

Song of Solomon Chapter 8

Verses 8:1-4: The church wishes for the constant intimacy and freedom with the Lord Jesus that a sister has with a brother. That they might be as his brethren, which they are, when by grace they are made partakers of a Divine nature. Christ is become as our Brother; wherever we find him, let us be ready to own our relation to him, and affection for him, and not fear being despised for it. Is there in us an ardent wish to serve Christ more and better? What then have we laid up in store, to show our affection to the Beloved of our souls? What fruit unto holiness? The church charges all her children that they never provoke Christ to withdraw. We should reason with ourselves, when tempted to do what would grieve the Spirit.

Song of Solomon 8:1 "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."

Or, "who will give thee as a brother to me?" A usual form of wishing (Deut. 5:29; Psalm 14:7). The church here not only requests that Christ would be like a brother to her, but appear to be really one, and to act the part of one towards her. With whom she might as freely converse as brother and sister may. Several Jewish writers own, that the King Messiah is intended here; and in such a relation Christ does stand to his church and people, by virtue of his incarnation (Heb. 2:11). Hence many of the ancients take this to be a wish of the Jewish church, for the coming of Christ in the flesh. And also through their adoption, he and they having one Father (John 20:17). And by being of a like nature, disposition, and practice (Matt. 12:50). As well as on the score of love and friendship (Prov. 18:24). And this relation Christ fills up, by the intimacy and familiarity he uses them with. By his compassion on them, and sympathy with them, in all their afflictions. By the help, aid, and relief, he gives them. By his condescension to their weaknesses, and by his great love and affection for them. As a further description of him as a brother, it is added;

"That sucked the breasts of my mother": Which may denote the truth and reality of Christ's incarnation, being a sucking infant. And the near relation of Christ to his people, being a brother by the mother's side, reckoned the nearest, and their affection to each other the strongest. By her "mother" may be meant Jerusalem above, the mother of us all. And, by her "breasts", the ordinances, of which Christ, as man, partook when on earth, and now may be said to suck, as formed in the hearts of his people.

"When I should find thee without": Or, "in the street"; in public ordinances, where Christ is to be found. Or outside of Judea, in the Gentile world, where, after his coming in the flesh, his Gospel was preached, the ordinances administered, and he was there to be found. Or in the most public place and manner, where she should not be ashamed to own him, his truths and ordinances, before men.

"I would kiss thee": Not only with a kiss of acceptance (Prov. 24:16); but of love and affection, of faith and confidence, of homage and subjection, of worship and adoration (see Psalm 2:12). This is a usage with relations and friends, brothers and sisters, at meeting. Hence Heunischius

refers this to the time when the saints shall meet Christ in the clouds. Who will be admitted to the nearest embraces of him, with unspeakable pleasure, and enjoy him to all eternity.

"Yea, I should not be despised": For taking such freedom with Christ, her brother. Or, "they would not despise me". Neither men nor angels, for such an action, and still less God, the Father, Son, and Spirit. Which she might conclude from the relation between them, it being no more unseemly than for a sister to use such freedom with an own brother, even in the street. And from the reception she had reason to believe she should meet with from Christ. Who would not turn away his face from her, when she offered to kiss him, which would occasion shame and blushing. The whole expresses her boldness in professing Christ, without fear or shame, in the most public manner.

This is wishing to be the brother, that the relationship could have gone on from the beginning. It is interesting to me, that even though the Christians are the bride of Christ, they are also all sons of God. Jesus is The Son of God, but all believers in Christ are adopted into the family of God, and are sons of God.

Romans 8:14-15 "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."

This is a spiritual thing. In the Spirit, we can be the bride of Christ and the sons of God all at the same time. These are not speaking of a gender, but a relationship. The kiss just indicates sweet love.

Luke 7:45-47 "Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet." "My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment." "Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, [the same] loveth little."

Song of Solomon 8:2 "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."

The general assembly and church of the firstborn is mother to the church visible, to particular churches and believers, where they are born, educated, and brought up. For which they have a great affection, as persons usually have for the place of their nativity and education. And here the church desires to have Christ with her; either to consummate the marriage between them (Gen. 24:67), or to enjoy his presence there, with great delight and pleasure. The act of "leading" shows great familiarity with him, great love and respect for him, and a hearty welcome to her mother's house. All which is done by prayer, in the exercise of faith. And the act of "bringing" denotes on her part the strength of faith in prayer; and on his part great condescension (see SOS 3:4).

"Who would instruct me": Meaning her mother. The allusion may be to a grave and prudent woman, who, taking her newly married daughter aside, teaches her how to behave towards her husband, that she may have his affections, and live happily with him. The house of God is a

school of instruction, where souls are taught the ways of Christ, the doctrines of the Gospel, and the duties of religion. Nor are the greatest believers above instruction, and the means of it. Some render the words, "thou shalt", or "thou wouldest teach me". Meaning Christ, who teaches as none else can. He teaches by his Spirit, who leads into all truth. By the Scriptures, which are profitable for instruction; and by his ministers, called pastors and teachers. And by his ordinances administered in his house; where the church desired the presence of Christ. And might expect instruction from him, being in the way of her duty. And to hear such marriage precepts, as in (Psalm 45:10). In return, the church promises Christ;

"I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine, of the juice of my pomegranate": Or, "wine of my pomegranate"; of which mention is made in Jewish writings and by other authors. There was a city in the tribe of Dan, called "Gath-rimmon" (Joshua 21:24); the winepress of the pomegranate, or where they made pomegranate wine. Now these sorts of wine being accounted the best and most agreeable, the church proposes to treat Christ with them. By which may be meant the various graces of the Spirit, and the exercise of them in believers. Which give Christ pleasure and delight, and are preferred by him to the best wine (see SOS 4:10).

We see a true desire to learn the perfect ways of the Lord. The woman here, is the church of God. We read in the book of Revelation of the Light of Jesus being in all 7 churches. This speaks of not only being ministered to by Jesus, but ministering to Him as well. The love of the bride for Christ is shown here.

Galatians 4:26 "But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."

The "mother's house" then, is speaking of New Jerusalem.

Acts 17:11-12 "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."
"Therefore many of them believed; also of honorable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few."

Song of Solomon 8:3 "His left hand [should be] under my head, and his right hand should embrace me."

That is, when she should have the presence of Christ in her mother's house. Or the words are a petition that so it might be, "let his left hand", etc.; or a declaration of what she did enjoy, "his left hand is under my head", etc.; (see notes on SOS 2:6).

We discovered in an earlier lesson that the left hand was lifting her out of this sinful world, and the right hand spoke of the spiritual blessings. This is saying, He anointed her with the Holy Spirit of God.

Song of Solomon 8:4 "I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake [my] love, until he please."

The phrase, "by the roes and by the hinds of the field", used in (SOS 2:7); is here omitted. Not as if the charge was less vehement and earnest here, for the form of expostulation seems rather to express more earnestness. For the words may be rendered, "why will ye", or "why should ye stir up, and why awake my love?" Being apprehensive they were about to do it; and which she tries to persuade them from, as unreasonable and dangerous, and might be prejudicial to them as well as to her. The allusion is to virgins, that sung songs at marriages. One in the evening, lulling to sleep; and another in the morning, awaking and stirring up from it.

We also discovered that the "daughters of Jerusalem" were speaking of the physical house of Israel. Jesus spoke to them in the following Scripture.

Luke 23:28 "But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children."

They should weep, because they rejected Jesus.

Verses 8:5-7: The Jewish church came up from the wilderness, supported by Divine power and favor. The Christian church was raised from a low, desolate condition, by the grace of Christ relied on. Believers, by the power of grace, are brought up from the wilderness. A sinful state is a wilderness in which there is no true comfort; it is a wandering, wanting state. There is no coming out of this wilderness, but leaning on Christ as our Beloved, by faith. Not leaning to our own understanding, nor trusting in any righteousness of our own; but in the strength of him, who is the Lord our Righteousness. The words of the church to Christ which follow, entreat an abiding place in his love, and protection by his power. Set me as a seal upon thine heart; let me always have a place in thine heart; let me have an impression of love upon thine heart. Of this the soul would be assured, and without a sense thereof no rest is to be found. Those who truly love Christ, are jealous of everything that would draw them from him. Especially of themselves, lest they should do anything to provoke him to withdraw from them. If we love Christ, the fear of coming short of his love, or the temptations to forsake him, will be most painful to us. No waters can quench Christ's love to us, nor any floods drown it. Let nothing abate our love to him. Nor will life, and all its comforts, entice a believer from loving Christ. Love of Christ, will enable us to repel and triumph over temptations from the smiles of the world, as well as from its frowns.

Song of Solomon 8:5 "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."

Which words are spoken by the daughters of Jerusalem, occasioned by her charge to them, by which they were excited to look more earnestly at her, whom Christ had indulged with so much nearness to him. At which they express their surprise, and describe her by her ascent "from the wilderness"; that is, of the world, out of which she was chosen and called. And from a state of nature, out of which she was brought; and was rising up in a state of grace to a state of glory (see notes on SOS 3:6).

"Leaning upon her beloved?" Faith in Christ, whom her soul loved, and who loved her, is signified hereby (see Isa. 50:10). Which is the grace by which believers lean on the person of Christ, for acceptance with God. On his righteousness, for justification; and on his fullness, for the supply of their wants; and trust in his blood for pardon and cleansing. As sensible sinners do at first conversion, when they venture their souls on Christ. And commit the care and keeping of them to him, and trust their whole salvation with him. Such souls give up themselves to Christ; cleave to him, with full purpose of heart; walk with him, and walk on in him, as they have received him. Deriving all her strength from him, to exercise grace, perform duty, withstand temptation, and persevere to the end, conscious of her own weakness. Faith, in every sense of the word is intended.

"I raised thee up under the apple tree": Not the words of Christ concerning the church, since the affixes are masculine. But what the church said concerning Christ, when leaning on his arm as she went along with him. So the words may be connected with the preceding, by supplying the word "saying", as Michaelis observes; relating a piece of former experience, how that when she was under the apple tree, sat under the shadow of it (SOS 2:3). That is, under the ordinances of the Gospel; where, having no sensible communion with Christ for some time, he being as it were asleep, she, by her earnest prayers and entreaties, awaked him. And raised him up, to take notice of her. Whereby she enjoyed much nearness to him, and familiarity with him.

"There thy mother brought thee forth: there she brought thee forth that bare thee": Which may be said either concealing the Old Testament church, who conceived hope of the coming of Christ, waited for it, and was often like a woman in pain until he was brought forth. Which at length was done, to the joy of those that looked for him. Or of the New Testament church, hoping, looking, waiting for the second coming of Christ, in the exercise of faith and prayer. And is like a woman in travail, and will be until he makes his appearance. And both may be meant, the one by the former, the other by the latter phrase, and may be the reason of the repetition of it. It may be applied to the apostles of Christ, who travailed in birth, until Christ was brought forth into the Gentile world, through the preaching of the Gospel. And so to all Gospel ministers, who are in like case until Christ be formed in the souls of men. Which is no other than the new birth, and is attended with pain like that of a woman in travail. And every regenerate person may be said, in this sense, to be Christ's mother, as well as his brother and sister (Matt. 12:50). And each of the above things are usually done under and by the means of the word and ordinances; which may be signified by the apple tree, or, however, the shadow of it.

The bride is not of the daughters of Jerusalem. She is made up of the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is that wild olive branch that was grafted into the tree. This bride is not of the physical house of Israel. This is a stranger from the wilderness, the Gentiles. These are those who took Jesus on simple faith. The bride is dressed in the white robe of righteousness that Jesus provided her. We find that the strength of the bride (church), comes from Jesus.

John 15:4 "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me."

Song of Solomon 8:6 "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."

These are still the words of the church, speaking to Christ as she walked along with him, as the Hebrew text show. In which she desires to have a fixed abiding place in his heart; to continue firmly in his love, and to have further manifestations of it. To be always remembered and supported by him; to be ever on his mind, and constantly under his care and protection. And to have a full assurance of interest in his love, and in his power, which is the sealing work of his Spirit (Eph. 1:13). The church's desire is, that she might be affectionately loved by Christ. Be deeply fixed in his heart, be ever in his view, owned and acknowledged by him, and protected by the arm of his power. Her reasons follow:

"For love is strong as death": That is, the love or the church to Christ, which caused her to make the above requests. Death conquers all; against it there is no standing. Such was the love of the church, it surmounted all difficulties that lay in the way of enjoying Christ. Nothing could separate from it; she was conquered by it herself; and could not live without him. She could readily part with life and suffer death for his sake. Death itself could not part her from him, or separate him from her love. So that her love was stronger than death.

"Jealousy is cruel as the grave": The jealousy she had of Christ's love to her which was her weakness. And yet it was very torturing and afflicting, though at the same time it showed the greatness of her love to Christ. Or "envy", that is of wicked men. She was the object of, which exceeds cruel wrath and outrageous anger (Prov. 27:4). Or rather her "zeal", which is no other than ardent love for Christ; his Gospel, cause, and interest. Which ate up and consumed her spirits, as the grave does what is cast into it (Psalm 119:139).

"The coals thereof are coals of fire": Which expresses the fervency of her love to Christ, and zeal for the honor of his name. Which, though sometimes cold and languid, is rekindled, and becomes hot and flaming. And is, like fire, insatiable, one of the four things that say, "It is not enough" (Prov. 30:16).

"Which hath a most vehement flame": Nothing is, nor common with other writers, than to attribute flame to love, and to call it a fire. Here a most vehement flame. Or, "the flame of Jah" or "Jehovah"; an exceeding great one. The Hebrews use one or other of the names of God, as a superlative. So the mountains of God, and cedars of God, mean exceeding great ones. And here it expresses the church's love in the highest degree, in such a flame as not to be quenched, as follows. Or it signifies, that the flame of love in her breast was kindled by the Lord himself, by his Spirit, compared to fire. Or by his love, shed abroad in her heart by him. Hence it appears to be false, what is sometimes said, that the name of God is not used in this Song; since the greatest of all his names, Jah or Jehovah, is here expressed.

Notice that this is not a flesh relationship. This is of the heart. The bride has taken Jesus in her heart. The seal is like a signet. The wedding band used in marriages is a symbol of the very same thing. Read the love chapter (in 1 Corinthians chapter 13). Husbands and wives should not be

jealous of each other. They should not be given reason to be jealous either. They are for each other. This marriage is to be forever.

2 Corinthians 11:2 "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present [you as] a chaste virgin to Christ."

Jealousy is like a burning fire.

Song of Solomon 8:7 "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."

The love of the church to Christ, which is inextinguishable and incapable of being overcome, by the many waters and floods of wicked and ungodly men. Neither by their flattery and fair promises; nor by their cruel edicts, force and persecution. By neither can they withdraw the love of the saints from Christ, nor tempt them to desert his interest. Nor by all the afflictions God is pleased to bring upon them. Rather their love is increased thereby, which they consider as effects of the love, wisdom, and faithfulness of God, as designed for their good. Nor even by their sins and corruptions; for though, through the abounding of these, their love may wax cold, yet it never becomes extinct. It may be left, but not lost. Its fervency may be abated, but that itself remains. Nor by Satan's temptations, who sometimes comes in like a flood, threatening to carry all before him. But the Spirit lifts up a standard against him, and maintains his own work of faith and love (Isa. 59:19). Nor by the terrors of the law, and the apprehensions of divine wrath, they are sometimes pressed with, signified by waves and floods (Psalm 88:6). Nor by all the hardships and difficulties, scoffs and reproaches, which attend believers in their Christian race. Which are so far from alienating their affections from Christ, that they rather endear him the more unto them. And make heaven, and the enjoyment of him there, the more desirable.

"If a man would give, all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be regarded with contempt": It is true of the love of Christ to his people, as also what is said before. But is rather to be understood of the love of the church to Christ. Which is a grace so valuable, as not to be purchased with money. If this, or any other grace, is to be bought, it is to be bought without money and without price. It is to be had freely of Christ; and, where possessed, will not be parted with for anything that may be offered. If a rich man's whole estate was offered for it, to a lover of Christ; yea, the riches of the Indies, or the vast treasures of the whole globe, on condition of his parting with him. And deserting his cause and interest, and dropping or neglecting his love to him, it would be treated by him with the, almost disdain and contempt (see Phil. 3:8). Now all this is used by the church as an argument to gain her request, "set me as a seal", etc. (SOS 8:6). Since my soul is all in flames of love to thee, which cannot be quenched by all I suffer on thy account; nor will be parted with for all that the world can give me. This love of the church reaches to Christ, and to all that belong to him, even to a little sister (as in SOS 8:8).

Paul sums it up very well in the following Scriptures.

Romans 8:38-39 "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come," "Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Verses 8:8-12: The church pleads for the Gentiles, who then had not the word of God, nor the means of grace. Those who are brought to Christ themselves, should contrive what they may do to help others to him. Babes in Christ are always seen among Christians, and the welfare of their weak brethren is an object of continual prayer with the stronger believers. If the beginning of this work were likened to a wall built upon Him the precious Foundation and Corner-stone, then the Gentile church would become as a palace for the great King, built of solid silver. If the first preaching of the gospel were as the making a door through the wall of partition, that door should be lasting, as cased with boards of durable cedar. She shall be carefully and effectually protected, enclosed so as to receive no damage. The church is full of care for those yet uncalled. Christ says, I will do all that is necessary to be done for them. See with what satisfaction we should look back upon the times and seasons, when we were in his eyes as those that find favor. Our hearts are our vineyards, which we must keep with all diligence. To Christ, and to his praise, all our fruits must be dedicated. All that work for Christ, work for themselves, and shall be unspeakable gainers by it.

Song of Solomon 8:8 "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?"

Which seems to be the Gentile church, so called by the Jewish church. For as the church, catholic or universal, with respect to its parts, is called a mother, as often in this Song; so these parts, with respect to each other, as the Jewish and Gentile churches, may be called sisters. And the rather, as they belong to the same Father and family, are partakers of the same grace, and are of the same faith and religion as to the substance of them. And the object and nature of their worship the same, though as to circumstances different. And it may be observed that the Gentile church is not only sister to the Jewish church, but to Christ, and therefore she says, not I, but we, have such a sister; of which relation (see SOS 4:9). Also, that she stood in this relation to Christ and to the Jewish church before the coming of Christ, and before the Gospel was preached to her, and she was called and separated from the world. As elect Gentiles are also called the sheep of Christ, and children of God, before that time (John 10:16). This church is described as a "little sister", younger in age than the Jewish church, and in some respects less honorable (Rom. 3:1). The same with the younger son and brother, in the parable of the prodigal son. Little in esteem among men, especially the Jews, (Eph. 2:11). Little in stature, light, knowledge, and faith, at first conversion. And but few in number, particularly at first, and in comparison of the world. And so, the church of Christ, consisting both of Jews and Gentiles, is called a little flock (Luke 12:32). As a further description of her, it is added;

"And she hath no breasts": Is not arrived in years of ripeness, nor marriageable (see Ezek. 16:7). The time of her open espousal to Christ was not yet come. At this time, she had no ministers nor ordinances, from whence she could have the sincere milk of the word, or share it with others. And it was some time after the Gospel came among the Gentiles, before they had a settled ministry.

"What shall we do for our sister?" Or, "what shall be done for her?" Being moved with pity to her, in her forlorn and helpless condition, like a little infant (Ezek. 16:4). And willing to do anything

for her that lay in her power, though seeming at a loss to know what to do for her. The believing Jews were very assisting to the Gentiles, in carrying the Gospel among them at first. And in supplying them with ministers, and with money too, to carry on the interest of Christ among them. The Jewish church here is not forgetful of the chief and principal agent, Christ, and therefore says, what shall we do? She was willing to do what she could; but she knew all would be insignificant without Christ, his agency and blessing. The time she was concerned what should be done for her in is;

"In the day when she shall be spoken for": Or "with", or "unto". When she should be wooed or treated with for marriage, by the ministers of the word, at the first preaching of the Gospel to her. Or be spoken to by her enemies, by fair words, or severe menaces, to desert the faith. Or, "be spoken of"; the fame of her be spread abroad, far and near, for her light, knowledge, and faith. For her profession, and her sufferings for it. And the concern is, how she should behave under all the noise and talk about her: or, "be spoken against". As she would be by unbelieving Jews, and by ignorant Heathens, for embracing the Christian religion, and for receiving the Gospel of Christ, submitting to his ordinances, and professing his name (Acts 28:22).

The little sister is not yet mature. I believe this is speaking of the very young Christian church that is still on milk and honey of the Word. This is speaking also of those young Christians who already are saved, desiring to bring others into the true fellowship with Christ.

Song of Solomon 8:9 "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."

Built upon a sure foundation; and firmly established in her faith on Christ, and love to him. And is constant therein, and stands as a wall against the attacks of enemies.

"We will build upon her a palace of silver": Though at first but as a side wall, yet should become a complete habitation, even a palace for Christ, the King of kings. And, being designed for so illustrious an inhabitant, should be a "silver" one, denoting its worth, value, and splendor. The builders of it are the church and her ministers; though Christ is the principal builder (Zech. 6:12). Or, "a tower of silver", signifying, that she should be well fortified, and be put into a posture of defense against her enemies. The Gentile church at first had but a very small appearance of a building, a foundation just laid, a side wall erected. But, in a short time, a noble structure, a stately tower, a silver palace, was built for God.

"And if she be a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar": If the door of the Gospel was opened among the Gentiles, it should be succeeded to the building a holy temple to the Lord. Which should be not only ornamented, but so well fenced, that it should not be in the power of their enemies to deface and demolish it. Or if the door of their hearts was opened, to receive Christ, and his glorious train of grace, they should be adorned and beautified with a larger measure of them. Or if being come into a church state, and the door of it was set open to receive good men, and exclude bad men, this would be to their honor comfort and safety. Or this phrase is expressive of the finishing of the building, the gate or door being set up. Though it rather seems to intend the low and mean estate of the Gentile church at first, when there was but little appearance of a building, only a door set up. Which afterwards grew up into a stately and

magnificent palace, like that of Solomon's, built of cedar boards of the wood of Lebanon. Which may denote her fragrancy, perpetuity, and incorruptibleness.

The "wall" is speaking of a steadfast Christian who is unmovable. Jesus is the Corner stone, and we are the lively stones.

1 Peter 2:5 "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

The door would be more moveable. We see however, the door is to be enclosed with cedar. The cedar preserves and strengthens. The strong Christians are to help the weaker.

Acts 20:35 "I have showed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Song of Solomon 8:10 "I [am] a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found favor."

The words of the little sister, or Gentile church; either wishing she was what was supposed, and desiring to be in a well settled state, "O that I was a wall!" Or as asserting that she was in such a state, well walled. God was a wall of fire about her. Salvation was appointed as walls and bulwarks to her. She was one of the two walls Christ was a cornerstone unto, and cemented together. And was a wall built up of lively stones, of true believers, built on Christ, the foundation. And established in the doctrine of grace; and constant and immovable in her love to Christ.

"And my breasts like towers": Round, plump, and high; signifying that she was now marriageable. And the time of her being presented as a chaste virgin to Christ, and of her open espousals to him, was now come. Of ministers of the word, of the Scriptures, and of the ordinances of the Gospel, as signified by breasts (see notes on SOS 4:5). Which may be said to be "like towers": ministers of the word, because set for the defense of the Gospel. The Scriptures, because an armory from whence saints are supplied with armor, to repel Satan's temptations, refute errors, and defend truth. And the ordinances of the Gospel, because they stand firm and immovable against all the efforts of men to subvert and abolish them. And these are peculiar to the Gentile church, under the Gospel dispensation.

"Then was I in his eyes as one that found favor": From the time that the Gentile church became a wall, firmly built on Christ, and was formed into a church state, and had a settled ministry and Gospel ordinances, she became acceptable to Christ, and was admitted to near communion with him. And not only her person, but her services, met with a favorable acceptance from him. And these privileges and blessings were the fruit of his love, layout, and good will, he bore to her. Which before was secret and hidden, but now her breasts being fashioned, her time was a time of love, of the open love of Christ to her, and of her espousals to him. And when, as the words may be rendered, she was "as one that found peace". Peace being made by the blood of Christ, and the partition wall broken down between Jew and Gentile, and they peaceably joined together in a Gospel church state. And when she enjoyed inward peace and tranquility of mind, which is

found in Christ, the word and ordinances. Even all kind of prosperity, which peace, with the Hebrews, includes. Every spiritual blessing, as reconciliation, justification, pardon, adoption, and eternal life, which are all the fruits and effects of divine favor, good will, grace, and love.

The wall is made up of the Christians who are grounded in the Word. They are always attached to the Corner stone.

1 Corinthians 15:58 " Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

The Lord always sees and approves the good work you do for the Lord.

Song of Solomon 8:11 "Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon; he let out the vineyard unto keepers; every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand [pieces] of silver."

The little sister, or Gentile church, goes on to give an account of the success of the Gospel, the planting of churches, and the establishment of the interest of Christ in the Gentile world. Together with the advantages that accrued to Christ from it. For not Solomon literally, but a greater than he, is here, Christ, the antitype of him, the Prince of peace (see notes on SOS 3:7). By the "vineyard" is meant the church, especially under the New Testament dispensation. So called, because separated from the world by sovereign grace; planted with precious and fruitful plants, which Christ has a property in, by his Father's gift and his own purchase. And therefore, receives of the fruit of it; takes delight and pleasure to walk in it; and takes care to keep it in order, and to protect and preserve it. This is said to be at Baal-hamon; perhaps the same with Baal-gad, the names signifying much the same, and where Solomon might have a vineyard (Joshua 11:17). The word signifies "the master", or "lord of a multitude"; the Gentile world, consisting of a multitude of nations; and in which were many churches, and consisting of many persons.

"He let out the vineyard unto keepers": To his apostles, and to ministers of the Gospel in succeeding times. And who have their employment in it. Some to plant, others to water; some to prune, to reprove and correct for bad principles and practices, and others to support and uphold weak believers. And others to defend truth, and preserve the church from innovation in doctrine and worship. The "letting" it out to these agrees with the parables in (Matt. 20:1); where there seems to be an allusion to this passage. Christ is the proprietor of the vineyard, and the principal vinedresser; yet he makes use of his ministers to take the care of it, watch and keep it in order. For which purpose he lets, or "gives", it to them, as the word is, for he makes them in some sense owners. And they have an interest in the churches, and their life and comfort, greatly lie in the fruitfulness and well-being of them. The vines are called "ours" (SOS 2:15).

"Everyone for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand pieces of silver": Or shekels, which shows the fruitfulness of the vineyard, that its produce should be worth so much. And the great usefulness of the Gospel ministry, in bringing souls to Christ. The fruit of his labor is as dear to him as pieces of silver (Luke 15:8). Christ's ministers are his rent gatherers, and the collectors of his fruit (John 15:16). And though they have different talents and success, yet, being honest and

faithful, the meanest are reckoned to bring in the same as others, or what make for Christ's delight, pleasure, and glory. As will appear when the reckoning day comes, and an account will be given in (Matt. 25:19).

The "vineyard" in the verse above, is possibly showing us the value of the church in the sight of God. "Silver" means redemption. We know that there is no money in the world that we would trade for our salvation. The vineyard is the church in its relationship with the vine (Jesus Christ). Read the 21st chapter of Matthew, beginning with the 33rd verse about the vineyard. Just as the Scripture above, the vineyard was a prized possession.

Song of Solomon 8:12 "My vineyard, which [is] mine, [is] before me: thou, O Solomon, [must have] a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred."

These are either the words of Christ, asserting and confirming his right and property in his vineyard, the church; and which he distinguishes from and prefers to all others. And which being said to be before him denotes his exact knowledge of every vine in it. Not a plant escaping his watchful eye; his presence in it, his care of it, the delight and complacency he has therein. Or else the words of the church, expressing her care, watchfulness, and diligence in the vineyard, and her concern for the welfare of the several vines and plants in it (see SOS 1:6). And certain it is that the next clause is spoken by her.

"Thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand": A thousand pieces or shekels of silver, as before. The church is willing Christ should have all he desires and demands, his whole due and full revenue of glory from his people. For he is meant, and not Solomon literally, as many Jewish writers acknowledge. And the church being now in his presence, and using familiarity with him, thus addresses him.

"And those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred": By which may be meant an honorable maintenance for themselves and families, and much esteem and respect among the people to whom they minister. This is the double honor in (1 Tim. 5:17). Christ has the greatest share, as in reason he should, being the proprietor of the vineyard, and having the chief care and oversight of it, and gives it its increase. However, faithful ministers have their reward, which lies greatly in the conversion of sinners, and edification of saints. For that is their joy, and crown of rejoicing; and in eternal happiness they shall enjoy hereafter (1 Thess. 2:19).

Christians should be caring for the vineyard and causing new growth, and bringing new fruit.

Acts 20:28 "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

Verses 8:13-14: These verses close the conference between Christ and his church. He first addresses her as dwelling in the gardens, the assemblies and ordinances of his saints. He exhorts her to be constant and frequent in prayers, supplications, and praises, in which he delights. She

replies, craving his speedy return to take her to be wholly with Him. The heavens, those high mountains of sweet spices, must contain Christ, till the times come, when every eye shall see him, in all the glory of the better world. True believers as they are looking for, so they are hastening to the coming of that day of the Lord. Let every Christian endeavor to perform the duties of his station, that men may see his good works, and glorify his heavenly Father. Continuing earnest in prayer for what we want, our thanksgivings will abound, and our joy will be full; our souls will be enriched, and our labors prospered. We shall be enabled to look forward to death and judgment without fear. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Song of Solomon 8:13 "Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear [it]."

These are the words of Christ to the church, describing her by her habitation, and may be rendered, "O thou, inhabitress of the gardens". The word used, being in the feminine gender, which determines the sense of it, as belonging to the church. By the "gardens" are meant particular congregations, the dwelling places of the church, and where she has work to do by her ministers, to plant, water, prune, and dress the gardens. And of particular believers, whose business it is to attend on the ministry of the word, and other ordinances. And dwelling here may denote diligence and constant attendance here, and which is approved of by Christ, and well pleasing to him. And it is honorable, as well as profitable and delightful, to have a place in these gardens, and especially an abiding one. And indeed those, to whom Christ gives a place and a name here, are in no danger of being turned or driven out, as Adam was from Eden.

"The companions hearken to thy voice": Meaning either the divine Persons, the Father and the Holy Ghost, as the companions of Christ, of the same nature, perfections, and glory with him. Who listen to what the church and true believers say to them and to one another (Mal. 3:16). The friends of Christ and his people, who hearken to the conversation of believers, in private and public. And especially to the Gospel, preached in the assembly of the saints (Eph. 3:10). Or rather the daughters of Jerusalem, who all along attend the bride in this Song, and are the virgins her companions (Psalm 45:14). And it is a title that belongs to all truly gracious souls (Psalm 122:8). Who hearken to the voice of the church, to the Gospel, preached by her ministers; which is a joyful sound, and gives great delight and pleasure.

"Cause me to hear it": That is, her voice; so sweet and charming to him as in (SOS 2:14). Her voice in prayer and praise; in speaking of him, his person, offices, and grace, to others, and confessing his name before men. Some render the words, "preach me"; and then the sense is, seeing the companions flock unto thee, and listen with great attention and pleasure to thy voice, and take the opportunity of preaching me unto them. Let my person, righteousness, and grace, be the subject of thy ministry: and which was done in the first times of the Gospel, by the apostles. Has been, more or less, ever since, by faithful ministers; and will be continued until the second coming of Christ, prayed for in (SOS 8:14).

The Bridegroom (Jesus), is speaking to His bride here. Jesus will restore the church to its original beauty, and provide a heavenly Garden of Eden for her to dwell in. The simplicity of Christianity is spoken of here. That is what makes it so beautiful. Jesus quickens the spirit of individuals in

the church. He is the quickening Spirit. It is Jesus who perfects His bride (church). Notice how the bride receives power.

John 15:7 "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

John 16:24 "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."

Jesus provides for His bride (church).

Song of Solomon 8:14 "Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices."

These are the words of the church, to Christ, calling him her "beloved"; a title often used in this Song (see SOS 1:13). And is continued to the last. For Christ was still the object of her love; and she had now a comfortable sense of her interest in him, and claimed it. And makes use of this title, not only to distinguish him from others, but to obtain her request the more easily, that he would "make haste", and come. Which may either be understood of his speedy coming in the flesh, and appearing on Mount Zion and in the temple, where the spicy and sweet smelling incense was offered. Or of his spiritual presence, in his house and upon the mountains, and in all the assemblies of Zion. Where the prayers and praises of the saints go up to God, as sweet odors, perfumed with the incense of Christ's mediation. Or the petition may respect the first spread of the Gospel throughout the Gentile world. Which, being like a box of ointment opened, would diffuse the savor of the knowledge of Christ everywhere. Or rather it expresses the breathings of the New Testament church after the second coming of Christ, being the last petition of the church in this Song. And with which she closes it, as John does the Revelation, and with it the whole canon of Scripture in like manner, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus". That is, come quickly. And when the church says, "make haste", she does not desire Christ to come before the appointed time, nor will he. His coming may and will be hastened indeed, yet in his own time. But it shows her eager and earnest desire after it, being as it were impatient for it. The word, may be rendered, "flee away"; not that the church desired Christ to depart from her; she valued his presence at another rate. But she being weary of a sinful troublesome world, and breathing after everlasting rest in another, desires him to remove from hence, and take her with him to heaven, where she might enjoy his presence without any disturbance.

"And be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices": Where spices and aromatic plants grow, as on Lebanon. Of Christ, compared to a roe or a young hart (see notes on SOS 2:9). These creatures being remarkable for their swiftness in running upon mountains and other high places (see Hab. 3:19). The church desires that Christ would be as swift in his motion as those creatures, and come quickly and speedily, and take her with him to the "spicy mountains". The heavenly state, and all the joys and glories of it. And there have everlasting and uninterrupted communion with Christ. And be out of the reach of every troublesome enemy; be in the utmost safety and security; and in the possession of pleasures that will never end. This state may be expressed by "mountains of spices": because of the height and sublimity of it. And

because of the permanency and everlasting duration of it; and because of its delightfulness and pleasantness. Where will be fullness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.

This is saying, "Come quickly Lord Jesus."

Revelation 22:17 "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Revelation 22:20 "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Song of Solomon Chapter 8 Questions

1. Why was the brother mentioned in verse 1?
2. What does the author find interesting about the bride of Christ?
3. These are not speaking of a gender, but a _____.
4. In verse 2, we see a true desire to do what?
5. The woman, here, is the _____.
6. Which churches was the Light of Jesus in?
7. The "mother's house" is speaking of _____.
8. What was the left hand doing in verse 3?
9. What was the right hand blessing of verse 3?
10. Who are the "daughters of Jerusalem" speaking of?
11. Why were they weeping?
12. What is the bride dressed in?
13. The seal is like a _____.
14. What is the love chapter in the Bible?
15. How does Paul sum up verse 7?
16. Who is verse 8 speaking of?
17. Who is the "wall" in verse 9?

18. What is special about cedar?
19. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye _____, _____ always abounding in the work of the Lord.
20. What is the "vineyard", in verse 11, showing?
21. Where can you read more thoroughly about the vineyard?
22. Who is speaking in verse 13.