

HIGH PLACES

(Bro. Bakht Singh- Balance of Truth April 1957)

"I will cause thee to ride upon high places of the earth". Isa 58:14)

I want you to claim this fragment of the Word of God as His promise for yourself, for this is indeed the desire of the Living and Mighty God for everyone of us, even to ride upon the high places of the earth. God often brings to our attention, either a whole verse or a fragment, at different times according to our need.

When I was born again on December 16, 1929, the Lord used just a fragment of verse in John 3:3 to speak to me, and to give me understanding and love for Him. Just these words: "Verily, verily I say unto thee." For many these words may no meaning, but for me these few words meant every thing, because at that time I was saying in my blindness that the Bible was a good book, but meant only for Americans and Europeans. But through just that small fragment: "I say unto thee", I got a new faith in the word of God, as if the Lord Himself was saying these words to me! "Do not say this book is meant for Americans or Europeans, I say unto thee, that this book is meant for you also." Hearing these words, I knelt down, even though I never knew what salvation, or atonement or faith meant, nor what was O.T or N.T., nor whether Matthew was a man or woman! So blind was I and yet the Holy Spirit could use that tiny fragment of His word to open my blind eyes and let me see my sinful condition and my need. Thus God can use a tiny fragment form His word to solve many of our problems. In the same way when I read the book of Genesis and saw in a certain chapter these words: "God said, God said," several times, I realized that those words were meant for me. In the five books of Moses these very words were repeated again and again, and that fragment taught me how to read the Bible. I said if indeed God is speaking, I must listen. If I were to stand before a great person of any country I would be respectful and very reverent, so surely when I read the Bible, I must be very reverent and humble. Nobody told me that these words were there. But I learned by the Holy Spirit how to read the Bible on my knees. That is why God's word became to me so precious and the life of the Lord Jesus entered into my spirit. I had torn that same Word of God in 1919. Then I was blind, but now the life of the Lord Jesus Christ has made every word, every full-stop even, to be something precious and full of meaning.

How many there are who come to God with wrong motives. They want something for themselves, position, or money, or the praise of men. They come to God's Word as thieves and robbers, and seek to steal His glory for themselves.

There were once some well-known thieves who wanted to rob an officer in the Government. They went into his tent and gathered the stuff they wanted. As they were going away the officer called them back, "Why have you gathered the stuff over here? Why do you want to gain your living by stealing? Tell us what you want? Do you want horse, cows, land or cash?" While they were thinking what they should answer the officer prepared tea for them. They thought he was coming to shoot at them, but instead he brought them fine cups of hot tea. After they had taken their tea with trembling heads, he again asked them what they wanted. They said they wished for the oxen and horses, so he told them to take what they wanted. In this way they were put into shame, and later they both became true witness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now I had the privilege of going to the homes of those thieves some years ago, and God had wonderfully changed their motives, as well as their lives. In the same way God can change your motives even though you may even come to God's Word with wrong motives as though to steal something from Him. God loves you, and he wants to make you to share His glory, to become His co-workers and friends. He wants you to ride on high places. Now perhaps you are living in some dark lane, living a life of shame, defeat and spiritual starvation. But the Lord Jesus Christ wants you to become a partner with Him of His riches and glory, even though many many have said about you that you are in a hopeless case. Humanly speaking this may be quiet true, because human nature can never be changed by human efforts Even though a man may go to jail, his nature can never be changed.

Once a man took a bamboo stick, and put his dog's curly tail in the hollow of the bamboo. After twelve years he took out the tail from the bamboo, expecting it to be straight and it immediately returned to the same curly condition. This is just like man's heart. No matter where or how far you may study, or whether you may be beaten by shoes, or slapping, or stick, the corrupt nature within you cannot be straightened. It is that corrupt nature that makes a man to live a life of shame, sin and darkness, and that corruption of man's heart reveals itself in different ways. You too may have fallen so low that nobody has any hope for you. But the Lord Jesus Christ is saying to you: "My son! My child! Give me your heart." For what purpose?

Even that you may ride on high places. Not only to forgive your few sins or many, but to fulfill His heavenly plan to lift up to higher places.

Many years ago when men did not know anything about airplanes, if somebody had told you that one day man would be able to fly two or three miles high, you would never have believed it. I still remember when we saw airplane first in our place in 1913. We were playing hockey on the ground that day and suddenly heard some noise above us. With our hockey sticks lifted up, we were shouting "Where is it? What is it?" We thought it was something wonderful and I said: "I wish I could be up there. I could not understand how any machine could go so high, but now having studied something about engineering, I know how these engines are made and how they fly. Thus when you understand Divine laws you will know how, with the Lord Jesus Christ, you can ride so high. God's desire is that we may thus ride in heavenly places and enjoy His love and grace in fullness. You may have been born again many years ago but are you really riding with your Lord in high places, or are you still living a life of shame.

When we came from Hong Kong to Colombo a few years ago, then there were a few Sikhs who joined the boat at Hong Kong. Presently I found that they were cooking their own chapattis everyday, so I thought they did not like the food that was cooked in the boat. As some people prefer their own food, I enquired from them: "Do you not like this food which is being served to us in the ship? Why do you burn your faces by making your own food? This ticket also includes our food?" They were surprised, and asked: "Does this ticket also include our food?" I asked them to see their ticket, and found that they had paid the full money, but never knew all that was included in that fare. Everyday they were making a fire and burning their faces. In the same way there are many people who say they are born again and that they have Christ, and yet we find from their testimony, their prayer, and worship that they do not know anything about the Lord Jesus Christ. They are living in fear, doubt and defeat. We do not want to condemn you or judge you. We have no right to do so. We have no right to find fault with you. But we want to tell you from God's Word what you can have in the Lord Jesus Christ. Every believer has been called and saved to ride with Him in high places. We may be more than conquerors. It does not matter where we live and what we are – whether you are living in a small village, or in a big town; whether you are living among friends or enemies; whether you are

living in poverty or richness, the life of the Lord Jesus Christ will make you to shine everywhere, provided you know how to ride in high places.

The word mountain in the Bible speaks of God's high thought for believers. In Matt. 5:1, we see the Lord Jesus is Going up a mountain, and in Matt. 6:1 we see Him coming down. In both these chapters, a multitude is with Him. All these details are recorded for a purpose. When an artist or a painter draws a picture every line he draws and every dot has a purpose. He may draw very quickly, yet you see every line and dot is necessary to bring out the real meaning of the picture. But supposing you and I draw some picture, we will do the same thing in a very ugly way. You may draw a man's nose, but it may look like a donkey's nose! But an artist by one stroke can make a nose to look like a man's nose! That means that every small line has definite purpose there. In the same way every detail recorded in the Bible has a deep meaning.

The Lord goes up the mountain, in Matt. 5:1. In the three chapters 5 to 7, we have most wonderful sermon called Sermon on the Mount. Many learn by heart the saying of these chapters, but very few have the experience of this sermon on the mountain top. Many listening in the crowd must have said, "No doubt what He is saying is very good and true, but how can men live such a life? Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God! Pure in heart! Who does not want to have pure heart? Men of every country have the desire to have a pure heart but nobody knows how to obtain it, and many have confessed with shame after many years of struggle that they still have wicked thoughts. In the same way how are we to love our enemies? When I was in college I used to make fun of the Bible. I used to say: "Christians tell you to love your enemies, but tell me who can love his enemies?" It is something impossible – nobody can love enemies. Often I wondered at the whole chapter, and when the Lord was giving the Sermon on the Mount many must have been saying in their hearts: "What he is saying is good, but who can live up to it?"

But the Lord also knew how to answer their question! As He came down the mountain the very first person He met was a leper. Matt. 8:2. You cannot hope to meet anybody lower than that. You know how lepers are cast out and despised of their own community. It is a disease that has confused and troubled many clever doctors, even though they have been experimenting for years. How much suffering,

pain and shame the lepers suffer from leprosy and no matter how hard they may try, they cannot hide the disease. In Karachi recently I saw a leper. Because he was a wealthy man, he was living in a very nice house and they kept him surrounded with comforts. When I went to pray for him, I did not know he was a leper. I wanted to shake hands with him, but the man held his hand back. He did not want to show his hand to me. He wanted to cover his leprosy. That is how sinners try to cover their sins. But the Lord Jesus Christ, just by one touch, performed three miracles. The whole crowd was witness to that. In order to heal the leper, first of all He had to kill and destroy every germ of leprosy in the blood. Secondly, all the damage done by leprosy had to be repaired, and thirdly he had to be again brought into society. Our Lord Jesus, just by one touch, performed these three miracles, and that is how He answered the question of the multitude.

The Sermon on the Mount can be regarded as the Mount Everest of the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ showing us how God wants us to rise on high places and wants us to have a pure heart, to be meek in spirit to love our enemies, to rejoice in sufferings and persecution, to so live that the very thought of fornication is repulsive, and to seek God's Kingdom all the time. Our Lord tells us that just as the germ of leprosy brings a man so low, the sinful heart within pulls men down to the lowest death. It brings upon his face the marks of ugliness and shame. Men may be wealthy but that does not hide their sins. A woman may wear a sari costing Rs. 300/- or man a suit worth Rs. 250/-; the ladies may have their ears loaded with jewels, and their hands with gold bangles and rings, and the men may wear a costly gold wrist watch, but these things cannot hide the sin that has marred every man's face, and ruined every man's nature; and that has cut off man from God's fellowship like a leper. One touch of the Lord Jesus Christ performed three miracles in that leper's life, and raised him higher. In the same way, you can rise to the heights of the Sermon on the Mount by the Lord Jesus Christ coming into your life. Just the memorizing by heart of these beatitudes will not change your life. The teachings of the Sermon on the Mount cannot be lived by any man in the world. Only the touch of the Son of God can change you and raise you up to high places with Himself!

Now supposing there is a tiny fly in the aero plane and, after it has traveled to many parts of the world, you meet it, and ask it: "Little fly, where have you been?" and it will answer: "I have traveled all over the world". Then you question it: "You are so tiny, how did you fly so high and so far?" and it would answer: "I am telling you the truth that I have gone all over the world." Again you would say "But you are so tiny, you can easily be crushed! Could you go so far away?" and it will say "I only sat in an airplane, and the engine moved, but I never got out." It is the same with us when we come into the Lord Jesus Christ. People are trying to fly over the Himalayas from Tibet to Hindustan and vice versa, and the plane goes at least 25 miles high. But in the Lord Jesus Christ, we ride in heavenly places. But such a life requires a constant living touch from the loving Saviour. Keep in touch with the Lord Jesus Christ. Do not cease from prayer till you feel His presence when you have your morning, evening or midday prayer, or when you read Bible, or when you come for worship. The test is not how much time you spend in prayer or reading the Bible, but how much consciousness you have of the flow of His life in you, when you worship or read the Bible.

As I mentioned earlier, at first I never knew how to understand even a small part of the Bible. I never knew the meaning of new birth, or faith or resurrection or atonement. But presently I found the life of heaven coming into me as I read the Bible, and I have maintained that secret principle never to finish my quiet time unless and until I felt the life of Lord Jesus Christ Himself flowing in and through me. His touch will lift you to the mountain top. It gives heavenly beauty and you recover every loss caused by sin, and you are able to enjoy the love of God through every child of His, till you feel as though all the time you were riding higher and higher still higher. An airplane raises higher and higher when the pilot sees a cloud, and same rule applies to things spiritually.

Are you going down spiritually or higher? Are you conscious of your Lord lifting you up to greater heights. May the Lord help us to ride on high places with Him.