

## The Strong Hand

Duet 3:24 "O Sovereign LORD, you have begun to show to your servant your greatness and your strong hand. For what God is there in heaven or on earth who can do the deeds and mighty works you do?"

About 20 years ago and 50 pounds ago, I was a bicycle rider and racer. A small group of us from Riverside went to Northern California to a bicycle racing camp. None of us had any aspirations or abilities to be professional cyclists but we were just groupies sitting at the feet of some of the best cyclists in the world like Greg Lemond and Steve Bauer.

I was never a good hill climber and the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains were especially steep. On the first evening's training ride, the group quickly broke apart on the hills. As fatigue set in and the afternoon light began to fade, I knew that I would have a hard time finding my way back to the training camp headquarters. I was just barely turning the pedals over on a steep grade when suddenly I felt a large powerful hand in the middle of my back accelerating me towards the summit. I turned around and saw the smiling face of the 1984 Olympic Silver Medalist Canadian, Steve Bauer. In a few seconds his powerful legs had propelled both of us back up to speed. Just as quickly and quietly as his unsolicited help had come, he disappeared. The momentum and encouragement of just those few seconds of help carried me to the top of the hill and back into the pack of other homeward bound riders before the cold and darkness could set in.

At dinner that night I learned that I was only one of several riders that had received Steve's help to make it to the top of the hill. It occurred to me that this is a similar picture of what God is doing in our lives. By His strong hand we are delivered from the darkness and the cold and He's shown us the way home. Oh, what a strong hand He has to rescue us from the deepest pit we have fallen into or in some cases the pit that we have dug for ourselves and then jumped into. And likewise we need to be available to be God's strong hand to help others who are tired or lost and about to be overcome by the darkness.

I like to reflect on Jesus' hands. These were hands that reached down and raised the dead, and made the blind see. They were the hands that blessed the little children. They were the hands that were nailed to a cross. They are the strong hands where we can seek refuge...

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