

# Letter 149

by James Bourne

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*James Bourne's sermon emphasizes the comfort found in being God's portion amidst struggles with fear and sin, highlighting the importance of discipline and praise.*

**Scripture:** Deuteronomy 32

**Topics:** "Spiritual Struggle", "Gods Mercy"

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## Description

James Bourne shares his personal struggles with fear, sin, and doubts, especially in the face of death and judgment, despite being involved in writing and speaking to others about God. He finds comfort in the assurance that he is God's portion, experiencing God's favor and guidance through various trials and disciplines. Bourne acknowledges his inner struggles with idolatry and sin but relies on God's compassion and mercy to restore his joy and uphold him with His Spirit, enabling him to continue sharing God's praise and light in the world.

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## Transcript

[To Mr. Nunn.] Pulverbach, 12 August 1838.

My dear Friend,

I can join full well in what you said respecting your feelings when Mr. G. left you. It was but Friday night I was very restless, and seemed brought to the bar of God. The fear of death and judgment took hold upon me, and my sins all seemed to stare me in the face, and the Lord was withdrawn. I feared I should be put to shame in the great day, and more especially because I have said so much to others. I think I am more attacked upon the subject of my writing and speaking to others than upon anything else, and yet my comforts and assurances flow in more by these channels than by any other; and I am often greatly surprised how the Lord does continually show his tokens of favour on these occasions. This morning Phil. ii. 15 was very sweet to me, elucidated by Deut. xxxii., where God says he separated the sons of Adam and set them bounds, and he himself took one part and called them HIS PORTION. On these last words I dwelt, and thought I proved by the Spirit that I was in that portion, and my soul was comforted. Such conquests make us to "shine as lights in the world," by the tender effects of the true essential fear of God. I cannot yet forget or leave the sweet consideration of being God's portion; if I look within, the sight tempts me to despair; but the Lord says he finds his people in a sad condition when he first takes them in hand - "in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness;" but he condescends to instruct them, and to keep them as the apple of his eye. "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad

her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings," so the Lord alone leads us by various sorts of discipline and furnace-work, that no strange god may be harboured. I find many strange gods within, that would be revered, if the Lord did not keep me continually in a low place. It is my dire necessity that drives me to him for help; and if my sin causes him to hide his face I seem quite at a stand, without judgment, light, or understanding; and I fear the Lord will resent my folly to my dying hour. But his compassions have never failed; he surprises me with his mercies, and restores to me the joy of his salvation, and upholds me with his free Spirit; and this instructs me what to say in my readings, for I cannot help showing forth his praise, as you did when you returned that day in the power of the Spirit

Yours &c. J. B.

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