

SONG OF SOLOMON 5

“HE IS ALTOGETHER LOVELY!”

When we echo the words of the Bride in the last verse of the last chapter, and pray to the Holy Spirit for a preparation of the garden of our heart; the Lord Jesus will assuredly come down into our souls! He manifests His acceptance of our services and graces; and their acceptableness to Him is illustrated by the combination of gratifications which may be experienced in a pleasant garden, where one is delighted with pleasant fragrances, beautiful scenes and flowers, and delicious fruits. Nor does Jesus enjoy these by Himself! He desires His friends to come and enjoy with Him the beauties and delights of this garden – this new creation which is the result of His work alone! And so, while He rejoices as a Bridegroom over His Bride; the people of God sing together and shout for joy. “Eat ye that which is good!” says He. “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed” (Isa. 55:1-2; John 6:53-57). “Eat, O friends!” Christ desires believers to partake of the soul-refreshing blessings of His purchase. There is no danger of excess in this spiritual feast; we cannot spiritually eat too much of the flesh of Jesus, nor drink too much of His blood.

Verses 2-6 describe the effect of sluggishness and indifference when the Lord Jesus draws near to the soul – namely, the loss of His presence and favor. Even after we enjoy the most glorious displays of the love of Jesus, we may soon become entangled and overcome through the weakness of our flesh (Matt. 26:41). The necessary duties of life turn themselves into temptations; and our perceptions then become dull to these manifestations of grace, through our own apathy and sluggishness. But even at such times when the flesh may be weak, the spirit remains willing. To use the language of the Bride in verse 2, we sleep, but our heart is awake. Our heart is not in sufficient strength to counteract the pressure of carnality, and to control the doings of the body. Alas! So far from fulfilling Jesus’ wishes by coming away from the world and meeting with Him in the mountain of myrrh, we prefer the indulgence of our fleshly, carnal inclinations. We prefer sleep over all the attractions of His loveliness and society!

But so strong is Christ’s love, that when He does not find us meeting Him at the appointed place, He graciously comes to seek us – even in our sloth. And He tries to allure us to come away with Him by the most moving and endearing considerations. “Open to me!” He tenderly calls (Rev. 3:20). And yet, unmoved by these words, we content ourselves in our apathy by the most silly excuses (verse 3). But then the love of our Lord prompts Him to go further than mere

Outline of the chapter:

- ❖ Christ accepts His Bride’s invitation, and visits the garden of her soul – verse 1
- ❖ The Bride gives an account of her distress over her Beloved’s withdrawal, which was a result of her slothfulness and sluggishness – verses 2-8
- ❖ The enquiry of the daughters of Jerusalem, and the Bride’s answer – verses 9-16

entreaty! He Himself opens the door and finds His own way into our heart (verse 4). At length, being moved by His tender words to us, and by the measures of mercy used by Him for reviving our love; our affections begin to move, and we arise to meet Him! However, instead of running at once to meet Him, and opening our soul to Him just as it is; we make a delay, in order to prepare ourselves to see Him. And the result of this delay is that although we bring with us the best of our acts and endeavors – represented by our hands dropping with myrrh – He is gone! (verses 5-6) Nothing of our own, such as duty, self-denial, and mortification – however costly – can excuse us for hesitating to rush into His arms. By delaying to meet Him, in order to make ourselves fit to see Him, we often lose precious fellowship-time with Him.



The Bride's soul had been deeply moved by hearing the words of her Beloved standing at the door; and being thus moved, her desires are now stirred up to go and seek him. The withdrawals of Jesus are a just recompense for our sluggishness; but they do serve a good purpose by causing us to call our love into exercise, and to show its strength. Alas! That which was lost by indifference can now only be gotten by great exertion. We seek Him and call on Him without receiving an answer. We suffer reproach and mistreatment from the watchmen of Zion. Sadly, instead of helping us in our zeal, those who should watch over our souls often view our love and devotion to Jesus as fanaticism; and so they misuse us and expose us to shame (verse 7). But the sympathy that is sometimes denied to the seeking heart by those who are high in office in the Church, may often be found among our pious friends – the “daughters of Jerusalem.” We may entreat their aid in serving, seeking, and following our Lord (verse 8).

This earnestness and zeal are not without its effect upon others, before whom the light of the believer is thus made to shine. They observe the manifestations of such intense love to Christ – a love that will be satisfied with nothing short of Himself; and which is willing, for the enjoyment of His presence, to incur any self-denial and humiliation. And after seeing this, they will naturally inquire what is to be found in Jesus above all others, that so strongly moves us (verse 9). The Bride replies by setting forth an illustration of Christ's beauty, in verses 10-16, which is unequalled for beauty and richness! The most fine gold, the raven's blackness, the eyes of doves, beds of spices, lilies dropping sweet-smelling myrrh, jewels and marble, and stately cedar trees – all of these are only faint pictures of the wonderful excellence and beauty of Jesus! In Him, there is everything that can be desired; “he is altogether lovely.” “Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious” (1 Pet. 2:7). This Person – combining beauties beyond what any ordinary human being may possess – “this,” says the Bride, “is my beloved, and this is my friend!”

Lord, we repent of times when our sluggish hearts have been asleep on the bed of sloth – causing us to ignore the voice of Jesus, Who desires to meet with us! Amen.