

PEACE, BE STILL

(Bro. Bakht Singh, Balance of Truth, 1958, March and April)

I believe there is a message for each one of us in this small fragment of a verse. Whether born again or not, you will find a message of comfort and cheer and new hope in these words. The storm was raging and the wind was blowing, and the blowing of the wind is always the symbol of the inward battle and conflict, which rages in every heart. There is always some kind of storm raging both before and after the new birth, and generally these storms create much fear, no matter how hard you may try to prevent it. During air-travel there has to be preparation for all kinds of storms. Recently, on my return journey to this country, for some distance there was perfect calmness and no storm disturbed us. Then suddenly our plane began to shake. It was just after midnight, and till that time everything had been calm and undisturbed, but when the Air Pilot saw the coming storm ahead over him he signaled "Tie your seat belts." Whenever there is danger in the air, the crew will make you to put your belt on. Suddenly everybody was shaken when they saw the signal. I saw their faces when they swathe storm signal, and some were afraid. In my own heart I was saying, "Lord, if the time has come, I am ready. If it is Thy will that I should to back to Hyderabad, take me there in safety, but if not, do what you like with me." I was prepared to go. You see the temporary storm outside can create fear and you will find in the same way that there are many similar situations and circumstances in our lives. Everything goes on smoothly for a little while, and then comes the storm that creates fear. It may be a storm in your heart, or home or country. From the time Russia sent up the Satellite, there has been a terrific storm of fear in the whole world. All this time, the other nations were thinking of having something ready for the next war. They wanted to have space to send the atomic bomb upon Russia. When a few months ago the second Moon went up into the sky 200 miles high, the nations did not know what to do, because they know that Russia can send a rocket right from Russia to America or to any other part of the world, and that knowledge has brought great fear to many nations and their kings. An indication of this was the fact of great changes in the exchange market in New York on that day. But when you know the Lord Jesus Christ, such news cannot upset you. There may be such moments as long as we are human beings, and we will be provoked to fear for a time, but there is always the assurance that the Lord is in the boat, and we have only to go and wake Him up. Why should we struggle ourselves and find our

labours are of no use. Let us rather call upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and hear this word: "Peace be still", and see the storm begin to cease. His peace He gives to us and that is our portion and the inheritance He has given us to enjoy. Nor is that peace for a short period only. "My peace I give unto you" He says, but remember this, when the enemy attacks it will be upon your peace. You may be reading your Bible or attending a meeting, but as soon as you have real peace in your heart or soul, suddenly the devil will come in to disturb your peace and create doubt and fear, imaginations and anxieties. At once the temptation is to give room to the enemy, and there is a storm within. We see from God's Word that only peace can help us to get the victory, and by faith we need to claim that peace to garrison our inward condition, and that will help us to overcome in many storms.

In Isa: 48:18, peace is likened to a river and from the first chapters of the Bible (Gen. 2:10) we can see how that, even from the river of Eden, God was seeking to teach man by an object lesson about the peace He was offering to man. Even though the first man Adam was turned out from the Garden of Eden, he could still see the garden and the river coming out of the garden. We are told that the river divided into four branches or heads. The first was called Pison, the second Gihon, the third Hiddekel and the fourth Euphrates, and the literal meanings of these four names are very interesting and helpful.

The word Pison means a softly flowing stream. Why did God make that river of Eden to divide into branches? Why did God give names to those branches? I believe it was Adam who gave those names. You would probably require Concordance to get their meaning. But Adam had no Concordance! When he gave the names, he knew exactly what God was trying to say to him through those rivers. You can imagine his sorrow of heart when he was turned out of the garden but the river would be a source of great comfort and strength to Adam and Eve from that day onward. Many people, when they feel lonely and discouraged go near river banks or walk by a river as they meditate. Many artists have painted pictures of rivers and poets have composed songs, because by the river side, they have learned the meaning of life. What is this river? Where does it come from? And where does it go to? See how the moving river moves the dirt. Only standing water stinks. That is what was conveyed to Adam and Eve. That is the first thing to learn about peace. Peace is like a soft and gentle stream, - and more! We are told that the river Pison

was made to go through the land of Havilah, and that there was plenty of gold in the river bed. There were beside bdellium and onyx stones. All this was found in the first river. In the olden days there were no gold mines like Kolar Gold fields. Man obtained gold from the river bed. Much of the Gold of Ophir, used in the temple of Solomon, was gathered from the river bed. Gold is found in very white stones and some of these stones were brought from the highest heights of the river, where because the water is so clear and moves smoothly, the stones can be seen on the river-bed.

Now the river Pison had not only gold but good gold, and also most precious stones like bdellium and onyx stones. That is how peace first comes to us. As sinners we have a sinful nature- extremely sinful- and it is only as we begin to grow spiritually that we learn how crooked and sinful human nature is. It has become extremely spoiled and corrupt because we have inherited sin and there cannot be any improvement in the corrupt nature. It is a waste of time and energy to try to improve your old nature, for you will only make it worse. Sin is in its very texture. Human nature itself is sinful. What you need is a divine nature. God is the symbol of the divine nature and divine love. The Lord Jesus Himself came into the world to bring that divine life to men. Adam surely often wondered how he would get back to God and then he would look at the river, and see the stones with the gold. Thus he would realize that when he secured the divine nature, he would get back what he has lost. That is the only way. In the world we suffer many losses, but do not waste your time about the things that have been lost, ruined and thrown away. Ask God to fill you with gold. Do not struggle with the old nature. Let the old nature be crucified completely. Trials are allowed that God may fill you with more gold. Because we do not understand our trials, we begin to weep and cry. But God has to subject the old nature in us and bring out the gold of His divine nature.

In the river also were onyx stones and bdellium. Onyx stones were worn upon the shoulders of the High Priest engraved with the names of the twelve tribes, six names upon each stone. In the same way, God has promised that He will bear the burdens of His people and carry them through. In numbers 23:21,23, we read how the people of Israel had failed many times, and Balak thought he could bring Balaam the prophet and curse God's people. All the prophet could say, as in verse 20 was that God Himself had blessed His people, and no man could reverse it. He was not going to allow anyone to trouble His people. God's answer was that He had not

beheld iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel. Like as a father carried his son upon his shoulder, so God would carry and bear his people. His beloved would "dwell between His shoulders" (Deut. 33:12). There is no enchantment against God's people, but of them it shall be said, "Behold what hath God wrought!" So why should you fear? When all men refuse to carry you, God gives His whole shoulder to carry you. The time may come in our life when everyone will forsake us. Friends whom we loved and who once helped us, may forsake us, but "When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up" (Psa. 27:10). This is the lesson of Pison. In the waters were onyx stones. This is the assurance that when God's loving shoulder is available, when you are wounded, and cannot be helped by any man, then underneath are the shoulders of God.

Bdellium also was found in the river, something most precious, and rare, speaking of hidden wealth. At present we do not know what it is used for. The same thing is happening in your heart. The Lord is depositing hidden wealth in every heart that trusts Him, and we will know its value when we get to heaven, even though upon this earth we may never know. There were many things on earth that men never knew the use before. Now they have discovered that these things have energy and strength. So the Lord has deposited in every believer a hidden wealth which cannot be estimated on earth, but what we cannot understand now, we shall understand later on. That is the bdellium, the hidden, unseen wealth which is being deposited by the painful trials which we cannot now understand.

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Now we come to river Gihon, verse 13, the river which winds round Ethiopia, and is the symbol of protection against enmity. How constantly the Jews were troubled! The river encompassing the land means that God is going to give blessing, even though your enemies are all around. The river flowing rapidly stands for activity. Power-houses have been constructed at waterfalls, and thus electricity has been provided for many places. I noticed in Switzerland how railways on the high mountains, always go extremely fast because of the high power. With the help of that power men are able to overcome many mountains. This is like the effect of true peace. If we are careful to maintain that inward God-given peace, one day we shall overcome every mountain. Peace has been given to us for this purpose, and we do not know how much we have at our disposal. The enemy will say, "Look at the large

mountains, which of them are you going to pass over?" But Gihon says, "I will pass over every mountain, and I will overcome all the land by His help." The work is going on, and in His own time will be perfected. In all these things the Lord takes His own time, and we must not hurry. (Gen 2:14).

The next is river Hiddekel, the river which overflows. Now at the time of flood, overflowing water is deposited on either side of the bank and makes it fertile. This speaks of abundant life which should flow out through us to others also. God gives us his peace to help others, and if you do not share that peace it will become less. Peace multiplies when it is shared. The Syrians were unexpected enemies of the Jews, and in cunning ways they tried to attack them. You may see in your own life-time how many crooked and cunning means the devil may use to bring about a fall and thus disturb your peace. That is why at times you feel so hurt when you see crookedness in your own friends. But Hiddekel overflows every barrier. You go on sharing your peace and joy and do not look at those who have failed you.

The fourth river is Euphrates, which is very wide and deep. If you look down from above the river, you see its course, and how it finds its way through the mountains, and forests. It is very strange how the river can find its way, even if its course goes right around by a distance of 30 miles, it will surely find its way. Rivers have a way of going right round all obstructions. There may be obstructions in you life, but even if you find the distanced great, you must go on walking, and you will find God's blessing for you. We must not give up in our life-journey and travel. So do not be like Elijah who said, "Take away my life?" There is no use in that. Do not run away somewhere and hide. Say, "Lord, I am ready, let me go by the course of the Euphrates. I know one day I will come out of it and join the big sea." That is the kind of peace God was offering to Adam.

These are the rivers of the garden of God, and God can never change the purpose He revealed by them to Adam. In Numb 6:24 the same thought is there again. Every time the people were blessed with peace, and the blessings of God are summed up in that one word: "Peace." They were blessed every time they called upon God. Look at Abraham in Gen 14. He had been in trouble, and he was just returning after conquering his enemies, when God blessed him. Possibly he was full of fear and doubt. He had just succeeded in delivering his men and Lot from the

kings, and might have been thinking that they might yet come after him. Perhaps there was fear in his heart, as he thought; "How am I going to face the enemy when they come?" Then there met him a man called Melchizedek. Abraham asked him: "Please tell me from where you have come." He said, "I am the King of Salem," and he gave him bread and wine. Salem means peace. Bread gives peace, and wine new joy and you will see how that every time you are in danger, our heavenly Melchizedek will come with bread and wine saying: "My son, my child, do not be afraid, I am your peace. Cast your burden upon me and leave it to me." (Psa. 55:22). When you see your trials, you may want to run away somewhere. If so, read the further verses – 12; 13; 14. That Psalm describes a hard and painful experience. The Psalmist said, "If it was mine enemy hating me I would bear it; but it is my own equal, one with whom I sang together and prayed together, and such a man has hurt me." He could not understand why such a man whom he loved could do all these things. (Verses 16-18;22). But in this life such things happen, and may happen also to you one day. These are true experiences which have happened even to men of God and are recorded for our encouragement. When you come into such an experience, cast your burden on the Lord. He will sustain and give you peace. Just cast your burden upon the Lord and peace like a river will come back (Psalm 46:4, 2) and flow around you and protect you. This Psalm tells us that there may be changes in the whole world through earthquakes or wars, and that at such a time only the river of God can give you peace, not human safety, nor any weapon of warfare, but the river of God itself. That is the only way by which you can come out victoriously. There is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost (Rom 14:17). The real enjoyment of God's kingdom is when these three things reign together – righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. All these gifts of the Holy Ghost are necessary to give true joy. "And the God of Peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you. (Rom. 16:20). It is by the grace and peace of God that God is going to defeat Satan, and the day will come when you see the same Satan tramped under your feet by the God of peace, and by other means. You must make sure that the God of peace reigns in your heart constantly, but it will mean that you will often have to make an extra effort to maintain peace. Heb. 13:20 shows us that it is the God of peace who is going to touch us and help us to do His will. If we have not got inward peace, then we cannot hope to find God's will, and if we are not sure of God's will, then we know that there will be defeat.

Again we see in John 20:19, 21 that when they were in the room full of doubt and fear suddenly there came these words: "Peace be unto you." How quickly their fear was taken away when the Lord said to them "Peace be unto you! As my Father hath sent me, so send I you." So with perfect peace in your hearts you can go anywhere and conquer any obstacle. "Peace be unto you!" You have to make sure that peace indeed comes into your heart. The Lord Himself is peace. If He has not already become your peace, then take Him now as your Saviour. One name of our Lord Jesus Christ is "Peace". (Isaiah 6:9). The same One, who is the mighty God, and the Everlasting Father, is also the Prince of Peace. He has come to give peace and if you have not got that peace, then receive Him today as your Lord and Saviour. Then He will bring peace into your heart, and that peace will multiply. We see in Jer. 33:3-6, God's promise of abundance of peace. "I will give them abundance of peace and truth." Not peace in a small measure (Psalm 119:165), but great peace for them who love the Lord, - a great and abundant and perfect peace!

In Isaiah 26:3 you will find this perfect peace. You will also find in Col. 3:15, Phil 4:7, a word that means that the peace of God is like a garrison. Such a peace it is; but we do not get that peace in one day. By faith we receive it and it gets multiplied as we obey God's Word. This is the peace that we offer to you. "My peace I give unto you." As the enemy disturbs your peace, you find a dispute inside but after a few moments you get back your peace. Even today you can confess what is wrong and get back that peace. The peace of God shall reign in your heart. The Lord Jesus Christ came into this world to help us to make peace with God (Rom. 5:1). When we make peace with God, we receive the life of God and that life brings the peace of God. The old nature disturbs the peace. But the life of heaven brings more peace. So we claim that life in greater measure. Do you want that peace today? Do you feel upset by any persons, or by any means? We offer that peace to you, the peace of Pison, the peace of Gihon, the peace of Hiddekel and Euphrates. Let these four streams flow in and out of your heart.

May the Lord give us that peace.