

The Hiding of His Power

#0704

Study given by W.D. Frazee—March 14, 1964

Our text is found in Habakkuk, the third chapter, and the fourth verse. In our Sabbath School lessons this quarter, we've been studying what theme? Christ, the Messiah. Where? In all the Scriptures. Just now we're studying in the Old Testament; soon we'll be looking at Christ as revealed in the New Testament. But this morning, I would like to note some texts which there was not time to include in the Sabbath School study for this theme of Christ in all the Bible is an exhaustless theme, one that we'll be studying a million years from now.

In this little book of Habakkuk, the third chapter and fourth verse, we have a wonderful view of Christ in His glory still bearing the marks of His humiliation and sacrifice. You notice that this chapter is a prayer of Habakkuk; it's a psalm. It was meant to be sung, accompanied with stringed instruments, as indicated in the last line of the 19th verse.

The theme of this psalm is the glorious coming of our Lord, His second advent, the time of trouble that immediately precedes His coming when pestilence and earthquake and other devastating forces will make this world a wilderness. And in the setting of that time of trouble, the prophet sees our Lord coming. The third verse:

“God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran. [Selah.] His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise. And His brightness was as the light; He had horns coming out of His hand: and there was the hiding of His power” Habakkuk 3:3-4.

Now, horns in the Bible are often used as a symbol of power. God says to the wicked, “Lift not up your horn on high.” (See Psalm 75:5.) Here are horns (or rays of power) coming from the hands of the Savior. I wonder why. I wonder why. Well, we'll study that this morning.

The marginal reading is also very interesting. Here it says He had “bright beams out of His side.” I wonder what there is about the side of Jesus and about the hands of Jesus that rays of light and glory and power should come from His hands and side. Yes, we know, don't we? This, too, is indicated in this book of the Old Testament. (Remember, all these books were written hundreds of years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and yet again and again, we see certain points brought out so vividly.)

Look at Zechariah, the 13th chapter, and the sixth verse. Here we get another clue on the hands. Zechariah 13:6:

“And one shall say unto Him, What are these wounds in Thine hands? Then He shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of My friends” Zechariah 13:6.

“He came unto His own, and His own received Him not” John 1:11.

He was rejected by His own people, despised and crucified by those He died to save. Isn't it amazing that He still calls us His friends? He's *our* friend. And those wounds in His hands, He says He got them in the house of His friends.

Again, Zechariah, the 12th chapter, and the 10th verse. Here we get another ray of light concerning those wounds in His hands and feet and side:

“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn” Zechariah 12:10.

What a mourning this is as the soul is awakened to understand that those wounds in the hands and feet and side of Jesus were made by those who should have been His friends!

We read in our opening text that there is the hiding of His power—in these wounds. In this little book *The Story of Redemption*, one of the inspired volumes that have been given us in the providence of God in these latter days, I read on page 430 (speaking of the world to come, the heaven that awaits us, the earth made new):

“One reminder alone remains: our Redeemer will ever bear the marks of His crucifixion” *The Story of Redemption*, page 430.

Both of those statements are very interesting to me. There will be *no* reminder of sin as far as nature is concerned. There'll not even be any tree of knowledge of good and evil with its tempting suggestion of disobedience. It won't be necessary. And upon *all* the face of nature there will not remain a single scar. Everything will be as beautiful as Eden; in fact, more so. And all through the universe there'll not be a single scar remaining.

But there will be one reminder. That's what our text is talking about. In His glory, bright beams from His side, horns coming out of His hand—rays of power:

“...There was the hiding of His power” Habakkuk 3:4.

“Upon His wounded head, His hands, and His feet are the only traces of the cruel work that sin has wrought” *The Story of Redemption*, page 430.

I’m so glad that’s all there’s going to be, aren’t you?

But friends, I’m glad that through eternal ages there will be those wonderful reminders that hold us, hold us fast. I’d like to have us think this morning of *how* that is and *why* it is. In the first place, friends, these wounds reveal to us His love as nothing else could, and love is the holding power. Love is the holding power.

If we were in captivity—in prison, in a concentration camp somewhere—and someone who loved us risked his life to rescue us, we would know that he thought a great deal of us, right? Suppose that he gave his life in the attempt, and we look upon him there, cold in death. We’d think, “Oh, how he loved me. He gave his life to try to rescue me.”

But thank God, friends, here is One who paid an infinite price to rescue us from an infinite loss, an infinite curse. He not only risked His life, He *gave* His life, and He gave it in a way that you and I can only study (we can never fully comprehend) because He suffered not merely *this* death, He suffered the awful pains of the *second* death. His love *led* Him to accept that full measure of guilt that belongs to us and it broke His heart.

And so, those wounds of Calvary, as we see them in the glorified body of our Lord, we shall remember as we look upon His head and hands and feet and side, that it was His *love* that led Him to give everything for us. And in return, our love for Him will flow out eternally in a never ceasing stream of gratitude and praise and loyalty and obedience—obedience, because we *love* to obey, because we love to obey *Him*, because we know He loves us better than we love ourselves. There is the *hiding* of His power. There is nothing of compulsion in that holding power. It’s the holding power of love. We want to enter into it now, don’t we, friends? The truth of the matter is, it’s only as we learn something of it here that we shall ever know it in that world to come.

I was reading somewhere about a little girl who, as she grew out of babyhood to the place where she began to notice certain things, one day she observed that her mother’s hands were different from the hands of the mothers of her playmates. They were scarred and contracted. She wondered about it and, childlike, she asked her mother why her hands were all scared and pulled like that and not like other little girls’ mothers. Then the mother told her about how, when this little girl was a just baby, that there had been a terrible fire. And the baby was in the fire and mother rushed into the fire and got the baby and saved its life, but in doing so burned her own hands so terribly that they were always scarred and always would be. The little girl understood then something she hadn’t understood before.

And you know, friends, while many who are in the kingdom of God will have learned the story of redemption before they get there, there will be some who have never heard the Gospel. There will be some who have never seen a Bible. Some will have never known a missionary. Some in heathen lands who, living up to the light they had, yielding to the Holy Spirit as He speaks to them through nature and through the experiences of life have so, shall I say, unknowingly, not fully sensing all that's involved, they have yielded themselves to God in such a way that Jesus' sacrifice can save them. And doubtless, they are among those who are mentioned in this second text we read this morning:

“And one shall say unto Him, What are these wounds in Thine hands?” Zechariah 13:6.

I'd like to be there when one of our dear brothers or sisters from Africa or Asia or some other part of the world, who, through the ages past has never heard the name of Jesus, puts that question to the Savior, and hear *Him* tell for the first time in the life of that dear one the story of redemption, the story of Calvary. Won't it be wonderful, friends? And as the little girl appreciated the mother's love in a new way as she heard that story of sacrifice that was written on her hands, so all our hearts will thrill anew again and again through eternity as we see new meaning in those scars, those wounds.

I like the way it's put here in *Great Controversy*, page 674:

“One reminder alone remains: our Redeemer will ever bear the marks of his crucifixion. Upon his wounded head, upon his side, his hands and feet, are the only traces of the cruel work that sin has wrought. Says the prophet, beholding Christ in his glory: ‘He had bright beams coming out of His side: and there was the hiding of his power.’ [Habakkuk 3:4 (MARGIN)] That pierced side whence flowed the crimson stream that reconciled man to God—there is the Saviour's glory, there ‘the hiding of His power’” *Great Controversy*, page 674.

Now let me read that wonderful statement again:

“Upon his wounded head, upon his side, his hands and feet, are the only traces of the cruel work that sin has wrought. Says the prophet, beholding Christ in his glory: ‘He had bright beams coming out of His side: and there was the hiding of his power.’ [Habakkuk 3:4 (MARGIN)] That pierced side whence flowed the crimson stream that reconciled man to God—there is the Saviour's glory, there ‘the hiding of His power’” *Ibid.*

So if we look there this morning, we can have power, friends, the power of love that draws us to Him.

There's something else that those scars tell us this morning and will tell us through eternal ages, and that is the awful character of Satan and the terrible malignity of his hatred. Think of it: Satan was jealous of Jesus. And when Jesus came down here in this world, Satan tried to destroy Him, even when He was a little baby you remember. And when the time came when Satan got Jesus in his power, then he inspired the Jewish priests and the Roman soldiers and the rabble to do everything that men and devils could invent to humiliate Him, hurt Him, insult Him, and torture Him. They spit in His face; they beat Him; they scourged Him until the blood ran down His back; they kicked Him... Ah, friends, we'll never know all that they did. Finally, they led Him out to Calvary, nailed the spikes through His hands and feet, and hung Him up to die.

Who inspired it all? Satan. And as we look at those scars and we think of what Satan did to our best Friend, tell me: if we love the One who thus gave everything for us, how shall we feel, how *must* we feel, toward the one who inspired such cruel treatment of Jesus? How must we feel? Surely we must hate him and all his cruel, cruel work. How could such a one be our friend? How could Satan do us any good? How could his program appeal to us?

Those wounds spoil this world for us. Those scars *break* the hold of Satan as they *strengthen* the pulling power of Jesus. Shall we not then, friends, look at Calvary and encourage in our hearts a hatred of sin as well as a love for righteousness?

Christ and Belial are not united. This world and the kingdom of God have nothing in common. Jesus and Satan are not united. And at Calvary, all the race divides. At Calvary, each man becomes identified either with the Savior, who suffers there, or with Satan, who makes Him suffer. I repeat: we become identified with one or the other.

And those who share His kingdom in glory will never forget the love that He poured out, the suffering that He endured. And neither will they forget that it was Satan and his rebellion that caused it. And through eternal ages they'll never, even once, want to *investigate* anything that leads away from Christ. If such a thought should *ever* come in the mind, the thought would at once meet it, "Ah, that's been tried and look at the fearful cost! Look at those marks in the hands of Jesus! Look at those scars, those wounds! Could I do that again? Oh, no, no, no, no! Never! Never!" And with that, my dear friends, comes this humiliating thought (and it ought to humble us): it was not merely Satan's rebellion; it was not merely sin in general; it was *my* sin that nailed Him there to the cross.

You remember how that was brought out in our third text, Zechariah 12:10:

"...They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son..." Zechariah 12:10.

Several years ago in a city where I was pastor, there occurred one of the greatest tragedies that I've ever known about, one of the saddest funerals I've ever known of. It was a little boy that was buried. He didn't die of sickness—His father backed the car out of the garage and ran over his little boy. (He didn't mean to, of course.) The little toddler wasn't used to going out there in the driveway. He was just at the age when he was *beginning* to toddle around. That morning he toddled out of the kitchen, following daddy. And daddy, starting to work, ran over him. Can you imagine the grief of that father as he sat there in front of the casket?

But, my dear friends, the blow which we have dealt the heart of Jesus was not done 'accidentally' or just through 'carelessness.' Again and again we have sinned *deliberately*. Am I correct? Isn't it terrible? And Hebrews 6:6 says that when we do that, we crucify unto ourselves the Son of God... how? [Audience responds: Afresh.] Afresh. "...And put Him to an open shame." And if the view of those scars can burst upon us this morning as God *wants* it to, we too shall weep that our sins have broken His heart. Therein lies the cure for sin, my friends, and that's why the scars are going to stay there in the hands of Jesus.

You know, a scar is not an open wound; it's a wound that's been healed. But there's something there that tells the story. Most of us have a scar; some of us have several scars. And somebody says (somebody that has a right to ask), "What happened to you? What happened to this or that?" And at once your mind goes back—five years, ten years, maybe 40, 50 years—and you tell the story.

All through eternity the wounds of Calvary are going to tell the story of a love that would not let us be lost and sin that was so cruel that it killed the Son of God. And looking at the love on one side and the sin on the other, we shall have a constantly recurring choice. The free choice of man will be eternally exercised to choose love and refuse selfishness and sin. The keeping power is in those wounds:

"...He had horns coming out of his hand [bright beams coming out of His side]: and there was the hiding of his power" Habakkuk 3:4.

Now, I want to read something to you that I think is most eloquent that the servant of the Lord wrote in the *Signs of the Times* of December 30, 1889. (Part of what I'm going to read you will now find quoted in the *Bible Commentary*, Volume 5, and page 1132):

"The blood of Christ is the eternal antidote for sin" *Signs of the Times*, December 30, 1889.

What's an 'antidote', anyway? Well, that means a cure, doesn't it? That's something that neutralizes the poison. Now, what is the antidote for sin? [Audience responds: The blood of Christ.] The blood of Christ. And notice, "the *eternal* antidote":

“The blood of Christ is the eternal antidote for sin. The offensive character of sin is seen in what it cost the Son of God in humiliation, in suffering and death. All the worlds behold in him a living testimony to the malignity of sin; for in his divine form he bears the marks of the curse. He is in the midst of the throne as a Lamb that hath been slain. The redeemed will ever be vividly impressed with the hateful character of sin as they behold him who died for their transgressions” *Ibid.*

Oh, think of it! It isn't just *this* world, friends, but all the worlds on high—all the angels—they are looking at that view of the Lamb slain! Why? That is what keeps *them*. The whole universe is reconciled to God and held to Him by those rays that come from His hands and side:

“The death of Christ upon the cross made sure the destruction of him who has the power of death, who was the originator of sin...The atonement will never need to be repeated; and there will be no danger of another rebellion in the universe of God” *Ibid.*

Isn't that fine?

“That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. The significance of the death of Christ will be seen by saints and angels...Shall we not then exalt the cross of Christ? The angels ascribe honor and glory to Christ, for even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God” *Ibid.*

What holds the angels, friends—the two thirds that stayed with Jesus—what holds them down through the ages? Oh, looking at the sufferings of Christ symbolized and marked by those scars in His hands and feet and side:

“The angels ascribe honor and glory to Christ, for even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God. It is through the efficacy of the cross that the angels of heaven are guarded from apostasy. Without the cross they would be no more secure against evil than were the angels before the fall of Satan. Angelic perfection failed in heaven. Human perfection failed in Eden, the paradise of bliss. All who wish for security in earth or heaven must look to the Lamb of God” *Ibid.*

Let's look, what do you say, friends? *Behold* the Lamb of God that bears away the sin of the world! Jesus, keep me near the cross:

Near the cross! O Lamb of God,
Bring its scenes before me;
Help me walk from day to day,
With its shadows o'er me.

There is the hiding of His power.

How many of us would like to send Him the word this morning that we appreciate that love? Ah, may God grant that every soul of us may *know* Him better than ever before and *love* Him more than before.

Now, He's standing for us up there this morning. He'd love to have us stand for Him down here. He's taking *our* names upon His lips there. He'd love to hear us take *His* name upon our lips.

[A testimony service follows.]

Now as we sing, dear friends, there may be somebody here this morning that needs to surrender to that wonderful love. There might be somebody here this morning that has never yielded your life fully to Jesus. Why not do it this morning? As you see that cross, as you see those wounds of Calvary, why not yield to the Savior who gave everything for *you*?

And there may be someone here this morning that has known Him in the past, and you've let something of this world of sin or self come between you and the Savior. Wouldn't you like to get that out of the way this morning? He's the only one that can take it out of the way, but He waits to do it until you let Him.

So, if you'd like to come just now, whether it's for the first time or to renew a surrender which you have turned away from, just come and we'll pray for you. And Jesus will pray for you; He will accept you. I *know* He loves you. He's calling you this morning.

Jesus, keep me near the cross;
There a precious fountain
Free to all, a healing stream,
Flows from Calvary's mountain.

In the cross, in the cross,
Be my glory ever,
Till my raptured soul shall find
Rest beyond the river.

Near the cross, a trembling soul,
Love and mercy found me;

There the bright and Morning Star
Sheds its beams around me.

In the cross, in the cross,
Be my glory ever,
Till my raptured soul shall find
Rest beyond the river.

Notice this third verse especially:

Near the cross! O Lamb of God,
Bring its scenes before me;
Help me walk from day to day,
With its shadows o'er me.

In the cross, in the cross,
Be my glory ever,
Till my raptured soul shall find
Rest beyond the river.

Near the cross I'll watch and wait,
Hoping, trusting ever,
Till I reach the golden strand,
Just beyond the river.

In the cross, in the cross,
Be my glory ever,
Till my raptured soul shall find
Rest beyond the river.

Dear Savior, Thou who didst say, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," lay Thy loving hand upon these and grant them an abundant entrance into Thy kingdom. May they know this morning that they are very precious to Thee, that Jesus loves them and will *a/ways* love them.

And now Lord, dismiss this congregation with Thy blessing, and grant to us all, day by day, such a view of the wounds of Calvary that we shall love Thee always and hate sin always. We ask it in Jesus' name, Amen.

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