

The Beauty of Jesus Delivers from All Fears

Song of Solomon 5:14; Psalm 27:4

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When David fled for his life from Saul and when He felt overwhelmed by the wicked all around him who sought to destroy him, what was his chief desire—to be victorious, to be safe, or to be fed? Those were all important matters for which David prayed at various times in the Psalms. But those were not his chief desire in prayer to the Lord at such times of distress. Victory, safety, and food did not deliver him from all his fears. What did? Consider David's words in Psalm 27:1-4—that one thing that he supremely desired was to live in communion with the Lord Jesus (“that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life”) in order that he might fix his eye of faith upon the unsurpassing glory of Jesus (“to behold the beauty of the Lord”) and be directed by His Word (“and to inquire in his temple”).

Dear ones, what is it that you desire of the Lord more than anything when you face a conflict in your home, a serious illness, a fearful rumor, or a great crisis? Is it simply to be delivered and provided for, or is it with David that you may live in communion with Jesus so as to behold His glorious beauty and to be led not by your emotions and fears, but by the unshakeable promises in His Word? When Jesus is most beautiful to you, and when you are fixed on His greatness (He is “the chiefest among ten thousand” Song 5:10), He will deliver you from all your fears.

Let us turn again to behold the beauty of the Lord Jesus regardless of the fears that you may face. This is God's remedy to your fears. We shall (by God's grace) behold from our text (1) The Beauty of His Hands (Song 5:14); and (2) The Beauty of His Belly (Song 5:14).

I. The Beauty of His Hands (Song 5:14).

A. When the daughters of Jerusalem (professing Christians within the Visible Church) inquire of the elect bride of Jesus Christ (the Invisible Church) what makes the Lord Jesus so special and glorious to her (Song 5:9), she has no difficulty at all in beginning to summarize the unsurpassed beauty of who Jesus is (Song 5:10-16). The bride is not stumbling around lost for words as to why there is no one like Jesus.

1. This speaks of the bride's true knowledge and near communion with Jesus. Her knowledge of Jesus is not a mere catechetical knowledge of Jesus Christ. That knowledge is great and we should all have it, but dear children, if that is all that you have, you do not truly know Jesus and He does not know you as your own personal Savior.

2. If your knowledge of Jesus does not lead you to trust in Him, love Him, delight to spend time with Him in prayer and to read His Word, and obey His commandments, you do not have a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. In fact, mere knowledge without faith, love, communion, and obedience will intensify God's judgment upon you, not lessen it (the harshest criticism Jesus gave was not against the tax collectors and prostitutes, but against the Jews who knew the Law of Moses). Children, let that knowledge you have from the Scripture and from the catechism drive you into the loving arms of Jesus Christ.

B. How are the hands of Jesus beautiful (Song 5:14)? As gold rings that are inset with the precious stone of a beryl are stunning, captivating, and beautiful to behold, the hands of Jesus are infinitely more so.

1. The hands of Jesus speak of His almighty power to use them in judging His enemies or in blessing His people. His hands are not amputated or chained so that He is unable to humble nations by His hands or unable to help His beloved people in the most dire situations.

a. The hand of the Lord brings righteous judgment (Exodus 9:2-3; Acts 13:10-11). The Lord Jesus may restrain His own hand in delaying or lessening judgment, but no man can restrain His

omnipotent hands (Daniel 4:35). Those who do not have ears to hear or eyes to see the present pestilence in all of its devastating consequences upon us as the Lord's judgment upon the nations for their rebellion and covenant-breaking are sadly deaf and blind (Amos 4:10). To announce a "National Day of Prayer" without confession of national sins and wicked laws that promote the violation of the Ten Commandments is to mock the Lord and to reveal our pride as a nation (2 Chronicles 7:14).

b. The hand of the Lord also brings undeserved blessing (Psalm 118:14-15; Acts 11:21). Every blessing we enjoy (material and spiritual) is by the hand of the Lord Jesus. When you are dismissed with a benediction (blessing) at the end of the worship service, the uplifted hands of the minister represent the hands of the Lord Jesus set upon you for your good as God's people (Luke 24:50).

2. Are the Lord's people enjoying the hand of His blessing in all that has and shall come by means of this virus (health and economic crises)? Yes, they are. To His enemies, this crisis is a curse. To His beloved bride, it is a blessing. How can disease, pestilence, sickness, death, and an economic crisis be the hand of Christ's blessing? This virus is not a curse to you, His beloved bride. The curse of death and all miseries in this life have been paid for and removed by Jesus (Galatians 3:13). The Lord's hand will bless this pestilence and crisis to your sanctification and growth in Jesus Christ (as He will with death).

a. This virus reveals our weakness and His strength, our sin and His righteousness, our mortality and His immortality, our insufficiency and His all sufficiency (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). In such times of distress, we see our help is in the Lord Jesus. Dear ones, have these trials brought you to see all the more your need of Jesus Christ? This is for your sanctification and growth in Christ. That is a blessing.

b. This virus is a God-appointed opportunity for us to show the love of Jesus Christ in declaring the gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed to family members, brothers and sisters in Christ, and neighbors). We suffer that we might comfort others (2 Corinthians 1:3-4). This virus, reminds us that we need to keep in touch with, pray, and help those within our church (and outside our church) that are especially vulnerable to illness and financial setbacks, and to make the eldership aware of such needs.

c. This virus is also for the salvation of the Lord's elect (2 Timothy 2:10). If you knew one person would be brought to Christ through this virus and its consequences, what greater blessing could there be?

d. This virus causes us to long for and desire to be with the Lord Jesus in the glories of heaven where there is no more sin, temptation, pain, or suffering, and where the hand of the Lord gives an everlasting and uninterrupted peace, joy, and contentment in Jesus.

3. The Lord's hands are His works in creation, in providence, in redemption, in sanctification throughout all history which testify to the truth that the Lord has not only spoken to us in Scripture, but has also given hands to His Word in His mighty acts performed in history.

a. So likewise, it is not enough for you to merely profess the truth with your mouth, you must also practice the truth daily in your actions (in daily private worship and with your family, in practicing what you believe when you are alone, when you are with your family, and when you are at work with unbelievers).

b. This is true in the church as well. We not only have a Confession of Faith (the *Westminster Confession*, etc.) as a subordinate standard of what we believe, but also historical testimony as a subordinate standard of the faithful church and followers of Jesus Christ (*Act, Declaration, and Testimony*). Historical testimony is simply following our faithful forefathers as they followed the Lord Jesus (1 Corinthians 11:1). If this is the Lord's command through Paul to individual Christians, surely it is true of us as a church as well.

4. Finally, the hands of Jesus are beautiful because they were scarred, disfigured, and nailed to the cross for you, His elect bride. Just as His cheeks were pummeled for you, His back was scourged for you, His head was crowned with thorns for you, so His hands are beautiful for in them forever will be the scars that bear the nail prints as a constant reminder of what He endured by way of His suffering for you.

There are no hands to the true Christian that are more beautiful than His hands. It is only and always with those hands that the Lord Jesus sends a crisis into your life and mine. You cannot look at the hands of the Lord in anything that He brings upon you without seeing those pierced hands that rescued and saved you now and for all eternity. Looking upon those pierced hands makes all of the difference in how you will respond to a crisis. The hands of Jesus are beautiful to every true Christian and if they are not, something is seriously wrong.

II. The Beauty of His Belly (Song 5:14).

A. The Hebrew word for “belly” is actually used earlier in this same chapter, only there it is translated “bowels” (Song 5:4). It should likewise be understood in this case not to refer to the outward belly, but to the inward belly or bowels. As Scripture uses “heart” many times to refer to the seat of affection (rather than to the physical organ), so likewise it uses “bowels” many times to refer to the inward affection of love, compassion, and tender mercy (Jeremiah 31:20; Colossians 3:12).

1. The only reason that that the bride’s bowels of love and compassion were moved at the voice of the Lord Jesus (Song 5:4) is because His bowels of love and compassion were first moved for her (1 John 4:19). The Scripture seeks to give some illustration of the infinite love of Jesus that burns in His heart for you by comparing that love to the love of a mother for her baby (Isaiah 49:15).

2. The bowels of His everlasting mercy and infinite love flow in every drop of blood which He shed for you, His people. You receive of the bowels of Christ’s love and mercy every day (for every breath, for food, for safety, and for every spiritual blessing). His belly (inward belly) or bowels are most beautiful because we were not desirable or loveable in ourselves. He freely set His love and mercy upon us, His elect bride, when we were ugly and detestable due to our sins. Now that you are His chosen and beloved bride, He will never stop loving you. Nothing can separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:35,38,39). His amazing love is conforming you to His image. It is impossible that His love will be ineffectual. Your fears reveal your doubts in understanding the bowels of Christ’s infinite and everlasting love for you (1 John 4:18).

B. How can you and I be so infinitely blessed, and yet withhold that same love toward one another? How can we withhold love, mercy, forgiveness, and compassion to one another (1 John 3:17)? How can we claim that He has shown us such love and yet not show it in our own families daily, to brethren who offend us, and to those who curse us? If we claim that our bowels of love are moved for the Savior, but not for those who offend us, we are practicing hypocrisy. We reveal whether we have been loved little or much by loving one another little or much in word and deed (Luke 7:47). We can tell how much we truly believe we have been loved and forgiven by how much we demonstrate our love and forgiveness to one another (loved and forgiven little by the Lord Jesus then loving and forgiving little—loved and forgiven much by the Lord Jesus then loving and forgiving much). You cannot truly correct a brother/sister until your bowels of compassion and mercy are moved for them as Christ’s bowels of compassion and mercy are moved for you. If His bowels of compassion are beautiful to you, you will not be able refrain from showing it to others.

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