



**Reflections  
on the  
Song of Solomon**

**Robert Hawker**

# Reflections on the Song of Solomon

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## Chapter 1

*“The song of songs, which is Solomon’s. Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine. Because of the savor of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee. 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. I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon. 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. Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions? 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. 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. While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof. A bundle of myrrh is my well-beloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts. My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of Engedi. Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves’ eyes. Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed is green. The beams of our house are cedar, and our rafters of fir.”*

Reader! what sayest thou now thou hast gone over the first chapter of this incomparable hymn? Is it to thee what the title terms it, The Song of Songs? And is it of Thy Solomon, Thy Jesus? If so, shall we not join in singing it here upon earth, until we come to the everlasting hallelujahs of heaven? Yes! surely I

would say for you and for myself, Let Jesus kiss us with the kisses of His mouth, for grace is poured into His lips, and He will communicate life, and grace, and pardon, and salvation unto our souls. And oh! that you and I may kiss the Son, for His love is indeed better than wine. Never was it known, that the highest cordial of wine recovered the dead; but Thy love, blessed Jesus, can and will recover sinners that are dead in trespasses and sins: and surely Thou, dearest Lord, as the virgins found, so have we known, that Thy name surpasseth in fragrancy and in odour the richest ointment. Every name of Thine is dear to a poor sinner: neither can a poor exercised soul of Thine be so sadly circumstanced, but that Thou hast a name suited for his case; and Thy name, through faith in Thy name, is the universal relief for all the maladies of Thy people. Draw me, then, Thou dear Redeemer, with the cords of a man, with the bands of love, and every heart will run after Thee. Surely the Lord the King hath drawn me into the chambers of His love, of His grace, His everlasting covenant. Oh! Lord, I will remember Thee; I will be glad in Thee; I will hail Thee under all Thine endearing characters, offices, and relations; for Thou art the Lord our righteousness.

And now let me tell the daughters of Jerusalem, and all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, of the grace, and mercy, and loveliness of my Lord. I am indeed, in myself a poor, black, fallen son of Adam: but Jesus hath made me comely in His comeliness, and adopted me into His family; so that I, that in myself merited hell, am made in Him an heir of heaven. Oh! do not look upon me, then, as I once was, but as I now am. Behold me in Christ, and be not angry with me.

But Lord, I turn to Thee. Tell me where Thou feedest Thy sheep here in this wilderness. I know Lord, that Thou art the Lamb in the midst of the throne, feeding the church above: but I know also, that Thou art not less attentive to the humblest and poorest of Thy family here below. Feed me, Lord, a poor weather-beaten lamb of Thy flock; and bring me home at length to Thine everlasting fold.

Reader! mark what Jesus hath directed the church in this place. If we are at a loss any time to know where Jesus feeds His flock

like a shepherd, let us seek out for a faithful, pure, and gospel ministry. Here let us sit under the Word, and be very diligent in the use of means and ordinances. Here let the kids, that is, our little ones also, the children of our houses and families, be brought beside the Great Shepherd's tents in the congregations of the faithful, and the Lord will bless and own His Word to His people.

And reader! let us with humble reverence, look up, and implore the fulfilment of this blessed promise of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that from their joint love and joint agency, we may have indeed borders of gold, with studs of silver. Hail! holy, undivided Three in One, the LORD Jehovah! do Thou regenerate our souls, and form them anew in Christ Jesus. Creating work, and renewing work, and refreshing work; all, all is Thine. Lord, carry on and complete Thy work unto the day of Thy coming.

Be Thou then, Thou blessed Jesus, all and everything our souls can possibly need or require! And while Thou sittest at Thy table, and art handing to my soul Thy bread in secret, my soul will go out in desires after Thee, as the fragrant smell of the spikenard; for surely Thou art to me more refreshing than myrrh — more healing than camphire. Thou art more fair than the morning, more lovely than the sun rising, even in a morning without clouds. May my soul live to Thee, walk with Thee, rejoice in Thee; and be Thou my portion, and mine everlasting rest, in time, and to all eternity. Amen.

## Chapter 2

*“I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys. As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters. 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. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love. 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. 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 please.*”

*The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. 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. 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. 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. Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes. My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bethel.”*

Blessed Lord Jesus, while reading this chapter of Thy love, do Thou, I beseech Thee, gracious Lord, lead out my heart, and the heart of every reader of it on whom Thy grace hath shined, to behold Thy loveliness in all the several parts of it, which so beautifully holds Thee forth to Thy church. Methinks I hear my Beloved say, as to the church of old, “I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.” To which my soul replies, Yes! Thou dear Lord! Thou art indeed in Thy bloody vesture, and Thy spotless humanity, red as the rose, and whiter than the lily. And oh! how infinitely precious in both, beholding Thee as I do through these similitudes in Thy blood and righteousness, as the sure tokens of Thy great redemption. And if Thy church, Lord, is as the lily among thorns, is it not from Thee that she derives all her beauty while living in the midst of a sinful world, the children of whom by nature, in their best performances, are but as a briar, and the most upright as a thorn hedge. But Thou, Lord, art the chiefest among ten thousand sons, as the apple-tree transcends the trees of the forest. And oh! for grace, dear Lord, like the church, to sit

down under Thy shadow with increasing rapture and delight, and to eat freely and fully of all the precious fruits of Thy great salvation. Do Thou, blessed Spirit, by Thy sweet influences both provide the food and give the appetite, and cause me to enjoy all the good things in the everlasting covenant of God my Father, purchased by the blood of Jesus, and brought home to my soul by Thy Divine power. And as for Thy banqueting house, my rich bountiful Lord, I know that Thou wilt bring me there, and spread Thy banner of love over me there. I do know it, Lord, that Thou wilt do this for me, and a thousand other blessed things of Thy love; for never should I have known Thee or Thy house, much less delighted in it, or desired to have been brought into it, unless Thou hadst first shown it to me, and opened for me a new and living way in Thy blood.

Reader! I break off for a moment from addressing my Lord, to ask you whether such views, and such desires of Christ are in your heart also?

But, Lord, I turn to Thee again, and in the language of the church, would beg of Thee to stay me with flagons, and comfort me with apples, even the enjoyment of all Thy rich covenant promises, manifestations, and the unceasing communion of Thyself to my soul; for without Thee I am sick and sorrowful. And, Lord, the more Thou givest, the more I need; the more of Thee I know, the more I desire to know; for in Thee alone I find comfort. Embrace my soul, O Lord, and let all my stay and support be in Thee!

Ye daughters of Jerusalem! I mean all ye that love my Lord, (for one church is my Beloved's and His Jerusalem, which is above, is the mother of us all); I charge you as I charge myself, let nothing be said or done to wound or disturb our Lord. Let us seek together His grace, His Spirit, His manifestations, and by everything that is interesting, as the roes or hinds of the field, let us be very cautious of grieving His Holy Spirit. Hark! do you not hear Jesus speak? Yes! it is His well-known voice; and He cometh to us notwithstanding all our sins, which like mountains and hills, might obstruct, for He is, and He will be Jesus. He looketh in upon us



through the windows of ordinances; and, ere long, when this wall of our mortality is taken down, we shall see Him as He is, and dwell with Him for ever!

But I leave the church to listen to my Lord, inviting me to come forth to Him in this spring-season of grace. Yea, Lord, I will rise, for the voice of the Holy Ghost, like the voice of the turtle after the winter of life, is heard in mine heart. Yea, I would follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest; and, as like the dove, Thou hast sheltered me, and hidden me in the clefts of Thy pierced side, and desirest to hear my voice and behold my countenance, Thou shalt hear, Lord, my voice betimes in the morning; early will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and I will look up. And do Thou, Lord, take away the foxes of the desert; yea, even both the greater and the lesser hindrances to my soul, which, in the tender buddings of grace by Thy bringing forth in me, my sins and corruptions joined with the temptations of sin, too often nip, and would destroy. Haste, Lord, to me, and to my rescue, for I am Thine, and Thou art mine. Make all intervening shadows flee away, and be Thou to my poor soul as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds.

### Chapter 3

*“By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. 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 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. 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 please. Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant? 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. 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. Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart."*

My soul! frequently in silent meditation run over the several blessed and gracious instructions which arise out of this delightful chapter, and enquire what correspondence thou canst find between Christ's church and thy experience in the love she manifested here to her Lord. Hast thou known what it is by night on thy bed to seek Jesus? Canst thou not say, "With my soul have I desired Thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me have I sought Thee early?" (Isaiah 26:9). It is blessed sometimes to be exercised with disappointments in order to endear the mercy, and to increase the value of it. The poor woman of Canaan would not have afforded so illustrious an instance of faith had the Lord Jesus given her an immediate answer to the first cry of her soul: and though Jesus is very frequently found of them that seek Him not, and sometimes surpriseth His people with His goodness; yet there shall be silence at the throne of grace again and again, when a child of God is going there with earnest importunity. But, as in the case of the church, when the Lord at length overwhelmed her with His visit of love, so, whenever the Redeemer comes, He comes with such a fullness of love, grace, and goodness, that the soul then holds Him fast by faith, and dreads to let Him go, lest darkness again should enter in upon the soul. And, reader, will you allow me to ask, or will you put the very interesting enquiry yourself to your own heart; Are you coming up out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, and perfumed with the sweet incense of Jesus's merits and righteousness? Have you found this life what it really is, and is graciously intended to be, to all the Lord's family, a thorny, dark,



and intricate path? Have you met with fiery flying serpents, and scorpions? A land of drought and barrenness, through which the faithful are sure to meet with persecution, and where none of them can find rest, or wish to make it their home? If so, is Jesus, the merchant selling goodly pearls, precious to you? Do you know, do you prize His myrrh and frankincense; the sufferings of His cross, the merits of His blood, and all the blessed graces of His Holy Spirit? This is to be coming up out of the wilderness, leaning as the church did upon her Beloved. Oh! precious Jesus, I would say both for myself and reader, give to us to behold Thee in Thy chariot, and on Thy bed of salvation, which is all Thine own, and nothing of our own mixed with it. Cause us to lie down upon this everlasting bottom, which is paved with love. And while, Lord, Thou art sending forth Thy ministering servants as ministering to them who are the heirs of salvation; oh! do Thou come and visit us Thyself, and make all Thy glory to pass before us. Yea! Thou dear Lord, Thou art the King in Zion, the sovereign in every heart of Thy church and people. Here, Lord! upon earth would we hail Thee our lawful rightful monarch, both by purchase and by conquest; and in heaven, we hope ere long to join that happy multitude who are casting their crowns at Thy footstool, and saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing” (Rev. 5:12).

## Chapter 4

*“Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves’ eyes within thy locks: thy hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead. Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing; whereof every one bear twins, and none is barren among them. Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely: thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks. Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armory, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men. Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins,*

*which feed among the lilies. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense. Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee. 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. 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. A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; 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 trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices: A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon. Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits."*

And doth my Lord indeed call me His fair one, His love, His sister, His spouse? Oh! how shall my soul contain itself in the contemplation of such peerless grace, amidst my conscious undeservings. Surely, blessed Jesus, whatever I am that can at all endear a poor sinner to my Lord, all I have, and all I am, and all I hope to have, the whole is in Thee, and from Thee. Well may I take up the language of one of old, and say, "By the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Cor. 15:10). And, oh! Lord let it be said also as of Him, so of me, that the grace bestowed upon me was not in vain.

And doth Jesus call me to go with Him from Lebanon, and escape the lion's den, and the mountains of leopards? Yes, Lord Jesus, I would pray for grace to follow Thee, whithersoever Thou goest. Nothing shall separate my soul from the love of Christ. For

Thou hast bought me, redeemed me, and with a price no less dear than Thine own most precious blood: therefore, Lord, I am Thine by every endearment, and by every tie. Oh! Lord, give me grace here also, that as I am not my own, but bought with a price, I may glorify Thee both in my body and in my spirit which are Thine (1 Cor. 6:20).

But, precious Lord Jesus, as without Thee I can do nothing; I pray Thee be to me, “a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and as streams from Lebanon.” Come, Holy Ghost, and be to me as the quickening source in leading to Jesus, and taking from Jesus, and showing everything to me in Jesus. And do Thou, Lord, daily maintain and support, and carry on the life Thy mercy first gave me in Jesus. Thou, Lord, art the only spiritual effective agent in Christ’s garden, the Church, which by breathing Thy gracious influences upon my heart, can prepare that poor heart for the visits of my Lord to His servant. I would, therefore, gracious Spirit of all truth, intreat Thy mercy upon my poor soul, that by Thy grace I may invite my Lord, and be prepared for my Lord, that He may daily come into His garden, and my soul be so quickened to receive Him, that He may eat of His pleasant fruits. Yea, Lord, do Thou knock at the door of my heart, and open it Thyself; and let my Lord come in, and let me sup with Him, and He with me (Rev. 3:20).

## Chapter 5

*“I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: 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. 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. 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, and my*

*fingers with sweet smelling 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. I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am sick of love. 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? My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest 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.”*

Reader! let us not dismiss this beautiful chapter, until we have once more looked up to God the Holy Ghost, and entreated Him to show us our interest in what is here said of Jesus, and how far we can adopt a similar language concerning Him. And first, let us never overlook the readiness of Jesus to comply with the wishes of His people in coming at their call. No sooner did the church invite her Beloved to come into His garden, but we find Christ is come. And let us remark further, how gracious the Lord is in gathering His spices; His myrrh, and milk, and honey. Reader! be assured from hence, that every prayer of His people Jesus regards. Every sigh they utter comes up before Him. As one of old said, so all may be assured: He putteth our tears into His bottle; all these things are noted in His book. And as Jesus comes in the midst of His churches and people to gather, so doth He give unto them

largely to enjoy. His language is, “Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved!”

Reader! are you acquainted with that state, of which the church in this part of the Song so greatly complains? Dost thou, by reason of a body of sin and death which thou carriest about with thee, groan, being burthened? Dost thou feel a heaviness not unlike the sorrow of soul which the disciples felt in the garden, and frequently dost thou feel that sad indisposition which disqualifies the soul for the sweet enjoyment of Jesus? And when at times under this dreadful deadness of affection, thou hearest the voice of Jesus in ordinances and providences; by rebukes, by chastisements; oh! what a decisive proof is this, in every heart that feels it, of the impossibility of any natural goodness in a creature, who is the subject of such infirmities? Precious Jesus! do Thou by me, do Thou by the reader, and by every child of Thine, follow up Thy gracious calls, by opening the doors of our hearts; and do Thou come in, Lord, and revive Thy work with the droppings of Thy grace, and the fragrancy of Thy Spirit’s influences. And in those seasons, do not withdraw, Thou dear Lord, neither be Thou to us as the wayfaring man that turneth in to tarry but for a night. Neither let Thy servants, the watchmen of Thy city, wound us; but oh! let them point our souls to Thee, and lead us to Jesus that we may tell our Lord we are sick, waiting for the renewed views of His pardoning grace and mercy, that our souls may revive as the corn and grow as the vine.

Are there any that enquire after my Beloved? Do you desire to know, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, who Jesus is; what He is; what He hath wrought; what He is doing, and can, and will do, and wherefore it is that He is my Beloved, my only Beloved, and why is it that I am so truly anxious for His love? Oh! for grace and power to tell you of His loveliness. Everything in Christ is precious. He is precious in His Person. Every feature of Him is lovely. He is precious in His offices, precious in His character, precious in His relations; yea, there is nothing in Him but what is precious, for He is altogether lovely, and the chiefest among ten thousand. And what would be alarming and distressing in others

becomes lovely in Him. His cross and reproaches for His sake, how trying and painful soever to flesh and blood, are on His account, not only endurable, but productive of holy joy. And Jesus is this in all that belongs to Him, and in all circumstances connected with Him, for as He is in Himself the first fair, the first beautiful, the first lovely; so He communicates loveliness to all that are united to Him; neither is there anything lovely or amiable but what is derived from Him. Do you enquire, then, what there is in my Beloved, more than in another beloved? I will answer; All these things and a thousand more. And will you not love Him with me, and delight in Him also; oh, that He that is my Beloved, may be your Beloved; and that you may at length say with me, “This is my Friend, and this is my Beloved, O ye daughters of Jerusalem.”

## Chapter 6

*“Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we may seek him with thee. My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies. I am my beloved’s, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies. Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners. 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. There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number. My dove, my undefiled 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; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her. Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners? 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. 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."*

Here, reader, let us pause, and before we close the chapter, take into one view some, at least, of the many blessed things contained in it for our instruction. Are we earnest in our enquiries for Jesus? Do we now seek after Him from a knowledge of Him, and a conviction of our need of Him, and our utter ruin without Him? Then let us learn from hence, where we are to seek Christ, and the earnestness with which we should enquire after Him. There is a generation that seek the Lord, and of whom He saith, that He will not be sought in vain. And very blessed it is to have this assurance from the Lord Himself; while in a day of much heresy the cry is, "Lo! here is Christ," or "lo, He is there!" Reader! let us not be discouraged with these things. A real love for Christ, and the going forth of real desires after Christ; both are of Jesus's own giving: and the grace He gives He will perfect. And if, as the church speaks, Jesus is gone down into His garden, His church; let us in ordinances, and in all the several means of grace there, seek Him where His name is as ointment poured forth, and where His glory and His salvation are the chief and only objects regarded; and we shall find that, ere we are aware, our souls will be made like the chariots of Amminadib. And oh! for grace, like the church, to arrive at that blessedness of assurance founded in the Father's love, the Redeemer's grace, and the Spirit's fellowship, that each may say for Himself as the church: "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine."

Precious Jesus! is Thy church indeed lovely and beautiful as Tirzah? Is she comely as Jerusalem? and in Thy strength terrible as an army with banners? Surely, then, blessed Lord, the whole is derived from Thee! What grace, what endowment, what ornament can our poor polluted nature have, but in and from Thee. In Thy light, Lord, we shall see light; and in Thy strength we are strong: but without Thee, we are nothing. Cause Thy redeemed to come up as a flock of sheep from the washing, and let there be not one



barren among them.

I praise Thee, my blessed Lord and Saviour, for this account of Thy church, that she is but one and undefiled; and the choice one of her that bare her: and oh! for grace to bear about with me this precious mark of unity. One, Lord, with Thee, and one with Thy people: one faith, one hope, one baptism; and all Thy redeemed shall be found in one spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling. And although, Thou glorious Head of Thy body the church, all Thy redeemed here below are like the Shulamite, always in the conflict as of two armies; yet already in Thy strength we have overcome.

Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ! And therefore now we would begin the song, until in the full assembly of the church above we come to sing with a louder, fuller, sweeter strain: “Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen” (Rev. 1:5, 6).

## Chapter 7

*“How 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 an 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 toward 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. I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me. 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."*

Blessed and all-lovely Lord Jesus! is it possible that Thy church can be so fair in Thine eyes, as that her very feet are beautiful to her Lord? Surely Lord, it is Thou that must have made her so; for when Thou camest from heaven, to seek and save Thy people, Thou didst find the whole nature of man sunk and degraded by sin and uncleanness. But now Thou hast washed Thy church in Thy blood, and adorned her with Thy spotless garment of righteousness, she is indeed the king's daughter, all glorious within. And seeing then, that it is in Thee, and by Thee, and from Thee, that all the beauties and loveliness of Thy church are derived; methinks I would hold Thee in the galleries of Thy grace, and plead and wrestle with my God and Saviour with an earnestness not to be resisted by my Lord; but, like the Father of the seed of Jacob, tell Thee, I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.

And doth my Lord regard the supplication of His poor petitioner? Doth Jesus indeed say to me, as to the church of old, that He will go up to the palm-tree, and that He will take hold of the boughs thereof? Doth Jesus say that He will give me the best wine, that shall go down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak? Oh! Thou gracious condescending Lord, if Thou wilt thus pour out of the sweet influences of Thy Spirit, Thy love will be better to me than wine; for by it my poor dead soul, under all her dying circumstances, will revive, and I shall go forth and speak of Thy love, Thy truth, and righteousness. While Jesus is with me, and blessing me, I shall feel such an enlargement of heart, that my mouth will spread abroad Thy name, and make mention of Thy righteousness, even Thine only; and surely, Lord,

I may hope this; I may look for these sweet visits of Thy love, for Thou hast taken me into the nearest covenant connections with Thee, for I am Thine, and Thy desire is towards me. Yes! precious, precious Lord! Thy desire hath been towards Thy people from everlasting; and what it was from everlasting, so must it be to everlasting. Thou hast all along desired the salvation of all that the Father hath given Thee. Thou hast waited to be gracious. Thou hast longed for the hour of redemption appointed for every individual soul for whom Thou hast died. Thou art now continually desiring to manifest Thyself to them; and, Lord, I am fully persuaded that the desire of Thy soul will not be fully satisfied until Thou hast brought all and everyone of them unto Thyself in glory. Oh! the unspeakable felicity of that day, when Thou shalt have brought home Thy whole church, that where Thou art, there they shall be also!

Come, Lord, then I beseech Thee, for Thou art my Beloved; come with me into the fields of Thy Holy Word, and let us lodge together in the villages of the saints, and get up to the vineyards of Thy churches, for the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the House of Israel, and the men of Judah is Thy pleasant plant. All must flourish in Thee, oh Lord, which are branches in Thee; both grapes and pomegranates, young believers and old saints, will put forth their graces when excited by Thy quickening and reviving influence. There, Lord, doth my soul desire to tell Thee how exceedingly I love Thee, and how ardently I long after Thee. Oh! that the mandrakes may be perfumed with the fragrant of Thy incense, and all the fruits of the Spirit may be in such lively exercise in my soul, that I may show forth Thy praises, and manifest Thy glory to all around.

## Chapter 8

***“O 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. I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, until he please. Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? I raised thee up under the apple tree: there thy mother brought thee forth: there she brought thee forth that bare thee. Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine 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. 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 inclose her with boards of cedar. I am a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found favor. Solomon had a vineyard at Baalhamon; he let out the vineyard unto keepers; every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand pieces of silver. My vineyard, which is mine, is before me: thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred. Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear it. Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.”*

Reader! here let us take to ourselves the sweet instruction the Church teacheth in the opening of this chapter, and while she is so passionately looking to her Lord as her Brother, and desiring to kiss Him without being ashamed or despised, let you and I delight to call Him our Brother also, and to be convinced that, as a Brother, He feels interested in all that concerns our salvation. And oh! for grace and faith in such full actings upon His glorious Person, that we may constrain Him to come with us to the Church, our Mother, and there cause Him to drink of our spiced wine, even the blessed fruits and effects of His own grace in our hearts. Surely Jesus will embrace us, and take us into His arms; neither

shall any disturb the hallowed season of enjoyment with Him, while He is pleased to impart the manifestations of His love; and, reader, shall we not be among the happy number that are coming up from the wilderness leaning upon our Beloved, hanging upon Him, and feasting our souls with beholding His beauty, and living upon His fullness? Yea, surely Jesus will raise us up from under the apple tree of this world's good; will bring us out of all the deadness of nature, and the dead frames of the heart, and bring us into His Church, the Church of the living God.

Blessed Lord Jesus, dost Thou really desire that such poor creatures as we are, should set Thee as a seal upon our hearts, and upon our arm? And is Thy love so ardent, and yet so condescending, that Thou declarest it to be strong as death, and as jealous as the grave, and doth it burn towards us as coals of fire? Oh Lord, for grace, ever to keep this desire of Thine in remembrance, and to carry it about with us whithersoever we go; delighting our souls with the very thought that our poor sealing to the love of Jesus is had in remembrance, and valued by our Lord; and do Thou, oh Thou most gracious and compassionate Redeemer, do Thou set Thy people as a signet on Thy right hand, and wear our names, worthless as they are in themselves, but highly honourable as noticed and owned by Thee, wear them in Thine heart, and bear them in, as the High Priest of Thy people, before the throne, that as Thine we may be sealed in the presence of our God, unto the day of redemption. Oh! for a heart to love Thee, and to live to Thee, and to praise Thee, for nothing could damp or abate Thy love to Thy people! Neither the agonies in the garden, nor the cross, neither the justice of Divine wrath against sin, nor the powers of hell, no, nor the forsaking of Thy disciples at Thy death, nor the continued slights of all Thy disciples through the whole of Thy life, even until now, hath abated, or can abate Thy love for one moment from Thy redeemed; but as Thou hast from the beginning loved Thy people that are in the world, Thou lovest them unto the end. Oh, that the Lord would add one mercy more to this unmerited mercy! and as no waters nor floods can quench Thy love, so the Lord would not suffer any or all the

torrents of sin and death to quench ours. Lord, we pray Thee to keep our poor souls in the love of God, and in the patient waiting for Jesus Christ.

Hail, holy Lord! Father, Son, and eternal Spirit! we bend before Thy throne with thanksgivings and praise, for all the wonders of redemption by Jesus Christ! Hasten, almighty God, the call of Thy people. Let the little sister of Christ's Church, even the Gentile Church, be filled with the breasts of consolation, and may our elder Brother, the Jewish Church, be called home by grace. Oh! for that glorious hour, when the fullness of the Gentiles shall be completed, and all Israel shall be saved! When the Deliverer shall arise out of Zion, to turn away ungodliness from Jacob! In the blessed hope of this assurance, may Thy people live from day to day, and may the cry of faith be continually going up for the accomplishment of it from all the redeemed of the Lord. And while Jesus is calling upon His Church to hear His voice, and saying, "Surely I come quickly!" Oh! may every faithful heart make sweet responses to their Lord, and send up the earnest prayer, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev. 22:20). Amen.

