

Sermon #21 — *Habakkuk Series*

Title: **“BEHOLD”**

Text: Habakkuk 1:5

Subject: *Some Wondrous Works of God*

Date: Tuesday Evening — March 1, 2011

Tape # *Habakkuk #21*

Readings: *Larry Brown and Joe Blakely*

Introduction:

I have chosen one word for the title of my message. It is a very common, simple, two syllable word. It is not a word we use very often today. But in the Word of God it is used over 1300 times. It is always used like a sign post to point us to something of utmost importance. It is an attention getter. The word I want us to consider is **“BEHOLD.”** In the texts we will look at this word behold is used as a signpost pointing us to Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

We will begin at **Habakkuk 1:5.** Let’s take one more look at this marvellous prophecy and promise of grace.

(Habakkuk 1:5) “Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for I will

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work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you.”

We know that the wondrous work of which the Lord God here speaks is the work of redeeming and saving poor sinners by His rich, free, and almighty grace through the blood, righteousness, and intercession of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. We know that is what our text is talking about because God the Holy Spirit tells us so in Acts 13:38-41.

(Acts 13:26-43) “Men [and] brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, **to you is the word of this salvation sent.** 27 For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, **because they knew him not,** nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, **they have fulfilled [them] in condemning [him].** 28 And though they found no cause of death [in him], yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain. 29 And **when they had fulfilled all that was written of him,** they took [him] down from the tree, and laid [him] in a sepulchre. 30 But God

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raised him from the dead: 31 And he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people. 32 And **we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers,** 33 **God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.** 34 And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, [now] no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, **I will give you the sure mercies of David.** 35 Wherefore he saith also in another [psalm], Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. 36 For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: 37 But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption. 38 **Be it known unto you therefore, men [and] brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:** 39 **And by him all that believe are justified from all things,** from which ye could

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not be justified by the law of Moses. 40 **Beware** therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; 41 **Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.**”

“42 ¶ And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath. 43 Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, **persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.**”

The greatest wonders in all the world are the wondrous works of God’s amazing grace, by which such things as we are are raised from the dungheap of fallen humanity and made to be the sons of God.

I have nothing new, profound, or deep to say to you. **All I want to do is point you to Christ and show**

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you what God has done, is doing, and will yet do for sinners in Christ. If God the Holy Spirit will enable you to see Christ and God’s free, full, saving grace in Him, you will leave here stunned, amazed, and in profound awe, not at the learning and speech of a man, but at the grace and glory of God in Jesus Christ, His dear Son.

Follow with me through the Scriptures as we look at the way this word “*Behold*” is used to show us the wondrous works of God’s grace in Christ.

1. GOD’S AMAZING LOVE

Let’s look first at 1 John 3:1 and **behold the wonder of of God’s amazing love.**

(1 John 3:1) “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.”

Before the world began, God Almighty bestowed His love in all its fulness upon chosen sinners in Christ,

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adopting us as His children, accepting us as His sons, and determining from eternity that we would in time and forever be called “*the sons of God.*” We who are chosen of God, redeemed by the blood of Christ, and called by the grace and power of His Holy Spirit should never get over the wonder of your election, adoption, and calling as the sons of God. We are all the **sons of Adam** by nature (Romans 5:12), born in sin, — the **children of the devil** in behavior (1 John 3:10; John 8:44), — and the **children of wrath** by merit (Ephesians 2:1-4). **But all who trust the Lord Jesus are the sons of God by grace** (Galatians 4:4-6).

(Galatians 4:4-6) “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.”

This is a work of grace in which all three Persons in the Godhead are concerned.

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- The Father predestinated us unto the adoption of sons (Ephesians 1:6).
- The Son became one of us and redeemed us, that we might receive the adoption of sons (Galatians 4:4-6).
- The Holy Spirit regenerated and makes manifest the fact that we are the sons of God by giving us faith in Christ.

This is a privilege of grace that exceeds all others.

— Commenting on 1 John 3:1, John Gill wrote...

“It is more to be a son than to be a saint. Angels are saints, but not sons. They are servants. It is more to be a child of God than to be redeemed, pardoned, and justified. It is a great grace to redeem from slavery, to pardon criminals, and to justify the ungodly. But it is another and a higher act of grace to make them sons, which makes them infinitely more honorable than to be the sons and daughters of the greatest potentate upon earth; yea, gives them an honor which Adam had not in innocence, nor the angels in heaven; who are sons by creation, yet not by adoption.”

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The Triune Jehovah, our great and glorious God, loved His elect from eternity and adopted them and predestinated them to be the sons of God. **But how can the fallen sons of Adam, sinful men and women of corrupt flesh, become the sons of God?** Before we could become the sons of God, the Son of God had to become the Son of Man, one of us. So secondly...

2. CHRIST’S INCARNATION

Turn to Isaiah 7:14 and **behold the wonder of Christ’s incarnation.** Hundreds of years before it took place, the incarnation and virgin birth of Christ was prophesied by Isaiah (Matthew 1:23). In order to save men, the Son of God had to become a man. In order to bring men into union with God, Godhood had to come into union with manhood. God and man must become one!

- Only as a man could God obey His law to establish righteousness for men.
- Only as a man could God suffer the penalty of the law and die the violent death of a sacrificial

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Substitute for the satisfaction of justice against the sins of men.

- Only by becoming a man could the infinite Son of God be touched with the feeling of our infirmities and make empathetic intercession for us in heaven.

Mary, as a virgin, conceived a child by the Holy Spirit without the aid of a man. The child that was born into this world from Mary’s womb was and is the Son of God. The incarnate Son of God is Immanuel!

- God with us!
- God in our nature!
- God come to save! (John 1:14-16; Colossians 2:10.)

(John 1:14-16) “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

“15 ¶ John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that

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cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. 16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.”

(Colossians 2:9-10) “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. 10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:”

Yet, we must have more. The incarnate God cannot save us by living for us and establishing righteousness as our Representative. **Sin must be punished! Justice must be satisfied! Mercy cannot be extended, grace cannot be given, until justice has satisfaction.** The incarnate God must die for us or He cannot be our Savior.

3. SUBSTITUTIONARY REDEMPTION

So, thirdly, we **the behold the wonder of substitutionary redemption** in John 1:29.

(John 1:29) “The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of

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God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

When John saw the Lord Jesus coming and cried, “*Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world,*” he was saying, “There is the One of whom I have been speaking. There is the Lamb spoken of throughout the Scriptures. There is the Savior by whose bloody death justice must be satisfied.”

Wonders of wonders. Christ is the Lamb of God!

— The first mention of blood in the Bible was the blood of a lamb that typified Christ (Genesis 3:21; 4:4). — The last mention of blood in this Book is the blood of Christ, the Lamb of God (Revelation 19:13).

Christ is the Lamb!

- A Victim!
- An Innocent Victim!
- A Voluntary Victim!

Christ is the Lamb of God and the Lamb who is God!

- A Lamb provided by God!

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- A Lamb Acceptable to and Accepted by God
(Infinite in merit and efficacy.)

Christ is the Lamb of God sacrificed for us!

(2 Corinthians 5:21) “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” (2 Corinthians 5:21)

(1 Peter 1:18-20) “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, [as] silver and gold, from your vain conversation [received] by tradition from your fathers; 19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: 20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.”

(1 Peter 2:24) “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”

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(1 Peter 3:18) “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:”

Christ is the Lamb by whose blood our sins have been put away!

- Hebrews 1:1-3 (“Purged”)
- Hebrews 9:26 (“Put Away”)
- Galatians 3:13 (Redeemed”)

Illustration: *The Scapegoat*

But how can we be absolutely certain that the Lamb of God will get what He paid for, that all for whom He died will believe on Him and be saved by Him? Is the success of His labor dependent upon sinful man’s fickle free-will? Oh, no! We know that Christ will save all for whom He died, that every sinner for whom He made satisfaction to Divine justice will believe on Him unto life everlasting, because **God exalted him to be a Prince and a**

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Savior, to rule the universe for the saving of his people!

4. CHRIST’S EXALTATION

Turn to Isaiah 32:1 and **behold with me the wonder of Christ’s exaltation and dominion as Lord and King.** — *“Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness!”* And that King is our hope, our joy, and our comfort. He is our hiding place. Look at Isaiah’s prophecy.

(Isaiah 32:1-4) “Behold, **a king** shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. 2 And **a man** shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. 3 And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. 4 The heart also of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly.”

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William Huntington rightly observed, — “Jesus is King over the earth. His reign of providence is universal. He is heir of all things. All power is given to Him. And He has power over all flesh; and for this end, that He may give eternal life to as many as the Father has given Him.”

Christ our Redeemer is King over all things. — He reigns in righteousness.

- By Virtue of Righteousness (John 17:2).
- In a Righteous Manner
- To Make Sinners Righteous by His Grace.

All who come under the rule of this King are righteous. — Made righteous by Him.

- Imputed Righteousness — Justification!
- Imparted Righteousness — Regeneration!
- Righteousness in Behavior — Consecration!

How does King Jesus make sinners righteous? How is that possible? How can a sinner, a man who is sin, a man who can do nothing but sin, be made righteous?

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5. THE NEW CREATION

Turn to Revelation 21:5. **Here we behold the wonder of the new creation.**

(Revelation 21:5) “And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.”

It takes more than an act of your freewill to make you righteous. It takes more than sashaying down a church aisle and saying, “I believe in Jesus,” to make you righteous. The only way you can be made righteous, the only way a sinner can be saved is for the Lord Jesus Christ to make you a new creation. I know that Revelation 21 is talking about our ultimate glorification. But this new creation is experienced by every child of God in regeneration (2 Corinthians 5:17).

(2 Corinthians 5:17) “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

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“Old things are passed away.” Your sins are gone!
— **“Behold, all things are become new!”**

- A New Record!
- A New Nature!
- A New Heart!
- A New Will!
- A New Life! — Not just a new principle of life, a new life!

Dr. Martyn Lloyd-jones once said to his congregation, — “The moment you receive this new life, you’re aware of it; you know it. There’s no need to discuss it; you know it’s happened...[God’s people have] all been born of the same Spirit and have the same life in them. They [are] all partakers of the same life.” — And that life of which we are all partakers is Christ. All are **“partakers of the divine nature,”** — **“Christ in you, the hope of glory!”**

Will it last? Will God’s saints persevere in faith? Are we sure enough secure in Christ? Let’s see...

6. THE WONDER OF PRESERVING GRACE

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Sixth, turn to Psalm 121:4 and hear David sing, as we **behold the wonder of divine preservation and care, the wonder of God’s preserving grace, the wonder of our perseveration.**

(Psalms 121:1-8) “I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. 2 My help [cometh] from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. 3 He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. 4 **Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.** 5 The LORD [is] thy keeper: the LORD [is] thy shade upon thy right hand. 6 The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. 7 The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. 8 The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.”

“Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep!” We are the Israel of God (Philippians 3:3). The Lord God Himself is our Keeper!

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- He keeps us from temptation.
- He keeps us from falling.
- When we fall, He keeps us from ruin.
- He keeps us from our enemies.
- He keeps us in the midst of our enemies.
- He keeps us in faith.

The Lord God keeps us in safety in His providence, both spiritually and physically (Isaiah 54:17; Psalm 91).

(Isaiah 54:17) “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.”

Without question the 91st Psalm is all about our Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ; but if it is about Him it is about me too. I am one with Him!

(Psalms 91:1-16) “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the

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shadow of the Almighty. 2 I will say of the LORD, [He is] my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. 3 Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, [and] from the noisome pestilence. 4 He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth [shall be thy] shield and buckler. 5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; [nor] for the arrow [that] flieth by day; 6 [Nor] for the pestilence [that] walketh in darkness; [nor] for the destruction [that] wasteth at noonday. 7 A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; [but] it shall not come nigh thee. 8 Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.”

“9 ¶ Because thou hast made the LORD, [which is] my refuge, [even] the most High, thy habitation; 10 There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. 11 For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. 12 They shall bear thee up in [their] hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. 13 Thou shalt tread upon the lion

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and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet. 14 Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. 15 He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I [will be] with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. 16 With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.”

Still, there is more. There is something more to come, something more to be done...

7. THE WONDER OF CHRIST’S COMING

Seventh, in Revelation 1:7 **behold the wonder of Christ’s glorious second advent.** — “*Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen*” (Revelation 1:7).

Marvelous message we bring,
Glorious carol we sin,
Wonderful word of the King,

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Jesus is coming again!

Standing before Him at last,
Trial and trouble all past,
Crowns at His feet we will cast,
Jesus is coming again!

Christ comes for His saints one by one, when He fetches them home to heaven (John 14:1-3). — *“Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world”* (John 17:24). **But our Lord Jesus really is coming again in His body to this earth!...And when, at last, He does appear...**

- *“Every eye shall see him!”* (Believer and Unbeliever!)
- *“They also which pierced him!”*
- *“And all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him!”* (The Terror of Judgment)
- *“Even so. Amen!”* (The Joy and Confidence of Faith)

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8. THE WONDER OF THE RESURRECTION

Children of God, we have reason to rejoice when we think of that great day. Let me show you what will happen to us when the Lord comes. Turn to 1st Corinthians 15:51 and **behold the wonder of resurrection glory.**

1st Corinthians 15:51-57 tells us what will happen to our bodies when Christ appears.

(1 Corinthians 15:51-57) “Behold, I shew you a mystery; **We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,** 52 **In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,** at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal [must] put on immortality. 54 **So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.** 55 **O death, where [is] thy sting? O grave, where**

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[is] thy victory? 56 The sting of death [is] sin; and the strength of sin [is] the law. 57 But thanks [be] to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

1st Thessalonians 4:13-18 shows us the order of the resurrection.

(1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) “I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive [and] remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be

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with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

It won't be long, till we'll be leaving here.

It won't be long until we're free!

(1 Corinthians 15:58) “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

9. THE WONDER OF FREE SALVATION

Are you hungry to be a partaker of these great boons of grace that I have been talking about? If you are, the door is open and God Himself invites poor sinners like you and me to come. **In Matthew 22:4 we behold the wonder of God's free salvation.**

(Matthew 22:2-4) “The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, 3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they

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would not come. 4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and [my] fatlings [are] killed, and **all things [are] ready: come unto the marriage.**”

- A Savior Ready to Save!
- A Father Ready to Embrace and Kiss! — (The Prodigal — The Fatted Calf — The Best Robe The Family Ring — A Pair of Shoes: Grace and Peace!)
- A Spirit Ready to Seal!
- And Everything is Free!

Once while preaching at a county fair. **Rowland Hill** noticed the vendors selling their wares and said to his audience, “Our friends bring their fruits and crafts to the fair to sell, and they work hard to get up to their price. I bring you better things than they; my milk and bread is eternal food, but my difficulty is in getting you down to my price! My goods are free! — **“Come,”** saith the Lord, **“he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price.”**”

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“My friends,” Rowland Hill continued, “if I were to preach justification for five dollars, all would leave this place justified; if I were to preach justification for all who would walk a hundred miles, all would become pilgrims tomorrow; if I were to preach justification for all who would be beaten with stripes, all would bare their backs immediately; but when the gift of life — justification freely by His grace in Christ Jesus — is preached freely for the poor and needy, men turn away in unbelief.”

10. **THE WONDER OF**
LOVE OFTEN SPURNED

There is one other group to whom I must speak for a moment. There is a behold for fallen, languishing, lukewarm, declining, spiritually negligent, and indifferent souls saved by Christ. **Turn to Revelation 3:20 and behold the wonder of love often spurned, the wonder of our Savior’s tender plea.**

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(Revelation 3:20) “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.”

(Song of Solomon 5:2-8) “I sleep, but my heart waketh: [it is] the voice of my beloved that knocketh, [saying], Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, [and] my locks with the drops of the night. 3 I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them? 4 My beloved put in his hand by the hole [of the door], and my bowels were moved for him. 5 I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped [with] myrrh, and my fingers [with] sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock. 6 I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, [and] was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer. 7 The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil

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from me. 8 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I [am] sick of love.”

(Song of Solomon 3:4) “It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother’s house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.” (Song of Solomon 3:4)

May it please the Son of God now to graciously cause you and me to open to Him (Song of Solomon 5:2-6).

Are you acquainted with that state in which we see God’s Church here? Do you, by reason of that body of sin and death you carry within, that burden, that heaviness of soul that saddens your heart, that you are disqualified for grace? — At such times, when you hear the voice of the Lord Jesus in the ordinances of worship, in providence, in rebukes of conscience, or in chastisements of

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soul, understand that that is His voice knocking for you to open to Him!

What a decisive proof this is, in every heart that feels it, of the impossibility of any natural goodness in us! And what a decisive proof this is of His free love for our poor souls!

Precious Savior, follow up Your gracious calls, by opening the door of our hearts. Come in, Lord Jesus, by the force of Your irresistible love. Revive Your work with the droppings of Your grace, and the fragrance of Your Holy Spirit's influence. Do not withdraw from us, dear Lord, and don't let us withdraw from You! Let not the watchmen You have sit upon the walls of Zion wound us. Oh, cause Your watchmen to ever point our souls to You, that we may tell our Lord we are sick of love, waiting for renewed views of Your pardoning mercy, love, and grace that our souls may revive as the corn, and grow as the vine.

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O Lord Jesus, make me such a watchman upon
the walls of Zion!

Amen.