

## THE ARMS OF GOD

**Mk. 10:13** And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. <sup>14</sup> But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. <sup>15</sup> Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. <sup>16</sup> And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

Sometimes don't you wish time would stand still, especially when you are enjoying those precious moments? ... And when you look at our grandchildren, wouldn't it be lovely if they stayed the way they were for a few more years, before growing up and growing away from us? ... Life is not like that though for it moves on and we have to face the good and the bad.

Earlier in this chapter Jesus had been confronted by a barrage of religious leaders haranguing Him (Mk. 10:1-12). When He left them, He went to where the children were. ... Jesus, Who never had children of His own, had the most beautiful and loving manner with them. He would have made the most perfect father! ... Here is a very simple and beautiful picture of how He was in the midst of the children, <sup>16</sup> he took them up in his arms.

It doesn't matter what age you are, young or older, life brings all kinds of hardships and difficulties which sometimes seem too heavy to bear. The apostle Peter would have been with Jesus on this occasion, and he would have been one of the disciples who *rebuked* Him for wasting time on the children (Mk. 10:13). ... It surely had an impact on him though for he wrote on a later occasion how important it is to cast all your care upon him; *for he careth for you* (I Peter 5:7).... The blind hymn writer Fanny Crosby described it, "Safe in the arms of Jesus".

Let's begin there, by considering **THE ARMS OF THE SAVIOUR**. When the disciples were telling Jesus it was more important to spend His time with adults, He knelt down and lifted up one of the children in His arms ... and then another ... and another. You can imagine each of those boys and girls jumping up and down in excitement, waiting their turn. These were children the parents wanted to meet Jesus (Mk. 10:13). The highest gift the family home is blessed with is the presence of the Saviour ... and when the mother and father know Him, it is their priority for their children to know Him too.

Of course, we want them to do the very best in life, but everything else is secondary to them coming to know Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. And yes, He *does* save children. They don't have to become a certain age. He can save the youngest child who, in the simplest manner, recognises their need of Him.

When it comes to salvation, no matter what age you are or how well you have done in life, there is only one way to Jesus, with the simple child-like faith, and a prayer to match, “Come into my heart, Lord Jesus. Come in today, come into stay. Come into my heart, Lord Jesus”. ... Some people think *I* have to try and be better, *I* have to change myself ... but becoming a Christian does not begin on the outside, but it begins when the Lord Jesus comes into your life. It is when He holds you in His arms and receives you as His child. ... **The arms of the Saviour.**

Another passage we turn to is in the Song of Solomon, **2:6** His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me. ... The Song of Solomon is a romantic book, so we shall give this verse the heading ... **THE ARMS OF THE SWEETHEART.** I’m sure some of you can remember away-back ☺ to the first time the one you loved placed their arms around you. ...

Can you also remember the day, - the evening, - the Lord Jesus put His arms around you, and you became His child, and you received Him as your Saviour? You can remember, - as the hymn writer put it, “The peace, the joy I sought so long” ... it became yours. And He has been yours since that day, and you have been His, and your love for Him has grown.

You love Him more than words can describe. Wherever you go He is with you ... and you know of a certainty, He will never leave you nor forsake you. When it seems you have been going through a dark tunnel, and you wonder if you can make it out the other end ... this is your testimony that **2:6** His left hand is under my head. ... You ‘hold tight’ to His promises for you *believe* in Him to keep His Word, **Songs 6:3** I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine... **Songs 2:6** His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me. ... His strong arms are holding me as if I’m the only One. King David wrote, **Ps. 63:8** thy right hand upholdeth me *Isustains and keeps me*. He will never let me go. ... Maybe we can adjust the Salvation Army hymn a little, “I’m in His arms, I’m in His arms, Whate’er the future holds, I’m in His arms; The days I cannot see have all been planned for me, His way is best you see, I’m in His arms”. ... **The arms of the Sweetheart.**

**THE ARM OF SALVATION** **Ps. 40:2** He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay. When I couldn’t get up to Him, He came down to me. When it was too filthy for anyone to reach into the mire, **Phil. 2:7** [*He*] made himself of no reputation ... <sup>8</sup> And ... he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. When He came down to rescue me out of the pit in which I was sinking, He got Himself dirty for “He took my sins and my sorrows, He made them His very own; He bore my burden to Calvary, and suffered and died alone”.

It is truly *Amazing grace* for only through Christ has the price God's justice demanded been paid, and He paid it with His own precious blood. He didn't send an angel, or resurrect an Old Testament prophet or choose a New Testament apostle ... He came Himself, He identified with me by coming into this world, dying on the cross, and lifting me *up*, - Ps. 77:15 Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people, - with **His arm of salvation**.

**THE ARM WITH THE SEAL**      The Bride requested of the Bridegroom, Songs 8:6 Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm. ... You sometimes see the men with a tattoo of their partner's name on their arm. It's supposed to speak of their promise to be faithful.

When the Bride requested the seal to be *burned* on her Bridegroom's arm, it was an indelible mark to last forever, like a sign of a covenant. Her name was printed upon Him for always. Wherever the Bridegroom would be, his bride's name was written on His arm ... and we have been sealed with the mark of identification, as Paul describes, Eph. 1:13 ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. ... You know you are *saved* because you are *sealed* with the indelible mark of the Holy Spirit in your life ... and He is the Guarantor of your salvation. He keeps you in your salvation! ... You are His, He is yours, you are "loved with everlasting love, drawn by grace that love to know". He'll never leave you nor forsake you ... as Paul told the Corinthian believers, II Cor. 1:21 Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; 22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. ... I have His mark on me that says I am His, and He has my mark on Him that says He is mine ... those were the marks He received when He was 'wounded for me, there on the cross He was wounded for me.

Augustus Toplady wrote, "My name from the palms of His hands Eternity will not erase; Impressed on His heart it remains, In marks of indelible grace."

**The arms of the Saviour. The arms of the Sweetheart. The arm of salvation. The arm with the Seal. ... THE ARM OF STRENGTH** Ps. 89:13 Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand. As the children of Israel entered the Promised Land, they heard the stories of how the local tribes were defended by their manmade idols. One story related to how the Philistines had shackled Samson to the pillar. They not only mocked him, but also his God, Judges 16:23 ... for they said, Our god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand. 24 And when the

people saw him, they praised their god: for they said, Our god hath delivered into our hands our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, which slew many of us.

That's how the world continues to mock ... and our Saviour was and is mocked. Today His Name is the object of scorn, sarcasm, and scoffing, but there is coming a day when He says, *Is. 45:23* I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.

When the Lord spoke to Job, - after his companions had finished berating him, - the Lord comforted him, *Job 40:9* Hast thou an arm like God? Have you the *strength* God has?! He put the stars and the planets in their place. He created the rocks and moulded them into mountains. *None* has the arm of strength which belongs to God! *Ps. 89:13* Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand.

**THE ARM THAT SUSTAINS** The remnant of Israel cried, *Is. 33:2* O LORD, be gracious unto us; we have waited for thee: be thou their arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble. The strength of Israel was in the arm of God for He had kept them during their trials. He had lifted them out from Egypt. He kept them through the wilderness of Sinai. He fed them with the manna and the quail. He made the water flow out of the rock. He gave them hope when their hope was gone. ... He 'carried' them when they were weary. He destroyed their enemies. He kept His Word to them for He brought them into the Promised Land. Later, He brought them back from their captivity in Babylon ... He is **the arm that sustains**, *Ps. 61:2* when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. <sup>3</sup> For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy.

His was the keeping power upholding Job when he cried out in agony and sorrow, *Job 19:25* I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: <sup>26</sup> And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. It was Paul's testimony too, *II Tim. 1:12* I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. ... **The arm that sustains.**

**THE ARM THAT SHELTERS** In Isaiah's prophecy we are told about the wonderful day when the Lord will return, *Is. 40:11* He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm. The sheep are exhausted with the trials of life and the dangers of the preying wolves ... and the Good Shepherd promises to reach down and pick them up ... When the winds and the storms beat heavily and when we were coming near 'the end of our tether' ... that's when, as the chorus reminds us, "In my need Jesus found me. Put His strong arms around me. Brought me safe home into the Shelter of the fold." **The arm that shelters.**

**THE ARM OF THE SHEPHERD** Yes, we have used some verses already that speak about the shepherd-sheep relationship with the Lord but think again of the picture of the one sheep in a hundred that went astray. Rather than leaving it and being satisfied with the ninety-nine He went out to find it. He never quit until He discovered that sheep and notice He didn't bring it back to the sheepfold, He brought it into His *home ... rejoicing* (Lk. 15:17).

... The arms of the **Saviour**, The arms of the **Sweetheart**, The arm of **salvation**, The arm with the **seal**, the arm of **strength**, the arm that **shelters**, the arm of the **Shepherd** ...

**THE ARMS OF OUR SOVEREIGN KING** When Moses was on his deathbed, he blessed the children of Israel, reminding them of their relationship with the Lord, **Dt. 33:3** Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand; and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words. As he came near the end of, he spoke of their great privilege, **39** Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD. Then, in almost his last words, he told them, **27** The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms ... "What a blessedness, what a peace is mine, Leaning on the everlasting arms."

**CONCLUSION** This is the wonderful salvation with which God has saved us and is keeping us. As we said at the beginning of our study, it doesn't matter what age we are, whether we are young or older ... we need to know we are being held in those strong arms of God. ... Believer, He is holding you in His arms, "What a Friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear ... "Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care?" Here is the promise, "In His *arms* He'll take and shield thee; thou will find a solace there."