back your ranks as the rock breaketh the waves of the sea. We shall stand against you and triumph, and tread you down as ashes under the soles of our feet. "Arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam."

Would to God that the joy of heart which we feel this morning may tempt some soul to seek the like. It is to be found in Christ at the foot of his dear cross. Believe on him, sinners and thou art saved.

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