

THE  
SONG OF SOLOMON.

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# The Song of Solomon.

## Chapter E.

“**T**HE Song of Songs, which is Solomon’s.” David was the type of the Lord Jesus Christ, in His earthly humiliation, sorrows and sufferings. Solomon was the foreshadowing type of Christ Jesus in His heavenly exaltation and glory, and in His resurrection perfectness.

After Solomon had built a house for Jehovah, and a house for the kingdom, he made a house for Pharaoh’s daughter, whom he had taken to wife.

In this Gentile wife is shadowed forth, the great mystery, Christ and the Church. (Eph. v. 23-32.)

It is the Church of the present dispensation, the one pearl of great price purchased by Immanuel’s blood, and the workmanship of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. In these chapters we have the communion in spirit carried on between Christ and His Church in the power of the Holy Ghost.

As in the Book of Esther, though the name of God does not appear, yet His presence is conspicuous throughout, so here it is communion in spirit between Christ and the Church carried on in the immediate presence of God.

In this Book we have Paradise regained. It is the second Adam, the Lord from heaven in fellowship with the second Eve, taken from His opened side after His deep sleep of death, and renewed in knowledge after the image of Him who first created her.

We are here surrounded by the beauties and bowers of Eden, its trees and spices and flowers, and while the intercourse is most familiar, there is not the slightest trace of shame or sin.

Some of the figures seem taken from the Temple of Jehovah.

“The Song of Songs.” Solomon’s songs were a thousand and five (1 Kings iv. 32), but this is the chief of all.

This song is of pre-eminent excellence; it celebrates the kingly glories, and human perfections of Immanuel.

*Verse 2*—“Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth: for Thy love is better than wine.”

The heart of the bride is occupied with Him, whose title is given in verse 1. “Solomon,” which signifies both “perfect” and “peaceable.”

This is the language of strong desire. “The kisses of His mouth” are those expressions and assurances of His love, contained in the inspired Word, brought home to the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, as in John iv. 26.

We notice the transition from “Him to “Thy.” The soul’s mention of a Saviour’s love leads on to communion with Him; from speaking *of* Him, to speaking *to* Him.

“Better.” No earthly joy or affection to be compared with His, whether as to affording strength for service or consolation in affliction.

“Love” here is in the plural. The love of Christ is large and various, it has breadths and lengths, and depths and heights; it passeth knowledge. To be filled with it, is to be “filled into all the fulness of God.” (Eph. iii. 16 19.)

*Verse 3*—“Because of the savour of Thy good ointments, Thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love Thee.”

There is here an allusion to the anointing oil, mentioned in Ex. xxx. 22-33, composed of pure myrrh, sweet cinnamon, sweet calamus, and cassia, which are emblematic of those various spiritual excellencies and graces which are manifested in Christ Jesus. These sweet spices combined with the olive oil, constitute the holy anointing oil.

The mention of His name, “Jesus,” Jehovah, the Saviour, and “Christ,” the Anointed One, bring to remembrance the excellencies and perfections of His person.

“The Virgins love Thee.” The more we know of virgin separateness to Christ, and of virgin preference and fidelity to Him, the more shall we know of the sweetness of His name, and the more shall we love Him. (See 2 Cor. xi. 2-4; Matt. xxv. 1.)

*Verse 4.*—“Draw me, we will run after Thee: the King

hath brought me into His chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in Thee; we will remember Thy love more than wine: the upright love Thee."

The drawing is individual, the pursuit may be in company.

We can only run as He draws; we come to Him as the result of the drawing of the Father; we run after Him as He draws us.

The soul that is drawn by Christ does not follow Him alone, but seeks that others may follow also. (See Psa. li. 12, 13, and John iv. 28-30, 41, 42.)

"The King hath brought me." Individual communion. "Into His chambers" (*lit.* inner chambers), into His own palace home. This is typical of the secret manifestation to the soul of the believer, of the kingly and heavenly glory of Christ Jesus. "We will be glad and rejoice in Thee." This joy may be shared by others, and the united remembrance of His love is preferable to any earthly joy, and it is those who are upright in heart who enter most fully into this love.

In the Book of Job, we have the COMMUNION OF SAINTS, in the converse together of Job and his four friends; but in the end, God comes in with His divine wisdom and supplies their lack.

In the Psalms, we have the COMMUNION OF SOUL WITH GOD, under the teaching of the Divine Spirit.

In the Song of Solomon, we have the HEART'S COMMUNION WITH CHRIST, under the leadings of the Holy Spirit.

The Psalms furnish us with promptings to COMMUNION WITH GOD. The Song of Solomon prompts to communion with Christ, only we see the heart of the Bride, as well as that of the Bridegroom.

The Comforter has come down, even the Spirit of truth, to lead the soul into spiritual fellowship with the risen Christ in heavenly glory at the Father's right hand.

*Verse 5*—“I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.”

Here the Bride speaks under the consciousness of what she is externally and internally.

“Black, but comely.” Black as the dark goat's hair tents of the desert. “KEDAR,” means “dark” (externally). “Comely,” as the curtains of Solomon (internally). Thus the prophet Isaiah foretold concerning the Lord Jesus, when He should be on earth. “He hath no form nor comeliness, and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him.”

The Church owns her want of external attractiveness. Unlike Babylon in the Book of Revelation, which is described as decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls, and sitting as a queen.

The Church confesses herself to be unsightly, and the more spiritual she is, the less she thinks of outward adornment.

There is frequently more realization of the power of

the Holy Ghost in a barn, or in an open air service, than in a cathedral.

“Black, but comely.” Nature confessed, and grace acknowledged; comely through His comeliness put upon us.

But there is internal beauty, as there was also in the blue, purple, scarlet, and fine twined linen of the curtains of the Tabernacle. These inner curtains signify the inward workings of the Spirit of God. While externally there was the badger’s skin covering above.

*Verse 6.*—“Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother’s children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards: but mine own vineyard have I not kept.”

The Bride says, “Do not take me for what I am in appearance.” I may be like an Ethiopian.” Some of the Lord’s people may be blacksmiths, chimney-sweeps, navvies, sailors.

“Look not on me, as I am by nature and external circumstances; because I have been exposed to the influences of surrounding things.” “My mother’s children . . . made me the keeper of the vineyards.” “I have been set to work on externals, to the neglect of the cultivation of my own soul’s interest.” Service appointed by the Lord Jesus never interferes with this, man-appointed service may. It may be possible to be so occupied with outside work, as to leave little time for the study of the

Scriptures and prayer. When there is a danger of this, the word of the Lord Jesus to His disciples frequently is, "Come ye yourselves apart and rest awhile."

*Verse 7*—"Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth, where Thou feedest, where Thou makest Thy flock to rest (lie down) at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside (or as a veiled one, see 2 Cor. iii. 13-18) by the flocks of Thy companions."

The Bride turning away from the consideration of herself: now appeals to the Bridegroom. It is the inquiry of the heart toward the object of supreme affection. Direction is sought immediately, from the Chief Shepherd Himself, as to where the soul may receive its nourishment and repose, from His hand, and where His presence may be most fully enjoyed. It may be regarded as the inquiry of one who is seeking for guidance in the matter of Church fellowship. The flock of God is one, and there is one Good and Great Shepherd who has purchased it with His own blood, and sealed it with the Holy Spirit. There are under-shepherds who are to be acknowledged and valued in their place, but in God's Church, the centre of supreme attraction and around whom all are gathered is Immanuel—He, who in Revelation i. is seen walking in the midst of the seven golden lampstands, "He that is holy, He that is true, He that openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth, and no man openeth."

But while the under-shepherds are valued, it is well to avoid the appearance of being gathered to them, or to

allow their influence to interfere with the supreme authority of the Lord Jesus.

“For why should I be as one that turneth aside?” (*or*, as a veiled one). Why should we allow anything to dim the brightness of the revealed vision, but rather with unveiled face behold in the mirror of the Word, the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and thus experience the transforming power of the Holy Ghost.

*Verse 8.*—“If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds’ tents.”

Love to the Bridegroom prompts the question, “Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth,” and affection, to the Bride supplies the answer, “If thou know not, O thou fairest among women.” The Church is precious to the heart of Christ. He loved her, and gave Himself for her. She is to Him the pearl of great price for whose sake He gave up all, and He will present her to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

“Go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock.” When the Good Shepherd putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him, for they know His voice. Writing to the Corinthians, Paul says, “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.” (1 Cor. xi. 1.) And to the Thessalonians, he writes, “Ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, . . . so that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.” (1 Thess. i. 6, 7.) These footsteps of the

flock may be traced throughout the Acts and Epistles, before the Church was corrupted from the simplicity which is in Christ Jesus.

“Feeds thy kids beside the shepherds’ tents.” Give instruction to those who are less taught than yourself; whether in the family, the Sunday School, or elsewhere, but also avail yourself of those gifts of the Spirit which the ascended Christ has given for the edification of His Church. At the same time do not neglect the Communion of Saints. When the children of Israel came to Elim, they found there twelve fountains of water, and seventy palm trees, and they encamped there by the waters.

“Beside the shepherds’ tents.” That thy own soul may be cared for by the under-shepherds appointed by Christ; and that the little ones may have the like advantage as thyself, and be the subjects of a double care.

*Verses 9, 10.*—“I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh’s chariots. Thy cheeks are comely with rows (of jewels), thy neck with chains (of gold). We will make thee borders of gold, with studs of silver.”

There are two thoughts here connected with Pharaoh’s horses; the perfection of their training, so that they could keep rank; and the elegance of their trappings. The Lord Jesus observes the Church’s fellowship in testimony, and thus compares her. The service of God, and of Christ, is royal service. “In Pharaoh’s chariots.” “Fellowship in the Gospel.” Being “perfectly joined together” in

the same mind and judgment, keeping step, or keeping rank (1 Chr. xii. 33), this is precious to Christ. The prevalence of envy, strife and division, is a proof of carnality.

“A company of horses in Pharoah’s chariots.” We are reminded by this comparison who is the author of this song; and whom he addresses.

It is Solomon in his kingdom of glory, and the Bride of his heart whom he addresses, is undoubtedly Pharoah’s daughter whom he had taken for his wife; hence the allusion here.

The figure she would well remember in her early days. Pharoah is represented as surrounded by his courtiers, and drawn in his chariot by horses well trained and disciplined, keeping step, and going on firmly.

Would that this comparison held true, more largely of the Lord’s people! But wherever the Lord beholds it, He acknowledges it, and sees its value.

As Eliezer, the servant of Abraham, adorned Rebekah, who was espoused to Isaac, with jewels of silver and jewels of gold, Gen. xxiv. 53; so the Holy Spirit adorns the Church espoused to Christ with spiritual gifts and graces. Her adornment does not consist of jewels and outward apparel, but in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God, of great price.

“Thy neck with chains.” As Pharoah put a chain of gold about the neck of Joseph, and Belshazzar com-

manded that a chain of gold should be put about the neck of Daniel; which is an emblem of subjection to royal authority, and considered the highest honour; so subjection to the authority of God, and Christ, and every thought brought into captivity to Him, gives dignity and glory of the highest order.

*Verse 11.*—"We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver." We see here Divine grace, combined with spiritual perfections, rendered fixed and permanent by the constrainings of redeeming love; gold being the emblem of that which is Divine, and silver of redemption. (1 Peter i. 18).

This figure is perhaps taken from the trappings of the horses in Pharaoh's chariots, which probably were adorned with ornaments of silver and gold.

*Verse 12.*—"While the King sitteth at His table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof."

The Bride now speaks. This verse reminds us most forcibly of John xii. 1-8, where the Lord Jesus is the guest, and Lazarus sits with Him at the table, and Martha is seen in her usual place of service, while Mary is at His feet, breaking the box of costly spikenard.

This supper was made in honour of the Lord Jesus. Lazarus may be regarded as representing those who have fellowship with Christ in resurrection life; Martha of those engaged in His active service; Mary of those saints whose hearts' affections are especially drawn out to Him.  
 "The King sitteth at His table."

The day following this supper at Bethany, the Lord Jesus made His triumphant entry as King into Jerusalem.

And while the Lord's Supper is especially the memorial of His suffering and death, it also recognises Him as now crowned with glory and honour. It is emphatically "The Lord's Table," according to 1 Cor. x. 21.

The word here rendered "at His table" is literally "in His circle." For where two or three are gathered together unto His Name, there is Jesus in the midst of them.

"My spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof." This spikenard represents the affections of the heart, which are in the sight of God of great value, being called forth by the remembrance of Christ as crucified, risen, and glorified, while the Believer is sitting at His table and in His presence.

Mary's spikenard, according to Matthew, was poured upon the head of Jesus; and, according to John xii., she anointed His feet with it. We also read that the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

These affections go forth to Christ Himself, and also to His members.

Lev. xxiv. 7 suggests another thought. On each row of shewbread on the pure table, frankincense was to be placed as a memorial before God. For while these pure affections are called forth towards Christ and His people, they also ascend as a sweet savour, acceptable and well-pleasing unto God.

*Verse 13.*—"A bundle of myrrh is my well beloved unto me, He shall lie all night betwixt my breasts."

It appears to have been a custom amongst women of rank in the East, to carry a casket of myrrh in their bosom as a perfume.

What is there in myrrh that the Spirit of God employs it as a symbol so frequently? It is bitter in taste, fragrant in perfume, soothing in power.

"How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds  
In a believer's ear,  
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,  
And drives away his fear."

The root of the word in the Hebrew, which is here rendered "bundle," signifies "to bind up," to constrain, to confine; and in one of its derivatives is translated "balm."

At the remembrance of His sufferings and death for us, the love of Christ constraineth us to live for Him. Strengthened with might by God's Spirit in the inner man, Christ dwelling in the heart by faith, we become rooted and grounded in love. (Eph. iii. 16-18.)

Verse 13 follows beautifully after verse 12. The remembrance of Christ's love kept up. "This do in remembrance of Me."

The soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness, when we thus remember Him upon the bed, and meditate on Him in the night watches.

And well for us if, on awaking in the morning, love to Him occupies the central place in our hearts' affections,

as the constraining motive for service and action throughout the day; affording also the sweetest consolation in seasons of darkness, affliction, and trial.

This is true also, dispensationally, during the present night time, while the Sun of Righteousness is absent, having set behind Calvary; but we are now expecting the Morning Star to usher in His re-appearing, in that morning without a cloud, when His radiance will flood the world.

*Verse 14.*—"My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of En-gedi." "Cluster of camphire." A bunch of this fragrant blossom, sweet and beautiful, is carried in the hand by the women of the East, and used as a perfume.

The Hebrew word for camphire, "*Copher*," signifies "to cover, to make atonement," to propitiate.

The "bundle of myrrh" may suggest Christ in death, delivered for our offences, the Christ of Calvary. The cluster of camphire, Christ in resurrection, raised again for our justification.

We are to bear about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that His life also may be made manifest in us.

There are a whole cluster of sweet and fragrant excellencies in the Beloved, as manifested by the Spirit of Christ in resurrection.

The remembrance of Jesus is sweet in prosperity, as well as in adversity, by day, as well as by night: not only in repose, at night upon the bed, but during labour in the day, when occupied in the vineyards.

While engaged in the vineyards of others, there is a danger of neglecting our own (verse 6). But when working for the beloved, the remembrance of Him, and the constraining of His love, tend to the promotion of our own personal interests, and growth in grace.

*Verse 15.*—"Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes."

The Bridegroom looks on the Bride with an expression of intense love, for throughout this book, she is regarded as not in the flesh, but in the Spirit.

It is important to cherish the remembrance of Christ's appreciation of the Church, in the midst of its present corruption and ruin, as the gift of the Father, the purchase of His own blood, and the workmanship of the eternal Spirit.

Her exquisite beauty will appear by-and-bye, when Christ presents her to Himself, without spot or blemish.

"Behold." It is well for us to contemplate her as Christ does, in her true value, as chosen of God before the foundation of the world, and as loved of the Father with the same love as He loves the Son.

"Doves' eyes." That is, having eyes of meekness and affection, constancy and subjection. Every fond remembrance of Him, and every expression of her love to His person, is valued by Him.

*Verse 16.*—"Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed [or couch] is green" [or shady].

The scene here depicted, recalls to our memory,

Paradise, with the first Adam and the first Eve in the bowers of Eden, as in their original purity and innocence before the fall. But here, we have Paradise regained, and the fulfilment of the great mystery, of "Christ and the Church" (Eph. v. 32). Thus, what has failed in the first Adam, will be fulfilled in Christ.

Do our hearts go out in the acknowledgment that He is "fair" and "pleasant?" The world sees no beauty in "Jesus of Nazareth." He is to it as a "root out of a dry ground." But to the believing heart, He is an object of infinite beauty and delight.

*Verse 17.*—"The beams of our house [or houses] are cedar, and our rafters of fir" [or cypress].

This Song of Songs is especially beautiful for the variety of figures employed, they are culled from every quarter.

"Houses," for the word in *Heb.* is in the plural.

Solomon built three houses, one for God, one for the Kingdom, and one for the daughter of Pharaoh, whom he had taken to be his wife. (See 1 Kings iii. 1; vi. 1, 9, 10, 15; vii. 7, 8; ix. 10, 11, 24).

Cedar and fir [or cypress] were employed in the construction of the Temple; and cedar for the King's house, and the house for Pharaoh's daughter. Cedar is the emblem of resurrection incorruptibility, and fir [or cypress] of resurrection strength. The cedar and cypress were also to be found in the Garden of Eden.

Notice the repetition of the word "our." The Bride of the Lamb has fellowship with the Bridegroom in the

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prospect of the Father's house above, the heavenly kingdom, the especial place which **H**e has gone to prepare for her (John xiv. 1-3), in the Paradise of God.

## Chapter Ⅲ.

“**I** AM the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the valleys.  
 Who is the speaker here? Although in the Hebrew the word for “Rose” is in the feminine, this does not decide the question, for some Hebrew words are feminine and some masculine in themselves, and the word for “Lily” is masculine.

When we consider the meaning of the comparison, it appears to be the voice of the Beloved, the Bridegroom, as the example of His people, whether in exaltation, glory, and honour as the “Rose of Sharon,” or in humiliation, meekness, purity, and lowliness as the “Lily of the valley.”

The language of the Lord Jesus to His disciple is, “Ye call ME Master and Lord, and so I am.” He also said, “Learn of Me for I am meek and lowly in heart.” As the Son of God, He manifested the Divine glory; as the Son of Man, He was the chiefest among ten thousand, and as the Christ, the Anointed, all the graces of the Spirit, in Him were seen in perfection.

*Verse 2.*—“As the lily among thorns, so is My love among the daughters.”

He notices the “thorns,” and cares for His “lily.”

“He knows what sore temptations mean,  
For He has felt the same.”

Believers are exhorted to be “blameless,” and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation.” (Phil. ii. 15).

Thus to be followers of Him, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.

*Verse 3.*—“As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is My beloved among the sons. I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste.”

The Hebrew word *tapuakh*, is from *nahphuakh*, signifying “to breathe, or blow,” and suggests rich perfume.

It was a tree evidently affording grateful shade, and bearing fruit fragrant in smell, and pleasant to the taste. Many suppose it to be the citron, others to be the orange tree. The colour of the fruit suggests the idea of gold, as in Prov. xxv. 11. “A word fitly spoken, is like apples of gold in pictures [or caskets] of silver.”

This is the language of the Bride, “My beloved,” whom she regards as superior to all beside. Is the Lord Jesus of incomparable excellence to our souls? Do we know what it is like Mary to sit at His feet, to receive His words, and taste their sweetness? His language is “Come unto Me, and I will give you rest.” In Him we may find rest, joy, and abundance to meet our every need.

*Verse 4.*—“He brought me to the banqueting-house, and His banner over me was love.”

The banqueting-house, is literally "the house of wine." Wine is the emblem of joy, and especially of Divine joy. (Judges ix. 13; Ps. civ. 15). There are seasons when the Lord Jesus brings the faithful and obedient soul into the realization of the Divine presence, into the secret place of the Most High, under the shadow of the Almighty, in Whose presence there is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.

This joy is threefold. There is joy in God (Rom. v. 11). There is the joy of the Lord Jesus according to His prayer for His disciples, "that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves (John xvii. 13, see also John xv. 11). "There is joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. xiv. 17). There are also seasons of special manifestations of Divine favour, when His banner over us is love; when the voice of Jehovah is heard saying, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." When the Lord Jesus assures us, "The Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me." (John xvi. 27). There is also the assurance of the Lord Jesus, "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth ME: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him." "If a man love Me, he will keep My words, and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him." (John xiv. 21-23).

And further, we are assured of the love of the Spirit

(Rom. xv. 30). He is the Comforter, whose fruit is love. He sheds abroad the love of God in the heart, and brings the soul, especially at times, under the constraining love of Christ. These seasons of special joy and communion are often realized in the Assemblies of God's saints, when the presence of God is manifested; when the Spirit of God ungrieved takes of the things of Christ in the glory of the Father, and reveals them, in all their sweetness and fulness; and when in the fellowship of saints a foretaste is realized of those everlasting joys which the redeemed will share around the throne of God and of the Lamb.

When the Holy Ghost was poured out at Pentecost; then the place where they were assembled became a house of wine; then the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost, so that those who beheld them said, "these men are full of new wine." (Acts ii. 13). So will it ever be now, if the flesh be kept in subjection, and the Spirit of God be ungrieved and unquenched. For the exhortation is not given in vain, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." (Eph. v. 18.)

*Verses 5-8.*—"Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love. His left hand is under my head, and His right hand doth embrace me."

"Stay me with flagons," or clusters of raisins, and the dried fruit of the vine, which had afforded the joy. "Comfort me with apples," or refresh me with the sweet

perfume of the goodly fruit that had been so grateful to my taste. So the believer desires to have something abiding, as strong emotions are apt to unfit for continuous effort. To this the Bridegroom responds by the sustenance of His grace, and by the further manifestations of His Almighty love. The left hand of His grace confirming the understanding, and the right hand of His love establishing the heart.

*Verse 7.*—"I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love till He [she] please."

The Bridegroom now speaks. By the "daughters of Jerusalem," we may understand the remnant of Israel during the last week of Daniel's seventy weeks of years, in the time of the judgments and "The Great Tribulation."

The Lord is not willing that the prospect of these coming events should interfere with the Church's present communion with Himself; and her perfect repose in His all-sufficient grace, and His unchanging love. The roes and the hinds are creatures exceedingly susceptible of alarm, and flee at the slightest indication of approaching danger. But the Church we know, will be taken away before those days of calamity come.

*Verse 8.*—"The Voice of my Beloved! Behold, He cometh—leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills."

This is the response of the Spirit, in the heart of the Bride, to the voice of the Beloved. "I am the Root and

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Offspring of David, and the bright and Morning Star. Surely I come quickly." (Rev. xxii. 16-20.)

He has not been slack concerning His promise; for one day is with Him as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. And when seen in the light of eternity, the intervening period between His departure and return, will appear short indeed. For the day of prophecy is set according to the sun of eternity. He comes leaping from century to century, and skipping over the intervening years. Creation is groaning and travailing for the time of her release from the bondage of corruption: and the godly in the time of the Great Tribulation will be earnestly looking for the return of the Son of Man, for their deliverance from their enemies, and for the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom.

But the heart of the Bride is set on the return of the Bridegroom. It is for Himself that she is looking. "Behold, He cometh!" This very One, and no else but He, will satisfy to the full, her longing desire. The voice at first appears to have been indistinct, but on listening more intently, she discovers whose it is, and exclaims, "It is indeed, the voice of My beloved! and is an indication of His near approach." It is not simply the midnight cry, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh!" but the voice of My Beloved Himself, already at the doors.

*Verse 9.*—"My Beloved is like a roe or a young hart; Behold, He standeth behind our wall, He looketh forth at the windows, shewing Himself through the lattice" [lattices].

Whether it be to fetch His bride, or for the relief of the persecuted in their tribulation, or in response to the groaning of the creation, or for the establishment of His Kingdom, He comes leaping as the roe, and skipping as the young hart. He is speeding on His way, first and especially for His bride.

As to His spiritual and abiding presence, He has never left His bride. His word on going to His Father was, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." "I will come and manifest Myself to you." The wall of separation between us, if there be any, is ours; not His. Our coldness, forgetfulness, or lack of spirituality of mind, may set up a barrier between us, but "Behold! He standeth" behind it. The eye of faith, and heart of love endures as seeing Him who is invisible.

The inspired Scriptures may be compared to a window with beautiful lattice work.

Its promises, types, allegories, and prophecies, furnish so many openings, through which the Beloved is seen, and by means of which He manifests Himself to the awakened heart, and to the anointed eye.

Through these, the robes for glory and beauty of the great High Priest are distinctly seen, the jewelled breast-plate, and the holy crown.

Through these openings at other times, He appears as the Lamb of God in the holy mysteries of the Cross, or as the anointed King, in the transcendant glories of His approaching Kingdom.

*Verses 10-13.*—"My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away."

"My beloved spake (Heb., answered) and said unto me." Silent prayer had gone up, which is not here recorded; this is the answer. In God's presence there is fulness of joy, at His right hand there are pleasures for evermore. When the Lord Jesus left this world and returned to His Father, He exchanged the wilderness of earth for the Paradise of God: His sorrows and His sufferings were for ever past. Where Jesus is at the right hand of God, all is happy, clear, and bright.

There the graces and fruits of the Spirit blossom, and ripen in full perfection.

"Rain is over." There no tear ever falls, no sigh is ever heard, no pang is ever felt. The coldness of frosts, and of snow, and hail are over. Eternal Spring encircles all.

"There everlasting Spring abides,  
And never-withering flowers."

All is beauty and joy, harmony, love, and song.

Divine love, diffused by the Eternal Spirit, is breathed forth in songs of adoring gratitude and love. The

heavenly Bridegroom exhorts His Bride to set her thoughts and affections on things above where He is; to fix the eye not on the things which are seen, and temporal, but on those things which are unseen, and are eternal. And as one through the indwelling Spirit, with the risen and glorified Christ, to realize her citizenship as raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Him; not of the world, even as He is not of the world, but sent into the world on a Divine Mission, while her home and habitation is above.

When the Lord calls away from the earth some matured and ripened Christian, this also may be regarded as His language to the soul—calling it away from the chequered scenes of earth, to the pure and holy joys of heaven—absent from the body, to be at home with the Lord.

*Verse 14.*—“O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.”

Here is a word of personal comfort, “O my dove.” He calls her by a tender name. It is a familiar sight in Palestine to see the harmless, defenceless, timid, gentle dove, secure and hidden in the “clefts of the rock.”

This is Christ’s own figure of His blood-bought Church, as secure in Him the Rock of Ages.

Like Moses on the Mount, whom God put into the cleft of the rock, and covered him over with His hand, whilst His glory passed by.

“Rock of Ages cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee ;  
Where the water and the blood,  
From Thy riven side which flowed,  
Are of sin the perfect cure,  
Cleansing from its guilt and power.”

After His baptism, the Spirit of God rested on Christ, in the form of a dove. And this Dove-like Character is re-produced in the Church, while abiding in Christ, and living in the Spirit.

“In the secret places of the stairs.” The side-chambers of the Temple were in three storeys. They were enlarged in size as they went upward, and the entrances into them were by winding stairs hidden from the view. There is an allusion, probably to this, in the figure employed.

It is in private communion especially, that the soul ascends into a fuller apprehension of God, while in due proportion its capacity expands whether for enjoyment, worship, or service. The Lord Jesus values the society and intercourse of His own. His language is, “Let Me see thy countenance, let Me hear thy voice.” And these seasons of near and intimate fellowship are acceptable, and well-pleasing to Him.

*Verse 15*,—“Take us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.”

While all is peaceful, and secure above, and no evil can enter there, it is not so in the present state. There is danger even in the vineyards, even amongst the people

of God, and in the assembly of God's saints. Roots of bitterness may spring up, and thereby many may be defiled.

Dangers may not only arise from powerful foes, but even small and unsuspected evils may work much mischief. These "little foxes" need to be trapped; these little and unsuspected sources of danger need to be guarded against, and avoided.

The fruits of the Spirit though vigorous in themselves with the power of an endless life, are yet tender. The gifts of the Spirit in the assembly may be easily quenched; and in the individual experience of the believer, the Spirit of God that dwells within may be grieved, His communion hindered, His communications of Divine truth obstructed, and the joy, comfort and peace of the Holy Ghost may be impaired. We need to avoid the very appearance of evil, and the first slips of deviation from the paths of holiness and truth.

The Lord Jesus has an interest in the vines, and in the fruit of the vineyard, and He is fully aware of the dangers besetting even the smallest, and the least suspected. "OUR vines have tender grapes." And He is willing to help us in our efforts to prevent or avoid the evil. "Take us the foxes." His own interest is connected with that of His people; what affects them, affects Him.

*Verse 16.*—"My beloved is mine, and I am his; he feedeth among the lilies."

The Bride now speaks with full assurance and appropriation, "My beloved is mine." Mine, by a three-fold title.

1st—As the gift of the Father. “God so loved that He gave His only begotten Son.” “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son”: He is the Child born, and the Son given.

2nd—As His own personal gift, for “Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it,” and each believer may say, “He loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

3rd—This gift is communicated to us by the Holy Ghost.

It is as strengthened with might by God's Spirit in the inner man, that Christ dwells in our heart by faith.

One purpose of this Song is to train our affections upward, around the person of the Lord Jesus.

Words are put into our mouths which not only may express our feelings towards Him, but which strengthen and mature them.

This is to lay claim to boundless blessings, privileges, security, life, pardon, the Spirit's indwelling, God our Father, and heaven as our home. In Christ Jesus, we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies (Eph. i. 3).

“In Whom we have redemption through His blood,” according to the riches of God's grace. Our life is “hid with Christ in God.” This gives all power for holy walk, and loving service. How poor is a gorgeous throne, or the friendship and honours of the world, or the popularity of the masses, if we are destitute of this inestimable gift? When we are able to realize that our

Beloved is ours, then it will be an easy and sweet thing to say, "I am His." It may seem difficult to give up the world, self, and sin for Christ; but having first opened the heart to admit Him, it will become easy and natural to do so. If we can say as in Psa. xxiii. 1, "The Lord is my Shepherd," then all the rest of the Psalm follows in due course. When we realize Christ as our eternal portion, a consecrated life will be the result. Then the love of Christ constrains us, "because we thus judge, that if One died for all, then all died: that they that live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and rose again." This realization is the fulness of Christian experience; it is the secret of holy living.

"He feedeth (feedeth as a Shepherd) among the lilies." In verse 1, the Lord Jesus speaks of Himself as the "lily," and He says, "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." In verse 2, the Bride is compared to a lily among thorns, blameless and harmless, "without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation." The Good Shepherd not only makes His flock to "lie down in green pastures," or pastures of tender grass, but He leads them into flowery meads, where the lilies in abundance grow. Thus "the meek will He guide in judgment, the meek will He teach His way." It is amongst the lowly that He exercises His Shepherd care.

Verse 17.—"Until the day break, and the shadows

flee away, turn my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart, upon the mountain of Bether" (or Separation).

Even so, in Rev. xxii. 17, after the Lord Jesus has announced Himself as the "Root and Offspring of David, and the Bright and Morning Star," the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. They invite Him to return as the Bright and Morning Star, to receive His Church to Himself, previous to His coming as the Root and Offspring of David; in that morning without clouds, when, as the Sun of Righteousness, He will rise upon Israel and the earth, and usher in the bright day of millennial blessedness and glory. To which the Bridegroom again responds in Rev. xxii. 20, "Surely I come quickly," in acquiescence, with the desire that He should hasten His return as the roe leaping upon the mountains.

## Chapter III.

.. **B**Y night on my bed, I sought him whom my soul loveth : I sought him, but I found him not." The heart of the Bride is feeling the loneliness of the night while waiting for the dawn of the morning. She is thinking of the One who brings the morning with Him.

"By night on my bed." Night, in the Heb., is in the plural number ; many nights had the Bride been in search for the One whom her soul loved, and whom in chapter *i.* she had compared to "a bundle of myrrh." How is this? Whence the change? The Word of the Lord is "I will never leave thee, or forsake thee ;" "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you ;" "Lo, I am with you always." It is true He never leaves us ; but the conscious realization of His presence may be absent.

"He stands behind our wall" of separation, not His. There may be some barrier that we have raised, intercepting His realized presence. We are not told what little foxes had been spoiling the tender grapes, or interfering with her heart's affections, though He is still the object of them.

Seasons of outward activity, even in the Lord's service, may not always be favourable to deep inward experience. And even in seasons of rest and retirement,

the disciple may look in vain for that sweet consciousness of the Lord's presence and love, which he once enjoyed, though deep down in the heart, Jesus is still the object of his love.

On the other hand, remissness in His service may be the real cause. As obedience is the fruit of love, so love is the reward of obedience. Jesus says, "He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me, and he that loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him."

Verses 2-4.—"I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth. I sought him, but I found him not. The watchmen that go about the city found me; to whom I said, 'Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?' It was but a little that I passed from them, but [or when] I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me"

When the private means of grace, such as meditation and prayer, may not be found soon to restore the rest of the soul in communion with Christ, it may be quite natural to try the more public means, in outward fellowship with believers, in smaller or larger gatherings. But even this may not be sufficient, there must be a manifestation of the Lord Himself.

The aid and advice of those who have the oversight of souls may be sought, but even these may fail to under-

stand the case, or afford the needed help. None will satisfy but Himself. But where the search for Him is sincere, and persevering, sooner or later He will be found. When found, past experience will make us more desirous of maintaining close and intimate communion unbroken.

This will lead to a thorough examination of the whole matter; going down to the secret causes which led astray, which may be traced to some tendency in our original nature, some activity of the natural mind, which always needs to be guarded against.

“But,” or “when I found him.” What a finding! What an incoming of full-tide joy!! Just like the sea, the farther it has gone out, the farther in proportion will it roll in. “I found him!” No joy is equal to this, and never so welcome as when we experience its return. “I held Him,” a firmer grasp than ever. The entwining arms of love and faith surround His feet, like those of the women on the resurrection morning. (Matt. xxviii. 9.)

Faith takes hold with firm grasp, love embraces with strong affection, for the soul has learnt what it was to be without Him, and now it cleaves to Him with full purpose of heart.

Verse 5.—“I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he (she) please.”

When the soul is established, the Lord Jesus is not willing that prophecies of the future respecting Israel, nor the experiences of the remnant in their tribulation,

or of the manifestation of the Son of Man, should interfere with present communion with Him, or of the expectation of His return to receive His Church to Himself. "Till SHE please." The word is in the feminine gender. Believers are quite at liberty to be occupied with coming events in fellowship with the Lord, who treats them as His friends.

Verse 6.—"Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?"

The Church is here contemplated as walking not in the flesh, but in the Spirit; coming out from among the world; and from all filthiness of the flesh and the spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. She is here seen as the purchase of Immanuel's blood, and the workmanship of the eternal Spirit. When the Church is thus seen coming up from this wilderness world, separated not only from its worldliness, but from worldly religion, there is a cloud of sweet incense ascending to God from thousands of hearts and souls.

Sanctified affliction, like the bitter but fragrant myrrh, causes the affections, praises and thanksgivings of the heart, to ascend as sweet incense towards God.

During the whole of this present dispensation since Pentecost, there have been a constant ascending of redeemed spirits from this world to God. They have left the body with all its carnality behind, and their ransomed spirits have departed to be with Christ. These are the

fruit of the travail of the Redeemer's soul, and the result of the quickening and sanctifying work of the Holy Ghost, and they will form when completed, the Bride of Christ.

Verses 7, 8.—“Behold his bed, which is Solomon's; threescore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel. They all hold swords, being expert in war: every man hath his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night.”

The season of the scene to which our attention is now directed is the present night-time, previous to the appearing of the Morning Star, and the rising of the Sun of Righteousness. The true Solomon is now taking His rest, awaiting the time when His foes shall be made His footstool. But there are, even now, many adversaries, and there is great need for earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints.

The truth, honour, and authority of the Lord Jesus need to be jealously guarded.

But the King during the whole of the present dispensation has not been without His bodyguard. There have always been men valiant for the truth, ready to maintain His cause, at the first alarm. For this service, it is needful to be established in the truth, and to be skilful in the use of the Sword or the Spirit, which is the Word of God; such of whom the Lord can say, “Thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My Word, and hast not denied My Name.”

These are known and numbered, and it may well be esteemed a high honour to be included in the list, as faithful in maintaining the holiness and truth of the person of Christ, and His Supreme Lordship in His own Church. Not indifferent to false doctrine, but ready always to maintain the truth of God, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, acknowledging the Scriptures alone as of supreme authority on all matters concerning the faith.

Verses 9, 10.—“King Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon. He made the pillars thereof of silver, the bottom thereof of gold, the covering of it of purple, the midst thereof being paved with love, for the daughters of Jerusalem.”

Solomon's bed is for the night-time, and he has his body-guard around him, because of the perils of the night.

King Solomon's chariot, or palanquin, or car of state, is for the day-time.

The cedar, is a type of resurrection incorruptibility.

We have here a figure of the Lord Jesus coming as King, in resurrection-glory to Israel, on the morning of the bright Millennial Day. Silver is the type of redemption, and of the redemption price. At His first coming to Israel, He came to make atonement, but atonement having been made, and its acceptance having been proved by His resurrection, He will come again in all the security and strength of accomplished redemption,

to bestow its full benefits on Israel, His earthly people, who will be again gathered and own Him their King.

Gold is the emblem of Divine glory, for, as the Son of God He will come in all the glory of His Father.

Purple is a combination of scarlet and blue, and is typical of the combined glories of Emmanuel, uniting His earthly dignity as Son of David with His heavenly glory as the Lord from heaven. For He will come in His Melchizedec glory, as King and Priest.

“The covering thereof” may perhaps be better rendered “seat thereof;” and is the emblem of the royal dignity and majesty, in which He will come.

“The midst thereof being paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem.” Israel has been the object of “everlasting love.” (Jer. xxxi. 3). And it is in the fulness of this love, that He will return again to His ancient people Israel.

Verse 11.—“Go forth, oh ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals [or marriage], and in the day of the gladness of his heart.”

This is the day when the Son of Man comes as King to reign over Israel under the New Covenant; He will then have on His head many crowns (Rev. xix. 12). But He will not only come as King of kings, and Lord of lords, but, as the Bridegroom of His Church, for the time of His appearing mentioned here is after the Marriage Supper. In Rev. xix. 5, we hear His voice

from the Throne, calling upon all the servants of God for an ascription of praise to His God and Father, Who is the God and Father of His blood-bought and Spirit-perfected bride. In response, John heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, from those who had come out of the great tribulation ; and the voice of many waters, from the innumerable company of angels that surround the Throne, and as the voice of mighty thunderings from the outlying universe, saying, " Alleluia : for Jehovah God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice and give honour to Him : for the Marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready."

This joy was set before Him in that day of His deepest sorrow, when He purchased His bride, so that " He endured the Cross, despising the shame." In Psalm xlv. 8, we read, " All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad." And in Rev. xix. 11, we see Him coming forth after the Marriage Supper, seated on a white horse, the symbol of imperial power. By the " daughters of Jerusalem " we may understand those who will be faithful to God and Christ during the time of the tribulation. And by the " daughters of Zion," Israel, under the New Covenant, who will welcome the Son of Man when He appears in His glory accompanied by the ten thousands of His saints.

## Chapter III.

**W**E have in verses 1-5 the Lord's estimate of the perfection of the Bride, the Church, in seven particulars. The eyes, hair, teeth, lips, temples, neck, and breasts, when the whole body will be complete in all its varied members previous to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. This will be the threefold accomplishment of the Father, Son, and Spirit. First, of the Father. Eph. i. 4, "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." Secondly, according to the purpose of Christ. Eph. v. 25-27, "Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word: that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Thirdly, according to the purpose of the Holy Ghost. 1 Thess. iii. 12, 13, "And the Lord (that is the Lord, the Spirit) make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you; to the end He may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints." Then the

Bride, the Church, will appear in all the varied excellencies, virtues, and triumphs of the saints, as manifested during the whole of the present dispensation, for "to her will be granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white : for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." (Rev. xix. 8).

To this the Bride responds in verse 6, "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense."

"The night is far spent, the day is at hand." The Bride, under the teaching of the Spirit, is looking for the appearing of the Bright and Morning Star, previous to the dawning of the bright Millennial Day, when the Sun of Righteousness will rise on a benighted world, bringing in that morning without clouds, when all shadows flee away.

Meanwhile, Calvary and Pentecost will be the scenes of chosen resort, in fellowship with the sufferings of Christ. "Myrrh" being the emblem of sanctified affliction, and "frankincense" of thanksgiving and praise. For as we are partakers of the sufferings of Christ, we shall be also of the consolation, and thus glory will redound to God.

Verse 7.—"Thou art ALL fair, my love ; there is no spot in thee."

Now the Bridegroom speaks. Compare this verse with verse 1, "Behold, THOU ART FAIR, my love ; behold thou art fair."

In this, and the following verses, the Church is contemplated as the workmanship of the Divine, Eternal Spirit, and the fruits of the Spirit as seen in her. The language of verse 7 is—"THOU ART ALL FAIR, my love; there is no spot in thee."

Here the Church is seen, according to Eph. v. 25-27, in resurrection perfectness, and glory, not only as washed in the blood of the Lamb and sanctified by the Spirit, but as conformed to the glorified body of the Redeemer.

Verse 8.—"Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir, and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards."

This is the first time that the word rendered "SPOUSE" occurs in the Song of Solomon, hitherto it has been "MY LOVE, OR FRIEND."

This implies the time when the Marriage Supper of the Lamb has been celebrated, and when the Church has become the Bride of Christ. The Hebrew word denotes "completeness," and is frequently translated in Isaiah, "bride." "When Christ who is our Life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory." This is expressed in the words, "Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse." It was on Lebanon that the cedars grew, and the cedar wood is a type in Scripture of resurrection incorruptibility.

We notice that these words "with me from Leban-

on," are repeated, as denoting the importance and significance of the figure. For when Christ will appear in His resurrection glory, the Church His Bride conformed unto the same image, will manifest His glory. "He will come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe."

"Look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards."

From these heights of excellency and dignity, commanding an extensive prospect, look down on scenes below, on earthly beauty, and away from the snares and dangers of this lower world.

Verse 9—"Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck. How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! How much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices! Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk are under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon."

Here a new title is introduced. It was first "My love;" "My spouse" or bride; now it is "My sister," "My spouse." These two titles only occur in the fourth chapter, and in the first verse of chapter five.

The Lord here claims a double relationship; for the children being partakers of flesh and blood, He, Himself also took part of the same.

He values in the highest degree every expression of sincere affection from each individual member of His body; and every manifestation of subjection and obedience to Him, gives joy to the heart of the Redeemer now, as well as secures a recompence when He comes.

The spiritual affection wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost, is far more valuable to the Lord Jesus, than all mere fleshly excitement, or natural virtues. "He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all of one, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren; saying I will declare Thy Name unto My brethren" (Heb. ii. 11-12). And again, "I ascend unto My Father, and your Father, and to My God, and your God" (John xx. 17). Hence the Church cries "Abba, Father;" as claiming a double relationship, not only as children of God, but as the future Bride of His blessed Son. Loving communion with the Lord Jesus is precious to His heart, and sweeter to Him than honey, and the honeycomb, for then the hearts of His people reflect back on Him some of the affection which He has bestowed on them.

Verses 12-15.—"A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse (or bride); a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard; spikenard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, with all the chief spices: a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.

**The Church as the Body and Bride of Christ is com-**

pared to a garden, but a garden enclosed; not open to the world, but separate from it, as Christ says, in John xvii. 9. "I pray for them, I pray not for the world." Again in verse 14, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

"A spring shut up, a fountain sealed." For the Comforter, the Holy Ghost who has been given unto her, the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him, but He dwells in, and bears witness to the Church, and is in her a well of water "springing up into everlasting life." A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon."

The fountain is the spring, the well, the reservoir, which contains the water, and the streams the outflow from the fountain.

To this our Lord refers in John vii. 38, 39, speaking of the Holy Spirit, which they that believe in Him should receive, after that He was glorified, He says, "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

The fountain of living waters is God, the Father. (See Jer. ii. 13).

And the promise is "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh, shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son." (Rev. xxi. 6, 7.)

The reservoir in whom the fulness of the Spirit dwells, is the Lord Jesus; as He says "If any man thirst let him come unto ME and drink." (John vii. 37.)

And it is through the believer, that the living streams flow forth. "Out of his belly shall flow forth rivers of living water."

The cedars of Lebanon are typical of resurrection life, and these streams from Lebanon remind us of the Spirit of life which flowed from the risen Christ.

The language of Isa. lv. 1, 2, is specially that of the Holy Ghost as the Comforter, come down from the ascended Christ.

By a reference to Exod. xxx. 23-25 we find that the chief spices enumerated in this chapter in the Song of Solomon (verses 13, 14), enter into the composition of the holy anointing oil, by which Aaron and his sons were anointed. And through the Pentecostal Spirit, the Church is made partaker of those spiritual excellencies and graces which characterise the Lord Jesus.

*Verse 17.*—But what is needed for the manifestation is, the fresh energy of the Holy Spirit. "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south, blow upon (or breathe upon) my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out."

Oh for a fresh gale, to cause the perfumes to arise to God! To cause the pent-up rivers to flow forth to the world in active energy! We want the reviving grace of the Spirit of God as the NORTH wind of conviction, and reproof, showing us where we come short.

And we need also the SOUTH breezes, the consolations and joys of the Holy Ghost, and views of eternal glory, to renew us with fresh power.

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“Let My beloved come into His garden.” In order that the Lord Jesus may be refreshed by the gifts and graces of the Spirit in the Church. She recognises that the garden is His garden, and that all the fruits thereof belong to Him.

## Chapter V.

“ AM come into my garden, my sister, my spouse, (or bride): I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.”

Here is the response of the Bridegroom, to the invitation of the Bride, given in the fourth chapter and sixteenth verse:

“Let my beloved come into His garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.”

His reply is “I am come.” The north wind of affliction, the south wind of consolation, has resulted in the flowing forth of the graces of the Spirit of God which have been wrought in her soul.

“Myrrh and spice.” His eye sees and values each, every perfume is grateful to Him.

There is no sorrow with which He does not know how to sympathize, no joy that He cannot share.

Sanctified affliction may be the mingling of the two, He can have fellowship with both. “I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey.” He has fellowship with the sweet as well as with the bitter, and can rejoice with those who do rejoice.

“I have drunk my wine with my milk.” Whilst He values the strong wine of earnest devotedness, zeal, and service, He is not indifferent to the milk belonging to the little ones, for “out of the mouth of babes He has perfected praise.” He is the same as when on earth He welcomed the little children to Him.

“Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.” The Lord Jesus would have those whom He calls His friends, and who share His love, to have full fellowship with Him in His appreciation and joy in the graces, virtues, and fruits of the Spirit in His saints.

*Verse 2.*—“I sleep, but my heart waketh; it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, “Open to me my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.”

The Bride is conscious of stupor. We are not always the same in the spiritual life. Sometimes there is languor, coldness; but Jesus is always the same, unchangeable. The difference is in us: the state of the body often affects the state of the soul, and the atmosphere of our surroundings. The spirit, truly is willing, but the flesh is weak. There is often a felt want of the power of enjoyment of the realization of the presence of the Lord.

It is better to sleep while the heart waketh, than to be awake while the heart is asleep.

We have here a Laodicean condition of the soul, there is lukewarmness, and an absence of an outward healthy glow, but there is vital warmth at the heart.

It is in this condition of things that the Lord says, "Behold I stand at the door and knock : if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." (Rev. iii. 20.)

He had already knocked at the door of the habitation as a merchant with His wares ; gold, fine linen, and eye-salve. (Rev. iii. 17-18.)

Now, He knocks as a friend seeking admission.

There are several occasions on which the Lord Jesus knocks at the door of the human heart. First at the door of the poor sinner, with the offer of salvation and eternal life.

In this portion of the Song of Solomon He is seeking intimate communion with His spouse.

In Rev. iii. 20 the words are addressed to the Church, and to individuals in it : as it is written, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." (Verse 22.)

And a time will come when He, as the Lord will knock at the hall door, where He has left His servants with a charge to watch, so that when He cometh they may open to Him immediately.

It is in the present night-time, now far spent, and especially in these last days of increasing difficulty and danger, when a cold ungrateful world is neglecting Him, and denying His sacred and holy claims ; and when a merely professing worldly church is forsaking Him, and His doctrines, for outward forms, seeking after vanity,

and becoming vain ; it is in such times as these, that the Lord Jesus values intimate communion with those who are true in heart to Him, and are in spirit undefiled by the surrounding spirit of the age ; whether it be as assemblies of believers, or as individuals remaining faithful to Him.

It is at the present season, after the midnight cry has gone forth, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh !" and the time of the cock crowing, and the appearing of the Morning Star, while the whole surrounding atmosphere is chilly with the dew and drops of the night, when scepticism and false doctrines abound ; it is now, that the Lord Jesus especially values the intimate communion of faithful souls.

*Verses 3-8.*—"I have put off my coat ; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet ; how shall I defile them?"

"My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him. I rose up to open to my beloved ; and my hands dropped with myrrh, upon the handles of the lock. I opened to my beloved ; but my beloved had withdrawn himself and was gone : My soul failed when he spake : I sought him, but I could not find him ; I called him, but he gave me no answer. The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me ; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me."

The Lord has various means to arouse His people from slumber.

He had been grieved, now He leaves, withdraws His

near presence ; He may correct for sloth, and hide Himself ; but He does not forsake.

Where He has been, He leaves traces of His presence ; flowing myrrh was upon her fingers when she touched the handles of the lock.

The Bride desires to realize His presence, and goes from one to another to see how she can do so. But not every one knows how to deal with anxious souls ; some are harsh and wound more deeply, others seek to probe the secrets of the heart. "Took away my veil," but even this is turned to good. Now she is ready to bear testimony for Him, perhaps she was not prepared before.

*Verse 3.*—"I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am sick of love."

The Lord Jesus is not only the Bridegroom of the Church, but He is also the Messiah and King of Israel, whom those who are here designated "the daughters of Jerusalem" are expecting.

The Bride desires that such should understand that her heart is fully occupied with her Lord.

*Verse 9.*—"What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? What is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?"

There are two aspects in which the Lord Jesus may be contemplated, either as the Messiah the future King of Israel, who will reign in all His Solomon glory on the

throne of His father David ; or, as the Bridegroom of the Church, who, when He comes to reign will be accompanied not only with ten thousand of His saints to be glorified in them, but by His blood-bought Spirit-perfected Bride to be admired in her.

The question here proposed to the Bride, the Church, is, wherein in her estimation is the superior excellence of Christ, as regarded as the Bridegroom, over that of Israel's estimation of Him as her future King in all His glory.

To this question the Bride replies in the following verses.

*Verses 10-16.*—"My beloved is white (or bright, clear), and ruddy, the chiefest (conspicuous, signalized) among ten thousand.

His head is as the most fine gold ; His locks are bushy, and black as a raven. His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set. His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers ; his lips like lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh. His hands are as gold rings set with the beryl ; his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires.

His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold ; his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. His mouth is most sweet ; yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, "O daughters of Jerusalem."

What a portrait she gives !

His full-length photograph is impressed on her heart. He is white, or bright, pure and brilliant. "The chiefest among ten thousand." Or, conspicuous as a standard-bearer, as the Hebrew word suggests, there is none like Him. "Ten thousand." Ten is the number of numbers, and implies an innumerable host. In Rev. i. 12-16, we have another portrait of the Lord Jesus, in which He appears as the High Priest, trimming the golden lamps of the sanctuary.

Let us compare the two descriptions and notice wherein they differ.

In the Song, we read "His head is as the most fine gold," implying His divine excellency. "His locks are bushy," (waving or flowing), and "black as a raven," expressive of health, gracefulness, and vigour.

In Rev. i. 14, "His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow."

This characterises Him as "the Ancient of Days," whose goings forth have been from of old from everlasting."

Here, "His eyes are as doves," tender and gentle. There, "as a flame of fire," piercing and penetrating.

Here, "His lips are like lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh." There, "Out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword."

Here, "His <sup>lips</sup> are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold." There, "His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace."

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Here, "His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars." There, "His countenance was as the sun shineth in His strength."

In the Song of Solomon, the Bridegroom is occupied with His Bride as the workmanship of the eternal Spirit ; and she regards Him in His spiritual perfections as He is revealed to her by the Spirit.

In the Revelation, the Lord Jesus is dealing with the Church in judgment, as connected with her outward walk before the world.

## Chapter VI.

“**W**HITHER is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? Whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we may seek him with thee.”

This is the reply of the virgins given to the Bride, on her description of her beloved, in the previous chapter. “Whither is thy beloved gone? that we may seek him with thee.”

It is a beautiful proof, that the heart which is occupied with the Lord Jesus can give such a glowing description of Him, that others are drawn to seek Him. It is a word of encouragement to those who seek to make the Lord Jesus Christ known.

*Verse 2.*—The Bride replies, “My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed [feed as a shepherd], and to gather lilies.”

In chapter iv. she had invited the north and south winds to blow upon her garden to cause the spices to flow, and besought the presence of her beloved there.

In chapter v., He says He has come; but through sloth, and a want of readiness to take up her cross, she lost for a time His manifested presence.

But now she knows that the Lord Jesus may be found amongst His people, where the graces of the Spirit are manifested by those who know Him and by those who seek Him. To the two or three gathered together to His name, He will make Himself known. He feedeth as a shepherd His own flock where the graces of His Spirit have been called forth by the north wind of discipline, or the south wind of consolation.

*Verse 3.*—"I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine; he feedeth among the lilies."

In chapter ii. 16, she says, "My beloved is mine, and I am his; he feedeth among the lilies."

The experience of chapter ii. is the result of the contemplation of the Cross, and the acceptance of God's unspeakable gift.

Having accepted Christ, and in the sweet consciousness of it she says, "Yes, my beloved is mine," and having surrendered herself to Him she says, "I am His." The language of the verse in chapter vi., under consideration, "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine," indicates an advance in Christian experience; it results from the realization of Pentecost, as founded on Calvary. In John xiv. 20, the Lord Jesus says, "In that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." The day here referred to is the day when the Comforter had come, whom He had promised to send them from the Father.

The presence of the Comforter with them on earth,

was the assurance to them that Jesus had returned to the bosom of the Father. But by that one Spirit sent down from heaven believers are baptized into one body in spiritual and living fellowship with the risen head in glory; and the Comforter Himself bears witness with our spirits that we are in Him, and that our life is hid with Christ in God, and that strengthened with might by God's Spirit in the inner man, Christ also dwells in our hearts by faith. "He feedeth among the lilies." "As the lily among thorns, so is my beloved among the daughters," is the Lord's comparison.

Believers are exhorted in Phil. ii. 14, 15, to do all things without murmurings and disputings: that they may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation.

Oh what meekness and lowliness is in Him who says, "Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Among such as obey His exhortation the presence of the great and good Shepherd is manifested and enjoyed, in fulfilment of His own promise, "He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me, and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him."

In David we have a type of the Lord Jesus in His humiliation on earth, in sorrow and conflict as Jesus Christ. In Solomon we have a type of the Lord Jesus in resurrection and heavenly glory, as Christ Jesus.

The Song of Songs is Solomon's, and the Bridegroom in this Song is Christ Jesus returned to the bosom of the Father, and seated on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens.

So that, whilst the name of God does not occur in the Song, even as it is not found in the Book of Esther, the glory of God is manifested throughout, in the person of the Bridegroom who is Immanuel.

*Verse 4.*—"Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners."

This is the Bridegroom's response, the Lord's reply to His own blood-bought, Spirit anointed Church.

Tirzah means pleasantness. It was the residence of the Kings of Israel from Jeroboam to Omri. Jerusalem means the vision of peace. It was the residence of the Kings of Judah, from David to the captivity. The two royal cities, each beautiful for situation.

The Church is beautiful and comely in the eyes of Christ, through the grace of God given to her, and the graces of the Spirit manifested in her.

But as earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the Saints, and clothed with the panoply of God, she is terrible against all evil doctrines, and to the evil one.

Oh! for a greater manifestation of this beauty and comeliness; and of this terribleness against all evil and the enemies of Jesus. That she may come forth adorned with the graces of the Spirit in her fair proportions and excellency, and with a firm and uncompromising front

against all evil in conduct and error of doctrine. Adorning the doctrine of God her Saviour in all things, as the pillar and ground of the truth, and as a city set upon a hill which cannot be hid.

*Verses 5-7.*—"Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me: thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead. Thy teeth are as a flock of sheep which go up from the washing, whereof every one beareth twins, and there is not one barren among them. As a piece of a pomegranate are thy temples within thy locks."

The comparisons in these verses are similar to those in chapter iv. 1-4, which we have already considered in detail.

*Verses 8, 9.*—"There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number. She, my dove, my undefiled (or perfect one) is but one; she is the only one of her mother; she is the choice one of her that bare her. The daughters saw her and blessed her (or pronounced her happy); yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her (or sang hallelujah, concerning her)."

From 1 Kings xi. 1-3, we find that Solomon had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, together with the king of Egypt's daughter.

In chapter iii. 1, we read that Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh, King of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the House of

House of Jehovah, and the wall of Jerusalem. And when he had finished these, he made a house for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken to wife.

Although Solomon had so many queens and concubines, yet there was but one whom he specially regarded as his wife, the daughter of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. And it is she who is seen throughout the Song of Songs as the "love," the "spouse," or "bride" of Solomon.

We have here a most beautiful emblem of the oneness of the Church of God, the Spirit-formed bride of Christ. The Lord Jesus thus compares her in Matthew xiii. 46, as the one pearl of great price, which He purchased by the sacrifice of all that He had. This is explained in Eph. v. 25, "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it."

That the Church might be one in a divine, spiritual, and eternal union, is the burden of the prayer of the Lord Jesus in John xvii. And this was accomplished at Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost descended from the glorified Saviour to baptize into one body all believers, not only those that were then living, but all who should believe in Him through their testimony till He come again. When the marriage supper of the Lamb is come, and His wife has made herself ready, the Hallelujah Chorus will be sung by all creation. And at the time of His appearing He will come, not only to be "glorified in His saints," the ten thousands of holy ones who accompany Him, but also to be "admired in

all them that believe," who are the saints of the present dispensation, for when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory.

Verse 10.—"Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

This is the language of those who behold the Church accompanying her Lord, in His coming in that morning without clouds, which ushers in the bright millennial day.

The result of her having seen the Lord Jesus in His resurrection glory is, that she has been transformed into the same image, and reflects and manifests that glory, as the moon reflects the radiance of the sun.

Clear as the sun, for she has been justified by God the Father, and she will come forth in the energy of the Holy Spirit in opposition to all that is unholy, untrue, and not in harmony with Divine love.

Verses 11, 12.—"I went down into the garden of nuts to see the fruits of the valley, and to see whether the vine flourished, and the pomegranates budded. Or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib."

It is the Bridegroom speaking. On former occasions when the Bridegroom had come into His garden, it appears to have been the spring or summer season. This is an autumn scene; it is the time of fruit.

This brings us to the closing period of this dispensa-

tion, when the Lord will come, and in a moment, in the twinkling of the eye, will take away His people, who willingly accompany Him; for "the chariots of Amminadib" means literally "the chariots of My willing people."

Verse 13 — "Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies."

Verse 13 begins a new chapter in the Hebrew.

"Shulamite," is the feminine of Solomon, meaning "Peaceable." It may imply that she now bears her husband's name, for the day of marriage has come. So Adam said respecting Eve, she shall be called "Woman," "Ishah," because she was taken out of "Man" "Ish."

"The company of two armies." There may be an allusion to Mahanaim. (Gen. xxxii. 2).

Whether Jew, or Gentile, now it is one Church, "she my dove, my undefiled is but one." The Church when removed, will be missed by the godly who come after her, who will earnestly desire once more to see her. This desire will be accomplished when she is manifested with the Lord in glory.

## Chapter III.

"**H**OW beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter! the joints of thy thighs are like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman. Thy navel is like a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor: thy belly is like a heap of wheat set about with lilies. Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins. Thy neck is as a tower of ivory, thine eyes like the fishpools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bathrabbim: thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon which looketh towards Damascus. Thine head upon thee is like Carmel, and the hair of thine head like purple; the king is held in the galleries. How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights! This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes. I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples; and the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak."

We may compare these verses with the Bride's description of the Bridegroom in chapter v. 10-16. She begins with the head, and goes down to the feet. But

here, the Bridegroom begins at the feet and goes on to the head. "For the head cannot say to the feet, I have no need of thee."

Not only are those feet beautiful, which bring good tidings and publish peace, but the Lord values the holy and consistent walk of the humblest of His people, when their feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

So also, those joints and bands which knit the body together are precious in His sight.

In like manner, the various other members of the body which together go to make up a perfect whole, are estimated and valued by the Lord, although their operations may be of a hidden and unobtrusive character.

Some members may nourish the body by their affections and sympathies.

While others, are called upon to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; and to maintain a bold front.

While again, there are others who sustain the authority of their Lord in the control and ordering of His Church. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ." (1 Cor. xii. 12).

Verse 10.—"I am my beloved's and his desire is towards me."

In chapter ii. 16, the Bride begins with claiming the Bridegroom as her own, and consequently her relationship

to Him. The soul having accepted Christ, is at supreme good, can say this, and is led to self-surrender. "He gave Himself for me;" I now reckon I am not my own.

In chapter vi. 3, she states her relationship to the **Bridegroom**; and hence what **He** is to her. This is a further phase of experience, and shows further intimacy.

In this verse in chapter vii., the consciousness of belonging entirely to her beloved, fills her with acquiescent joy, and she dwells with delight in the realization of His complacency in her, and his desire toward her. Here is further progress still. I not only possess his person, but His affections. He would have me in fellowship with Himself. He seeks my companionship. He is coming again, not merely to receive a kingdom, but a **Bride**.

Verses 11-13.—"Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages. Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves. The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved."

"Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field." Here, the **Bride** invites the fellowship and co-operation of the **Bridegroom** in service and testimony.

And there is an indication here of the three spheres of service and testimony. That of the evangelist pastor, and teacher.

“Let us go forth into the field,” to the regions beyond, let us lodge in the villages, or more settled work in the places nearer home. This is the work of the evangelist.

“Let us get up early to the vineyards, let us see if the vine flourish.” This illustrates the work of the pastor in caring diligently for, and in watching over the fruits of the Spirit in the believer.

“All manner of precious fruits, new and old, laid up reminds us especially of the work, or office of the teacher, which appears to be referred to by the Lord Jesus in Matt. xiii. 52. “Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of the heavens is like unto a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.”

It is in these activities of service, and labours of love, that the affections of the Bride are expressed, and flow forth to her beloved.

“All manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.” Not simply for the church, and the portion of meat for the household; but laid up for Thee, Oh my beloved! Not merely to feed the church of God, but for Him. Study the Word to be well pleasing to Him, and for the glory of Christ. Treading out the corn, establishing old truths, and having new light thrown on the Word by the Holy Spirit, for the honour of the Bridegroom.

## Chapter VIII.

“ THAT thou wert as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother! When I should find thee without, I would kiss thee; yea, I should not be despised. I would lead thee, and bring thee into my mother's house, who would instruct me; I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate. His left hand should be under my head, and His right hand should embrace me.”

The realization of the fact that the children having been made partakers of flesh and blood, Himself took part of the same, and that as Son of Man He was in all points tempted as we are, lays the foundation for the most intimate communion, between the Bride and her beloved.

The Bride desires to enter more deeply into the realization of this relationship in order that she may experience more fully the sustainment and consolation of His love.

“His left hand should be under my head, and His right hand should embrace me.”

Also that she might refresh Him with the expression of her affections towards Him, by the spiced wine of her pomegranates.

Verse 4.—“I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, until she please.”

The Bridegroom would not have His love disturbed in her enjoyment of this intimate communion with Himself.

Verse 5.—“Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning herself upon her beloved?”

The virgins appear to ask this question concerning the church who is seeking a higher walk, and more complete separation from the world in dependence upon the Lord Jesus Christ.

“I raised thee up under the apple-tree ; there thy mother brought thee forth : there she brought thee forth that bare thee.”

This reminds us of chapter ii. 3, 4. “As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.”

It is through faith in Christ, and dependence on Him, that we are quickened and raised up into newness of life.

Verses 6, 7.—“Set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thy arm ; for love is strong as death ; jealousy is cruel as the grave . the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it : if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.”

“Set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thy

arm." This may be regarded first as the language of the Bridegroom, who desires to have a permanent place in the affections of the heart of His Spouse, and to be kept in constant remembrance, so that love to Him may be the constraining motive of her actions. And for this purpose He has instituted the memorials of His dying love in the Lord's Supper, saying "This do in remembrance of Me." He had proved the strength of His love to her, when He laid down His life for her, and He is content with nothing short of love as a recompence. "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity (or love), it profiteth me nothing." And though the church of Ephesus stood at the top of the list, and was pre-eminent for many graces, He has this complaint to make, "Thou hast left thy first love."

And as the Lord is jealous over the affections of His spouse, so was also the apostle Paul, see 2 Cor. xi. 1, 2, and this jealousy of Christ is provoked with intensity when He sees those affections and regards bestowed upon other and inferior objects.

It may also be regarded as the language of the Bride, who desires to be set as a seal upon the heart of the Bridegroom; as the breastplate was worn upon the heart of the High Priest when he went in before Jehovah; and as the stones of the ephod were borne upon his shoulders before Jehovah continually.

The love of Christ also, in the hearts of His faithful

followers, has often proved unquenchable, a divine flame triumphing over death and the grave.

Verses 8-10.—“We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for? If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she be a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar. I am a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found favour.”

We may take this as a beautiful comment on the apostle's words, “We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.” Ever ready to supply the needs of those whose graces are immature, or whose knowledge is defective, seeking their establishment, and building them up in their faith.

This may be done by leading them into a fuller apprehension of the rich wonders of redemption through the blood of the Lamb, even as the walls of the Temple of Solomon were covered or plastered with silver, the emblem of the ransom price of the soul. “If she be a wall,” that is, needing edification, “we will build upon her a palace of silver.”

“If she be a door,” that is, needing to be led onward, or forward, “we will enclose her with boards of cedar;” as were the walls of Solomon's Temple. Cedar is the type of resurrection, incorruptibility, and glory.

The soul needs to be led into the apprehension of present resurrection in Christ Jesus (Eph. ii. 6); and

the prospect of being conformed to Christ in resurrection glory, and for eternity.

Where the Christian graces are developed, and the soul established in the faith, such find favour in the eyes of the Lord Jesus.

Or, this may refer to the remnant of Israel in the latter day, and there is something in the movement among the Jews in South Russia like this now. No maturity of doctrine.

Among the Jews, there is a growing desire for the light of Christ, but there is not a coming to maturity. If really built up by God, then the palace will be of silver, which is the emblem of redemption. What will not the power of God do, if they are sincere? They will be led on. Like the Temple inlaid with cedar, that is, in resurrection. The Spirit of God will work with power on the nation. It will be clothed with redemption, and then called to stand before the throne of God.

Verse 11.—“Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon; he let out the vineyard unto keepers; everyone for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand pieces of silver.”

“Baal-hamon” signifies “Lord of a multitude.” The explanation of this passage will be found in the parable of the Ten Pounds in Luke xix. 11-26.

The Lord Jesus is now gone to receive for Himself a kingdom, and to return, according to Daniel vii. 13, 14. And it is for His return the Bride is waiting. Meanwhile His vineyard is the whole world, and He is Lord of the

multitude of nations. Hence He says to His labourers, "All authority is given unto Me in heaven and on earth, go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations." And again, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." The day is coming when He will take account of the keepers, to see how much of the thousand pieces of silver they are prepared to give an account of. For the reception of the privileges of the Gospel, lays those who have received them under solemn responsibility, for to whom much is given, from them much will be required.

Verse 12.—"My vineyard, which is mine, is before me; thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred."

In these words the Bride acknowledges her full responsibility, and her preparedness to render accordingly as a good steward of the manifold grace of God. Those employed in the vineyard are entitled to a due recompense for their labour, as the Lord Jesus said in John iv. 36, "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal." And as the apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians in his first epistle, chapter iii. 8, 9, "Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together of God, ye are God's husbandry."

Verse 13.—"Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice; cause me to hear it."

At the close of the former dispensation we read,

“Then they that feared Jehovah, spake often one to another, and Jehovah hearkened, and heard it” (Mal. iii. 16). So also as the present dispensation draws to an end, and the cry has gone forth, “Behold the Bridegroom cometh;” communion and conferences among believers on the subject of their Lord’s return abound. But the Lord desires to be personally addressed and invited. So when He announces Himself as the Root and Offspring of David and the Bright and Morning Star, the Spirit and the Bride say “come.” To which His reply is, “Surely I come quickly.” To which also the Bride responds, “Even so, come Lord Jesus.” Or in the language of the Song, verse 14, “Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.” These mountains being no longer mountains of separation, see chapter ii. 17, but fragrant with all the graces of the Spirit, which will accompany Him on His return.

# APPENDIX.

## MEANINGS OF WORDS

### *WITH MARGINAL NOTES ON NAMES IN "THE SONG OF SOLOMON."*

#### CHAPTER I.

- VER. 1.—"Solomon," means "Peaceable," a type of Christ in resurrection power and glory.
- .. 4.—"Chambers," inner chambers, places of secret communion.
- .. 7.—"Feedest," as a Shepherd feeds his flock. "As one that turneth aside"—as a veiled one, see 2 Cor. iii. 13-18.
- .. 9.—"Love," companion, or feminine friend.
- .. 12.—"Sitteth at His table," in His circle. His guests gathered around.
- .. 13.—"Well-beloved," masculine. Christ the Object of the heart.
- .. 16.—"Bed," couch, resting-place. "Green," or shady, in the silent retreat.

#### CHAPTER II.

- VER. 1.—"Sharon," the plain. "My love"—feminine, my friend.

- VER. 4.—“Banqueting house,” a house of wine, place of joy and honour.
- „ 5.—“Flagons,” cakes of dried grapes.
- „ 7.—“Charge,” adjure. “Till he please”—till she please. The Bridegroom speaks, the Bride is the one spoken of.
- „ 8.—“He,” this Very One. Christ Himself our Hope (1 Thess. iv. 16).
- „ 9.—“Shewing,” glittering, manifesting Himself.
- „ 13.—“Turtle,” turtle dove (Gen. xv. 9). It migrates to Palestine in the early Summer.
- „ 14.—“The Stairs.” Ascents, going upward by steps.
- „ 17.—“Break,” breath.
- “Bether,” separation (John xiv. 2, 3).

## CHAPTER III.

- VER. 6.—“This,” feminine, The Bride.
- „ 7.—“Valiant men,” mighty men, ready for defence.
- „ 9.—“Chariot,” a palanquin.
- „ 10.—“Covering,” seat.
- „ 11.—“Espousals,” marriage (see Rev. xix. 7).

## CHAPTER IV.

- VER. 1.—“Within thy locks,” behind thy veil.
- „ 8.—“Spouse,” or Bride, from CAHLAL, which means finished or perfected (see Eph. v. 27).
- „ 12.—“A garden enclosed,” locked or bolted for security, privacy, and possession.
- “An Orchard,” a paradise, place of delight.

## CHAPTER V.

- VER. 8 —“Adjure,” cause to swear.  
 „ 10.—“Chiefest among ten thousand,” conspicuous,  
 or signalized.  
 „ 11.—“Bushy,” flowing.  
 „ 12.—“Rivers,” torrents.  
 “Fitly set,” set as gems in their enclosures.  
 „ 13.—“Sweet flowers,” towers of perfume.  
 „ 16.—“Altogether lovely,” all of Him desirable.

## CHAPTER VI.

- VER. 2.—“Feed,” to feed as a Shepherd.  
 „ 4.—“Beautiful,” fair.  
 “Tirzah,” pleasantness.  
 „ 9.—“My dove.” She.  
 “Undeiled,” perfect one.  
 “Blessed her,” pronounced her happy.  
 “Praised her,” Sang Hallelujah concerning  
 her (see Rev. xix. 6, 7).  
 „ 12.—“Amminadib.” My willing people.  
 „ 13.—“Shulamite,” peaceable, feminine of Solomon.

## CHAPTER VII.

- VER. 4.—“Heshbon,” intelligence.  
 “Bath-rabbim,” daughter of many.  
 „ 5.—“Carmel.” The fruitful field.  
 “Galleries,” flowings or ringlets.  
 „ 9.—“Sweetly,” straightly.  
 „ 13.—“Gates,” entrances.

## CHAPTER VIII.

VER. 5.—“Leaning,” leaning herself.

“Raised thee,” awoke thee.

“Brought thee forth,” pledged or plighted thee.

„ 6.—“The Grave,” Heb. Sheol. Greek, Hades.

“Most vehement flame.” Flame of Jah.

„ 10.—“Favour,” place.

„ 11.—“Baal-hamon,” place of a multitude.



# THE BRIDE OF THE LAMB.

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## NOTES OF SCRIPTURE EXPOSITION \*

By THOMAS NEWBERRY.

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**I**N the Book of Revelation the teaching is symbolic. It was "signified," that is, made known, by signs or symbols. But when these symbols are interpreted, the interpretation is in plain, literal language. In 2 Cor. xi. 2, the Church is represented as espoused to one husband, to be presented as a chaste virgin to Christ. And in Eph. v. 26, 27, we learn how Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; that He is now sanctifying and cleansing it with the washing

\* It has been taught by some "that the Bride, the Lamb's Wife," is not the Church in her glorified condition, but a restored Israel of the future, and that "The Song of Solomon" is applicable to the earthly covenant people rather than to saints of the heavenly calling. These "Notes" of Mr. Newberry's ministry on the subject, having been helpful to very many, are added to the present reissue of his notes on "The Song," being in entire harmony with the truths therein taught, and calculated to help the reader toward a fuller understanding of the Church's true bridal relation as set forth in the Scriptures.

of water by the Word, and that He will ultimately present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. This will be in resurrection power, and glory. Having made peace through the blood of His Cross, God raised His Son from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand on high. Consequent on His glorification as Man in heaven, the Holy Ghost the Comforter has come down to earth to form a union between the glorified Head and His body the Church, composed of many members, yet one body, which thus becomes "the fulness"—the filling up, or complement—of Him that filleth all in all. The links are being formed here, and the union of the members, each being spiritually united to the Head now, will be manifested, consummated, and perfected at the marriage of the Lamb.

### **FORESHADOWINGS OF THE BRIDE.**

Beautiful and striking are the foreshadowings of this relationship of the Church to Christ as given in the Word of God.

**Eve**, was the bride of Adam, who was head of Creation, and a figure of Him who was to come (Rom. v. 14). She was his helpmeet, provided for him by God while he was in a deep sleep, emblematic of the death of Christ—a rib being taken from his side and the woman formed out of it, and presented to the man after his awakening. So after Calvary and Resurrec-

tion came Pentecost, when by the Spirit the Church began to be formed as the Body and the Bride of Christ. This is the great mystery, even Christ and the Church (Eph. v. 32).

**Rebekah**, in Gen. xxiv., is another foreshadowing of the Church as the Bride. Isaac, the obedient son, having been offered on the altar on Moriah and received back in figure from the dead; Eliezer (typical here of the Holy Ghost in His present work on earth) is sent to procure for Isaac a bride, and having won the heart of Rebekah, he brings her safely home, and presents her to him who comes forth to receive her unto himself.

**Asenath**, the Gentile bride of Joseph, was given him during the period of his rejection by his brethren according to the flesh, after his imprisonment at the hands of the Gentiles, and his exaltation to glory and power in a new sphere.

**Zipporah**, was given to Moses while he was rejected by the people of Israel as their deliverer, and while he was abiding in a far-off land as a stranger there. Zipporah shared the rejection and Asenath the glory, as the Church now shares Christ's rejection, and will yet share His throne (Rev. iii. 21).

**Ruth**, the Moabite stranger, becomes the wife of Boaz, the mighty man of wealth, who had been her kinsman-redeemer.

**Solomon's Bride** was the daughter of Pharaoh, King of Egypt, and Solomon having built a house for his God and a house for the kingdom, builds a house for her also. Thus associated with him in his kingdom and glory, she, the Gentile wife, stands as a beautiful foreshadowing of the Church in association with Christ glorified, and furnishes the theme for the mystic language of communion as expressed in "The Song of Songs."

### THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB.

In Rev., chap. xix., we have an account of the marriage of the Lamb, as celebrated in heaven, and the subsequent appearing of Christ and His saints in glory,

The Church having been caught up to heaven, as seen in symbol in chap. iv. 1, representatively in John, the call goes forth in chap. xix. 7 to all in heaven, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him, for the Marriage of the Lamb is come." All respond to the call, both small and great, and all creation is interested in the event, for through the Lamb's blood all creation has now been reconciled (Col. i. 20), and in Him, who is the second Man and the last Adam, all has been headed up (Eph. i. 10), and for ever secured from failure and from fall.

## **THE PREPARED BRIDE.**

In close connection with the intimation that "the Marriage of the Lamb has come," is the announcement "And His wife hath made herself ready."

A threefold work was necessary to prepare the Church for this great event of her marriage as Bride of the Lamb, and for her eternal relationship to Him as His wife.

First, she had to be redeemed unto God by His blood: second, to be sanctified by the Spirit, and third, that she should make herself ready. She had already been conformed to the Lord in glory at the first resurrection. She had after that stood before His judgment-seat, where the secrets of all hearts had been manifested, and all true service for Him rewarded. She had been in the presence of God, in the light of His countenance, and in the full fellowship of the Lamb, as one with Him on the throne, and in the communion of the Holy Ghost as symbolised by the seven lamps of fire that burn before the throne, in the company of saints of former dispensations, and with an innumerable company of angels around that throne, and likewise conversant with all the scenes which had been taking place on the earth since she had been caught up to be with her Lord in heaven. Now she is prepared, as never she could have been before, able to enter into the thoughts of her heavenly "Bridegroom." And

to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white (bright): for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints, not righteousness in the singular—as characteristic of the whole, but plural, indicating the recognition of each and every particular act of service rendered, sacrifice made, and victory gained, all kept in everlasting remembrance.

### **THE PRIVILEGED GUESTS.**

Those who “are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb,” are to be distinguished from the Bride. May we not understand by these called ones who are there as “her companions,” the saints of former dispensations? John the Baptist, who was one of the last of these, speaks of himself as “the friend of the Bridegroom” (John iii. 29). The redeemed in glory of all ages will share in the bliss and joy of this great marriage scene.

### **THE BRIDE DESCRIBED.**

In Rev. xxi. 2—the Bride is seen associated with the Bridegroom at the beginning of the Eternal State, in connection with the new heavens and the new earth, and in Rev. xxi. 10-27 she is seen descending to her place over the Millennial earth. In both she is presented under the emblem of a city, whose name is “the holy Jerusalem.” This is not to be confounded with “the heavenly Jerusalem” named in Heb. xii. 22, which

is a fixed locality in heaven, the city which Abraham looked for (Heb. xi. 10), the metropolis of that inheritance reserved in heaven which fadeth not away (1 Pet. i. 4), in which the redeemed from every country will sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Matt. viii. 11), whereas "the holy Jerusalem" is emblematical of the Church in glory as the Bride of the Lamb. And what emblem could be more appropriate than a city, which is a collection of habitations with their dwellers! And what is the Bride but the whole company of the redeemed of the present dispensation, clothed upon with their house which is from heaven (2 Cor. v. 1-3), that resurrection, incorruptible, immortal house, which is "not made with hands."

### THE CITY OF GLORY.

After the marriage of the Lamb has been celebrated in heaven, she is seen "descending out of heaven from God," to reign over a Millennial earth. "Having the glory of God," for the Lord's prayer of John xvii. 22-24 has now been fully answered. She has beheld the glory of Christ which, as the Eternal Son, He had with the Father before all worlds, and she shares that glory which has been given Him as the One who became obedient unto death. Now she appears in the full manifestation of that glory, her light (or light-giving) being like a stone most precious, the glory within shining through her jasper wall, surrounding it with a softened

radiance and mingled beauty, like a lamp shining through variously-tinted crystal. "Clear as crystal" is literally CRYSTALLISING, for whatever it shines upon it will conform to its own purity and beauty. The nations on earth "shall walk in the light of it," the glorified saints reigning with Christ, being the communicators of that blessing which they enjoy themselves in all its fulness, to the dwellers on the millennial earth.

### THE ETERNAL STATE.

In the first nine verses of Chap. xxi. the Bride is seen entering on the Eternal State in connection with the new heavens and the new earth, in her eternal relationship "adorned"—not for her own satisfaction but "as a Bride adorned for her husband," as the bright morning of an eternal day without a cloud is dawning, in which all traces of sin, its sorrow, its pain, with its results in death, are all gone for ever, "for the former things are passed away."

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