

# The Captive

by Charles E. Cowman

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*Charles E. Cowman emphasizes the value of captivity as a commentator on the Scriptures and a source of new pathos and joy, encouraging listeners to accept their situation and turn it to the best possible account through prayer and submission to the divine will.*

**Scripture:** Genesis 32:24, Psalm 23:4, Psalm 119:50, Psalm 137:1, Ezekiel 1:1, Romans 8:28, Philippians 4:6

**Topics:** "Suffering And Trials", "Gods Sovereignty"

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## Description

Charles E. Cowman preaches about finding God's glory and peace in the midst of captivity and afflictions, emphasizing the importance of accepting our situations and turning them to the best possible account. He highlights how trials and afflictions can lead to fresh revelations of God, encouraging listeners to seek refuge in God through prayer and submission to His divine will. Through wrestling with God in our struggles, we can experience His presence and receive songs of joy even in the darkest times.

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## Transcript

"As I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God . . . and the hand of the Lord was there upon me" (Ezek. 1:1,3).

There is no commentator of the Scriptures half so valuable as a captivity. The old Psalms have quavered for us with a new pathos as we sat by our "Babel's stream," and have sounded for us with new joy as we found our captivity turned as the streams in the South.

The man who has seen much affliction will not readily part with his copy of the Word of God. Another book may seem to others to be identical with his own; but it is not the same to him, for over his old and tear-stained Bible he has written, in characters which are visible to no eyes but his own, the record of his experiences, and ever and anon he comes on Bethel pillars or Elim palms, which are to him the memorials of some critical chapter in his history.

If we are to receive benefit from our captivity we must accept the situation and turn it to the best possible account. Fretting over that from which we have been removed or which has been taken away from us, will not make things better, but it will prevent us from improving those which remain. The bond is only tightened by our stretching it to the uttermost.

The impatient horse which will not quietly endure his halter only strangles himself in his stall. The high-mettled animal that is restive in the yoke only galls his shoulders; and every one will understand the difference between the restless starling of which Sterne has written, breaking its wings against the bars of the cage, and crying, "I can't get out, I can't get out," and the docile canary that sits upon its perch and sings as if it would outrival the lark soaring to heaven's gate.

No calamity can be to us an unmixed evil if we carry it in direct and fervent prayer to God, for even as one in taking shelter from the rain beneath a tree may find on its branches fruit which he looked not for, so we in fleeing for refuge beneath the shadow of God's wing, will always find more in God than we had seen or known before.

It is thus through our trials and afflictions that God gives us fresh revelations of Himself; and the Jabbok ford leads to Peniel, where, as the result of our wrestling, we "see God face to face," and our lives are preserved. Take this to thyself, O captive, and He will give thee "songs in the night," and turn for thee "the shadow of death into the morning." --William Taylor

"Submission to the divine will is the softest pillow on which to recline."

"It filled the room, and it filled my life,

With a glory of source unseen;

It made me calm in the midst of strife,

And in winter my heart was green.

And the birds of promise sang on the tree

When the storm was breaking on land and sea."

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/charles-e-cowman/the-captive/>

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