

# When he hideth his face who then can behold him

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[ 0 : 00 ] We may now consider together the words you will find in the chapter read. The book of the prophet Job, chapter 24.

The book of Job, chapter 34. And we may read again at the 29th verse.

Job 34, from verse 29. When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?

And when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? And he said, whether it be done against an Asian or against a man only, that the hypocrite wail not, lest the people be ensnared.

When he giveth quietness or peace, who then can make trouble?

[ 1 : 22 ] And when he hideth his face, who then can behold him?

In these words, two things are ascribed unto God.

First, he gives quietness. He gives peace.

And when he gives quietness, who then can make trouble?

That is, the peace or quietness he gives, in a certain sense, is absolute.

[ 2 : 27 ] But then the opposite of that fact. And in order to maintain the balance of the symptoms, we have to take them as opposites.

The opposite of that is, he hideth his face. And then with the setting of him, who can behold him?

When the Lord hides his face, who can behold him? That is as absolute as the other.

And this is true on a larger and on a smaller scale. It is true whether it be against an Asian or for an Asian.

Or against or for an individual. And the reason for this is, that the hypocrite should not reign.

[ 3 : 40 ] That the people should not be ensnared. Well, first of all, it is predicated of him that he gives quietness or peace.

This is one of his titles in the scriptures. Especially in the New Testament scriptures. The God of Peace.

And that means not only that he himself dwells eternally in unchanging serenity.

But he is also the one who gives peace. He is himself above and infinitely beyond the disturbance, the disquietude that prevails on that visitor's world.

But not only so. He is able to confer on the heart of man a peace.

[ 5 : 11 ] That while he is pleased to maintain it, nothing can take away. We often hear the petition. Give us the peace that the world cannot give. And that the world cannot take away. That is true.

But the Lord gives not only what the world cannot give. But also what the world cannot take away.

No, he gives peace. He gives quietness.

And the peace of God is essentially and basically consists in agreement on the part of the creature with God's revealed will.

[ 6 : 20 ] Now we state that without any modification or qualification.

Peace. Peace. Peace. Peace. Peace. Peace with God essentially consists in being brought to a condition of heart and mind.

God's judgment. God's verdict. God's pronouncements on all things.

And there are no exceptions to this. But of course it has to be added that there is only one way by which this can be brought about.

But this is what must be brought about if we have to have the quietness, the peace, referred to here and elsewhere.

[ 7 : 45 ] In the scriptures. So as we are in and of ourselves, we are at areas with God in heaven.

In heaven, we are at enmity with him. His ways, and that includes of course his judgments, his verdicts and pronouncements on all things.

His ways, his ways are not our ways. We have our own ways. But God has peace.

Now these are at variance. They are not in agreement. They are not in agreement. They are the reverse of being in agreement. They conflict at every point. And that is man's misery. That is the essence of his misery.

Because that is the essence of his ungodliness. He does not. He is the frozenness of health, or are the uda, or are the valid ■inants on nothing along it man's misery. That is the essence of his misery because that is the essence of his ungodliness.

[ 9 : 11 ] He is not in agreement with God. His ways are not God's ways. His thoughts are not God's thoughts. No, it is to change that the gospel of God's grace has come into the world. It is to redeem man. To redeem him from what? Well, in essence we repeat, to redeem him or to save him from his disagreement with God. From the fact that he disagrees with him. That he is not at one with him. That he is not at peace with him. But how can that be done?

That we say can only be done in one way. Now there are many approaches, many scriptural approaches to the question of reconciliation. All depending what aspect of reconciliation we are considering. But this is a very important aspect of it. What is effected in reconciliation?

What is effected in the creature? What happens when a man is reconciled to God? This is the ministry that we have in the gospel. As Paul puts it, he has committed unto us the ministry of reconciliation. He has committed unto us that God was in fact reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. It is a ministry of reconciliation. But reconciliation is nothing more and nothing less than this. To be brought to a condition of mind in which we are in agreement with God. That is reconciliation. We are reconciled to him. We are in our own creature measure. And according to this regeneration, we are in our own creature measure. And according to this regeneration, we are in our own creature measure.

Anrau■■s well more or less about everything.

About everything. But God does not bring a book to his reconciliation. Peace be.

[ 13 : 04 ] That is not the way he affects this at all. He brings the sinner who was at enmity with him, who disagreed with him at every point.

He brings him to agree with him. And to agree with him on his verdict concerning his son.

This is the means of reconciliation. Reconciliation. This is the means of reconciliation. And when we are of the same mind with God concerning his son, then necessarily, in that very measure, we are of the same mind with him in everything else.

In everything else. reconciliation, reconciliation in this sense, is comparable with sanctification.

In sanctification, every faculty of the soul is renewed. But none of them is wholly renewed.

[ 14 : 29 ] So while the sinner is reconciled to God in all God's activities, when he is reconciled to God in the death of his son, he is not altogether reconciled and will not be altogether reconciled until the body of sin is destroyed, until the spirit is made perfect in holiness and passed into glory.

But nevertheless, the foundation, the basis of reconciliation is laid broad and deep in the soul.

when the sinners were reconciled in the death of Christ. Now, this is the peace or the quietness that comes to the soul who has the liberty of the gospel in Christ Jesus.

And as he sees this, he sees it in heaven. He sees God's anger not only in his grace specifically considered, but also in his providence.

the fields have a deeper grace, the sky above a deeper blue.

[ 16 : 32 ] Everything reflects the glory of the creation when and as he sees in Jesus Christ.

Why? Because reconciliation has been effected. the church's biographies are full of this.

They tell us of the change that man notices in himself. In his own took on heaven when he is reconciled side unto God.

The birds seem to sing more sweetly than before. Everything has changed. Yes. When God gives quietness.

When God gives peace. peace. No, he is absolutely sovereign in this.

[ 17 : 47 ] He gives it as he sees fit. And he maintains it in the soul as long as he sees fit.

Now, this is one of the strange things about it. nothing can disturb it. Nothing can take it away.

Now, when we say that, perhaps a word of explanation is in place. Everything that was in the soul before it experienced this quietness is still there.

what served as an obstacle to this quietness to the entrance thereof into the soul is still there.

the sin and everything that that implies are still in the soul.

[ 19 : 00 ] Yet the peace of God is in it. The quietness that he gives and the sin that kept it back before is unable to do so now.

not because sin has disappeared. It may seem to sleep for a time but that is not due to sin.

That is due to the quietness that the Lord gives. Sin doesn't voluntarily so to speak stand aside and say well I won't trouble you for a while.

no no sin stands aside only when it has to. Sin is always active according to the method which is given to it.

that is to say it never forsakes the field of its own accord. It is active as long and as far as God permits it to be active.

[ 20 : 21 ] But in this quietness or at the quietness to which this may have reference and certainly does have reference is a quietness that overcomes and stills the trumest of sin.

And sin cannot disturb it. As long as God keeps it there when he gives quietness who then can disturb who the question of course expects the answer no one.

No one can disturb. But there is another side to this. And we may say that all the experience of the church of God taken individually and collectively is summed up in this.

The fact that when God gives quietness none can disturb. And the other fact that when he hides himself none can discover.

and it is he who does both. He hides himself.

[ 22 : 06 ] He hides his face. Now in order to have some true idea overcome of our apprehension of the meaning of this.

We may remind ourselves of the fact that scriptures the scriptures always place the shining of the Lord's face as the essence of Christian blessedness in this life and in that which is to come.

In this connection just remind yourselves of the words of the Aaronic Benedict. How was Israel to be blessed while this was one part of the blessing?

May the Lord lift up this fountain upon the peace?

Now that is precisely the teaching we have here too. When he lifts up the light of his countenance on the soul, that is to say when the light of his fame, the light of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ shines, there is peace.

[ 23 : 40 ] but when that is withdrawn, who can find it? Who can discover it?

and know the idea is when that light is withdrawn, there is the opposite of quietness, there is trouble, there is a sense of quietness, there is a foreboding, there are doubts and difficulties, there are questions, there are threats.

When the sun sets, we read that the beasts of the forest do be burned. Beasts that would not dare come out while the sun would shine.

Now is the time for them to come out. he hideth his face and oh what a difference there is between the shining and the hiding of God's face and we wouldn't be going too far in saying that our acquaintance with vital godliness consists in our knowledge of this fact the difference there is between the shining and the hiding of God's face who can discover this is the complaint of the church as you will have it in the song of solemn

I went above the streets asking have you seen him whom I swore I went around the streets seeking him she was conscious of the difference between his presence and his absence now if that is so if that lies so near the center of vital godliness well might we ask ourselves the question what know we of this what do we know of it well it is obvious that only those who have seen the light can understand what darkness is only those who have made plans and programs for themselves can realize the disappointment of things not falling out as they expected as someone has put it

[ 27 : 47 ] I thought this life was to abide with me always and I made my plans according what a disappointment then that instead of life darkness came even darkness that could be fact and here precisely man learns two very important lessons he learns first his absolute dependence upon god he learns that he cannot create light he learns that he cannot discover god when he hides himself he learns that he is in the hand of the eternal to do with him whatsoever seemeth good in his sight dependence dependence apparently that is not possible it is quite obvious it is not what people like to believe about themselves both in in material and in spiritual things is that they are independent a feeling of independence gives wonderful satisfaction to the heart of man as well as is expressed by the poem

I am he says I am I am the captain of my soul to learn otherwise and to learn it by means and in ways we never expect it is something that is most disappointing most disappointing to human strife to human arrogance and it is it is really it is it is interesting to know how human strife insinuates itself into the very life of the godly there is need of joining there is need of cutting down there is need of keeping us where we belong at the food store of sovereign mercy man would rather walk on his own but this is a lesson he has to learn that he is dependent upon god that's the first one the next very important lesson he has to learn is this that while he is always dependent upon god while his breath spiritually and physically considered is in god's heart that does not take away from his obligation to god his obligation at all times and in all conditions to live to god and not to himself that is the paradox that is at the very heart of the life of faith and it is a paradox that will force itself upon us sooner or later there is no avoiding it the only way of avoiding it is avoiding the life of faith but if we know anything of that life then sooner or later we come up against this there's no escaping it when he gives quietness who then can disturb when he hides his face who can find him of course you know that as these propositions have stated what underlies them is the unchanging sovereignty of

God has whole over all creatures we must beware of narrowing down a Christian term that are full of meaning when we speak of the sovereignty of God we mean essentially God sovereignty we are not coincide that to election and one or two other doctrines no no the sovereignty of God is as wide and in fact God's home his king his absolute sovereignty that is that he do according to his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth that the sovereignty of God that's the meaning of the way to it now that's precisely what is said here in the foreground when he does something who can do otherwise who can withstand him who can say unto him what do is though rest know the quietness that he gives is not something he said for others from this the quietness that God gives is rest in his property, rest in his revealed will.

And unless I find rest in the revealed will of God, there is no rest for me in time of eternity, for there is no rest on peace, saith the Lord unto the wicked.

[ 35 : 53 ] It is rest in himself, rest in the Lord, and patiently wait for him. Do not fret.

Oh, that is the opposite of resting in God, fretting. And that is what the human heart is full of.

Fretting. That's what we had in mind when we said, disagreement with God, disagree with God.

Why does he do this? Why does he do that? Why not do this? There is a verse in this chapter itself, which is very significant in that connection.

The 33rd verse, we shall just read it. Should it be according to thy will? Should it be according to thy will?

[ 36 : 59 ] Well, I would answer him immediately and say, yes, it should be according to my will. That's what I would like. That it should be according to my will.

To what I desire. To what I feel. But will it? Should it be according to thy will? He will recompense it, whether thou refuse, or whether thou choose.

You refuse, and you are choosing. And I like who will do it in this matter.

He will do it, whether you refuse, or whether you choose. He will recompense. Whether you fret, or whether you do reconcile.

He's going to do it. He does his will in the arms of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. But oh, what a difference in the condition of my own soul.

[ 38 : 15 ] The condition between refusing and choosing. The difference between trusting and being reconciled.

the difference it makes in the soul itself. It makes no difference to the actual carrying out of the divine will.

but when it happens that I should be enabled to choose that is to the record side instead of refusing that is the difference.

Or the difference. That's the difference between the quietness you have spoken of and the described that you've spoken of to. Spoken of by influence.

When he giveth quietness who then can make trouble?

[ 39 : 16 ] When he hitheth his face who then can behold him? Jeremiah knew this condition well. This was the essence of his lamentation.

What did he say? Thou coverest thyself with a cloud that thou fear cannot go through it.

When he hitheth himself who then can behold him? No, let us not become lock-sided and therefore erroneous in our view of truth.

Truth consists as much imbalance as in any statement or statements that can be made. When we acknowledge and bow before the throne of God, when we acknowledge and bow before his unchanging sovereignty, his right to do what he will with us all, let us not fall into the opposite extreme.

Let us not think that because God is sovereign, then the creature has no responsibility. and in that connection we say this only and we conclude.

[ 41 : 05 ] What people should remind themselves of today and yesterday of course is this that their first relation with God is not as a savior.

and that is what so often lost sight does. Our first relationship with God is not as a savior but as a creator and a logger.

If we are to do business with God according to the revelation given us in his word this is the order in which we must do it.

We must acknowledge him as God the creator. God the Lord the man before we can know and acknowledge him as God the savior.

What does that mean? What's the practical lesson from that? Well it is this. our first question in regard to what God says before us is not a question what we have to get out of it.

[ 42 : 31 ] What profit it is going to bring us? That's not the first question at all. The first question is what does God say?

And that should be the end of all controversy. And I should apply myself to what God says as he speaks to me as my creator and my lawgiver.

And furthermore it is only as I acknowledge him does that he can have any meaning whatsoever to me as God the Redeemer.

God God the Lord the Lord of it the God the doctrine in system know that in dealing with the doctrine of God this is the order that is always followed.

First God the King God the lawgiver, and then God the redeemer.

[ 43 : 51 ] I should hear what he says. Without asking any question, what good is it going to do? My friends, we are all full of these questions.

What good is it going to do? Well, I repeat, we should never ask that question at all. What good will it do me if I do this or that?

You have no right to that question at all. It is not what good it will do you. The question is hardly at this, don't you?

What does God say? What does he say? And we have no right to sit down and to argue or speculate about it.

What good will I get out of it? See, thousands have ruined themselves with these questions. What good will I get out of it? We are so marginally.

[ 44 : 56 ] In our thinking. So self-centered. Not what you will get out of it. But what does God require of you?

I am convinced that much of the loose thinking and therefore of the loose practice of the day in the things of God finds its truth exactly here.

that people have got over the question of God's rights and they have said to everyone in this their own product.

Their own product. And that, that incidentally, is what makes the soul fed. what good will this do me?

I cannot believe that this or that will do me any good. So why then will, why do I have to endure it? That's the reasoning of the, of the human mind.

[ 46 : 14 ] You endure it because it's God's will. And if we were writing our attitude towards God, that would be sufficient.

There is the added motive of good. When we are one basically, there is the added motive. That it will work for good. But not until we are brought to a condition of reconciliation with God.

And I think that's what the apostle has in mind when he says, at least that he has this in mind. When he, when he addresses the believers, I say, we beseech you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

He's talking to believers there. Be ye reconciled to God. Reconciled to him in the ruling of his providence concerning yourself.

It is not easy. Not only that it is not easy. It is impossible. It is something that only the grace of God can do. But it is in the realm of the impossible that God reveals himself.

[ 47 : 34 ] It is as he works in the realm of the impossible that we recognize him as God. the realm in which none other can work.

That is the meaning, I take it, of the common saying, man's extremity is God's opportunity.

It is as in that sort of news of its exactitude and correctness theologically, I will not comment. but I take it that in as far as it can be taken with a spiritual sense, that is the sense of it.

God's realm is the realm of the impossible. That is the impossible with man. What is impossible with man is possible with God.