

# The Hiding Place

*Bryn Jones*

**How little is known of great revivalists before they were thrust into the limelight in God's move of the Spirit. How wise God is in shaping and preparing our lives to be instruments of peace and blessing to others. He hides his servants in the secret place away from the enquiring gaze of others. He deliberately closes the eyes of the people to those he has singled out as his instruments of blessing. He does this in order to disciple them before using them on the church in power.**

God not only hides his servants in the time of preparation but will often draw them aside from the pressures of popularity or the increasing demands made upon them by the peoples' response to their word. Often too, he will hide and provide for them in readiness for greater usefulness.

How gracious he was in dealing with Elijah who, having demonstrated on Carmel God's supremacy over all other gods by calling down fire from heaven on the water soaked altar and sacrifice, fled the scene in weakness. When God woke his servant from sleep He was first to give him a meal, let him sleep some more, then awaken him again; and gave him another meal before the prophet set out on a 40 day and 40 night journey to Horeb. Before God speaks he will determine how much to give; before he will ask us to bear a load he will first check that we are able to carry that load. (1 Kings 19:1-8)

God's hiding of his servants enables them to listen, hear, meditate, feed and prepare for what lies ahead. It is in the hiding of God that the man of God develops increasingly his love for God and God's presence. This is greater by far than his love for God's people. When God welcomes you into his hiding place this is not escapism, it is wisdom, it is being obedient, it is necessary. It is essential we learn to commune with God before confronting men, to counsel with God before counselling men.

It was the years Jesus spent in silence, the years John the Baptist spent in the wilderness, the years Saul of Tarsus spent in Arabia, of which we know so little, that were the hiding places of God where he schooled and shaped them before releasing them, that were so important. It is the voice that has spoken much with

God in the secret place that is the voice carrying authority to speak with men in the market place of life. God's revelation is that his hiding place is a man, and it is those who have learned to hide in the man Christ Jesus that have become the hiding place for men.

Such is the goodness of God, the many sided wisdom of his working, that he clothes us in the light of his nature only to hide us in the darkness of his dwelling place. His presence is both light and darkness, a mystery but a mystery suited to hiding as much as to revealing. Darkness holds no fear or terror to those who enter it, knowing it is the covering of his presence. God has hidden much in the secret place for you and your blessing. God's hiding places are many, in the multitude of circumstances and situations. One of the strangest places God will hide us is in the face of those who are blinded to what he intends doing.

The hiding of the Lord is as vital and important to our growth as the revealing of himself. Both serve differently but together serve the same goal.

Frequently when under pressure the tendency is to lose perspective. The difficulties become so enlarged they threaten to become impossibilities in our thinking, frustration only feeds this negative consequence. Here in the secret place of God's hiding you have the opportunity of quietening your soul and allowing things to recover perspective. Here in God's hiding place you are no longer intimidated by fear or people, but in quietness and confidence you find your strength.

Jesus spoke of relationship with himself as being an experience of 'abiding' in him. Paul's favourite expression for the believer was to be 'in Christ'. In Christ we are hidden from anything God knows would damage, hurt or threaten to overwhelm us. In the hiding place of his presence we find the peace of God that surpasses all understanding to rule our hearts and minds. As someone said, when Jesus called his disciples to 'come apart and rest awhile', he was intimating you either do so or simply come apart.

In the hiding of his presence we find our security; the reassurance that all is well because it is in the hands of the Lord. When my children were very young I recall on one occasion when I had been away for a few days ministering, returning and sitting in my favourite chair in the lounge, and my youngest daughter coming in, jumping on my lap, snuggling in close. I felt good, I felt loved, and said to her, 'what do you want darling?' Her reply was, 'Nothing. I just want to be with you.' In the hiding of his presence what is uppermost in our hearts and minds is not our needs and wants, we just want to be with him.

In the hiding of his presence we see his power and his greatness, we see beyond the visible, and marvel at the hidden resources of our God. As Lord of Hosts he can call upon hundreds of thousands of angelic beings to work his will and serve his saints. It is in seeing this we see the smallness and inadequacy of our own resources, the limitations on our own abilities. But equally, in the hiding of his

presence we realise the fullness of an exchanged life, what Paul was meaning when he said, *'it is not me who lives but Christ lives in me.'* (Gal. 2:20)

In these times of revelation hidden away from the busyness and activities of daily life we discover there is more hidden in God than revealed. The working of his Spirit enables us to discover the abundant resource of God in every sphere of life.

Christ is our hiding place. We need no other. May we in Christ become a hiding place for another,

See, a king will reign in righteousness and rulers will rule with justice. Each man will be like a shelter from the wind and a refuge from the storm, like streams of water in the desert and the shadow of a great rock in a thirsty land. (Isaiah 32:1-2)