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“THE HANDS OF GOD”

#3 - HIS HAND SECURING US

“Your right hand shall hold me.” (Psalm 139:10b)

David said God laid His *“hand upon me”* (Psalm 139:5) and *“Your hand shall lead me”* (Psalm 139:10a). He adds *“and Your right hand shall hold me”* (Psalm 139:10b). This is yet another posture of God’s hand. Picture God holding us in His hand. Let us give thought to the grasp of God.

THE HANDS THAT HOLD ME ARE HIS PIERCED HANDS

“They pierced My hands and My feet.” (Psalm 22:16)

Psalm 22 is one of the Messianic psalms and in this psalm we read of the crucifixion prerecorded. The scene is unmistakably that of Calvary. We read, *“They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.”* (v.18)

The sixteenth verse reads, *“They pierced My hands and My feet.”* Crucifixion was a most cruel form of punishment and death. The hands and feet had nails driven through them and fastened to a cross and the crucified one was suspended in that position until death.

After Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection He appeared to the eleven disciples in the Upper Room, the twelfth, Thomas being absent. The disciples reported to Thomas saying, *“We have seen the LORD.”* But Thomas said, *“Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.”* (John 20:25)

One week later all twelve of the disciples were meeting in the Upper Room when Jesus appeared to them again. *“Then He said to Thomas, “Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.” And Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!”* (John 20:26-28)

Illust. In 1015 B. C. A Norseman, named Herman O’Neill, organized a seaborne expedition to take possession of the northern coast of Ireland. The invasion was arranged in competition with another Viking Chief and the two leaders agreed, before they started out, that the one who touched land first would become the king of the newly conquered territory.

The two armadas came within sight of land at the same time. O’Neill’s rival put on a burst of speed and his ship surged ahead of O’Neill’s. Realizing that his rival was about to reach shore first and would therefore claim the crown, O’Neill performed a desperate act. He cut off his own right hand and threw the bleeding hand on shore. It landed just ahead of the other chieftain and by that act Herman O’Neill became the first king of what is now Ulster, on the northern coast of Ireland.

With O'Neal began the O'Neill dynasty which ruled over Ulster for many centuries. The coat of arms of the O'Neill dynasty features a red hand on a silver cross. It is known as "The Red Hand of Ulster." Jesus Christ not only gave His hands but he gave His life for our redemption. The red hands of Calvary provide salvation for all who will come to Him.

*"Place your hand in the nail scarred hand,
He will keep to the end, He's your dearest friend,
Place your hand in the nail scarred hand."*

THE HANDS THAT HOLD ME ARE HIS PROTECTIVE HANDS

"And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand." (John 10:28)

In the first church I was privileged to pastor, in a Mid-week service I commented on John 10:28 saying, once Jesus takes you into His hand no one can get you out! A lady, who usually attended a church that taught salvation by works, was visiting in the service and she took exception to the statement. She interrupted me by saying, "The devil can get us out!" I replied that the God Who is powerful enough to cast the devil out of heaven and Who will eventually cast him into hell is too powerful to allow the devil to remove a believer from His almighty hand."

The lady responded by saying, "Well, we can get ourselves out!" I reminded her that Jesus said, "*Neither shall anyone snatch them out of my hand*" and then I asked her, "Dear lady, are you an *"anyone"*? Jesus said, "*neither shall anyone*" remove a child of His from His hand."

Always remember that when God made us He did so with a purpose and a plan. He saw all our days before we lived one of them and placed over us the covering of His protective love. He has allowed nothing to come into our lives that has not first been screened through that love. His hand has enclosed us and we have His pledge that "*neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.*"

An insurance company advertises that "You are in good hands" if you are insured with them. That may be true. However, this I know: the insurance policy that the Lord Jesus announced in John 10:28 provides eternal security and you will not need to make a monthly payment for Jesus paid it all!

Margaret Clarkson, in her hymn "God of The Ages," penned these words in verses one and three of her hymn:

*"God of the ages, history's Maker,
Planning our pathway, holding us fast,
Shaping in mercy all that concerns us:
Father, we praise You, Lord of the past.
God of tomorrow, strong Overcomer,
Princes of darkness own Your command:
What then can harm us? We are Your people,
Now and forever kept by Your hand."*

THE HANDS THAT HOLD ME ARE HIS PATERNAL HANDS

“My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand.” (John 10:29)

We have a heavenly Father Who loves us so much that He will never turn us loose! You may not have good memories of your earthly Father but your heavenly Father is committed to keeping you in His family and in fellowship with Him!

If the devil cannot prevent a sinner from trusting the Lord Jesus for salvation, he works at causing that believer to doubt the finished work of Christ on his behalf. Consequently, the truth of the security of the believer is attacked by the devil.

I have another memory from teaching on the passage of Scripture in John 10 early in my ministry. In a Sunday School class a visitor took exception to my statement: “To have eternal life is to be eternally safe in God’s hands.” The visiting brother disagreed and said, “When we sin God releases us from His hand.” I replied, “Once we commit our souls to God for safe keeping, He keeps eternally. Paul said, “He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day.” (I Timothy 1:12)” To which he answered, “God does not have anything dirty in His hands and when we sin, we become dirty and He lets us go.”

My reply was, “When Jesus Christ died He paid for our sins past, present and future. When we commit individual acts of sin *‘If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’* (I John 1:9) Our security is based, not upon our sinless-ness, but upon His promises.” He said, “Once saved, always saved, is a dangerous doctrine!” I saw that the conversation was not going well and concluded by saying, “Once in His hands, always in His hands. Jesus is the Truth and He always spoke the truth. I believe Him.”

Jesus saves and secures us. Some there are who scoff at the doctrine of eternal security. There are those who believe correctly the truth of the eternal security of those who are saved and then there are those who believe incorrectly and are therefore eternally insecure! Jesus pictures those who are His as being in His and His Father’s almighty hands and therefore, are secure eternally. Charles Spurgeon wrote: “The chosen are doubly secure; two hands have grasped them and in that double security they are beyond all danger.” (Spurgeon’s Devotional Bible)

A young girl was giving her testimony of faith in Christ in a public park where there were many from all walks of life gathered. She concluded by quoting “no one is able to pluck hem out of My Father’s hand.” In the group was a skeptic who spoke up with this flippant question: “But suppose Maggie, that you slip through one of His fingers?” In an instant Maggie replied, “But sir, that can never happen because, you see, I am one of His fingers, for Ephesians 5:30 tells us that we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones!” “More secure is no one ever than the loved ones of the Savior” said hymn writer Karolina Sandell-Berg. Moses said, when addressing the people of Israel, “*All saints are in Your hand.*” (Deut. 33:3) Wonderful truth indeed!

THE HANDS THAT HOLD ME ARE HIS POWERFUL HANDS

"I cling to you; your right hand upholds me." (Psalm 63:8)

Isaiah 41:10 - *"Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."*

To be held in His powerful hands is to experience:

- His courage – *"Fear not"*;
- His presence – *"I am with you"*;
- His peace – *"be not dismayed"*;
- His energy – *"I will strengthen you"*;
- His assistance – *"I will help you"*;
- His undergirding – *"I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."*

Illust. I shook hands with the boxing champion Mohammed Ali. I was changing planes in the Atlanta, GA airport and as I walked from one concourse to another, I saw a large gathering of media people with cameras, etc. and in the middle of the group, head and shoulders taller than the others, was Mohammed Ali. He was the world's heavyweight boxing champion at the time.

I wanted a closer look and shoved my way through the crowd, to the consternation of some, and walked up behind Ali. I tugged on his sleeve and said, "Champ, I hear that you are a minister of Mohammed, I am a Minister of Jesus Christ!"

He wheeled around, leaving those who were interviewing and filming him, looked me in the eye and said, as he stuck out his hand to me, "Yes, I am a minister of Mohammed and I am glad to meet you! Say, I've got a question for you. "I understand that Jesus was born of a virgin. How could that be when He had brothers and sisters?" We had very friendly conversation and then he said, "I am resigning as a minister of Mohammed. You see, Mohammed's ministers should be holy and I can't be holy with the crowd I run with."

All the time we were talking, he was holding my hand, and I might add, gripping it tightly! Now, I thought I had a large hand, but his hand swallowed up my hand. I said to him, "Champ, you have powerful hands!" He replied, "My hands have made me what I am!" And turning loose of my hand he faked a jab at me, smiled and said, I've got to talk to these other fellows!" I turned and walked back through the crowd of impatient reporters, to their delight, I might add!

To simply say that God has powerful hands obviously minimizes their greatness. The Psalm writer puts His hands in perspective when he wrote: *"The LORD is the great God, and the great King above all gods. In His hand are the deep places of the earth; the heights of the hills are His also. The sea is His, for He made it; and His hands formed the dry land."* (Psalm 95:3-5) All who are in His powerful hands can say, "His hands have made me what I am!"

THE HANDS THAT HOLD ME ARE HIS PUNITIVE HANDS

"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Hebrews 10:31)

I must not conclude without giving as complete a portrayal as possible of the hands of God. While the truths regarding God's hands, about which I have written are a blessing, there is a warning that must also be communicated. That warning is:

"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Heb. 10:31)

I must say to those who have spurned God's love; rejected God's Son; ignored God's mercy; lived life on their own terms and pushed away the convicting hand of God, that you are in grave danger for, while attempting to escape the grasp of God you remain in the grip of the devil! I remind you that you have:

An appointment to keep

"It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment." (Hebrews 9:27)

An account to give

"Each of us shall give account of himself to God." (Romans 14:12)

All people must, in one sense or another, fall into His hands. How vitally important it is to accept now His offer of salvation so that we may be in the hands of a loving Father and not fall into His hands as The Righteous Judge and be condemned forever!

In the early days of America, an Indian who had, under the influence of a missionary, become a Christian, was trying to explain to other Indians what God had done for him and what he could also do for them. The Christian Indian illustrated his salvation by making a circle of fire on the ground. Inside the circle he placed a worm. The worm squirmed and crawled in every direction but could not escape the fiery circle. Then the Indian extended his hand, reached in and picked up the worm out of the circle of fire. He then said to the watching Indians, "That is what God did for me!"

That is exactly what God's hand does for us. As the psalmist said, *"He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my steps."* (Psalm 40:2) His hand is reaching out to you! Are you reaching up to Him?

From an unknown author comes this poetic summation about the hand of God:

"We are in His hand, that mighty hand, that flung a universe in space,
That guides the sun and moon and stars, and holds the planets in place.
We are in His hand that skillful hand, that made the blinded eyes to see,
That touched the leper, cleansed, healed and set the palsied sufferer free.
We are in that hand, that loving hand that lifted children to His breast,
That fed the hungry multitudes and beckoned weary hearts to rest.
We are in His hands, those pierced hands, once nailed to Calvary's tree,
When there in agony and blood He paid the price to set us free."