

The Song of Solomon

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(1988 and 1994 studies)

The following notes were compiled from two Bible studies led by Bro. Frank Shallieu, one in 1988 and the other in 1994. The notes should be utilized with the following understanding:

1. The original studies did not follow a prepared text but were extemporaneous in nature.
2. Although the transcriber tried to faithfully, with the Lord's help, set forth the thoughts that were presented in the studies, the notes are not a verbatim rendering and, therefore, should be considered in that context.
3. Finally, Bro. Frank has not reviewed the notes for possible errors that may have inadvertently entered the text.

With this disclaimer in mind, may the notes be a blessing as a useful study guide.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON

(Study led by Bro. Frank Shallieu in 1994)

Song 1:1 The song of songs, which is Solomon's.

In some Bibles, this book is called Canticles, which means "Song." An English derivative is "cantor," a singer. "The song of songs" is the special song of the calling of the Church.

Many have had difficulty accepting this book as part of Scripture because of the wording, but it is in the Bible. The problem is that such individuals take the wording literally and do not see the spiritual aspect. This book was providentially included in the Scriptures, and the fact that it is called "*THE* Song" indicates there is an important need to understand the contents.

Solomon represents Jesus as King, but after he ascended; ie, Solomon represents Jesus as the *risen* Lord. Written during Solomon's reign, the Song of Solomon has been in the Bible for almost 3,000 years.

Comment: The Song of Solomon expresses primarily the sentiments of the Bridegroom and the Bride. A comment from the 1976 study is that anyone possessing the desirable symptoms and characteristics recorded in this Song of Songs will be an overcomer. An *intense, personal love for Jesus* is necessary if we are to make our calling and election sure.

Song 1:2 Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine.

"Let him [Jesus] kiss me." The prospective Bride class is speaking. In the final analysis, this verse expresses the sentiment of the Very Elect, the Bride class, not the Great Company.

"Let him kiss me with the kisses [plural] of his mouth." The Bride class is asking for *multiple* and/or *repetitive* kisses. The Hebrew plural for "kisses" is not the double or dual plural but means *repeated*. In Hebrew there are three endings: singular, the dual plural, and anything more than two.

"Of his mouth." What does the "mouth" indicate here?

Comment: Jesus' utterances are through the Scriptures. Spiritual refreshment comes from his recorded words.

Reply: The "kisses" would be particularly the words of Jesus. When Jesus spoke to his apostles in the Gospels, there was an intimacy of communion and rapport. Those who love Jesus love his principles, doctrines, promises, instruction, warnings, etc. His words are of special importance.

"For thy [Jesus'] love is better than wine."

Comment: "Wine" is special truth that we rejoice in, but the *personal* assurance of Jesus' love exceeds even the most wonderful truth that we might study on a more intellectual basis.

Reply: Yes, for example, subjects such as chronology and the history of the kings do not contain much sentimentality, emotionalism, affection, or union of heart. Solomon pictures Jesus, and the “wine” would be the joys of the truth. “Water” is truth, but wine is the *joys* of the truth, the personal relationship with Jesus. What are the joys of the truth? If we understand chronology (such as the 1,260, 1,290, and 1,335 days), we get a certain pleasure, but the joy described here (“let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth”) is on a much higher level. Verse 2 describes the communion between Jesus and those who will make their calling and election sure. They desire intimate fellowship with the risen Lord, and their goal is to be members of the Bride class.

Song 1:3 Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.

This verse reminds us of the holy anointing oil, which was poured on the head of the high priest (Jesus) and came down to the hem of his garment (to the body members). The “ointments” are plural.

“Thy name is as ointment poured forth.” When perfumes are applied to clothing or to the skin, their fragrances are pleasing. There are different types of pleasing odors: for perfume, for cleanliness, etc.

We learn about Jesus’ doctrines and deeds in the Gospels. And of course the promises to each of the seven Churches in Revelation are precious to us. The only reprimand to the first Church, Ephesus, was that they had left their first love (Rev. 2:4). “You do not love ME as you did at the first” (paraphrase). The joy has to be maintained throughout our Christian walk, and hopefully, our course will end with this close type of communion—a goal we all aspire to.

“Therefore do the virgins love thee.” The word “virgins” *plural* shows that the Bride is a multitudinous seed or class.

Comment: The hymn beginning “Jesus, the very thought of thee with sweetness fills my breast” beautifully fits the portion of verse 3 that reads “thy name is as ointment poured forth.”

Reply: Yes, and the hymn continues, “Hope of every contrite heart, joy of all the meek.” “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28). The hymn catches this spirit.

The Scriptures encourage us to obtain understanding, and understanding is essential for this type of affection for the Lord Jesus. We must feel that we are *blood-bought*, that he died for *us* on the Cross, that we are *his possession*. This type of thinking must be kept in mind lest we get absorbed in other things inordinately and forget the character, deeds, principles, and thinking of Jesus as manifested during his earthly ministry. Through the Scriptures, we see Jesus as a man. Now we can understand him as a new creature. The combination of witnessing his life and deeds, as well as understanding his doctrine, is very important. Those whom God has called must be conformed to the image of His dear Son in order to make their calling and election sure. Developing a Christlike character is harder to do today than in the past because of the many distractions. However, redeeming

the time has always been a struggle for the Christian. In the past, people worked 12 hours a day and averaged 7 or 8 hours of sleep. The remaining 4 or 5 hours became exceedingly important, for not only was there limited time for studying God's Word, but the flesh was tired at night from the day's physical exertion and reading by candlelight was difficult. Abraham Lincoln read by firelight from a chimney. This was a hardship, but his efforts show he meant business. A Christian needs even more zeal. We should feel ashamed if we do not have more hunger for God's truth than Abraham Lincoln had just to be a success.

Jesus said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). There are dedicated people in the world along various lines. For example, Muslims, based on their religion, will use explosives to destroy a building, knowing they will die in a moment. In other words, they are giving their life for a cause. The difference is that Jesus laid down his life DAILY for 3 1/2 years. Terrible as it was, the Cross was only the climax. The daily process is what counts. Love for the brotherhood is shown in the hymn "Onward, Christian Soldiers": "All one body, we." We admire most those who are *trying* to please the Lord. Seeing that effort shows it is a brotherhood. The closer one walks to the Lord, the higher the regard we should have for that individual. And so the Lord chose Peter, James, and John because, evidently, they manifested a more intense interest in hearkening to Jesus' words and trying to be loyal disciples.

"Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth." Thinking of Jesus, his counsel, and what he did for us brings back good memories.

Note from the 1976 study: The word "therefore" relates to three points raised thus far. "Therefore, we, the virgins, love you, Jesus, because (1) your *love* is better than wine, (2) your *anointing oils* are fragrant, and (3) your *name* is as oils poured out."

When we pray to the Father, we pray in Jesus' name because Jesus made it possible for us to approach the throne of grace. He taught us the Lord's Prayer, and that short, simple prayer manifests many wonderful things. Jesus' name triggers fond recollections. He is "the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

Song 1:4 Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee.

"Draw me" is still the desire of the virgins. They are asking Jesus to draw them. We know that the high calling is of God, so this sentiment is referring to a desire to love Jesus more and more. We would like that affection intensified, as expressed by several hymns: "More love to thee, O Christ. More love to thee." "Jesus calls us o'er the tumult." "O for a closer walk with thee."

"We will *run* after thee," not walk. "Awake, my soul. Stretch every nerve and press with vigor on." The desire to be reinvigorated is expressed here. We would like reassurance that the Lord still loves us, that he is still dealing with us. In making these requests to the Father, we sometimes think of Jesus as being there with Him. And we pray to the Father for more love for Jesus. Here in verse 4 the Christian is promising that if he gets the assurance of Jesus' love, he will be more zealous. He will give more time and think more soberly, etc.

Comment: Also, a tender dependency is expressed here by the virgin class. They realize they must have help from Jesus in order to do the running.

Reply: Jesus is our Advocate. He pleads our case. We ask the Father in the name of Jesus to have mercy on us.

“The king [Jesus as the risen Lord] hath brought me into his chambers.” The title of “King” was given to Jesus at his ascension, but the exercise of that power is future. Even as a babe, he was called a “King” because the Father was so confident in his being faithful, but he became King after he died faithfully on the Cross and ascended on high.

The word “chambers” refers to the Holy of the Tabernacle arrangement where Jesus is the High Priest tending the Candlestick, the Table of Shewbread, and the Incense Altar. “Chambers” (plural) would include the Court with the Brazen Altar. And by prayer, we enter the Most Holy. Through the smoke of the incense (the perfections of Jesus), our prayers are lifted over the Second Veil into the Most Holy. Figuratively speaking, the smoke is like a platform that lifts our prayers. We penetrate into the Most Holy through Christ Jesus.

Comment: Ephesians 1:3 uses the plural: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ.”

“We will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember [extol, RSV; praise, NIV] thy love more than wine: the upright love thee.” Because we are so interested in the intellectual part of the truth, many prayers mention “the plan this” and “the plan that.” However, as marvelous as the plan is, it should not be the main emphasis of our prayers. True, we hope to have the privilege of helping mankind in the Kingdom Age, but we must first get ourselves ready. We must *love God and Jesus supremely* before we think of restitution for the world.

A crude definition of “extol” is to “rave.” The Lord is pleased with praise from the heart. Lips are merely the channel—praise must come from the *heart*.

Q: The end of verse 4 in the King James Version reads, “The upright love thee,” but we are not upright in the present life. The King James margin says, “They love thee uprightly.” The Hebrew word for “uprightly” is *mesharim*, which can mean “sweet” or “sweetly.” With the King James margin in mind, could the thought be “They [the prospective Bride class] love thee sweetly,” emphasizing the personal aspect?

Comment: The Masoretic has “sincerely.”

Reply: “Sincerity” would be implied and is the superior thought. When people accuse us of being a cult, they doubt our sincerity. They question the core or center of our consecration to the Lord.

Song 1:5 I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.

“Daughters of Jerusalem” are professed Christians including, to a certain extent, even the

Great Company because, in the final analysis, this is the Song of Songs of those who will become the Bride class. This love of the Bride class for Jesus is a *consuming* love.

“I am black, but comely.” In talking with the daughters of Jerusalem, the virgin class admit they are black. If they did not have the robe of Christ’s righteousness, their own righteousness would be as filthy rags from the standpoint of perfection. They realize they need a Savior and cleansing and forgiveness. The virgin class are explaining to another class, who regard them as being of an inferior stature.

Some in the nominal Church, especially Protestants, view us as a cult. They do not consider us Christians, even though we have dedicated our lives to Jesus. The Scriptures show that the Great Company class have a higher opinion of themselves than the Little Flock. Here the Great Company have such confidence in their own relationship with the Lord that the wise virgin class are defending themselves. The wise virgins have almost an inferiority complex, but when their love for Christ and God is questioned, they will not be a doormat. They feel they are just as sincere in their love and devotion to Christ as anyone else because they know their own feelings.

Job was questioned *repeatedly* about his relationship with God, but he realized his own integrity. He knew what he felt and how he regarded God. He even had to explain to his three friends—supposedly his comforters—a lot of things he had done before he was afflicted. And what did the three comforters do? They assumed a superior attitude. For seven days they sat with Job and wept and commiserated with him, but after that, they did nothing but criticize him. Job represents the Little Flock. Elihu, who pictures the Great Company, also felt superior to Job. Therefore, all four—the three comforters and Elihu—all believed they were superior. Elihu cannot represent Jesus in any sense because he did some bragging and had a big head.

The daughters of Jerusalem feel superior to and look down on the black virgin class, who are trying to defend themselves. If someone claiming to be a Christian calls us a cult, that is an insult. The virgin class admit, “Yes, I am black”; that is, they are not as perfect as they would like to be, but nevertheless, their love and affection for Jesus and their desires to please God are every bit as good as those of the critics.

“I am black, but comely ... as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.” The “tents of Kedar,” a reference to bedouin tents, were black on the outside and hung with beautiful tapestries on the inside. Back there, when the king traveled around, he had a black tent with lovely things inside.

Comment: As used elsewhere, “black” is a sign of favor. (1) The outer Tabernacle curtain was black. (2) Moses’ wife Zipporah was black, Moses being a picture of Jesus and Zipporah representing the Church. (3) The Queen of Sheba, who admired Solomon’s wisdom and traveled to Jerusalem to see the Temple, was black. She pictures the Church and Solomon portrays Jesus. (4) Also, black onyx stones were on the shoulders of the high priest. Chains suspended from them supported the breastplate. The black stones show that the Church will forever remember their humble origin here on earth.

Q: Would an alternate way of explaining this verse be the following? “I am black, but comely” is a couplet. The “tents of Kedar” and the “curtains of Solomon” describe, respectively, the blackness and the comeliness. In other words, “I am black as the tents of

Kedar, and comely as the curtains of Solomon.” The curtains of Solomon refer to beautiful curtains, such as those that were in the Temple.

A: Yes, that is the true thought.

Song 1:6 Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother’s children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept.

“Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me.” In other words, “Look not upon me as a servant.” It is like members of a household looking upon another member as a servant, as just a worker in the vineyard, and not as part of the household. The owner of a vineyard usually has helpers and does not ask his own sons and daughters to work there. Being suntanned is a sign of having worked in the field. The nobility used to pride themselves on the whiteness of their flesh, and ladies carried parasols to keep from getting a tan.

“My mother’s children were angry with me.” The “mother’s children” would be the professed children of the Sarah Covenant. It has been the history of the Church down through the age for the Little Flock class to be looked upon as inferior. For example, not having a ministerial title somewhat adversely affects a brother’s relationship with others in the Christian world.

Comment: The “mother’s children” are the same as the “daughters of Jerusalem”—daughters, sons, children of the mother Jerusalem (Sarah Covenant).

“They made me the keeper of the vineyards.” The virgin class are kept busy with activity and service (such as Sunday School). After consecration, an individual gets into an association with other professed Christians. As time goes on, that one is looked upon either as being immature (even though he or she may be growing) or with askance as to the true relationship to Christ. Consequently, the consecrated one is not recognized on a level with the others. If the individual is growing in Christlikeness and knowledge, and then asks questions about a certain Scripture, the response is “The Lord’s Word does not say that. Who are you to question the doctrine?” The minority virgin class are not accepted to the level of the majority daughters of Jerusalem. They are not esteemed on a family level with the mother’s other children and are elevated only to the level where they are taken advantage of. Their zeal is channeled into work for the organization, for that kind of work is accepted—just as money is accepted from almost any quarter. The virgin class work *for* the household, but they are not *in* the household. They are not “in the club,” as it were.

Comment: That can happen in our midst too.

Reply: Yes, that attitude is not limited to the nominal Church.

“But mine own vineyard have I not kept.”

Comment: The NIV reads, “My own vineyard I have neglected.” The virgin class realize they have been so busy with service and activity that they have not developed the way they should.

Reply: When the Bride class realize they have been kept busy to the neglect of their own vineyard, their sentiment is “O, for a closer walk with God and Jesus!”

Comment: Prior to coming out of Babylon, the truly consecrated in the nominal system can have this experience—until they come to their senses and realize what is happening.

Reply: The Song of Solomon is written for all Christians throughout the Gospel Age. This condition has existed ever since Pentecost, and will exist up to the end of the age. This class of professed Christians includes the purely nominal and the Great Company. In fact, the Great Company will be forcefully treated later in this book. Even the Little Flock are “professed Christians” in a broad sense. We, too, are “professed Christians” but, hopefully, sincere ones and *not nominal merely*.

It is natural to desire friends and company: to want to sing, pray, meet, fellowship, and study together. There is nothing wrong with this natural yearning, but we must be careful that the yearning does not become the chief motivation. Religion can be merely a *society* of believers, a *fellowship*, and that is as high as it goes. Those who believe in the erroneous doctrine “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved” have no fears. Moreover, they question the faith and integrity of those who try daily to make their calling and election sure, being suspicious of different beliefs. Meanwhile, they are confident of their *own* integrity.

The virgin class realize they have not kept their own vineyard; that is, they realize that all of the activity and service has kept them from developing as they should. In order for them to develop the fruits of the Spirit for their own salvation, the fruits must be planted, cultivated, pruned, watered, given sunshine, etc. The “vineyard” can be the heart.

Q: Who is angry with “me” and making me do “their” work instead of my own?

A: Anger can be inward and not necessarily expressed. There are all kinds of work. The Lord tells us to sit down and soberly assess what our talents are. We are to be neither overly high-minded nor so humble that our talents are not used. We should not all do the same service, for there are various talents and various administrations of the Spirit.

Q: The *prospective* Bride is speaking rather than the *finished* Bride class. Is the Great Company included at this point?

Comment: All of the consecrated have *the hope* of the high calling. How we respond makes the difference.

Reply: The ideal is shown here, but are you the ideal? Am I the ideal? Is anybody else? We will not know until our course is finished. When history is reviewed in the future, the class who prove faithful will be seen to have these symptoms and thinking. At present the Song of Solomon is meant to help us have the right motives.

Comment: A simple statement from the 1976 study might help. “The Song of Songs is a special song of the calling of the Church,” so it has to do with us now, in the present life—how we respond to circumstances.

Comment: The Bride is one of the daughters of Jerusalem too, but she is not recognized by those who oppose her. The “daughters of Jerusalem” (the new Jerusalem, the Jerusalem which is above) are professed Christians. “Jerusalem” can be considered on either side of the veil depending on context. Here it is this side of the veil. In the Book of Revelation, the new Jerusalem, the finished product that comes down from heaven, is beyond the veil.

The Hebrew has “mother’s sons,” which would still be children of the Sarah Covenant. In the Scriptures, we are pictured as daughters in one verse and sons in another verse. The sons and daughters are one and the same.

Song 1:7 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?

The prospective Bride continues to speak. Verse 7 has a pastoral setting. A shepherd is tending his flock, and of course the flock is entirely dependent upon the shepherd to (1) protect them, (2) lead them to water and good pasturage, (3) bring them back if they stray, etc. The prospective Bride wants to know where her Shepherd (Jesus) feeds his sheep and where they rest at noon with a minimum of sun shining on them. In a desert, shade would come only from a very large rock. The sentiments of the verse suggest that the prospective Bride is yearning for what she lacks, for some assurance or realization of the Shepherd’s care being manifested.

Q: Verse 6 said, “Look not upon me ... because the *sun* hath looked upon me.” Verse 7 mentions a desire to rest at *noon*. Would the “sun” represent a trial?

A: Yes, a trial or persecution. In such circumstances, a Christian yearns for a measure of comfort and consolation.

“For why should I be as one that is veiled by the flocks of thy companions?” is the correct thought, as presented in the Masoretic and the KJV margin. The prospective Bride feels she is veiled. The “companions” are nominal Christians, who have more fellowship. They seem happier and do not have so many trials weighing them down. The faithful virgin class desire fellowship, but on a *higher plane*. Others take advantage of those who comprise this serious class by relegating them to the more menial tasks and activities.

Q: Does the word “where” (“*where* thou feedest, *where* thou makest thy flock to rest at noon”) signify a place or a condition?

A: Spiritually speaking, it is a condition. The prospective Bride is looking for a circumstance or a condition, for the Shepherd does not seem to be there in her current circumstance. Her words are like a prayer, a yearning.

Song 1:8 If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds’ tents.

Jesus speaks in verses 8 through 10. Notice the expression “O thou fairest among women.” Generally speaking, this condition has existed all down through the Gospel Age, where this class has yearned for a closer walk with Jesus. She is veiled *in the eyes of her*

companions, but she is *unveiled in the eyes of Jesus*. He sees the beauty of her face and finds her more attractive. However, the motives of true Christians are generally not understood very well by nominal Christians. The prospective Bride yearns for closer fellowship. The others, who are also brothers and sisters in Christ, are content with their lower, more superficial level of fellowship. For example, consider those who feel that if a person just believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, he will be saved. Such a doctrine eliminates the need for Scriptural discussions and study because its adherents lack the hunger and feel eternally secure without them. The more sincere class think the others should sense their earnestness and their desire to please the Lord, but nominal Christians are blind in this regard. This blindness reminds us of Moses when his face was veiled. In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul says that Israel is blinded by this veil from seeing Moses in the true light. When Moses was up in the mountain, his face was unveiled, and he was talking with God. The light shone on his countenance to such a degree that when he came down from the mountain, the people were fearful and he had to hide his face with a veil. (Incidentally, this veiling is a type.)

To repeat: the virgin class wearing a veil of mourning desires Jesus' fellowship. The others cannot appreciate this desire because they are living on a superficial level. The advice is to "Go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents."

Q: Why is the instruction to feed "beside" and not "in" the shepherds' tents?

A: One cannot take the liberty of entering the shepherd's tent. It is like a dog that sits outside its master's door. The dog wants to be close so that when the occupant comes out, it will share in attention and fellowship.

The prospective Bride is longing for Jesus' appearance so she can follow him. For the Christian who finds himself in this condition, advice is given plainly: *Leave where you are. "Go thy way forth."* If you find conditions are not helpful to you spiritually where you are, why stay there? Go out and look for a better spiritual environment. Of course looking for the closer fellowship with those who are like-minded with the same desires and goals will require effort, courage, and faith that the Lord will guide. "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love" is the type of fellowship sought.

The advice continues: "Go ... [to the] shepherds' [*plural*] tents." The Good Shepherd said he would go away and return at the end of the age. Meanwhile, until the rapture, he has his ministers feeding the flock. Therefore, the yearning Christian should look not only for a better spiritual environment but also for an undershepherd that is more like the Good Shepherd. Such an undershepherd would be able to raise the Christian to a higher level of thinking and fellowship.

"Footsteps of the flock" would be evidences of the walk, conduct, path, etc., of those who are like-minded. This yearning condition has been experienced by Christians down through the age. The advice is to look for teachers who have the same manner of instruction as the Good Shepherd. To go out and search the unknown for the footsteps of the flock and the shepherds' tents requires a commensurate faith. Down through the age, ecclesias were in homes because public places were either too costly or too dangerous. Looking for homes where higher-level Christians met required effort.

Comment: Verse 7 mentions “flocks” (plural) versus “flock” (singular) here. This distinction shows again that Christians with the Little Flock tendency are in the minority.

The prospective Bride’s “kids” could be thought of as her own natural children. Parents have a measure of responsibility for their children. Putting them in a favorable environment increases their chance of “success.” The advice here is to pull up stakes and, if necessary, move. If you cannot find the proper spiritual environment by branching out locally, then move to where you can find it.

Q: Wouldn’t the “kids” also be babes in Christ? Baby spiritual sheep and goats—those we witness to—need nurturing in a good spiritual environment.

A: Yes, the “kids” refer to those you are responsible for, starting with the home and then reaching out to others.

Song 1:9 I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh’s chariots.

Jesus compares the one who is fairest among women to a company of horses in Pharaoh’s chariots. The literal rendering compares her to a horse (singular) or a mare. The horse would have to be female in order to be compared to the woman who is looking for a closer walk.

It was proper for Solomon to appreciate horses, but his sin came in *inordinately acquiring* them. God created the horse, and He singles out the horse in detail in Job 39, describing the magnificence of that animal from His perspective. Therefore, it was not wrong for Solomon to liken the Bride class to a mare. The mare was a lead horse in Pharaoh’s chariot, and Pharaoh had only the best horses to draw his chariots. The thought of verse 9 is that among those who are choice, the Bride class is particularly choice.

A mare is an animal of stability. The comparison is that we can have confidence in a sincere and mature Christian, one who is stable in character. We can count on such a one.

Song 1:10 Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold.

Jesus is still talking about the mare. To be sure that not only the enemy but also the compatriots in the nation knew who Pharaoh was, he wore a uniform and had horses, a chariot, decorations, etc., to show that he was the chief. Of course his chariot was outstanding in workmanship and ornamentation. Despite all this honor and display, the class Jesus is looking for are mournful and veiled. Why? Because the meek will be honored in the Kingdom. Those faithful Christians who are humiliated in the present life will be honored in the next life by “Pharaoh.”

A horse wears a **bridle**. Here the **bridle** has gold pins or studs joining the pieces of leather together. And perhaps a decoration flutters from the animal’s head or mane. The point is that the mare is specially ornamented. In pulling the chariot, the mare would be in the center between two other horses and half a foot or so ahead of them.

Song 1:11 We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver.

The pronoun “we” would be God and Jesus. In order to encourage the thought that more than just Jesus is interested in the Church, he says, “The Father himself loveth you” (John 16:27). We get a more complete representation of Jesus because of his sermons and the events of his earthly ministry that were recorded. To raise our thoughts to the Father, Jesus said on one occasion (John 14:8,9), “Philip, why do you say to me, Show us the Father? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” In other words, Jesus exemplified God so much in everything he did that if God were to come down here and appear in the flesh, He would look and act very much like Jesus. Jesus was saying, “You want to see the Father, but you know that no man can see God and live. I represent the Father *fully*.” “We [the Father Himself and I, Jesus] loveth you” is the thought.

Q: The Hebrew word for “borders” is *tor*. The back of Young’s *Analytical Concordance* gives three definitions for *tor*. One meaning, used only once, is “estate.” Would this be referring to the abode we will receive if faithful?

A: Yes, “estate,” “government,” or “condition.” *Tor* also means “rock,” showing stability.

The golden boards of the Tabernacle were set in sockets of silver. Those seated in the Holy hope to enter the Most Holy, which pictures a stable, permanent condition. The Holy is rectangular, being composed of *two* squares, whereas the Most Holy is just *one* square or cube. This distinction shows that only one of the two virgin classes in the Holy will get into the Most Holy, into the divine nature or estate.

Instead of “borders,” some translations have “chains” or “circlets,” which would be true when the picture is considered from the standpoint of the horse. Pharaoh had not only the best horse, chariot, and ornamentation but also the best sound from the tinkling chains when the horse moved. That way the eyes and ears of the people focused on Pharaoh. Just as Pharaoh chose the best mare for his chariot, so the Bride class is selected in this age according to **those** who develop the proper Christlike character for obtaining a permanent abode in heaven.

Comment: Malachi 3:17 comes to mind: “And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.”

Reply: The Church will be honored in the future.

“Studs of *silver*” would be truth, verity. In other words, the prospective Bride’s relationship to Jesus is not just a mood or condition but a FACT. It is like saying, “Thus it is!” When one looks into the Word and comes to the proper shepherd and the proper tent, that shepherd and tent will remind him of these Scriptures. From time to time we should review the precious promises and take inventory of where we stand, asking, “Have I made any progress? Am I still in the Lord’s favor? Was my call real?” As we reflect on past miracles, we get a little more confidence in our present state and realize we have not been following fables but what is REAL. The longer we are in the truth, the more we should feel like veterans in some respects. We have experienced wars, trials, and problems, yet we still love God and Jesus. This type of reasoning encourages us to put more faith in God and in the unknown future. God talks to us through His Word and through providence.

Song 1:12 While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.

The King, Jesus, reclines at his table. While we study together with our Bibles, we are at the Lord's table. In Matthew 18:20, Jesus said, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." When we gather, we expect to be fed spiritually. This "table" is on the ground in the desert. If in a nice house, the table would be a little elevated.

"My spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof." We are reminded of Spikenard Mary. Spikenard sending forth fragrance pictures our appreciation. Mary sacrificed the spikenard, which cost her a year's salary in value, because she LOVED Jesus. Her love was a spiritual love based on the Word and its principles. Therefore, we too should want to show a measure of our appreciation to Jesus. "What can I do to show my appreciation for Jesus?" she would have asked. Others considered the pouring of the spikenard to be a waste of money, but the act showed how much she appreciated sitting at Jesus' feet (or sitting at the "table" where she was fed).

When the expense was criticized, Jesus responded by saying, "What she has done will be known forever." Her act of kindness and sacrificing such a cost has been recorded in history for all generations to know. He further stated, "She hath anointed me for my burial." "She hath done what she could." On the opposite extreme is Judas, who, every time the Crucifixion is replayed, will be seen as the traitor. He is known in history as the son of perdition (John 17:12).

On another occasion Jesus said to the woman who anointed his feet, "Go thy way. Thy sins are forgiven." He encouraged her for her sorrow and tears of repentance and for drying his feet with her hair. A woman's hair is her glory, so drying Jesus' feet was a sacrifice. We should find the time to *meditate* on these precious moments.

Song 1:13 A bundle of myrrh is my wellbeloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.

Myrrh is a symbol of wisdom. Here the prospective Bride class is speaking of Jesus as being a bundle of myrrh: wisdom. His thinking is on such a *high level* that it lifts the Christian up to a cleaner, purer, higher clime.

In its natural form, myrrh was used as a deodorant and in connection with burial as a purifying agent. Women in the past worked and perspired. Suspending a bag of myrrh from their necks down between their breasts prevented the perspiration from giving an unpleasant odor.

But here the Bride is saying that Jesus is a bundle of myrrh to her. In other words, she realizes or asks, "Who am I?" We are but a tiny speck of humanity on one of the tiniest planets in the universe. From the divine standpoint, all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. If we did not have Jesus' robe of righteousness, he would find plenty of fault in every one of us—not just idiosyncrasies but unpleasant traits. Jesus' words "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" are very encouraging. In spite of our situation, the God of heaven, whose name is HOLY and who inhabiteth eternity, is very close to the meek, lowly, and contrite of heart. It is encouraging for us to realize He is

able to forgive. Jesus can love us if we recognize our undone condition and look to him for help, guidance, and instruction. This is the “deodorant” that overcomes our sins and shortcomings.

“He shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.” This statement, which is part of Scripture, is to be considered on a very high level. At night David would think about God and study the heavens. “Oh, how wonderful is thy Word, O God! This is my meditation day and night.” (See Psalm 119.) Christians in this age see Jesus, who reflects what his Father is like. The gospel is essential to get comfort, instruction, and edification.

Comment: The heart is between the breasts, and the heart is the seat of affection.

Comment: “Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh” (Matt. 12:34). If our heart is in heaven, our words will reflect that.

Song 1:14 My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of Engedi.

The Bride is speaking of her “beloved” Jesus. (“Beloved” is in the masculine gender.) Camphire is probably a form of cypress, which is very fragrant. In times past, sofas and pillows contained a cypress product of some kind as a deodorant. A forest of cypress trees produces a pleasing fragrance. There are many kinds of cypress, not just spruce and cedar. Cedar is a preservative too (example: cedar chests). In addition, a waxlike extract of camphire has been used as a cooling agent. For instance, if lips get sunburned, camphire will cool them.

“In the vineyards.” Vineyards are notorious for sun. Good grapes are produced with plenty of sun, which sweetens the grapes. Therefore, the camphire signifies coolness in the midst of extreme heat. “*Camphire in the vineyards of Engedi*” reinforces the thought of *coolness* in the midst of *heat*—whether it is a shade tree, shade leaves, or a refreshing fragrance. Engedi is at the Dead Sea, a very low, hot region.

1 Kings 4:29–34 speaks of Solomon’s wisdom before he deflected: “And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding *exceeding much*, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore. And Solomon’s wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men; ... and his fame was in all nations round about. And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.”

Comment: The text just quoted is excellent to rebut someone who wants to throw out any of Solomon’s writings.

1 Kings 3:11–13 speaks of God’s granting Solomon wisdom after he requested it. “And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also

given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days." Solomon was richly blessed because he is a picture of Jesus (and sometimes of The Christ).

Song 1:15 Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes.

Jesus is speaking. He calls the prospective Bride "my love." The repetition of "Behold, thou art fair" is for emphasis and reassurance that Jesus is not overstating the matter. When one sincerely consecrates and tries to do God's will, the Lord's love for that individual is more intense and more real than our love for him. When we question our love, we say it is maximum (or at least our intent is), but Jesus is trying to show us that his love for us is more intense.

When one consecrates, God is very pleased—just as He was pleased when Abraham responded after being called out of Ur. From God's standpoint, it is remarkable when an imperfect person consecrates, when one gives his heart to Him (or to Christ in some cases, because there has been some confusion). The angels in heaven rejoice over *even one* sinner who repents. And God Himself rejoices.

"Thou hast doves' eyes." Having doves' eyes signifies purity, peacefulness, tenderness, gentleness, sympathy, meekness, humility—all of which are related. If Jesus is meek and lowly of heart and we are to be like him, then, generally speaking, those who are called are the meek and lowly ones of the earth, those who are poor in spirit, those who realize their fallen condition. The flesh can have a good deal of pride that has to be dealt with and gotten rid of. We have conflicting emotions in that we are of the earth, earthy, and yet our hearts yearn for the spiritual, the heavenly, with its nobility and purity. Hence we need to wage a *continual warfare* against the flesh.

The dove is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, for when Jesus was immersed, the outward sign or evidence that the new nature was blossoming in him was the descent of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove visible to John the Baptist. Also, a dove sent forth from the Ark returned with an olive twig, which is a symbol of peacefulness, unction, and hope.

Song 1:16 Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed is green.

The prospective Bride responds to Jesus, calling him "my beloved." "Behold, thou art fair, ... yea, pleasant." The virgin class tells Jesus, "You are handsome as well." Then she adds the word "pleasant." Jesus is pleasant to be with. "Yea" is a form of emphasis. When we give our hearts to the Lord, different emotions go through us. We see our own fallen estate, our weaknesses, and our shortcomings, and then we see the nobility of Jesus' character, statements, and actions—and that he died on the Cross for sinners, of which we are one. We see Jesus' noble character and our own base character, and we want to be like him and to have fellowship with him. Mary sat at Jesus' feet to be instructed, to learn from him and be like him. Even those sent by the scribes and Pharisees to find fault with Jesus could only report, after listening to his sermons: "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46). They were enthralled by his profound utterances. We too are enthralled by the principles enunciated in Scripture, but we have gone one step further in wanting to be like him. To do that, we must be his disciples, and to be his disciples will cost us something (Luke 14:28). We admire what Jesus stood for, and we admire his devotion to the Father, whom we love as supreme.

“Also our bed is green.” The NIV has “Our resting place is life-giving.”

Comment: We are reminded of Jesus’ invitation “Come unto me ... and I will give you rest.” Jesus gives us a rest of faith and inner peace.

The word “bed” can be “couch” or “resting place”; it is not a bed that one sleeps in. “Green” pictures comfort, refreshment, life, youth, freshness. When in comfort in the shade, one is apt to commune and talk. A rest is implied, a comfortable condition, away from the world. The new creature communes with the Master in this most favorable environment for spiritual development.

Comment: On another occasion this rest was described as an oasis in the desert.

Reply: Yes, water for refreshment and trees for shade are in an oasis in the desert.

Comment: We have a new life in Christ, and we walk in newness of life. That would fit in with the thought of verdure and life-giving qualities.

Reply: When we first consecrate, we feel that we have found something wonderful and most unusual, and we want to tell everyone we know. We think others will be as interested as we are, and at first we are surprised to find out they are not. Without God’s Word, the future would be bleak, ephemeral, and visionary, but the Bible is specific and it brings order out of confusion.

Song 1:17 The beams of our house are cedar, and our rafters of fir.

Again the Bride is speaking, as shown by the pronoun “our” in verses 16 and 17. The beams and the rafters are a form of evergreen, which means the truth engenders life and hope. The term “our house” is plural in the Hebrew in the sense of *many* (not just a dual plural). In the Song of Solomon, the prospective Bride sometimes speaks as an individual and sometimes in the plural (clue: “our”). This is the experience of each of the consecrated, particularly at the time of consecration: joy, hope, a life-giving message, etc.

Comment: The King James margin has “galleries” for “rafters.”

Reply: Yes, because the rafters are the upstairs. For example, in a barn the rafters are the partial floor above where hay and other things are stored.

Consider, first, the “beams of our house.” Beams are *supports*, and it is crucial to have good supports. In other words, our future, our security, in which our faith and hope are anchored, is that these beams are very real—in fact, *more real* than a literal beam. In a book entitled *Christ in Concrete*, the thought is presented that for the Christian, faith sees things which are more real, whereas to others these things are delusions, fairy tales. The only problem is *us*—we must develop *more faith*. The promises are *sure and real and concrete*.

Q: Would the beams being cedar refer to our treasure in heaven, which moth and rust cannot corrupt?

A: Yes. This verse is a chorus. “The beams of our house[s]” means that *all* of the

consecrated have a hope of being in the mansion with Jesus. If the Song of Solomon is put to music, this verse will be sung as a chorus. In other places, an *individual* talks who is representative of the Bride class. Here the entire class speaks in a chorus.

Comment: Paul says that “faith is the ... evidence of things not seen” (Heb. 11:1). It is there! It is real!

Cedar has a preservative influence; it repels insects and has a fragrance that combats mildew. In times past, pillows and cushions contained cedar to combat odors and dampness. Cedar is a symbol of everlasting life. Therefore, our hope is eternal, lasting, secure. A house rests upon its beams, and particularly on the rafters. A strong beam is needed to support the next floor. The beams are fundamental supports.

The “beams” refer to the thoughts of Christians as regards their life now, at the present time, with the hope of everlasting life, whereas the “rafters” refer to the next life, beyond the veil. “Our rafters [are] of fir.”

Song 2:1 I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.

Because the prospective Bride is still speaking in verse 1, this verse should be the end of Chapter 1.

Comment: The use of “a” in the Revised Standard Version (“I am *a* rose of Sharon, and *a* lily of the valleys”) indicates humility. In other words, “I am a common, lowly flower of the plain, a common lily of the low lands.” The rose and the lily are to be thought of in the *collective* sense: the “valleys” (plural) would have more than one lily, for example. *Many* flowers, a *class* of flowers, is being referred to. The virgin class, these common little flowers, realize that God has called them as individuals into His family, and after a while they see why He has picked them: because they are rich in faith, poor in spirit, meek, etc. When they realize that they have this faith, they have a measure of confidence and hope that He really has called them. The HOLY ONE who inhabiteth eternity dwells with the lowly and contrite in heart. “Sharon” means plain.

In the Song of Solomon, “am” is a supplied word when the Bride is speaking and thus is (or should be) in italics: “I *am*.” When Jesus is speaking, “am” is part of the Hebrew: “I am.”

Song 2:2 As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.

The virgin class just said, “I am the lily of the valleys.” Now Jesus responds, “Yes, you are as the lily, but you are amidst thorns.” The “thorns” would be not only worldly people but professed Christians. The “daughters” are the same “daughters of Jerusalem” in Song 1:5 and 2:7. Even among nominal Christians who have similar hopes, the virgin class appear as fanatics and oddballs.

“So is my love among the daughters.” The word “love” is “friend” in the Hebrew, but of course it has a much deeper meaning than our English word. We sing, “What a *friend* we have in Jesus,” but he is singing, “What a *friend* I have in my consecrated followers.”

Song 2:3 As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the

sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

Now the prospective Bride speaks (and through verse 6). The word "beloved" is one clue; "among the sons" is another.

In some Bibles "apple" is "orange." The thought cannot be pinned down with certainty, but "apple" seems to be more accurate. In France, the potato is called the "apple of the ground." Hence the word "apple" is a loose term and would be something roundish.

Just as an apple tree provides shade and nourishment, so our communion with Jesus is uplifting, invigorating, and refreshing. Thinking about him takes us away from our own problems. His doctrine, his words, are like "apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov. 25:11).

"I sat down under his shadow with great delight." The espoused Bride is sitting under Jesus' shadow, that is, sitting at his feet for instruction. Jesus is being likened to the apple tree; hence the shade provides a good atmosphere for quiet, but penetrating, spiritual pleasure. In the heat of the day, shade provides a delightful and welcome atmosphere.

Comment: In the clause "his fruit was sweet to my taste," the "fruit" refers to the fruit of the Holy Spirit, ie, to the different aspects of Jesus' character.

Reply: Yes. The flavor or taste of a pomegranate, with its seeds and red juice, is not one distinct flavor, but a *mixture*. Perhaps the pomegranate is the fruit being referred to here. It would picture the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

Song 2:4 He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.

The "banqueting house" can be thought of as a grapevine arbor or a "house of wine" (King James margin).

Bro. Frank's personal thought for this verse is that it is a *future* picture. Jesus is preparing a house for us, the occasion being the introduction of the Little Flock into heaven. Since 1878, any of the faithful Little Flock who die receive an instant resurrection. The first experience of the resurrected individual is to see Jesus, who gives a private commendation: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matt. 25:21). This greeting is done in a hallway outside the banqueting room. In the banqueting room are gathered all the faithful. After Jesus' greeting, the newly resurrected individual enters the room and recognizes some faces. Of course most faces will not be known to the individual, but what joy and surprise upon mutual recognition!

Jesus said, "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matt. 26:29). The raised saints will not be introduced to the Father until the entire 144,000 are there beyond the veil. At that time they will be introduced as a group, and subsequently Jesus will confess the names of the different individuals in a special introduction to the Father and before the holy angels.

It is true that when we come into present truth as individuals, one of the features we first notice is the love of the brethren and fellowship and communion on the Lord's Word. Nevertheless, this verse seems to be future.

Q: If verse 4 has a future application beyond the veil, how would that apply to verse 5? Why would one of the Little Flock have to be comforted in heaven?

A: Giving a future application to verse 4 may be approaching it from an emotional standpoint. The time setting cannot be proven. However, this "Song" was written from the perspective of a *finished* picture, and it contains some movement that will be seen in later chapters. The Song progresses all down the age, and everything is viewed as *having happened*. For instance, the Little Flock is seen getting out of bed, the Great Company is reluctant to arise, a witness is given to Israel, etc. These events are all future, yet they are written as having happened. It is as though we are transferred to the very end of the age and are looking back at the feelings, reverence, devotion, and attitudes of the class who will be faithful, as well as the attitudes of the nominal Church, the Great Company, and others.

The point is that we cannot be dogmatic about the time setting here. Verse 4 could just as well be reasoned as a *current* expression, ie, on this side of the veil.

Song 2:5 Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love.

"Flagons" are raisin or grape cakes or goodies. The prospective Bride is lovesick; she is smitten with love for Jesus.

Comment: The NIV says, "For I am faint with love." In other words, she is overcome with love.

Q: Isn't the "lovesick" Bride so overwhelmed with her feelings for Jesus that she is pleading with him ("stay me with flagons," "comfort me with apples") for assurances that the hope engendered in her and the precious promises really can be fulfilled?

A: In a talk a few years ago, the speaker said, "If we were in a meeting and someone said that Jesus was in the next room, we would all run into that room." But that statement requires some very serious thought. Would not the proper reaction be to get down on our knees and ask the Lord that if he considered us worthy to enter the room, would he please send someone out to reassure us? This subject is such hallowed ground—it is very, very serious and something we have sacrificed a great deal for. If we had not consecrated, we might have become something in the world, but all that became meaningless when we saw the high station and the nobility of Christ's thinking. We would like to live, breathe, taste, eat, etc., that pure atmosphere, but we cannot do so while still in the flesh. The old man yearns for different things, and in the present life we cannot get rid of this monkey on our backs. We pray for help and fight not to submit to the wiles of the Adversary. Of the three temptations—the world, the flesh, and the devil—perhaps the most potent one is the flesh itself because it is with us every minute of the day. Satan makes his intrusions sporadically, but the flesh is always with us and it has preferences along the lines of pride, importance, leadership, and pleasure. Regarding the world, some have literally given all their goods to the poor and gone into monasteries, but still the flesh and other problems were with them. Nevertheless, in proportion as we fight a good fight according to the

strengths and weaknesses of our frame, we can be acceptable to the Lord.

Comment: We have been reading the book *Pilgrim's Progress*, and many times on Christian's way to the Celestial City, he needed refreshing and strengthening from the Lord. He had a scroll representing the Bible that he read for strength. The author, John Bunyan, vividly put the experiences and temptations of the Christian walk into this book.

Reply: The author had radical experiences earlier in his life, and his writing was just as graphic. Second to the Bible, it was the best seller in the past. Everyone in town knew him as a reprobate, but when he accepted Christ and changed, he was the opposite in every way. Seeing how his dedication to God changed his life just as radically the other way was a wonderful witness.

Comment: The NIV translates the beginning of verse 5: "Strengthen me with raisins; refresh me with apples." The "flagons" of wine can be doctrines, and the Lord's Word is what sustains us.

Song 2:6 His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.

This verse concludes the comments of the espoused virgin class to Jesus in this sequence. In the final analysis, the theme of the Song of Solomon is the theme of those who ultimately become the Bride of Christ.

The left and right hands are contrasted. "His left hand is under my head." The head is the seat of intellectual faculties.

Comment: Babies are supported by holding the back of their heads.

Reply: Yes, support and guidance are supplied by Jesus. The left hand steers the Bride toward the embrace. How? Through the Word of God.

"His right hand doth embrace me." The right hand indicates a position of favor. It provides love and protection.

To the world this is pure fantasy. They consider the faithful Christian a fanatic, always talking about the Bible. Sometimes they even view him as stupid.

Song 2:7 I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please.

Verse 7 is directed to the "daughters of Jerusalem"—a worldly element in the Church. The "charge" is issued lest the prospective Bride lose her closeness to Jesus because of interference from professed Christians who are not in the same attitude of heart and mind. Examples: (1) Levity can destroy our filling with the Holy Spirit. (2) Sometimes a chairman's prattling on afterwards can destroy the spirit of a talk. (3) Children should not be allowed to distract. *Intense* interest is *rare* among the professed people of God.

"Roes" and "hinds" frighten easily, being very sensitive to sound. Even the breaking of a twig sets them off. And so this precious love and fellowship between the prospective Bride and Jesus can be jarred. She wants no distracting influences.

The atmosphere that exists in certain studies under unusual circumstances seems to rise to a very high level of appreciation and reverence. If someone tells a joke at that time, the atmosphere is destroyed. A prayer meeting for one who is going through a trial can be adversely affected by someone who is not in the proper frame of mind. Those who are of kindred mind and in the proper mood should be gathered together for the prayer circle, even if the number is small. (Of course, others can pray about the matter at other times.) A reverential clime or atmosphere with everyone in sync makes the prayer more effective.

The thought is that those who disrupt or break the reverential atmosphere with trivia are going to pay a penalty in one way or another. It will cost such individuals something either in this life or in the next life. Paul, in some of his epistles, tells us that in certain cases where conscience is involved, we must tread softly—not that the whole should yield to the one, not that the tail wags the dog, but under certain peculiar circumstances. Paul spoke of trouble in a class because a Christian with a Jewish background believed that holy days should be observed and another Christian, a Gentile, believed that they should not. Paul's advice was to regard every day alike, but in the epistle he wove in the thought that we have to be very careful of the feelings of others under certain circumstances *that might be critical*. An example of a critical circumstance would be when someone is miffed or when something has been done that might be the difference between their fellowshiping with us, attending meetings, etc., or not doing so. Another illustration, a personal experience, occurred when we were sitting at a table at a convention and a Jewish couple came in. They were very interested in our discussion, and this was their first convention. Then a brother came over and patronizingly put a hand on the shoulder of the newcomer (the man) and asked, "Did you tell them about Pastor Russell?" What a crude way to speak under the circumstances! Interrupting a conversation was impolite, to start with, and then the comment made us sound like man-worshippers.

In summary, verse 7 is saying that anyone who disrupts an atmosphere which is very conducive to reverence and holiness and absorption in higher things is displeasing the Lord. "I charge you" means "Pay attention!" "This is a warning!"

The question is "Who is speaking?" Verse 7 ends in three different ways in various translations: "nor awake *my* love, till *he* please," "nor awake love, till *it* please," and "nor awake love, till *she* please." The correct ending is "nor awake love, till *it* please."

Comment: Bro. Frey's notes list 15 different translations for the end of verse 7. Out of the 15, only three say "till *she* please." The other 11 have either "till *he* please" or "till *it* please." And one translation uses "they."

If we are speaking of love as a *quality* that is easily affected by distracting influences, then the word "it" is permissible: "till *it* please." Love is a sensitive atmosphere, which can be easily turned off as a principle or a subject, just as the roe is easily distracted. With the pronoun "it" ("till *it* please"), the lesson is that an atmosphere can be destroyed through levity, carelessness, or some act or change of subject. For instance, if a group study is focused on a particular point and one party asks an irrelevant question, the atmosphere can be broken. The interruptive party spoils the atmosphere for the others.

We will now go into more depth to determine who is speaking in verse 7. We believe

this verse is a commentary by the Holy Spirit, and some examples follow to show that the Holy Spirit, under one guise or another, can speak in Scripture.

(John 14:17) “Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him [it] not, neither knoweth him [it]: but ye know him [it]; for he [it] dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.”

(John 16:13) “Howbeit when he [it], the Spirit of truth, is come, he [it] will guide you into all truth: for he [it] shall not speak of himself [itself]; but whatsoever he [it] shall hear, that shall he [it] speak: and he [it] will show you things to come.” This verse shows that the Holy Spirit “speaks,” commands, exhorts, etc. It manifests or expresses itself in one form or another.

(Acts 8:29) “Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.” Here the Holy Spirit spoke in Philip’s ear in a mechanical method. The spirit of God, the spirit of prophecy—this voice—let Philip know that he was to do something.

(Acts 10:19) “While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee.” We know the Holy Spirit is not a personality, but it speaks direct. It has knowledge because it emanates from the Father through a mechanism.

(Rom. 8:26) “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”

(1 Tim. 4:1) “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.”

(Rev. 14:13) “And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.”

(Prov. 8:12) “I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.” This is an important proof text, for here the Holy Spirit, under the role of Wisdom, uses the pronoun “I.” “I wisdom” do such-and-such. The Holy Spirit is not a personality. The personality that is subsequently introduced in Proverbs 8 is Jesus, not the Holy Spirit. At that point Jesus begins to personify Wisdom. Earlier, pronouns such as “she” and “her” were used for Wisdom, and the context shows it to be a principle. Also Wisdom, as the Holy Spirit, spoke and used the pronoun “I.”

Let us read verse 7 again: “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.” First of all, the word “my” is supplied; it is not in the Hebrew. The omission of this personal pronoun is very important. “I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, ... that ye stir not up, nor awake love...” The word “love” (*ahabah*) is in the feminine because it is a quality. Love is not a personality, but a state or condition. In Hebrew there are only two genders: masculine and feminine. However, there is an “it” inferentially. In other words, in order to make something understood in English, “it” can be supplied. A footnote in one translation says that although “love” is feminine, the use of “it” is preferable. That is correct, and the Hebrew allows this liberty in the translation into English based on

context. In addition, the verb is “please.” Therefore, instead of a personality (“he” or “she”), the thought would be “until love pleases”; that is, until this condition comes to a natural termination. It is a delicate situation of close communication, which should not be interrupted by any outside source.

Comment: The NIV says, “Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires.”

Reply: Yes, love is a condition, and the word *ahabah* is used elsewhere throughout the Song of Solomon in that same sense.

Comment: The RSV says, “I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles or the hinds of the field, that you stir not up nor awaken love until it please.”

Reply: In English the word “it” is used to make the thought coherent, but “it” can be omitted to read, simply, “until love pleases.” The words of this verse are quoted several times elsewhere in Song of Solomon.

Song 2:8 The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.

“Beloved” is masculine. Therefore, the wise virgin class is speaking. This verse is prophetic.

Comment: This verse pertains to the personal feeding Jesus is doing in a clearer, closer, and dearer sense here in the Harvest period.

Reply: He is coming down the space of time and is drawing near the consummation of the age. The “hills” and the “mountains” would be kingdoms, democracies, and all sorts of *governments* in the historic past. “Leaping” and “skipping” indicate the expectation and joy he experiences in coming nearer the Bride. Of course she appreciates the whole arrangement and is looking forward to a closer communion with Christ.

Prophetically or dispensationally speaking, the setting seems to be nearing the end or climax of the age. The passage of time is indicated by Jesus’ “coming upon the mountains” and “skipping upon the hills.” He is getting nearer and nearer to the fruition of the hopes of the Bride *class* (that is, not as individuals).

Note from the 1976 study: Jesus’ voice is heard as he approaches. The Master is approaching the Church with *joy!* He calls to her and she watches him coming closer. Anticipation and youth are involved. The love of Christ is not so intellectual that emotion is not involved. There is *enthusiasm!*

Song 2:9 My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, showing himself through the lattice.

Verses 9 and 10 are also dispensational, bringing us down closer to the end of the age. The prospective Bride is speaking in both verses. She likens Jesus to “a roe or a young hart.”

“Behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, showing himself through the lattice.” Three things need to be explained: the wall, the windows, and the

lattice. The one common denominator for all three is that they are a *barrier* or a *separation*. However, she can see through the barrier because it has windows or is a lattice. In other words, the barrier is not a solid wall. The wall represents the flesh, which physically separates us from Jesus. It also particularly represents the Second Veil (the Veil of the Flesh) between the Holy and the Most Holy of the Tabernacle. (The entrance to the Holy is the Veil of the Mind, the Will.) We cannot get into the Most Holy except through the death of the flesh.

(1 Cor. 13:12) “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” Seeing through the glass or veil “darkly” can mean it is translucent. There is a partial obstruction. We pray and commune with God (through Jesus) in the Holy, which is before the Second Veil.

The passage of time is again indicated as the end of the age gets closer.

Comment: Seeing through a glass darkly would apply to the whole Gospel Age, but now there are windows and a lattice. Dispensationally, we can see more clearly. The Lord has revealed more of his truth.

(Rev. 3:20) “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” This message to the Laodicean Church suggests a closeness.

A lattice has *several* apertures, and windows are *plural*. What would these suggest?

Comment: Multiple confirmations in the Scriptures assure us of the fact that we are at the end of the age and in the time of Christ’s presence.

Reply: We are not dependent upon only one Scripture to prove the presence. The most important proof from the standpoint of time is the Jubilee, which is mathematical reasoning. Another proof is “that servant.” The Lord said that when he would see that servant faithfully having the right attitude and spirit, he would give him the responsibility for the goods. The evidence of the Second Presence of the Lord as a chronological fact fits in with other expectations. Jesus said he would sit down on *this side* of the veil and serve meat in due season. The different facets of the “windows” confirm the fact of the Lord’s presence. And of course the ideal situation is to feel the love and joy in our hearts and not just in our heads. The “head” pertains to sight, to hearing.

Song 2:10 My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.

Song 2:11 For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone;

Before discussing verses 10 and 11, we will have a short review of verses 7–9.

Verse 7: “I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please.”

The fawn and the deer are gentle, delicate, innocent, very endearing creatures, but they are easily alarmed. The mere snapping of a twig startles and alarms them. Verse 6, which

just told about the left hand guiding and the right hand embracing, is linked with verse 7. The daughters of Jerusalem are admonished not to stir up or interrupt this close fellowship of endearment between Jesus and the Church. Who are the “daughters of Jerusalem”? The true “daughter” will marry Jesus. The “daughters of Jerusalem” have somewhat similar hopes, but they disrupt the tender fellowship that the prospective Bride enjoys with her Beloved. An example would be uttering untoward remarks that interrupt close fellowship between two brethren. Another example would be when someone hurts the feelings of one who is truly the Lord’s; the party doing the injuring is accountable.

Who is talking? Who is doing the charging? The Hebrew has “she,” not “he.” Therefore, is the Bride speaking, is Jesus speaking about love (“love” is feminine in the Hebrew), or is there another explanation? The Revised Standard Version has the proper thought: “until *it* please.” In other words, “I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up nor awaken this relationship until it [love] please[s].” Just let love be until it comes to a natural termination. In other words, verse 7 is an expression of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is saying, “I am warning you: Do not interrupt the relationship between the King and his chief lover, the Bride class.” The Holy Spirit is referred to similarly in 1 Timothy 4:1, “Now the Spirit *speaketh expressly*, that in the latter times ...” In both instances, the Holy Spirit issues a warning.

Verses 8 and 9: “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, showing himself through the lattice.”

The Bride speaks in verses 8, 9, and the first part of verse 10 (she quotes Jesus in the rest of verse 10 through verse 13). She likens him to a roe or hart leaping upon the mountains. He shows himself “through the lattice.” Previously the Bride class was pictured down through the age, but now the narrative draws a picture of the coming of the end of the age. The *parousia* is the setting, the invisible Second Presence. At this time a special enlightenment or opening up of the Word is possible through various interlocking and harmonious time prophecies and doctrines. Although we see through the dark glass imperfectly, at least we see through it, and we see him on the other side looking through the lattice at the Bride class down here (1 Cor. 13:12). He shows himself through the lattice work of present-truth time prophecies and doctrines.

Verses 10 and 11: “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.”

What does Jesus say to the Bride in verses 10 through 13? “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[dove] 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.”

In verse 10, the setting is near the Second Advent and the time for change. Jesus is calling this class from the tomb. The “winter” being past is not talking about the world’s winter Time of Trouble yet future but refers to those who, having experienced persecuting and trying conditions down through the Gospel Age, finished their course with faithfulness. Now comes their reward. For the saints who slept in the tomb from the days of the early Church until 1878, their “winter” is past. For them, the time of singing has come. This

time setting ties in with the fig tree beginning to blossom in 1878. The Harvest message has beautifully harmonized many truths, so that we can now behold the Master more definitively. Also, promising evidences of change are all about. Actually it is change and decay now, but the changes were predicted to be the cloud just before the sunrise. Thus the “winter” of the sleeping saints is past, their “rain” is over, and they have had their change.

“The rain is over and gone.” Normally we think of the rain as being favorable, as showers of blessing, but this is the *winter* rain in the *cold, damp* part of the year. The reference is to the time of deluge and uncomfortableness experienced by those who were faithful down through the Gospel Age. Their winter and the overwhelming “flooding” experiences are over.

Song 2:12 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;

Song 2:13 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.

“The flowers appear on the earth” in the spring. “The time of the singing of birds” occurs when they are mating. Prophetically, the “mating” is the harmonizing of prophecy. Isaiah 34:16 reads, “Seek ye out of the book of the LORD, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them.” “No one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate” means that the time for understanding the fulfillment of prophecy has come. One bird represents prophecy *foretold*; the other bird represents prophecy *fulfilled*. The mating means that it is accomplished—prophecy is fulfilled; it is now history. And so many time periods are now understood in the Harvest period. Examples are the 1,335 days, the secret presence of Christ, and Israel’s restoration and place in prophecy. All of these are signs of encouragement.

These events—the flowers appearing, the voice of the turtledove, the mating of birds, the fig tree putting forth her green (untimely, unripe) figs—followed the raising of the sleeping saints. In 1878, a lot of things happened: the sleeping saints were raised, the fig tree (Israel) put forth her leaves, Petatikva was established, Babylon was rejected from favor, and the Jewish double ended. These were all signs of spring, but not of summer.

“Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away,” the last part of verse 13, is similar to Jesus’ words in verse 10. However, this time another word is used. Instead of saying “Come away,” the Hebrew carries the thought: “Come, you—*you!* *You* yourself come!” “Arise, and *you* come!” The emphasis is on the sleeping saints being called forth from the tomb to be in earth’s atmosphere. Jesus calls them to “come away!” for *they have made it!!! They are part of the Little Flock!!!*

At the present time, many end-of-the-age prophecies have not yet been fulfilled, but they will be. Each bird finding its mate is related to the picture of the camels and the asses in Isaiah 21:5–7. “Prepare the table, watch in the watchtower, eat, drink: arise, ye princes, and anoint the shield. For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth. And he saw a chariot with a couple of horsemen, a chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels; and he hearkened diligently with much heed.” Two animals are

described: a train of camels and a train of asses or horses, one behind the other. Isaiah, in vision, sees the same person on both animals. The thought is not that he has one foot on one animal and the second foot on the other, but that as one of the Little Flock, his face will be on the one riding the camel down here in the desert of sin and also on the one riding the horse of victory. The one on the camel has made his calling and election sure, and therefore, he is seen on the horse as being faithful. When Isaiah saw the animals coming, he knew that Babylon had fallen.

Comment: The New International Version says, “The season of singing has come.” Jesus is saying to the Bride, “Summer has not yet come, but the Millennial Age has started. For the Church, the season of singing has come.” Bro. Frey makes a point about the turtledove: It “has a reference undoubtedly to improving the conditions of the poor and the oppressed.” He refers back to the Tabernacle sacrifices where the poor could bring turtledoves, and these are the blessings for the poor.

Reply: Verses 12 and 13 are an understanding of God’s plan but primarily the *time* factor—knowing that we are in the Harvest, that we are at the end time of prophecy. This understanding is promising to us, whereas if we just looked at the world, we would see a picture of confusion. Yes, in the type the poor could give a handful of incense or flour, and for them, that would constitute a sin offering, which normally required *blood*. However, in antitype the very poor in understanding (those who are limited in their potential development) are given credit because of their spirit.

“The vines with the tender grape give a good smell.” The supplied word “good” should be omitted, for the smell is distinctive but not a pleasant one. However, when that odor is in the air, it signifies that the grapes are developing and that the vine has life in it. At this point the grapes are not edible.

Q: Does the “fig tree” refer to when Israel is starting to get established?

A: Yes. Not only did Petatikva occur in 1878, but the nation of Israel was reestablished in 1948. However, the nation is still untimely today; its recognition in the Kingdom will be on a much different basis. Nevertheless, we see a form, an organization. The bones have come together, and flesh is on the bones (Ezek. 37:1–10). Everything is there, but the *breath* is still lacking. The breath will be imparted at the time of Jacob’s Trouble. Then the nation will be truly revitalized, and the Ancient Worthies will be installed in office. The Pastor saw the fig tree put forth leaves in 1878; in 1948 we saw the untimely fig when the nation was reestablished.

Both the resurrected saints in earth’s atmosphere and the prospective Bride still in the flesh behold these promises and see prophecy being fulfilled.

Song 2:14 O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.

Jesus now speaks. Attention is taken away from the risen saints and directed down here to those who remain in the flesh, to those who are in the “clefts of the rock [Jesus].” The dead in Christ rise first, and then, *afterward*, those who remain (1 Thess. 4:16,17). To be in the clefts of “the rock” is to be covered with the robe of Christ’s righteousness.

The term “clefts of the rock” refers, figuratively, to those still down here who are living *by faith*. The “secret places of the stairs” are related to Jacob’s ladder; specifically, they are the *prayer ladder* or secret prayer staircase by which we can communicate with Jesus and with God. Faith and prayer make communion possible. Jesus is telling the Bride to stay close to him, his Word, and his fellowship—and personal, private prayer is essential—in order to receive the refreshment that is necessary to finish their course in faithfulness. Prayer is very important—we are instructed to “watch and pray” (Matt. 26:41).

Song 2:15 Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.

The prospective Bride is speaking in verses 15–17. The “foxes” (little violations of our covenant) are problems that interfere with our communication with Jesus.

Comment: The Revised Standard Version has “*Catch* us the foxes”; ie, we are to recognize and deal with the little violations of our covenant. We are to *stop* them.

Reply: In other words, the thought of “take” is “capture” or “catch.” The foxes are violations of principle or conscience, being overcharged with the cares of this life, being deceived by riches—anything that would stop us from full faithfulness.

Our “vines” should develop “tender grapes.” Anything that would stop this development is to be halted, for a vine is adversely affected by little nibblings. A violation can spoil the fruitage so that it will not be completely acceptable to the harvester (the Lord). The “tender grapes” would be the fruitage of the Holy Spirit. Negligence is inimical to the Holy Spirit. Again, watch and pray seems to be the mood of these comments.

Comment: The Pastor said, “Little sins are really more dangerous than grosser sins, because we are less likely to be on guard against them. Foxes are very cunning, not capable of ferociousness and viciousness, but are nevertheless the cause of much harm. An appearance of docility makes them more dangerous and less likely to arouse suspicion of evil intention.”

Comment: Bro. Martin Mitchell wrote a children’s book on the “Little Foxes,” but adult thinking and principles are in that book.

Consider a tree, even a mature one. If you continuously walk around the foot of a tree where the roots are, the tree is very sensitive and can be damaged. Hence the “little foxes” are these habitual, small violations that are more continuous and not easily recognizable as being dangerous to the new creature. Anything repetitive can have a devastating effect.

Comment: Along that line, the huge, tall redwood tree is particularly susceptible to root damage because the roots are so close to the surface. It would appear to be one of the most durable of trees, but that is not the case. Moreover, because the wood itself is so durable and is naturally preserved against insects, the fragile nature of the root system is surprising.

The tundra above the timberline is also very fragile. Where visitors frequent a spot, a path is designated so that inadvertent walking will not occur on the tundra. It takes years

to replace damaged plants.

Song 2:16 My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies.

The Bride is saying that Jesus feeds among the lilies.

Comment: This verse ties in with verse 1 where the Church says, "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys." The "lily" is the common little flower of the lowlands, so Jesus "feeds" (has communion and fellowship) among this humble, meek class. In olden times, receiving hospitality gave one a feeling of security and protection. If you could get into the tent of an enemy and converse with him and plead for mercy, he would never kill you. The safest place would be in the house of the enemy. George Washington, with all of his problems, had a rule that during dinner no strife or unpleasantness could mar the peace or be discussed. A principle of ancient times was not to bring problems to the table of fellowship.

Song 2:17 Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether.

Verse 17 refers back to verse 9. Jesus is standing "like a roe or a young hart," and the prospective Bride wants him to continue in this condition.

In countries with hills and mountains, the roe and the deer are very adept. Like mountain goats, they scamper up mountains and jump from one crevice to another. The "mountains of Bether" signify mountains of division or separation; ie, the separation between the heavenly and the earthly. One mountain (the earthly) is on this side of the veil, and the other (the spiritual) is on the other side of the veil. The desire of the Bride class is that the gap be bridged.

Comment: The word "turn" in the French translation is "come again," which is "return."

Reply: The Hebrew word is literally "turn." The thought is to turn from something else.

"Day break" would be Millennial dawn, when the sun comes up. Remember the *Manna* comment from Leeser? "At the dawning of (*her*) morning" (Psa. 46:5). The dawning of the Church's morning will precede the dawning for the world.

Song 3:1 By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.

In this bedroom scene the prospective Bride class, personified as an individual, is musing, which often happens at night. This scene is quite different from the bedroom scene in Chapter 5. In Chapter 5 the Great Company, who have been sleeping, *delay* their action. Here the individual (the Bride class) *zealously, of her own volition*, seeks the Lord. He did not have to go to the door and rattle the latch.

Q: Can the "bed" be equated not only to a personal experience that happens at night but also to a creedal bed, as in Isaiah 28:20, "For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it: and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it"?

A: Some of this class who ultimately make their calling and election sure may be in a

creedal bed. Some are in another type of bed: a bed of faith. Those in the creedal bed who are not satisfied with the current situation will leave that bed to find the Master. Of those in the creedal bed, many would be in Christendom, but some could even be in the Truth movement itself, for there are two classes in our midst and none of us know for sure that we are of the Little Flock. However, in searching our hearts, we can be sure where our priorities are. As babes when we first consecrate, we may think we are of the Little Flock, but we are immature. As we are consecrated longer and longer, we realize the qualifications that are necessary for membership in that class, and we then *aspire, run, desire, and pray* to be faithful. But God will make the final determination. Verses 1–4 give characteristics of the class who will make their calling and election sure. They *voluntarily* search for an ever closer relationship with the Master. One way of searching is to come out of Babylon (“Come out of her, my people”) lest her plagues be received. In order to have sufficient spiritual development, we should gravitate to where we can get the best instruction. When we hunger for a closer communion with Jesus and for more information, we should search for a situation that fulfills that desire.

Comment: Bro. Frey suggested the “night” would be the night of the Gospel Age. For the Bride class, the creedal bed becomes too short, so she gets up out of the bed and searches about the city looking for the Lord. When she does not find him there, she continues to search.

Reply: Yes, except that the setting is the end of the Gospel Age, ie, *during the Harvest period*.

If we are running the race, one of our chief desires should be union with our Lord in the coming marriage. Those who earnestly desire this union purify themselves. “And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure” (1 John 3:3). Getting up out of the bed shows *activity*; whether in or out of the nominal Church, she gets out of the slumbering posture and actively seeks the Lord, whom her soul loves. Laodicea is a slumbering, indolent period of ease and comfort. To *personally want to be with Jesus* is something we could all improve on—and on a daily basis. Truth per se is an *aid* to bring us closer to the Lord because we can think his thoughts on a higher plane, but *personal love for Jesus* is another matter. Whom do we want to see most? It should be God first and Jesus next.

Comment: An interesting Scripture is Isaiah 26:9, “With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.”

Song 3:2 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.

“I will rise now, and go about the city [the nominal Church] in the streets [Christendom].” This verse shows a searching among all professing Christians, for even tares profess to be Christians. On a short-term basis it is hard for us to determine a tare from a real Christian. If one leads a fairly decent life and manifests interest in the Lord, we must take the individual at his word. In nature we look for *fruitage* to determine wheat from tares, and so we look at professing Christians to make sure they are not hypocritical in their profession. When wheat matures, it begins to bow its head because of the weight of the little seeds. In contrast, the tare grows straight up.

Comment: In each of the first four verses, the words are repeated “whom my soul loveth.” This indicates the Bride’s supreme personal love for Jesus.

Not finding Jesus at first would be the experience of many of us, if not all, in searching for truth. Perseverance is necessary. Development comes about when something is withheld and we have to exercise faith and search for it.

Comment: Many in our fellowship are “born” in the truth.

Reply: That is true. Bro. Krebs emphasized the difference between those who are born in the truth and those who are not. When enlightened, the latter class is, at least initially, more responsive and sensitive. For one who is down in a coal mine in darkness for a long time and then comes up into daylight, the reaction is startling—more so than with one who is familiar with truth from birth. However, in the final analysis, what we ultimately do with the truth is what is important. In the beginning, both classes are very lovable in the Lord’s sight because they have made a consecration.

In regard to not finding Jesus, even those who are born in the truth have questions. An example would be: Am I being influenced by my association? Is this the truth or not? To illustrate: If one is born in Russia, he thinks like a Russian. If one is born in Germany, he has German attitudes and thinking. Whether this is good or bad is another matter. How we develop subsequently is what counts.

“I will ... go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways.” The “broad ways” would be ways other than the nominal systems. For a while, when he could not get answers from the denominations, the Pastor studied other religions. Not finding answers there either, he returned to a prayerful, diligent study of the Bible.

“I will seek him whom my soul loveth.” This repetition is appropriate because the Song of Solomon is a metered song that will be sung *with understanding* in the Kingdom. Jesus will be represented by a solo male voice; the Bride, by a solo female voice and in some verses by a group of women. This is “the song of songs,” and Solomon pictures the Lord in glory.

Comment: In former times, and especially in Europe, streets were narrow. Thus *narrow* streets are contrasted with the *broad* ways.

Reply: There is a definite contrast. The “narrow” aspect would be Christendom’s streets, which are structured and strictured, but the “broad ways” are too broad. The creedal beds of the nominal Church are cribs, which are too short and too narrow. “For the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it: and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it” (Isa. 8:20). Moreover, the blanket is too short; if the blanket is pulled up to the neck to keep warm, the feet are exposed, and if the blanket covers the feet, the upper part of the body is exposed. For those who desire to develop and grow as new creatures, the creedal beds are too restrictive. For those who are satisfied, for those who wish to remain as babies, the crib is long enough.

Comment: “Broad ways” would imply one is just wandering around, not knowing where he is going.

In this picture, the Bride first looks around on her own. When she does not find the Master, she begins to ask questions. And so, when we feel we are not getting anywhere, we inquire for instruction.

“But I found him not.” Again her searching ends without success.

Song 3:3 The watchmen that go about the city found me: to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?

Comment: The “watchmen” are religious leaders, especially in the nominal systems, but they can also be in our midst. If we are not finding truth in a particular ecclesia in the depth that we desire, we should attend different classes to find out where we are best fed.

Reply: The “watchmen” are nominal religious leaders in positions of prominence who are in a teaching capacity.

Comment: It is the “watchmen” who find the prospective Bride class, and not vice versa.

Reply: Ministers want sincere Christians in their congregations, and they seek converts who will look to them for instruction. The next part of the verse indicates the seeking is almost mutual. Notice how responsive the Bride is! As soon as the nominal religious leaders find her, she asks where Jesus is—but she does not find him there.

Her attitude is one of watching and praying, and praying and watching. “Watch and pray,” we are told (Mark 13:33; 14:38; Luke 21:36; 1 Pet. 4:7). The Holy Spirit is an activating influence. In proportion as we have the Holy Spirit, the stronger will be our hunger and our desire to be satisfied.

Comment: Isaiah 56:10 speaks of unfaithful ministers: “His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.”

Reply: On the other side of the coin, Bro. Russell is likened to a watchman: “Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?” (Isa. 21:11). “Watchmen” should survey the horizon for dangers as well as for good news. The prospective Bride goes to those with a reputation for teaching.

Song 3:4 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.

The key thought here is that the prospective Bride takes Jesus to her “mother’s house.” The “mother” is Sarah, and the “house” is related first to a covenant and eventually to marriage. Hence the “mother’s house” is the Sarah Covenant. In Genesis 24:67, Isaac took Rebecca into his mother’s tent: “And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother’s death.” Thus verse 4 is related to the fulfillment of the Sarah Covenant.

Q: Is Sarah considered the Church’s mother?

A: Yes, she is the “mother of us all” (Gal. 4:26).

Comment: In Genesis 24:67 *Isaac takes Rebecca* into his mother’s tent, but here in Song of Solomon the *Bride takes Jesus*.

Reply: The fervent, intense love between Jesus and the Bride is mutual. The reverse emphasis in Song of Solomon (that Rebecca takes Isaac into Sarah’s tent) is intentional to bring out the mutuality of their intense love. It also raises the standard of our desire to be with the Master. That desire should be more supreme than just wanting to be identified with a movement. Many look for *social* acceptance, for mutuality of *fellowship*. Instead our highest desire should be to see *God and Jesus*. This type of love is a most vehement flame.

Comment: The repetition “my mother’s house” and “the chamber of her that conceived me” indicate her realization that she only exists as a Bride because of the Sarah Covenant and because of her relationship to Jesus.

Reply: Some translations read “into the inner chamber of her that conceived me.”

Isaac was Sarah’s seed. The Apostle Paul said, “Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise” (Gal. 4:28). In the final analysis, the “children of promise” are only the Little Flock.

Song 3:5 **I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please.**

This verse is a repeat of Song 2:7. Again, the Holy Spirit is speaking, the ending being “till love please” or “nor awake love, till it please.” This Holy Spirit commentary will be sung as a chorus in the Kingdom.

Comment: In the two instances so far, this interjection by the Holy Spirit comes appropriately at the tenderest of moments.

A temporary ending occurs here with the marriage; that is, with Jesus’ being brought into the Sarah Covenant, into the mother’s house.

Song 3:6 **Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?**

The one coming “out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke” is the Bride class. Clue: the word “this” is feminine. The “pillars of smoke,” along with the “myrrh” and “frankincense,” refer to the Tabernacle arrangement, which was in the “wilderness” of Sinai. Normally we think of the one cloud that led the Israelites, and a pillar of the cloud went before them.

Q: Strong’s has “a column that is cloud.” Could the plurality be the idea of the column and the cloud?

A: Yes, it could be. Another instance would be the smoke that issued forth from three sources at the same time: (1) the Brazen Altar in the Court, (2) the incense that went over the veil into the Most Holy, and (3) the burning hides and dung without the Camp.

Q: Would verse 6 be explaining those who make their calling and election sure?

A: Yes. Myrrh and frankincense are clues. Verse 6 definitely refers to the Tabernacle arrangement, and soon, in the same context, the Ark of the Covenant will be mentioned. The time element, the real key to the identity of the one in verse 6, must be determined.

“Perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant” refers to the various incense powders. “Myrrh” is a symbol of wisdom, and “frankincense” would be praise. Gold, frankincense, and myrrh were given to Jesus by the wise men. The *Berean Manual* says that gold represents obedience in consecration; frankincense represents praise, devotion, heart adoration, appreciation, and gratitude; and myrrh represents submission and a willingness for service to the extent of bitterness and suffering. The three wise men picture *three classes of the Church*, as do the three sons of Noah, the three stories of the Ark, the three bands of Gideon, and the three Hebrew children. Daniel mentions that “the wise” have understanding. “Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; ... the *wise* shall understand” (Dan. 12:10); that is, enlightened Christians would understand certain prophecies of Daniel at a certain time. Here in verse 6 “myrrh” pictures submission to the extent of sacrifice, and “frankincense” signifies praise, worship, devotion, etc. “All powders of the merchant” would be various other good qualities.

To repeat: three sources of smoke ascended simultaneously from the Tabernacle arrangement. (1) Smoke arising from the Brazen Altar in the Court pictures those in the condition of belief. In antitype the wall is a wall of belief to those inside the Court and a wall of unbelief to those outside. The smoke was pleasing to the Lord. (2) Smoke ascended from the incense in the Holy. (3) Smoke arose from the burning hides, dung, etc., outside the Camp. All three represent the same (one) burning, but as seen from three different standpoints. The world (outside the Camp) has no appreciation of Jesus’ sacrifice. Those in the Court of belief see the vicarious nature of Jesus’ sacrifice—that it pleased God and that it provides justification.

On the Day of Atonement, the bullock preceded the goat so that it could justify the goat; ie, the bullock was offered for the priesthood. The goat, which followed the bullock on the altar, was for the sins of the nation, the people. The Lord justified the Church so that its offering can be reckoned as pleasing to God. The Apostle Paul said we are baptized for the dead, meaning for the world of mankind: “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?” (1 Cor. 15:29). In other words, the bullock and the goat were the sin offering on the Day of Atonement for the nation, for the people. The bullock justified the priesthood. It was like a transfusion. The merit of Jesus’ blood coursing through the Church gives them a standing so that they can be presented as a sin offering. And what is the sin offering for? The goat represents the Church, but the Church’s offering is for the sin of *others*. After being sprinkled on the Law, the blood was sprinkled symbolically on the nation, and that is what Paul refers to in Hebrews when he mentions that the “blood of bulls and goats” does a sanctification work.

In effect, then, verse 6 refers to the Church in the feminine aspect, but it also represents The Christ, the Bride and Bridegroom. When a literal bride comes out of a church after the wedding ceremony, she leans on the arm of her bridegroom.

Q: Does verse 6 talk of the Church going home?

A: Verse 6 shows The Christ as a consummated class in the following sense: "When thy judgments are [abroad] in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isa. 26:9). The world of mankind will also learn that Jesus is Messiah and that The Messiah includes body members. The reason for the delay of 2,000 years for restitution and for God's showing His favor to the world is because He has been selecting a class, namely, Jesus and the Church. Verse 6 shows the consummation in several ways. The acceptability of Jesus' sacrifice was manifested in the incense in the Holy, and it is his justification that makes our prayers acceptable to God. Coming "out of the wilderness" (verse 6) brings in the Church. We sometimes say "the Church in the wilderness."

Song 3:7 Behold his bed, which is Solomon's; threescore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel.

Verses 6–11 are a commentary by the Holy Spirit. Verse 7 speaks of Solomon's bed or palanquin. Just as the Pope, the false Christ, is carried in a chair, so the Ark of the Covenant is likened to the "chair" of God, who "dwellest between the cherubims" (Psa. 80:1). The *shekinah* light represents God, but the Ark represents The Christ. The propitiatory lid pictures Jesus, the Head, and the box underneath is the Church. (Of course the Ark is incomplete without the cover.) Inside the box are the tables of the Law (The Christ will be the lawgiver), the golden pot of manna (The Christ will possess immortality), and Aaron's rod that budded (The Christ are God's elect). The budding of Aaron's rod indicated he was God's choice as high priest; hence Aaron's rod was a sign of election and selection. "Solomon" pictures The Christ in glory.

Comment: The fact that the "bed" is guarded by "valiant men" seems to indicate the scene takes place this side of the veil with guardian angels watching over the elect.

"Threescore valiant men." What does the number "60" represent? Song 6:8 compares a series of numbers: "There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number." Song 6:8 is a mystery verse, which we hope the Lord will open up to us, but notice that the context has 60, 80, and "without number." On the other hand, the "60" of Song 3:7 is not compared with another number but is by itself. In the past, the word "60" in Hebrew has had the connotation of an indefinite number. Sometimes we say to someone who wants our attention, "Just a minute," but we do not mean 60 literal seconds. What we mean is that we have something important to attend to, but it will not take long. In other words, the phrase means a short but unspecified amount of time. The "threescore" of Song 3:7 is not literal either. Based on the Hebrew, it is an indefinite number. However, in Song 6:8 the *series of numbers* means the 60 and 80 are definite numbers.

Song 3:8 They all hold swords, being expert in war: every man hath his sword upon his thigh because of fear in the night.

Sixty "valiant" (mighty) men are around Solomon's bed. All of the valiant men hold swords upon their thighs, "being expert in war ... because of fear in the night." During the wilderness journey of its earthly career, the Ark of the Covenant is pictured as having spiritual forces protecting it. But God's providence is over His elect not only during the Gospel Age but also in the Kingdom Age. People will come forth from the tomb with the

same characters they had previously (anarchists, atheists, rebels, etc.), but Jesus will reign *with authority* and be empowered from on high in connection with his work. As overseers of authority, the “valiant men” protect the Ark so that nothing can despoil, damage, or interrupt it “because of fear in the night[time of the Gospel Age],” the antitypical Passover night when the lamb was eaten.

The “valiant” ones, the power that is used to preserve the Ark during its wilderness journey, will be manifested and exercised even in the Kingdom Age so that nothing will interfere with the Lord’s arrangement.

Song 3:9 King Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon.

A “chariot” is a litter bed on which one can be transported. It is called a palanquin. The “wood of Lebanon,” a superior type of cedar from the cedars of Lebanon, is a type of wood that grows for thousands of years and is hard and enduring, much like our California redwoods. Cedars of Lebanon were used in building the Temple of Solomon. The “cedar,” an *evergreen*, is a symbol of everlasting life, of long and enduring life. The *arbor vitae* (“tree of life”) is basically a cedar.

This whole scene is a reference to the Tabernacle. Solomon’s “chariot” was not drawn by horses. The Ark of the Covenant carried on the shoulders of the Kohathites was borne with staves so that the Ark proper would not be touched.

Song 3:10 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.

The “pillars” are the staves or poles that were inserted into the rings of the Ark to carry it. Verse 10 is a description of the Ark, which has a fragrance and a glory. It manifests God’s authority and is connected with Solomon, who built the Temple and is a picture of The Christ in glory. The “silver” of the pillars represents truth.

The bottom of the Ark or the bottom of the palanquin was made of gold, a symbol of divinity. This is a double picture.

Q: When the Tabernacle furniture was transported, cloths of blue, white, or black were used to cover it, but purple is used here. Would the silver, gold, and purple picture the entrance from the Holy to the Most Holy? The pillars were silver, the bottom of the palanquin was gold, and the covering was purple.

A: When the Ark was transported, it was covered with a blue cloth. Here the fact the “chariot” is covered with purple shows it is a *finished* picture, for purple represents royalty, based upon faithfulness unto death. (Purple is a mixture of blue and red.) The blue covering for the Ark in the Wilderness, which was very different from the coverings for the other furniture, represents Jesus during his earthly course. As the Israelites followed the Ark during their Wilderness journey, they could see the covering, just as the people can see that Jesus was faithful. Even if they are not believers and do not agree with his doctrine, they know he was very unusual. True, they do not see him in the sense of royalty, but they do see him as being faithful. However, the world does not now see or recognize the true Church class as being faithful unto death. From the Lord’s standpoint

those who make their calling and election sure are “blue” in this age, but the world does not see the blue. Not until the “purple” condition, which represents royalty and being faithful unto death, will the world recognize the Church’s faithfulness.

“The midst thereof [of the palanquin] being paved with love, for the daughters of Jerusalem.” The word “love” is used *many* times in the Song of Solomon.

The New International Version correctly reads “*by* the daughters of Jerusalem.” In Hebrew or Greek, some of the same prepositions can be translated by six or more different words. In the Masoretic text, points indicate certain types of vowels and modify the consonants. While the Masoretic reads “*for* the daughters of Jerusalem,” if the points are omitted (the ancient Hebrew did not have points), the choice of a preposition is open to several options. Therefore, the text should read “*by* the daughters of Jerusalem.” So far in the Song of Solomon, the “daughters of Jerusalem” have represented the professed Church of Christ, some of which are the Great Company. The term “professed Church” can be understood two ways: (1) the *merely* nominal or the *merely* professed Church, or (2) that which is real, ie, the *sincerely* professing Church. Thus the love of the daughters of Jerusalem will “pave” the Ark in glory in the Kingdom Age.

The daughters of Jerusalem were an entity unto themselves. In Chapter 1 the true Church was pictured as longing for fellowship, and she was searching for the Master. Observing that she was outside the professed Church, she said she had been working in the vineyard. “I am black, but comely. Where are you, Lord? Teach me so I can come into closer communion with you,” she pleaded. Some of the daughters of Jerusalem considered the tanned and dark one to be inferior, and some even ridiculed her. But for the Ark to be paved with the *love* of the daughters of Jerusalem, it means that when the professed Church—whether they end up as tares or as Great Company—come to realize who the Very Elect are, they will acknowledge the saints as being *worthy* of their position of honor and royalty. This can happen only in the next age, for in the present life the true saints are not recognized as such. Remember the Holy Spirit’s commentary: “I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up [that you do not disturb], nor awake ... love, till ... [it] please.”

In summary, these last few verses go back to Tabernacle pictures of the past to give a frame of reference and to show that that class is now covered with royalty and in glory. The same is true of Job, who pictures the true Church. When Job had his suffering experiences, he was not recognized as a special man of God—until God thundered from heaven. When the supernatural occurred, then the “comforters” recognized Job for his true merit and that he truly was a man of God. In the first chapter of Job, God talked with Satan (in allegory), “Have you seen how loyal and righteous my servant Job is?” Satan replied that if God let him test Job with various experiences, Job would not praise God. God permitted the testing, and Job’s children, cattle, house, and health were all taken from him. Only his life was spared by Divine Providence. But once it was revealed that Job was a true man of God, then he received twice as much as he had previously had.

Song 3:11 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.

“In the day of his espousals” refers to the marriage. The “daughters of Zion” will “behold

king Solomon ... in the day of the gladness of his heart," ie, when the Church is complete and after the marriage.

In Hebrew, "in the day of his espousals" refers to when the Bride and Bridegroom come out following the marriage. "His mother" is Sarah.

In a subsequent study, we will review and find out why verses 6–11 were inserted and why there was an abrupt change.

Song 4:1 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.

In verses 1–5, Jesus is describing the virgin class who will ultimately become his Bride.

"Doves' eyes" indicate innocence, peace, humility, gentleness, meekness (teachableness), the Holy Spirit, sensitivity, and attentiveness.

Comment: A thought presented on another occasion was that doves in the Middle East have eyes that appear unusually large and noticeable, particularly as they look out from a thicket, which would be comparable to the Bride's eyes with her locks of hair (or with a veil, as some translations state).

The setting is a love story, and Jesus finds that the Church is attracted to him, having an eye single to pleasing him. If the eyes are considered as being behind a veil, the veil would show discreetness. If the eyes are associated with locks of hair, an attitude of consecration and devotion is symbolized. As the prospective Bride looks to the Master for instruction, she is characteristically submissive and has a spirit of reverence for him.

"Thy hair is as a flock of goats." Normally we do not think of a goat in a favorable sense. Being left for scavenger purposes, the goat can even eat tin cans, and it is usually unattended, unwashed, and ungroomed. But since the Song of Solomon is a love story, these goats are not ordinary goats. Coming from Mount Gilead, they have soft, lustrous, thick, luxurious, black (raven-colored) hair that is beautiful in quality and texture, and is used to produce cashmere. Hair is a symbol of consecration.

Q: Would the black hair tie in with the first chapter where the prospective Bride says she is "black, but comely"?

A: Yes. Black is favorable in Song 1:5 and also here.

Mount Gilead is the "hill of witness." Jesus was "the faithful and true witness" throughout his earthly ministry, ending with his death on Calvary. His entire life and his words were a testimony of his devotion to God and of his submission to the will of the Father. He faithfully enlightened Israel about God's plan and purposes, and he sealed this faithful testimony with his blood. The Church class also bear witness to the testimony of God and of Jesus and endeavor to do God's will at the cost of sacrifice. The "hill of witness" is down here.

Comment: According to Young's *Analytical Concordance*, "Gilead" means "strong, rocky." *Smith's Bible Dictionary* says "Gilead" means "rocky region."

The Song of Solomon is primarily the duet of Jesus and the Bride class. The Great Company is introduced only in a secondary sense.

Comment: Doves mate for life; hence the Bride has an eye only for Jesus.

Q: What is the time setting here?

A: We will treat the time setting here as well as in Song 3:6–11 after we discuss verse 6.

Song 4:2 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.

Teeth are a factor in looking for beauty. When a person talks or smiles, a missing tooth detracts from the appearance.

“Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that were shorn evenly and just washed” (paraphrase). During the year the sheep’s wool gets dirty, and for identification purposes it is stained with a red dye. When shorn and bathed, the sheep look alike, even, and clean. And so the Bride’s teeth are even, clean, white, and twinned (“whereof every one bear twins”). Each tooth has a twin: two eyeteeth, two bicuspids, two molars, etc. The main function of teeth is to chew food, and food is masticated so that it can be swallowed and digested. One spiritual lesson is to “rightly divide the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). Another is to masticate truth in both the Old and the New Testaments (which are pairs or twins).

Q: Teeth are seen when a person smiles. Could it be that when Jesus looks at his Bride, he sees her smiling with joy at beholding him?

A: Yes.

Comment: With the Bride’s teeth being so complete and so even, the chewing of truth is very even—not just Christian-living truth but dispensational truth in whatever age the Christian lives.

Reply: “None is barren” means that no teeth are missing.

Song 4:3 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.

“A thread of scarlet” would be the *Ransom* theme that is taught in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation; it is the doctrine of restitution made possible by Jesus’ death. In Hebrew “thread” is a cord. The New International Version has “a scarlet ribbon,” which is better.

Comment: Rahab let down a scarlet cord from her window; a thread would be too thin.

This is natural redness, not color artificially introduced with cosmetics. Lips are a prominent feature in enunciating and proclaiming truth and love for Christ, and the Bride’s “speech is comely.”

Comment: There are several Scriptures about speech. “Let your speech be always with

grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (Col. 4:6). "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov. 25:11). 1 Peter 3:4-6 gives the example of Sarah: "But let it be ... the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well."

The prospective Bride's speech is comely, too, in that it is in harmony with proper Christian thinking and bearing. It is constructive and not frivolous, comporting well with what one would expect from a child of God.

"Thy temples [cheeks] are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks."

Comment: The pomegranate is full of seeds. Hence her mind is active and full of good and beautiful seed thoughts.

Reply: The color and exterior shape of the pomegranate are the first spiritual comparison. Each cheek of the Bride is smooth, round, and rosy (a healthy color).

Comment: When Esther, who pictures the Church, entered the beauty contest, she rejected any artificial cosmetics or adornments. She had natural beauty that is spiritually pictured here: reddish lips, healthy cheeks, and teeth evenly matched.

Reply: Yes, there was a long period of purification under the tutelage of one who pictured the Holy Spirit.

Comment: The flavor of the pomegranate is a combination of the flavors of all fruits, showing the development in the Bride of the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

Reply: The teeth, lips, and cheeks are all related to constructive, pure conversation.

Q: In addition to the cheeks picturing spiritual health, could they also represent an act of blushing? Jesus admires the Bride, but in her humility, she is embarrassed by some of his words and so much attention being bestowed on her.

A: That is an interesting thought which may have value. It is true that flattery is a problem for the Christian, and this form of flattery from Jesus is very unusual. When anyone forsakes the things of this world and gives his or her heart to the Lord, promising that from henceforth God's will is to be supreme, that in itself is a wonderful and precious stand. In fact, that is one reason why the Great Company class will be rescued. God so appreciates their stand, even though they do not achieve the Little Flock, that in His mercy He will grant them opportunity to wash their robes.

"Within thy locks." Even the hair is paired or twinned, indicating the doing of God's will as expressed in the Old and New Testaments. Teeth, cheeks, lips, and locks are all paired. The locks are evenly distributed.

Song 4:4 Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.

Comment: The neck is a symbol of determination and purpose. The Bride has strength as well as gentle beauty.

From a natural standpoint, a person who has good bearing with a beautiful neck is admired. *Natural* nobility and bearing are appreciated. Spiritually, a stately neck is a picture of prominence in *God's* sight.

"Tower of David." David was a warrior in battle, and he fought not only Goliath but also wild animals (the lion and the bear) bare-handed, tearing their jaws apart. This quality pictures *boldness for the truth*. Whether a brother or a sister, we should try to have this blending of qualities found in the Master; namely, he was bold as a lion, yet meek as a lamb.

Generally speaking, even a tower is paired—one tower at each corner.

Comment: This verse indicates that the prospective Bride is equipped for spiritual warfare at all times. She is to have on the whole armor of God (Eph. 6:13).

Reply: Yes, the tower was an arsenal for weapons. In it were stored implements of warfare such as bucklers and shields and weaponry like bows and arrows for archers. From the tower an approaching enemy could be seen. The Christian's attackers are the world, the flesh, and the devil.

The important point is that we must stand for the truth, defend the truth, and still the mouths of the enemy if possible. One of an elder's duties is to stop the gainsaying of those who oppose or contradict the truth.

"A thousand bucklers" would just mean a large number, not a specific number. In other words, the Christian should have an ample supply of spiritual weaponry for defense against the enemy.

Song 4:5 Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies.

This verse concludes the remarks of the Bridegroom begun in verse 1.

"Roes" are "fawns" in some translations and "gazelles" in the Revised Standard, New International Version, and Masoretic. The "two breasts" picture the development that comes from feeding upon the Old and New Testaments, particularly the more lofty themes and sentiments (as opposed to chronology and history, for example). The breasts being "twins" means the development is even, balanced, and mature. "Lilies" picture good, constructive, upbuilding, Christlike thoughts. The lily is also a symbol of peace and resurrection.

One cannot develop a Christlike character without thinking Christlike thoughts. Feeding among the lilies means the Christian in his or her solitude sees the necessity of meditating on helpful, constructive thoughts. The new creature needs this wholesome, peaceful, gentle atmosphere. True, the Christian is to be like a soldier with fortitude and strong character and faith, but the Song of Solomon, being a *love song*, emphasizes *reverence*

and worship, which is usually done best in private study with quietness and solitude. Generally speaking, one has more control over the atmosphere in private study than in public or study meetings.

Q: What are the characteristics of “fawns”? Wouldn’t their gentle, sensitive nature be significant as well as the fact that they are easily startled?

A: This trait can be tied together with the Scripture “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 ... love, till [it] ... please” (Song 2:7). The Christian usually finds the necessity for solitude and private study, in which there are no interruptions. In a group study, some do not realize they should not interrupt a subject of great importance or sensitivity. The daughters of Jerusalem class will be accountable, to some extent, for such interruptions. To feed among the lilies has to do with the Christian being where he can control the atmosphere and surroundings so that they are conducive to prayerful, private study. A reverential *heart* attitude (the *inner spiritual* man) is very important in spite of a possible crude exterior (the old or natural man).

Song 4:6 **Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense.**

The prospective Bride class speaks. “Until the day break” is “until the day breathe” in many translations. Both terms are good. In other words, the thought is “until the day breaks the darkness,” “until the day comes to life.” This “day” will break for the Little Flock when they are with their Lord as the complete Bride class. A Scripture comes to mind pertaining to the change beyond the veil: “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, *until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts*” (2 Pet. 1:19). The day will break regarding the gospel night of sin for the Little Flock. Leeser translates Psalm 46:5 as “God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her in the dawning of *her* morning.” Leeser associates this text with the dawning of the *spiritual class*, rather than the dawning of the Kingdom. The dawning of the daystar in one’s heart corresponds to the dawning of “*her* morning.”

Comment: Song 2:17 is similar to Song 4:6, “*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 Bether.*”

Reply: The prospective Bride speaks in both cases.

“I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense.” Two incense ingredients are mentioned: myrrh and frankincense. What are the “mountain of myrrh” and the “hill of frankincense”?

Comment: A thought from an earlier study related the “mountain of myrrh” to Jesus’ death on Calvary and the “hill of frankincense” to his resurrection. Jesus’ death and resurrection, which constitute the basis of hope, are what the Church especially feeds on.

Comment: The Bride class desires to have all the experiences necessary to bring praise to her Lord.

Reply: Yes with both comments. Jesus set the example by his death on the Cross. The resurrection is the Father's reward for the Son's faithfulness. The Christian who suffers with Jesus will reign with him. Jesus is the example, the path ordained, for the Church to follow to attain the high calling.

"Myrrh" is bitter experience and the wisdom gained through such experience. The "frankincense" represents praise and thanksgiving. Hymns of praise often include the Christian's gratitude for deliverance from suffering that is beyond human endurance. Such help usually evokes praise and thanksgiving. Of course pleasant experiences also bring forth praise, but the type of praise that arises from suffering is on a higher level than praise from pleasure. Verse 6 alludes to praise that arises from suffering.

"Until ... the shadows flee away." The shadows in regard to the nighttime experience of the Church will "flee away" when the Church is complete. These are the shadows of the gospel night, the Passover night.

Q: Why is myrrh a "mountain" and frankincense a "hill"? Two different Hebrew words are used.

Comment: Our praise can never reach the mark of perfection. What Jesus offered at Calvary *far transcends* anything we can offer.

Reply: With our finite fallen nature, we cannot fully appreciate or know the depth of agony, anguish, and pain Jesus went through in Gethsemane and on the Cross. We do know we were purchased by a price, the blood of the Savior, and we praise him for having died and suffered for us. In fact, we so appreciated the condescending love of Jesus and the Father that we fully consecrated our lives, but we can only partly perceive the "mountain of myrrh" that Jesus suffered. We try to empathize as best we can with our "hill" of praise.

Comment: For the Bride to obtain wisdom (through bitter experience) on this side of the veil is harder to do than praising the Lord. She struggles to go through the "mountain" of bitter experiences.

Reply: The principle is the same in either case. The last comment considers the matter purely from the Christian's experience, whereas the first comparison was with Christ's experience, which is a "mountain" far greater than we can realize. Isaiah 53:11 says, "He [Jesus] shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." Such anguish was crushing him that not until his resurrection, when he looked back, did he see the necessity for his suffering experiences. On the Cross he did not have this understanding. His faith was victorious in that he cried, "It is finished!" but seeing the necessity for his suffering, realizing the amount of thought the Father had put into the heavy hand, came later. To be a corresponding price, Jesus had to suffer counterpart experiences for Adam's disobedience and circumstances.

Incidentally, we are to be developed with a heavy hand too, and many times we do not understand the nature of the trials we are going through. We do not see the necessity until afterwards—and sometimes that "afterwards" will not occur until we are beyond the veil. Often we do not see the reason for the trials of other individuals as well as of ourselves. In the Garden of Gethsemane, our Lord prayed that the cup might be removed. His prayer indicates the travail was so heavy on his shoulders that it almost crushed him.

His repetitive pleading shows that Jesus had feelings. To fully realize the Father's wisdom was even beyond Jesus' concept at the time, but *after his resurrection* he could see how essential the sufferings were to prepare him to be earth's King, Priest, and Savior.

That which is a "mountain" to us now, will be understood in the next life if we are faithful. "Our Father's wisdom planned it all!" is a very meaningful statement. When we first heard the truth, salvation was just a story, but it sounded true and logical. We consecrated as babes, being delighted to know that there was a God, that He is merciful, that He has plans pertaining to eternal life, etc. Later on, as we draw nearer and nearer to death, we will have gained a wealth of experience—and eventually we will understand our travail and be satisfied. A trial can come on an individual for various reasons. Trials are tailored to fit our position and work in the body of Christ in the next age, and sometimes in this age too. Trials cannot be humanly reasoned in the present life. In the next age, it will be seen why the Great Company are the Great Company and why the Little Flock are the Little Flock. The distinction between the two classes will be realized. We cannot discern this distinction now because the fact that we look upon one another as human beings obscures, to a large extent, the inner man. The most we can see of the inner man is his *habit* of thought and his *habit* of conduct, but we do not know what motivates these. The white stone that will be given to "him that overcometh" pertains to our motives (Rev. 2:17). Some motives will never be known except between the two who each have one half of the stone: the Savior and the risen saint. In the Kingdom Age, certain things will be known about the lives of each of the 144,000, but not all things. Our lives in the present life are being recorded, and we trust that the Lord will edit and delete aspects of our behavior down here in the flesh that would not be profitable to others.

Review of Song 2:10 Through 4:6 as to the TIME ELEMENT

"My beloved spake, and said unto me, *Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away*" (Song 2:10). "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*" (Song 2:13). These verses pertain to the resurrection of the sleeping saints in 1878. Thus Song 2:10,13 provides a chronological fix, a particular date. In regard to those members of the prospective Bride still here in the flesh between 1878 and the rapture of the feet members, Revelation 14:13 says, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord *from henceforth* [that is, from 1878 up to the rapture]: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow [with] them." In this interim period, those proving to be of the Very Elect receive an *individual instantaneous* change when they die. Other Scriptures show that the last members of the Church, the feet members, will be snatched away *as a class*. They will be raptured as new creatures from the body of flesh to a spirit body.

Song 4:1–6 brings us down to the end time, to the latter part of the Harvest period "until the day break," which is yet future. Therefore, Chapter 4 is describing a class who are still down here in the flesh.

In summary, two classes are being described. (1) Song 2:10–13 tells of the time for the change of the sleeping members of the Church. (2) Song 2:14–4:6 tells of the time approaching for the feet members to be raptured.

Q: Is the thought that after the second call in Song 2:13 to "arise, my love, my fair one, and come away," which is the call of the sleeping saints to resurrection, then verse 14 is

addressed to the saints still here in the flesh, to the “doves [who dwell] ... in the clefts of the rock”? From there through Chapter 3 and Song 4:6, which we are currently considering, the application continues to be the present life in the Harvest period, the time period since 1878 but prior to the rapture.

A: Yes. Just as the world of mankind is told that “the hour is coming when all in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man, and come forth” (John 5:28)—that is, those in the tomb will “hear” the call—so the saints who had been sleeping in death since Pentecost “heard” the call to resurrection in 1878. Similarly Lazarus, who lay in a tomb for four days, “heard” Jesus call him to “Come forth.”

Chapter 3 has a time setting down here at this end of the age in the Harvest period. Verses 6–11 are a break in thought. Who is speaking depends on the perspective. As for those who are beyond the veil now (ie, the risen saints), when they received their change, they immediately understood many things not previously realized (for example, why it took so long for God to select the Bride class and why their resurrection did not occur until 1878). Beyond the veil, the risen saints understand the principle upon which God has been calling the Bride class out of a wilderness condition. They realize that the wilderness condition was necessary to develop them and that the Ark of God pictures the movement of the Church down through the Gospel Age. In coming out of their wilderness experience and having their change, they see “Solomon” (Jesus). The crown represents his glorified state as earth’s King. The raised saints have the perspective of looking down and understanding God’s purposes. Meanwhile the class still in the flesh must be carefully guarded in the end-time experience, which will eventually lead to the marriage. To repeat, the time setting of Chapter 3 is the end time.

Comment: In an earlier study, verses 6–11 of Chapter 3 were attributed to the Holy Spirit, an impersonal commentary, which would still fit with the present thought that these verses can also express the sentiments and the perspective of the raised saints—how they would view certain matters. Either way, the setting is down here.

Reply: That is right. The risen saints know the past and the present—the present in earth’s atmosphere as well as their view of happenings down here. Fallen angels can predict certain events because from their perspective they see what a situation is leading to. Some of their predictions come remarkably true, and some do not because certain foibles of nature and events cannot be foreseen except with omniscience, a quality that only God has. Omniscience knows no enigma—it sees everything.

Song 4:7 Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.

Jesus begins to speak here and continues through verse 15.

There are two types of perfection: being faultless and being blameless. “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you [as if you were] *faultless* before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 24). “In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and *unblamable* and unreprouvable in his sight” (Col. 1:22). One who is “without blame” or “blameless” still has faults, but God sees that they are due to Adamic weakness. It is the will that must be perfect in His sight. To be “faultless” would mean that a person has no imperfections at all. Hence we are not “faultless” because we do have blemishes and we do fall. However, God does not blame those in the right heart

condition who commit certain aberrations through Adamic weakness because the aberrations are covered with the robe of Christ's righteousness.

Verse 7 means the prospective Bride is without blame on this side of the veil. A "spot" is a particular fault, a flaw. We must wash our robes on a daily basis, asking each day for forgiveness. Those who do not apply for mercy and forgiveness each day develop both wrinkles in their garments (through inactivity and a sleeping condition) and spots. The Great Company have long-term spots that need to be washed. Ephesians 5:26,27 describes the Little Flock: "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, *not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing*; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

Comment: "Above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins" (1 Pet. 4:8). Jesus views the consecrated with the eyes of love. He is not looking for imperfections but sees them covered with his robe of righteousness.

Reply: In other words, he makes a big distinction between the old creature underneath the garment of his righteousness and the new creature on the outside. Jesus views the individual something like the Tabernacle. God views the Tabernacle from the standpoint of the Most Holy: from the inside, He looks outward at those approaching Him (Most Holy ⇒ Holy ⇒ Court). We approach from the outside and look inward (Court ⇒ Holy ⇒ Most Holy).

Song 4:8 **Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards.**

Jesus is speaking to the espoused virgin Bride. "Lebanon" means "white mountain." Lebanon and anti-Lebanon are two parallel mountain ranges that run north to south. "Anti" means "similar." The prospective Bride is situated in Christ in the Holy, the "white" Lebanon.

The meaning of Amana is uncertain. It may mean "fixed" and another definition is "integrity." These three names—Amana, Shenir, and Hermon—all refer to different parts of the same mountain range. Shenir means either "coat of mail" or "white" depending on the vowel. Hermon, which has the thought of "prominent" and "lofty" (Hermon is the summit of this mountain range) is also defined as "white." From the perspective used here, Jesus is addressing his Church to come up higher. (Elsewhere, Hermon would represent God's throne.)

Comment: In this mountain range, Amana is the farthest north, Shenir is in the middle, and Hermon is to the south. From the Sea of Galilee, Hermon can be seen and it is covered with snow year-round.

Q: Would the order of the three mountains show a progression? Jesus calls the Bride from Lebanon, then from Amana, then from Shenir, and finally from Hermon at the border of Israel. Since we usually associate "Lebanon" with the cedars of Lebanon and everlasting life, is Jesus calling the Bride to come away from the earthly condition, from the possibility of life here on the earth?

A: Yes, a progression is shown for the Church, with Hermon being the loftiest condition, the one nearest to God, the “promised” heavenly condition. Jesus sought to get closer to the Father by climbing a mountain to pray.

Comment: After 40 years in the Wilderness, Moses went up on Mount Pisgah to view the Land of Milk and Honey. There he died, picturing that flesh and blood cannot enter the spiritual phase of the Kingdom. After his long earthly journey, he was in a high peak condition just before his death.

Reply: Yes, the association between Moses and the Church, the Moses class, is proper. Jesus, the Church, and Moses all reverently seek (or sought) communion with the Lord.

Amana, Shenir, and Hermon are a progression *upward* from the “lions’ dens” and the “mountains of the leopards.”

Comment: The lions’ den mentioned in Daniel 6 has an antitype for the feet members.

Reply: Yes. From the progression standpoint, the “lions’ dens” signifies opposition for the feet members at the very end of the age. “Having done all” they can do, the test for the feet members at that time will be to “stand” (Eph. 6:13). The crystallization process is the principle upon which God’s people have been developed down through the Gospel Age. Those who are faithful live long enough to have the Christian character developed in them, and then that character is usually crystallized by “standing.” All of the consecrated are to develop the fruits of the Holy Spirit as much as possible. The Little Flock develops the fruits *willingly*, whereas the Great Company is *forced* to wash their robes in tribulation in order to develop more of the fruits. All who live godly in Christ Jesus *will suffer persecution* (2 Tim. 3:12).

What is the difference between “lions’ dens” and “mountains of the leopards”?

Q: “Mountains” remind us of kingdoms, and Revelation 13:2 attributes leopard characteristics to Papacy. Do the “mountains of the leopards” refer to Papacy?

A: The Little Flock’s persecution will come from Christendom. Since the Great Company’s trial will occur *after* the fall of Babylon, they will be persecuted by a worldly element, the angry populace, near the time of Jacob’s Trouble. They will be persecuted because of their espousal of friendship with natural Israel. Hence anti-Semitism will be rife—in fact, Jacob’s Trouble will be a climax of anti-Semitism.

Q: Will the fallen angels be involved with the death of the Great Company?

A: Yes, and the fallen angels are anti-Semitic too.

Therefore, the “lions’ dens” and the “leopards’ mountains” refer to the persecutions that yet await the true Church.

Song 4:9 **Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.**

The word “spouse” literally means “perfected one.” In other words, this class, in which

Jesus sees no “spot” (verse 7), will make the grade. “One of thine eyes” indicates their eye is single toward the Lord. Their main focus of attention is on Jesus as their Lord, Master, and Bridegroom.

Comment: Devotion can be plainly seen in the eyes. If someone is in love, that devotion is obvious.

The New International Version reads: “You have stolen my heart, my sister, my bride; you have stolen my heart with one glance of your eyes, with one jewel of your necklace.”

“*One chain of thy neck*” does not mean “*one link of the chain.*” The thought is “with [*the*] *one chain of thy neck.*” The chain is a symbol of the consecration covenant relationship. Both a ring (circle) and a rainbow (semicircle) represent a covenant relationship.

This class has stolen the Lord’s affection. He will come as a thief in the night to take the jewel class as his Bride. The beauty of the Christian is in proportion to the heart affection for the Lord. “Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house; So shall the king greatly desire thy *beauty*: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him” (Psa. 45:10,11). We must be careful lest we be too technical, concentrating too exclusively on doctrine, to the neglect or forgetting of what the Lord has done for us personally. The emotional side of a Christian’s development is absolutely essential—plus doctrine. We must serve the Lord *with the heart—and with understanding.*

Song 4:10 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!

“Love” is plural, indicating a *progressive* love. The evidences (*plural*) of the love of the Bride class are what win the Master’s favor. Jesus calls the Bride “my *sister*,” and we consider him to be our elder *brother*. Jesus will marry his sister.

“How much better is thy love than wine!” The Bride’s personal love for Jesus is better than “wine,” the joys of the truth. While the *joys* of the truth are a higher level than just truth (water), yet the Bride class has to ascend to the still higher level of personal affection for Jesus. Many in the nominal system see the necessity for a personal relationship with Jesus, but they do not see as clearly the necessity for the water and the wine. Some say “once saved, always saved,” which minimizes the Word of God and a thirst for understanding.

Jesus’ first miracle at the First Advent was to change water into wine. Likewise his first miracle at the Second Advent was to change water (truth) into wine (joys of the truth) through *Tabernacle Shadows* and the *Volumes*.

“How much better is ... the smell [fragrance] of thine ointments than all spices!”

Comment: This commendation reminds us of Mary’s anointing of Jesus with spikenard.

Reply: The *heart devotion* that prompted her to do the anointing and the *personal cost* involved (a year’s salary) are an example of sacrifice by the Bride class. Mary’s act of breaking the alabaster box and anointing Jesus with the very costly perfume is admirable.

Normally in Old Testament times, such costly perfume was saved as a dowry.

The fragrance of the Bride's garments is better than that of all other spices. The emphasis is on the word "thine": "The smell of *thine* [the Bride's] ointments [is better] than all [other] spices." When some pray, they try to flatter the Lord, but in His sight, the flattery means nothing *unless it is genuine*. Women wear cosmetics and jewelry to attract attention to themselves, but the fragrances here in verse 10 result from a motivation of trying to please the Lord, not fellowman. The actions, services, reverences, etc. [*plural*], of the Bride class are included in the "ointments" [*plural*]. These repetitive, genuine, from-the-heart little things win his heart. Jesus appreciates the *heart* affections and the *heart* services.

The Song of Solomon manifests an emotional aspect that is necessary in our Christian development. The Book of Proverbs emphasizes the need for knowledge and understanding, which are tools for attaining a deep, personal love for Jesus. How can we love him if we do not know him? Knowledge and wisdom are stepping-stones, or a means to an end, that enable us feeble ones down here to develop reverence and love. The Song of Solomon speaks of the end product: perfect love, the sum of the graces.

Imagine that Jesus could love someone down here when he has the fellowship of all heaven! He appreciates our lack along certain lines, such as the woman who cried and washed his feet with her tears, then wiped them with her hair. Jesus was criticized for recognizing this woman because of her questionable past, but the general principle with the Bride class is that the one who is forgiven more can love more. Sacrifice and humiliation are involved. The intensity of one's love can be enhanced through experience.

Just giving one's life for a cause does not constitute faithfulness. Consider the radical Moslems in the Middle East, for example, who are idealistic. They are taught that if they die a martyr's death, they will be in the kingdom. So firm is their belief that they are willing to die for it. What is the difference between them and the true Christian, for both are faithful unto death according to their beliefs and both are sacrificing? In the Dark Ages, millions of Christians were put to death for their beliefs, yet only 144,000 from a 2,000-year period will be chosen. The difference is that radical Moslems are aggressively destroying individuals (the enemy, as they view matters), while we are called not to destroy but to do good to others and to die for a true and right cause. The principle behind our motivation is the determining factor. We should ask the soul-searching question "Do I have the intensity of love plus the proper principle and motivation?" We must know about God and Jesus and what their instructions are. Just to sacrifice money, goods, friendships, family, etc., is not sufficient, for the sacrifice must be according to proper understanding. The qualifications to become one of the Little Flock are very high and are of a somewhat different nature than just sacrifice.

Song 4:11 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.

"Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb." Jesus continues to speak and describe how he views the prospective Bride. The "lips" refer to the prospective Bride's speech. From another standpoint, the "lips" are the Old and New Testaments. Not only does she speak in harmony with the principles and doctrines of Scripture, but her only knowledge of God and Jesus comes from the Word. Her lips testify, utter praises, pray, witness, etc.

Verse 11 is an overall appraisal by Jesus of the Bride's verbal expressions, both private and public, concerning the Father and His Son.

Comment: Of "honeycomb" Proverbs 16:24 says, "Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones." The prospective Bride's speech is sweet.

Reply: To "drop as the honeycomb" would mean that sweet words flow naturally (they are not forced) from the Bride's lips and heart and are sincere.

Comment: There is not to be any "honey" (hypocrisy or flattery) in sacrifice. "No meat offering, which ye shall bring unto the LORD, shall be made with leaven: for ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the LORD made by fire" (Lev. 2:11).

Reply: Spiritually speaking, the addition of "honey" diminishes the real reason for a sacrifice. For example, if the sacrifice were for sin, "honey" words (flattery) would not bring forgiveness. One must get down to the basics: "I have done ..." "I have sinned ..."

However, here in Song 4:11, "honey" is acceptable because it is given genuinely. Jesus is listening to and observing the sincere testimony and heart appreciation of the consecrated. He is benefited from such words. What can we give to the Father and the Son? Our *sincere* worship.

This is a *dripping* honeycomb, which means it is *overflowing* with honey. Jesus thoroughly appreciates the dripping of sweet words out of the abundance of the heart in a natural fashion. The Word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the marrow of the bone as a soul-searching, penetrating message. In contrast, the honey aspect is healthful and soothing.

Comment: Honeycomb is geometrical and structurally organized. Out of God's mathematical, well-thought-out plan come forth the sweet words of the Bride.

Comment: The Bride's lips being "like a thread [or cord] of scarlet" (verse 3) and dropping honeycomb are a picture of real beauty.

Reply: The scarlet thread would be the testimony and appreciation of what Jesus did for us and for others at Calvary.

"Honey and milk are under thy tongue." This description by Jesus of the prospective Bride is interesting.

Comment: In the potential Bride's mouth is nothing bitter; everything is sweet and wholesome.

Reply: Yes, and constructive and helpful. Jesus appreciates these qualities. Under her tongue are honey and milk, which sweeten her talk.

To the contrary, the poison of asps is under the tongue of those whom the Lord disapproves. "Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips" (Rom. 3:13). Also, James likens the tongue to a match that burns down a forest. The little tongue is the rudder of a big vessel; the way it

wags can steer a vessel into treacherous areas.

“The smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon.” Jesus is enamored with the fragrance of cedar that emanates from the garments of the espoused class. The aroma of cedar is pure, healthy, wholesome, fresh, and stimulating, having everlasting and preservative qualities. The multiple “garments” worn are a symbol of the graces (plural) of the truth.

Comment: Psalm 45:13,14 says, “The king’s daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework.”

Reply: The needle work is done down here, but the gold (the divine nature) will be received at the marriage.

Song 4:12 A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.

Jesus’ sister and spouse is (1) an *enclosed* garden, (2) a *shut-up* spring, and (3) a *sealed* fountain. The “garden inclosed” would be a bolted, barred, or locked garden. This expression pertains to the virginity of the Bride class as new creatures. The point is that no one will come between Jesus and the one worshipping him. Providences can momentarily interfere with that relationship, but from her standpoint, she wants to keep the line of communication open with her Lord. She will allow no deviation or violation to occur. The “garden” is the spiritual garden of the heart; seeds are sewn or planted in the garden through the mind.

“A spring shut up.” Jesus said to the Samaritan woman at the well that anyone who drinks of the water he possesses will become a potential spring of life. If this spring of life within oneself is “shut up,” it is not active at present but is *potential* or *latent*. Eventually, with those who are faithful, this spring will burst forth so that the world of mankind can come and drink freely of the water of life. Therefore, the “spring shut up” represents the *pent-up hope* of the Christian. The barrier is the flesh. This “spring” cannot come forth until the flesh is broken. “Hope deferred maketh the heart sick [sad]: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life” (Prov. 13:12). In the present life, the Christian gets sustaining elements of grace and help lest one sorrow too much.

“We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it” (Rom 8:24,25). One cannot have this feeling without first having faith, for faith, hope, and love are a process. When faith and hope are realized, love remains and will get opportunity for service in a real sense. The *love* between Christ and his Bride will become more real when they *see Jesus as he is*, and *walk by his side*, and *sit in his throne*.

Song 4:13 Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard,

Jesus is still speaking about the prospective Bride.

“Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates.” The pomegranate is an unusual fruit that is full of seeds, and its flavor is a combination of all fruits. Hence the fruits of the Holy Spirit

are developed in this class. The word "orchard," meaning "paradise" in the Hebrew, reminds us of the Garden of Eden, which was basically an *orchard* of fruit-bearing trees, one kind of which was forbidden.

"With pleasant fruits." Pomegranates are a pleasant fruit, but the plural expression "fruits" suggests a variety. In other words, in addition to the pomegranates, which are common to all, each of the Bride class has a certain pleasing quality that is unique to that individual. Therefore, the thought is "with [other] pleasant fruits." Each individual has one unique characteristic, but when the Church is considered as a whole, all of them together have "pleasant fruits" (plural) in addition to the basic "pomegranates" or fruits of the Holy Spirit. The promise in Revelation 2:17 is that Jesus will give a special name to each of the 144,000 that is peculiar to only that one individual. The same principle operated when God brought the animals to Adam to name according to his first impression (Gen. 2:19). The name pertained to something unique with each species.

Comment: Verses 13 and 14 further describe the "garden" mentioned in verse 12. The garden contains a spring, a fountain, an orchard of pomegranates, and different spices.

When the Christian develops in character to his maximum capability, then comes the test of stability, of steadfastness, of *standing firm*, which is the final crystallization of character.

"Camphire, with spikenard." Camphire and spikenard portray qualities in the prospective Bride that Jesus appreciates. "Spikenard" suggests sacrifice because of Spikenard Mary. A cost is involved. What God appreciated in Abraham was his willingness to sacrifice his only son of promise. And Mary's anointing of Jesus with the spikenard cost her a year's salary. What more costly sacrifice can be made than one with such a high *personal* cost?

Comment: *Strong's Concordance* says the Hebrew word for "camphire" is *kopher*, which means a "cover" and is sometimes translated "ransom." According to Bro. Frey's notes, camphire has a fragrance.

Reply: *Kopher* is another word for "atonement." Camphire has a pure, invigorating, wholesome fragrance.

Song 4:14 Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices:

Let us consider the "saffron," which is predominantly yellow in color.

Q: Would the combination of spikenard followed by or coupled with saffron be like the Scripture "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Heb. 12:11)?

A: Yes, and that can be considered a fragrance.

Calamus pictures experimental knowledge, knowledge that results from or is based upon hard experience and "*calamity*" (*calamus*). Cinnamon symbolizes pleasant head knowledge, delightful knowledge, pleasing facts, which have a pleasant fragrance. These definitions are based upon the ingredients in the holy anointing oil of the Tabernacle

service (Exod. 30:23–25).

When Jesus looks at his people and sees their efforts to do his will, he is seeing their knowledge with *intent*. Knowledge by itself can lead to pride. Therefore, if we are to please Jesus, our purpose in acquiring knowledge is to better serve and do his will. Why do we study the Word of God? So that we can understand God's thinking and the mind of Jesus and bring our conduct into alignment with that thinking. Knowledge is a tool to that end.

"With all trees of frankincense." Trees of frankincense come in different varieties. The frankincense is obtained by making an incision in the bark to cause a resin-like exudation. When the exudation dries and hardens, it can be ground to powder. "Frank" means open, honest (not hypocritical). Hence "*frankincense*" means "*open praise*." There are different types of praise and worship and seeking to please the Master. Some praise the Lord with their lips, some with their conduct, some with certain deeds, etc.

"Myrrh" refers to bitter experiences. Myrrh is similar to calamus. Calamus pictures knowledge gained through experience. Myrrh and aloes (companion spices) are usually associated with burial, death. Having experience (calamus) helps make one a good counselor. Myrrh is the application of experience obtained through the school of hard knocks. Aloes would be the beneficial aftermath of the "myrrh," the beautiful healing and beneficent effects that result from the myrrh. Myrrh and aloes are like "cause and effect."

Comment: Then all of the couplets in verses 13 and 14 would be cause and effect: camphire and spikenard, spikenard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, myrrh and aloes.

Reply: That is right.

Q: Could the myrrh and aloes be referring to the Bride's view of her flesh? She is dead with Christ and keeps her flesh under.

A: Yes, there is a relationship. This class crucifies the flesh.

Many have died *for* Christ; few have died *with* Christ. In the final analysis, the Great Company class die *for* Christ, and the Little Flock die *with* Christ. In other words, the Great Company's sacrifice is not as acceptable as the offering on the altar. Of the two goats, one had *to be led* to the condition of crucifying the flesh; the other submitted *fully and voluntarily* to the doing of God's will. The Great Company are like the children of Israel, who made a covenant with God and said, "All these things we will do. We agree to the covenant." But simply agreeing with a covenant and actually carrying it out are two different matters. Self-examination is necessary in trying to please God, rather than having providence do all the instructing. Certainly providence is part of our development (these are setting-apart experiences), but the Great Company's development results more from providence than from strict, wholesome, and spontaneous obedience. The Little Flock need less discipline for wrongdoing. We all get some discipline for wrongdoing, but *self-discipline* is another matter. We are to run the race as if there is only one prize, one winner. "Suffering *with* Christ" means to pay close attention to doing what is latently in us so that, by God's grace, we can be drawn out and enhanced and supplemented by the Holy Spirit and the robe of Christ's righteousness. "Suffering with Christ" has to do with *spontaneity*, whereas with the Great Company, the issue is just life.

In the present life, the difference between the Little Flock and the Great Company is not too discernible. Since we cannot even judge ourselves, how do we know where we stand with the Lord in reality? It is not what we think or feel but where we stand in actuality that is important. Only God can clearly see in advance who will be faithful and who will not. The Little Flock are faithful unto death and *more* than overcomers. In summary, we cannot know in the present life whether we are suffering “for” or “with” Christ.

“With all the chief spices.” The Hebrew has “with all the chief *balsam spices*.”

Q: Is the expression “with all the chief spices” similar to the expression in verse 13 “with pleasant fruits,” referring to the *additional individual qualities* of the Bride?

A: Yes.

Song 4:15 A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.

All three pertain to *active water* and their *sources*: a fountain (pouring forth), a well (of living waters), and (flowing) streams. Active (moving) water shows *zeal*.

Comment: In verse 12, the fountain was described as “sealed.” Although sealed now, a wonderful potential of *living* water lies within those who will be faithful.

Reply: The sealed fountain was likened to virginity of the heart. This is a virgin class in the highest sense of the word; *they know only Jesus*. Their potential is locked, shut up, and sealed (*three* descriptions). In verse 15, the water is a fountain, living waters, and streams (*three* types of active water). These two verses are a very meaningful play on words.

“Fountain of gardens.” Normally, a garden has just flowers, but if water is displayed, the garden is aesthetically enhanced. A “fountain of gardens” is spectacularly beautiful. The water shoots up and pours forth.

“Well of living waters.” This is a well of “*living waters*,” as opposed to a well of stagnant water, which is not potable. Usually a well is deep within the earth (the heart), and water has to be drawn up in a bucket. A fountain is seen *outwardly*, which is good if the water is pure. But, in addition, Jesus sees us *inwardly*.

Jesus said to the woman of Samaria, “If you knew who is talking to you, you would have asked him for drink” (paraphrase of John 4:10). Instead Jesus had asked the woman for a drink of water.

Comment: John 7:38 says, “He that believeth on me, ... out of his belly shall flow *rivers of living water*.”

Reply: Usually that Scripture is coupled with Revelation 22:17, “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say [to others], Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the *water of life* freely.”

“Streams from [Mount] Lebanon.” We are reminded of Psalm 46:4, “There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.” Lebanon means “white,” hence a white mountain that symbolizes God’s

throne. The river of God descends from His throne. (The Jordan River can be viewed from different perspectives.) The streams will be brought together as a *river* in the Kingdom Age, when the Spirit and Bride say, "Come and drink of these living waters."

All three symbols (fountain of gardens, well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon) are exhilarating and life-giving waters that suggest *freshness*. This is how Jesus views his "true" disciples. When we consider the pure heavenly environment he has been living in, it is almost unbelievable that he can look upon members of the fallen human race this way, but he sees their *potential*. God's will is *done* in heaven. How wonderful to be in that environment! Only in regard to earth is rebellion allowed.

Comment: Where the streams come together to form a river, could that river be, in a typical sense, the source of the water that will proceed forth from the Third Temple?

Reply: Yes. Also, the Jordan River empties into the Dead Sea, and so will waters from the Third Temple. Wherever that water goes, even down to the Dead Sea, there will be trees of life and accompanying verdure. The Dead Sea, which contains no life and is the lowest and saltiest body of water on earth, will have fish in its northern part at that time. At present, without an outlet, the deposit of salt is getting more and more concentrated. Therefore, for fish to survive in part of the Dead Sea in the future, there will have to be an outlet. Fresh water will enter the northern part of the Dead Sea, but the southern part will remain salty and will be mined for salt and other minerals.

Comment: Water at the Baneas Springs comes from Mt. Hermon (the Lebanon area), and it is cold and pure.

Reply: And earlier we discussed the cedar trees from Lebanon, which have a pleasing fragrance that suggests everlasting life. When standing among the California redwoods, one feels removed from the world because of the deep silence, the height of the trees, and the smallness of self by contrast.

As we learn more and more of the truth, we become increasingly aware of our imperfections. We are supposed to grow in character, and yet we see our shortcomings more and more. Such a realization does not necessarily mean we are failing—we may just be getting keener insight into the reality of who we are and where we came from. We should be comforted to learn that while we recognize our shortcomings, faith and obedience are to surmount any discouragement along this line. Even the great Apostle Paul said, "I judge not mine own self."

Verse 15 ends Jesus' appraisal of his Church in the flesh. In verse 16, the prospective Bride responds.

Song 4:16 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.

Comment: The prospective Bride recognizes that both refreshing and difficult experiences are needed for development and discipline. We cannot grow with only one kind of experience—we need both.

Reply: The Church invites these experiences. A hymn goes, “Send sorrow, send pain. Sweet are thy messengers, and sweet their refrain.”

Comment: “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow” (Psa. 51:7).

Reply: Yes, David had this spirit of desiring to please God. “Cleanse me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins” (Psa. 19:12,13).

Q: In nature, does the combination of warm and cold winds help spices to grow well, for the next part of this verse reads, “Blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out”?

A: Yes, and in certain places the nighttime temperatures go down to freezing. However, the cold wind and no sun would retard growth.

Comment: Cold winds strengthen the trunk of some trees, and certain fruits need both the cold and the warm weather. For this reason apples grow only in certain climates.

Reply: Apples are the juiciest if picked when the first frost comes.

Comment: The proper attitude is to invite trials as well as pleasant experiences. When the hard experiences come, we should thank the Lord for them—even in the midst of the trial. We do not always remember to do this.

Reply: In other words, we are not always awake.

The prospective Bride requests that these mixed winds “blow upon my garden.” The Hebrew is “*breathe* upon my garden.” Thus the north and south winds have a life-giving quality, even if they are not always appreciated. The purpose of the north and south winds blowing on the Bride’s garden is “that the spices thereof may flow out.” The quality of spices is improved by this combination of winds.

Comment: The New International and the Revised Standard versions use the word “fragrance” instead of “spices”: “let its fragrance be wafted abroad.”

Q: The Hebrew word for “flow” is *nazal*. Is it related to the English word “nasal”?

A: Yes, it has to do with fragrance. The invisible fragrance flows out.

Comment: Verse 16 seems to fit into the context of the previous verses, which have cause-and-effect couplets: spikenard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, etc. The prospective Bride recognizes the relationship between trials or trouble and the subsequent peaceable fruits of righteousness. Hebrews 12:11 also shows this relationship: “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.”

“Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.” This is a garden of spices and pleasant fruits. The prospective Bride expresses her heart’s desire to be of the class Jesus will approve in the highest sense.

Q: Does Jesus eat any of the Church's pleasant fruits in the present life, or does he eat them all beyond the veil? Of course the prospective Bride is expressing this sentiment in the present life. She hopes she will be faithful now so that her garden will be pleasing to him, but when will Jesus do the eating?

A: The pleasant fruits will be eaten in the future, that is, beyond the veil. Jesus anticipates this fruit development, and the Bride class are very desirous of pleasing him so that they will be fit for their future role.

Song 5:1 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 am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse." The Church is complete beyond the veil, and Jesus has come into his garden. He likens this class to his sister and his spouse. The Great Company is also a sister, but the Little Flock is a *special* sister. Coupling together the terms "sister" and "spouse" distinguishes the Little Flock from the Great Company.

Comment: Although far more numerous than the *Little Flock*, the *Great Company* are merely the "*little sister*."

"I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk." These spices and foods were mentioned earlier in more detail.

"I have drunk my wine with my milk." This combination needs a little discussion. We usually think of milk and *honey*. Normally "wine" pictures the joys and exhilaration of the truth, whereas "water" is more important initially when one is dying of thirst in a desert. "Milk" is basic doctrine, generally speaking.

Comment: Isaiah 66:10,11 may help: "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory." "Milk" is associated with the thought of "consolation." And Jesus said at the Memorial before he was crucified that he would drink no more with the apostles until the Kingdom. Perhaps this part of verse 1 is saying that when the Church is complete beyond the veil, Jesus will drink the wine with consolation.

Reply: The sequence is interesting, for normally wine would have the priority.

Jesus continues to speak to the completed Bride: "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." In Song 5:1 the word "friends" would usually be thought of as female, but it is *masculine* plural in the Hebrew, which is *most unusual*. Moreover, the word "beloved" in the Song of Solomon consistently has a male singular ending because it is used by the Church to address Jesus. But here in verse 1 Jesus uses the *masculine* plural "beloved" to address the *Church*.

This use of the masculine harmonizes with the Pastor's thinking that eventually in the Kingdom, the Bride will have the male gender. In the present life, the prospective Bride is

regarded as female, and even in regard to the next age, Psalm 45:9 addresses the Bride with the collective noun “queen” (feminine). In addition to the *masculine plural* in Song 5:1, the Prophet Isaiah tells that Jesus will share the spoils with the “strong” (masculine) ones. “Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the *strong*; because he hath poured out his soul unto death” (Isa. 53:12). And in a future application, the Little Flock are considered “brethren.” These examples justify the Pastor’s conclusion that just as the angels now are all males, so the Church, when they have their change of nature and after the marriage, will be males.

Q: Please explain further how the Church can now be pictured as a Bride or a woman but one day will be masculine.

A: In *Tabernacle Shadows*, Bro. Russell states that gender distinctions will cease for the human race at the end of the Kingdom and that people will be like Adam before Eve was taken from his side. At first Adam was whole and a male, but he was divided into male and female when God took his rib to make Eve. The Scriptures support these thoughts with a little here and a little there, the Song of Solomon being one place. The Church is consistently described as female until Song 5:1, where *twice* the complete Church beyond the veil is described as *male*. Ultimately the Little Flock will all be masculine.

Q: Didn’t Adam originally have both male and female qualities? Then, when Eve was created, the female qualities were separated from him and given to Eve.

A: Yes, but Adam was still *male* originally. Before he was split, he was the *man* Adam with some female qualities, such as certain emotions. God is always male, and yet He has compassion like a woman—and so does Jesus. Paul had this quality too. In addition to his riven side on the Cross, Jesus had an unborn race in him, which is comparable to Adam’s side. Since God, Jesus, and the angels are all male, it is proper that the Little Flock be male also, even from the standpoint of their *executive* abilities and functions during the Kingdom and throughout eternity.

Verse 1 is sandwiched in just before the sentiments of the Great Company, who will still be down here in the flesh needing development after the Church is complete. Hence verse 2 helps to give the time setting of verse 1.

“Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.” This eating and drinking would not be at the marriage supper. In Scripture, there are several suppers:

1. Marriage supper (Rev. 19:9).
2. A “feast of fat things,” the supper for the world in the Kingdom, starting with Israel (Isa. 25:6).
3. The feast, supper, and/or sacrifice of the birds (Ezek. 39:17–20). The Lord will invite vultures to clean up the mess resulting from the slaughter, desolation, trouble, and decease of the ungodly in the great Time of Trouble.
4. Special supper in heaven for The Christ. At the institution of the Memorial, Jesus said he would partake anew beyond the veil. Just as he partook of the emblems with the apostles at the First Advent, so the entire Church class will drink the fruit of the vine with him in heaven prior to the marriage supper—and hence before the Great Company is raised. “But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom” (Matt. 26:29).

Song 5:2 I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.

The King James Version properly has a new paragraph here. Song 3:1,2 and 5:2–6 tell of two bedroom scenes. Chapter 3 gives the Little Flock’s attitude when they are awakened, and Chapter 5 contrasts the Great Company’s attitude when they are awakened. The Pastor’s writings furnish many clues and ideas, which, when collated, result in pictures that are tenfold clearer. Details and other truths are revealed in the collation.

These two bedroom scenes immediately remind us of the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins. Both classes *slept*. When the parable is read, it sounds as if all of the virgins awake together, but that is not necessarily the case. “Behold the Bridegroom” is the invitation to the marriage. The parable says that all of the virgins awoke and that the foolish asked the wise for oil (information). The foolish virgins were advised to go back to the marketplace. Not only does a comparison of Song 3:1,2 and 5:2–6 reveal the attitude of the foolish virgin class and what their problem has been, but the two chapters show that the wise class will be awakened just a little before the foolish class.

After the Great Company get the oil, they give a very detailed description of Jesus (Song 5:10–16). The description is interesting because they use more flowery language than the Little Flock. In fact, it would seem that the description could not be done better. However, it is one thing to praise with the lips and another thing to love deeply with the heart. This same attitude can be seen in the Book of Job with Elihu representing the Great Company. In some places his language is high and flowery, and it is noticed by the world as being unusual, but when his words are analyzed, they are seen to be superficial, not based upon proper reasoning, and very uncomplimentary of Job.

In verse 2, “beloved” is masculine singular referring to Jesus, as elsewhere in Song of Solomon *except for verse 1*, where it is masculine plural referring to the completed Bride.

In Chapter 5, with the exception of verse 1 and verse 9, which is an interjection, the Great Company speaks and speaks. This chapter provides interesting insight into the foolish virgins of the parable. In 1914 the ten virgins went forth to meet the Bridegroom, but he tarried. In other words, the false expectation did not materialize. Note: The *presence* did not tarry, just Jesus’ coming *as the Bridegroom*. Another point: *all* of the virgins fell asleep. In the Song of Solomon, both the wise and the foolish virgin classes are seen in bed. The difference is that the wise virgins wake up on their own and are thinking about Jesus. Then, of their own volition, they go out to look for him. In contrast, the foolish virgins need to be stirred up. When events become more and more pronounced that this is the end of the age, many who are lax in their consecration will become very zealous. If sincere, they will become like firebrands. After a period of sorrow and remorse, the Great Company class will rejoice—but too late to be of the Bride class. Both Habakkuk and the Book of Revelation show that the Great Company will change from a mourning condition to one of joy. The foolish virgins will weep as they knock on the door and beseech to be let in.

“I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me.” The Great Company class are speaking. The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins

shows that *all* are virgins, *all* of the virgins sleep, and *all* are awakened. Song 3:1,2 describes the wise class, and Song 5:2–6 pertains to the foolish class. How can the Great Company class “sleep” but their “heart waketh”?

Comment: The Great Company “sleep” intellectually, but at heart they love the Lord.

Comment: The Little Flock (in Chapter 3) voluntarily and zealously seek the Lord of their own volition, whereas the Great Company (in Chapter 5) need to be prompted or triggered by the Lord’s voice knocking.

Reply: A commentator likens the Great Company sleep to a stupor (as opposed to a sound sleep). Although drowsy and lethargic, they are thinking and troubled, nevertheless. When the rattling takes place at the handles of the door lock, they awaken. An example of this type of sleep occurred at the time of Jesus’ betrayal in the Garden of Gethsemane. The apostles fell asleep, yet John was able to quote the things Jesus said, the nature of his prayer, etc. However, in the case of the Great Company, an additional factor is indicated: negligence.

Q: How can we prove these verses in Chapter 5 pertain to the Great Company and not to the Bride? The terminology is similar to that used earlier for the Bride.

Comment: At first glance, it might seem that Jesus is speaking to the Bride in verse 2: “my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled.” But in the previous chapter, Jesus repeatedly used “my spouse” to refer to the Bride. Song 5:1 gives the time setting—it shows the completion of the “spouse” class. Now in verse 2, Jesus is addressing a different class, a consecrated class who at heart love the Lord but cannot be of the Bride.

Reply: Yes, Jesus has already entered into his garden (verse 1), and now verse 2 starts a new phase. The “undefiled sister” would be the Great Company class, who are an object of Jesus’ love. Later on (8:8), the Bride will refer to her “little sister” who “hath no breasts.” It is so self-evident that the Great Company class are the subject here that saying why is difficult.

Verse 3 clearly shows *negligence*, hesitation, nonreadiness, torpor—a secondary value. No matter how beautifully the little sister speaks later on, she is not of the category of the Bride class. In the Wise and Foolish Virgin Parable, the wise virgins (“those that were ready”) enter into the marriage *immediately*. The secondary class left behind, the foolish virgins, also try to get in, but they are not ready. They makes excuses: “I washed my feet. I took off my housecoat. I am in bed.” Subsequently, they have second thoughts, but tardiness is the first reaction.

Comment: The Laodicean spirit is “I am rich and in need of nothing.” The little sister is comfortable in her bed of ease. It would be a hardship or a chore for her to abruptly get up.

Comment: Verse 6 could only be the Great Company: “I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had *withdrawn* himself, and was *gone*.” Great pathos is indicated here.

Reply: In the Wise and Foolish Virgin Parable, Jesus said to the Great Company, “I know you not.” This is comparable to his “withdrawing” himself and being “gone.” In both the parable and here in Song of Solomon, two classes who sleep are shown.

“It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh.” Of course the Great Company’s “beloved” is Jesus, but how does a “voice” knock?

Comment: Through time prophecies.

Reply: Yes, in the *Second Volume*, Bro. Russell shows that the lock, the knock, is time prophecy. “Behold, I stand at the door, and *knock*: if any man hear *my voice*, and *open the door*, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me” (Rev. 3:20).

“[Jesus is] saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled.” All of these terms can apply to the foolish virgin class because they are virgins and sisters, they are covered by the Ransom, and they are members of the household of faith (shown in the Passover picture). They do have the robe of Christ’s righteousness, even though they will have to wash off the spots in the tribulation. At heart this class really want to do God’s will, but they have been tardy in some respects.

“My head is filled with dew, and my locks [curly hair] with the drops of the night.” Why is there a distinction? Perhaps the major reason is to refer to the time period at the end of the age. A dispensational aspect is shown—it is very early in the morning, which is when dew (condensation) forms.

Comment: The “dew” and the “drops of the night,” both being a form of water, represent present truth. Generally speaking, the Great Company is neglectful of present truth. She may have been zealously serving the Lord up to her level of understanding, but somewhere along the line, she has not perceived truth the way she should have. She has not sufficiently partaken of the spiritual feast that is available here in the Harvest period.

Comment: The Church class was completed earlier (verse 1). Therefore, Jesus has been here all through the night, the Gospel Age, and his head is filled with water.

Reply: Yes, with dispensational truth.

The Great Company class will be changed just before Jacob’s Trouble—not just before the *threat* of trouble but the *actual* trouble itself. Because the Great Company are covered by the Ransom, the lien must be satisfied and they must be off the scene before Israel can be legally recognized. Hebrews 11:40 shows that the Church must be complete before the Ancient Worthies are resurrected (“they without us should not be made perfect”). The “us” would include the Great Company because the text is referring to the Ransom. The Ransom cannot be applied to the Ancient Worthies until all of the Gospel Age consecrated are off the scene.

Song 5:3 I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?

This coat is not the robe of Christ’s righteousness, for to put off that robe would mean Second Death.

Comment: The robe is an outer garment that she uses for activity, as opposed to just night clothes in a slumber position.

Reply: A person changes clothes to relax and go to bed. The emphasis is that she went through all this change, and now she would have to get dressed and put the coat back on.

Q: Isn't she just making excuses for not putting forth extra effort?

A: The implication is that she is *not ready*; she is not dressed to go to the door. She makes excuses. This fits in with the Wise and Foolish Virgin Parable, for when both classes wake up, one class recognizes that their lamps are going out. The foolish virgins realize there is a need, a lack. "Give us of your oil," they entreat.

Just from a natural standpoint, she undresses, gets in bed for the night, is relaxed, and wants to go to sleep. She is not completely asleep but is thinking. Suddenly Jesus is at the door, but she delays, showing a lack of preparedness.

The following explanation was given in the 1976 study:

"I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on?" The Great Company does not exercise herself to respond, and makes an excuse for not opening the door right away. To rise out of the warm bed would make her cold. It would inconvenience her and require sacrifice, so she hesitates.

"I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?" Her feet were washed when she went to bed. Getting up to open the door would dirty them. She prayed, took off the outer garment, and went to bed. Then comes the knock. She willingly washed her feet the first time, but does not want to get up now because she would have to wash them again. The Bride would have exerted the extra effort.

Reply: Yes, this is the Laodicean spirit.

Song 5:4 My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him.

The King James is good: "My bowels were moved for him." Jesus' putting "in his hand by the hole of the door" suggests that he rattles the door handle and (old-fashioned bolt) lock.

Song 5:5 I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweetsmelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock.

After Jesus rattles the door handle and lock and disappears, the fragrance of the myrrh from his hand is left behind. A fragrance remains on the lock, so that when she finally opens the door, the sweet smell of myrrh gets on her hands. The fragrance intensifies her feelings when she discovers his absence.

Usually we think of myrrh as meaning "bitter experiences," but here the myrrh indicates the spirit of repentance. She now feels the loss or the lack, and the residual fragrance makes her sense of loss more acute—that because of *her* tardiness, Jesus was not at the door (of her heart) when she opened it. Her remorse and anguish create in her a desire to do better, and the only way she can do better under this circumstance is to go out into the

night (the marketplace in the Wise and Foolish Virgin Parable) and search for Jesus.

After the Church is gone and the Great Company realize more fully what Jesus did for them in suffering the ignominious death on the Cross, when they reflect on the beauties and excellencies of Jesus' love in even coming to the door for them and knocking, they will be repentant. Had they remained asleep, had Jesus not awakened them, they would have gone into Second Death. Hence they will be remorseful that they delayed their response and were negligent.

"*Sweet-smelling myrrh*" indicates that this type of myrrh evokes a feeling of loss in regard to the Master. The loss is like the silence of the "half hour": "And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour" (Rev. 8:1). The Great Company will have a *double* experience, as shown in Habakkuk 3:17,18. "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Despondency and sorrow will be changed into joy. The Habakkuk change matches the description in Song 5:10-16. The little sister misses out on the opportunity to be of the Bride, but she joyously praises Jesus later. Indeed her comments seem to exceed those of the Bride—but too late!

Comment: The fact that the flowery words spoken of Jesus are uttered by the Great Company class in verses 10-16 (and not by the Church) is substantiated in the Book of Job. There Elihu, picturing the Great Company class, overspeaks.

Reply: Yes, and so much so that many have given Elihu great credit, but much is wanting in his character and disposition, as revealed by his own words.

Comment: The foolish virgins need, but do not have, a sufficiency of oil in their lamps to go out at night to search for Jesus. The Bridegroom comes at the midnight hour—*nighttime*.

Song 5:6 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.

"I [the Great Company] opened [the door] to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone." Earlier, the Bride class got up of her *own* initiative, opened the door, went out to search for Jesus, *and found him*. Jesus did not have to knock for the Bride class. Only the Great Company needs the alarm. IMPORTANT: When current events match prophecy in a vivid fashion, many will wake up who were previously sluggish in serving the Lord.

Commentary from the 1976 study: The Great Company class hear the voice but do not open the door. This reaction suggests that at the end of the age, all Christians will have at least one opportunity—and probably two or three opportunities—to know present truth. How they respond is another matter. Christians in Babylon will hear, and so will the ones outside of Babylon.

"My beloved ... was gone." During Jesus' absence, the marriage takes place and the Church

is being honored in heaven. The absence is related to the half hour of silence (Rev. 8:1). The Great Company class will not be present at the wedding, but will attend the marriage supper.

“My soul failed when he spake.” Jesus is now gone, but earlier the Great Company made excuses and was not ready to respond to the voice of her beloved. Here she is reminiscing about how foolish she was in not responding faster.

“I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.” When the foolish virgins knocked on the door to be let in, the door remained shut, but they did hear, “I know you not.” Revelation 19:9 shows that when the Bride class is complete, a voice from heaven will say, “Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage *supper* of the Lamb.” In other words, the answer regarding the marriage will be negative, but there is hope. All is not lost, for even though the remaining consecrated lose out on the high calling, they have the hope of being of the secondary class. And the *spiritual* reward for the Great Company is a better hope than that for the world, who will have only an *earthly* restitution hope.

The Great Company will have a *waiting* experience, but eventually they do get an answer regarding the marriage supper. It is a *delayed* answer.

Comment: A Scripture in Revelation shows the difference between the Little Flock and the Great Company. “After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, *Come up hither [higher]*, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter” (Rev. 4:1). The John class are told to “come up higher,” and the feet members exert extra effort to obtain prophetic understanding of the time prophecies. Generally speaking, the Great Company class do not seek such information.

Song 5:7 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.

Song 5:8 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am sick of love.

Who are the “watchmen” of verse 7?

Comment: One possibility is that the watchmen are in the nominal Church, and another possibility is that they are in natural Israel.

Reply: One thing we know for sure, the “watchmen” are not the Great Company.

The time setting of verses 7 and 8 must be established. Because of the dispensational character and the progression developing in the Song of Solomon, the time setting when the Great Company responds to Jesus’ knock on the door will be at a rather late date. The Little Flock will all be beyond the veil at this time. But there is a problem. A short time after the Church is complete, Babylon will fall. The time frame of verse 7 is after the door is closed, after the Church is complete beyond the veil, and certainly before the Great Company class receive their change, for they go into a eulogy concerning the various graces, attributes, moral character, and beauties of Jesus.

In verse 8, the Great Company is addressing the “daughters of Jerusalem,” who can be equated to the “watchmen” and the “keepers of the walls”? (Incidentally, the Hebrew word for “keepers of the walls” is the same as that for “watchmen.”) Equating these three terms pushes the setting for verses 7 and 8 further ahead on the stream of time. We know the time setting is after the closing of the door, but the question is *how much after*? When will the Great Company arise from bed, go out, and meet these watchmen, these keepers of the walls, who harass and smite this secondary class but *not unto death*? Even though in most instances in the Bible, the word “smite” means “kill” or “destroy,” there are a few exceptions, such as here.

“The keepers of the walls took away my veil from me.” The watchmen, the keepers of the walls, whoever they are, take the veil away from the Great Company class. What does that act constitute?

Q: Would the removal of the veil expose the fact that the Great Company has not been as faithful as those of the Bride class?

Comment: The veil over the eyes of the Great Company will be removed so that they see who and where they are.

Reply: A custom of the Middle East is for women to wear a veil over part of their faces. The force of pulling away the veil depends on the context. For instance, when Babylon’s skirts are pulled away, the meaning is that its sins will be exposed, and Babylon’s exposure will lead to its downfall (Nah. 3:5). But here in the Song of Solomon, when the Great Company’s veil is taken away, the result is that they earnestly and zealously search for Jesus.

Q: The Great Company are thought of as being fearful, so would this veil be something they have hidden behind (Heb. 2:15)? With the veil being removed, it would be clear that they are of the secondary company and not of the Bride class.

Q: In some way, will the watchmen cause the Great Company to reveal their true nature?—that they have longings for the Master but have not been faithful enough to be of the Bride? The “smiting” would bring to the forefront the true disposition of the Great Company class and make them repentant in their realization that they have lost out on the opportunity to be of the Bride. The Great Company are smitten and wounded in conscience.

Reply: The answer would be a little of all of these comments.

Notes from the 1976 study read as follows:

There is a limitation here based on other Scriptures; that is, the watchmen, the keepers of the walls, wound and smite, but they do not kill. First, they persecute the Great Company, but later they ask questions and get interested. Their initial response is sarcastic, but look at Song 6:1, which shows the watchmen become interested and want to go along with the Great Company. In other words, the “watchmen” class end up semiconverted—*after wounding the Great Company*.

The persecution unto death of the true Church, induced by *Papacy* (and Protestantism), will be at the hands of the governments. The Great Company will not be in this experience of the wise virgins because of compromise in some way. However, the Great Company will still receive *some* persecution, but they will not be killed at this time because they are not considered as dangerous. For example, when Jesus was apprehended in the Garden of Gethsemane, his disciples would have been arrested and killed too if they had been as zealous.

IMPORTANT: The “daughters of Jerusalem” or “watchmen” class changes from the worldly element in the Church (nominal Christians—see Song 1:5 and 2:7) to *natural Israel*. Having the Scriptures (the Old Testament) puts natural Israel in the role of “watchmen.” (This change is similar to that in the Elisha picture. Elisha as a type changes from the Great Company to the Ancient Worthies.)

In the nominal system at the end of the age, certain individuals will respond to present truth in some way, just as a few Pharisees, such as Nicodemus, believed Jesus and revealed their belief under either duress or darkness. Joseph of Arimathea, who begged for Jesus’ body and offered his own tomb, was not a strong follower earlier, but when the chips were down, he came forth boldly. The same will be true of the Great Company when they are separated from the feet members. In some ways, persecution is good for the Church.

In verse 8, the Great Company are speaking. Formerly lethargic, they are now boldly proclaiming (like the Little Flock earlier). Elisha gets a *like* portion of Elijah’s spirit. The foolish virgins get the oil. The Great Company are now lovesick (like the Church earlier).

Thus the Great Company will have a role in enlightening Israel. Some blindness will be removed when the full number of the Gentiles (the Little Flock) is complete. Blindness will be removed from the conscientious Jews who are “watching.”

IMPORTANT: A primary purpose of the Little Flock is to acquaint and educate the Great Company to give a message later.

IMPORTANT: The “daughters of Jerusalem” will eventually be the *Holy Remnant*.

As shown in verse 7, the daughters of Jerusalem initially smite the Great Company. When the Great Company first try to communicate to this prospective Holy Remnant, they are rebuffed. The Jews have a natural antipathy for Jesus, a prejudice, but the Great Company will be *persistent*. After a while the conscientious Jews listen and eventually get interested.

The “veil” is a “mantle” (RSV) or a shawl that can serve as a veil. How do the “keepers of the walls” take away the Great Company’s veil? When the little sister searches for Jesus, the daughters of Jerusalem are rude in exposing her hypocrisy, but she is not discouraged and speaks even stronger. Seeing her sincerity, the Jews become interested in her message. In spite of the mistreatment, she keeps talking—*until they listen*.

IMPORTANT: The veil being taken away from the Great Company by the watchmen ties in with Elisha's shame before the sons of the prophets in 2 Kings 2:16,17. "And they [the sons of the prophets] said unto him [Elisha], Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty strong men; let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master [Elijah]: lest peradventure the spirit of the LORD hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley. And he [Elisha] said, Ye shall not send. And when they [the sons of the prophets] urged him [Elisha] till he was ashamed, he said, Send. They sent therefore fifty men; and they sought three days, but found him not" (2 Kings 2:16,17).

Without explaining why, the Pastor believed the Great Company would give a message to Israel, and Song 5:7-16 is a confirmation. Israel's reluctance to listen to Christians will be reversed after the Church is gone and after the Great Company has first been wounded by the "daughters."

The three-day search for Elijah fits in here. After seeing Elijah taken up in the whirlwind, Elisha inherited the mantle and crossed back over the Jordan. Song 5:7-9 precedes Elisha's getting Elijah's mantle and smiting the Jordan in 2 Kings 2:13,14. The "fifty prophets" and the "sons of the prophets" are *similar* to the "daughters of Jerusalem"—these "watchmen" are an enlightened class, ie, the Holy Remnant. The "daughters" (natural Israel) ask why Jesus is so beloved.

(The "watchmen" may also include some Great Company from the nominal system who do not have as much light. They would be further enlightened by the Great Company who have been in present-truth circumstances.)

The current thoughts would be the same as those presented in the former study. If the daughters of Jerusalem are related to natural Israel, then in a sense, the watchmen and the keepers of the walls would change too (instead of being identified with nominal Christendom as in Song 3:3). Those who initially smite the Great Company class will later experience a change of heart with regard to that class.

The time setting is yet future and fairly far down the stream of time. The Great Company will still be on the scene, and their last message will be effective in converting or strengthening the hand of the Holy Remnant class that potentially now exists in Israel.

A point will now be conjectured. The brotherhood as a whole are so sympathetic to the message to Israel "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people" (Isa. 40:1) that they are not preparing Israel for the Holocaust yet to come. They are speaking too comfortably to Israel. As Gog, the great horde from the north, begins to assemble or be seen as a real threat, the Jews will feel very indignant about the class who previously spoke "Peace, peace, peace" to them and did not prepare them for the imminent trouble. As a result, the Great Company class will experience shame for not disclosing that another wave of very severe and distressing persecution is coming upon Israel. While the Great Company class will be momentarily shamed, the "veil" being taken away by the keepers of the walls in verse 7 indicates that the shame, instead of overcoming them, will release within them a power and a force which they previously did not have. The Great Company will become charged or energized. A confirmation is the picture of Elijah's mantle coming down on the Elisha class. The "little sister" class will describe Jesus, the Messiah, in beautiful, wondrous

terms. The language is superlative, but—alas!—the oil comes *too late* for them to enter into the marriage. Momentarily they will experience shame and loss, but then will come a like portion of Elijah's spirit.

What will happen then? Some in Israel will really catch the zeal and enthusiasm of the Great Company class. The reason the early Church was so successful is that the people saw the POWER in their witnessing and realized the message was genuine. As the Great Company experience tribulation and wash their robes, a very powerful message will come forth from them to help enlighten a significant minority in Israel that Jesus really is their Messiah and to prepare that minority for Jacob's Trouble. This element in Israel will be saved miraculously because God has destined a Holy Remnant. When the Kingdom starts, not only will the Ancient Worthies have come forth from the tomb physically perfect, but also a class of repentant Jews will be on the scene to constitute a government in Jerusalem from which can go forth the Word of the Lord.

Song 6:1 presents the attitude of those Jews who properly respond to the message of the Great Company class: "Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we may seek him with thee." This was not the earlier attitude of the daughters of Jerusalem. Here the term "daughters of Jerusalem" cannot refer to those in the nominal Church, as in chapter 3, because Babylon will have been destroyed by this time. Earlier the "watchmen" and the "keepers of the walls" pertained to professed, nominal Christendom, but here the "daughters of Jerusalem" and the "watchmen" are related to Israel, who will be the "keepers of the walls" at that time. When the Great Company message is given to nominal *natural* Israel in the future, a class within Israel will respond and become interested in the message of truth at that time.

This very portion of the Song of Solomon is apparently what Bro. Russell understood, but he introduced without explanation the subject of the Great Company's giving a message to Israel. Although he did not treat the Song of Solomon as a whole or give a coherent theme, near the end of his ministry he did have a view. Perhaps the reason he did not share his view is that a few loose points remained and he did not want to overspeak.

Q: Then who gives the message "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people"?

A: This question would be another study, for Isaiah 40:1 has been misunderstood. The "double" in that context—specifically in Isaiah 40:2—is not the same as the "double" relating to a time period in Jeremiah 16:18. The Pastor said that at the death of Jacob in 1813 BC, God's dealings changed from individuals to the nation of Israel. From 1813 BC to AD 33 was a period of 1,845 years *of favor*. AD 33 marked a fulcrum point for a "double" of another 1,845 years—but this time it was a period *of disfavor*, ending in AD 1878. This "double" is correct in the proper context, but in Isaiah 40:2 the Hebrew word *kephel*, translated "double," is *in the plural*. Concordances usually supply the Greek or Hebrew *infinitive* for a verb or the *singular* for a noun, whereas the actual original text can be another verb form or a *plural* noun. In Isaiah 40:2 the thought is of "*many* doubles," and not of time parallels. That same Hebrew word *kephel* is used only once elsewhere in the Bible in the plural, and there it is talking about God's wisdom, meaning the *manifold* wisdom of God. The citation is Job 11:6, "And that he would show thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are *double* [*manifold, many*] to that which is!" In the plural the meaning has nothing whatsoever to do with a time period. To repeat, *kephel*, the Hebrew word, *cannot refer to a time period when it is in the plural*. When *kephel* is in the singular, it is an

entirely different thought.

Speaking peace and “comfort” will be like the “feet of him” that stand on Zion, as it were, and proclaim a wondrous message to Israel *in the future* (Isa. 52:7). The *glorified* Church will pronounce that message through the Ancient Worthies. Isaiah 40:1 corresponds to that time, circumstance, and message. On the other hand, Psalm 122:6 applies *now*: “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.” When we pray now for the “peace of Jerusalem,” we are praying for this wondrous future day to come. Zola Levitt is correct in applying this principle now. However, we as Christians should not concentrate on that message alone. We have to make our calling and election sure, so we should not allow that particular truth to burgeon so much that it preoccupies our whole attention. When we look on the Word of God and its instructions, it should not be with just that one perspective.

The point is that the Great Company class will get the oil and they will get Elijah’s mantle. When this happens, they will be very forceful and zealous, and will make themselves ready and fit for their inheritance of everlasting life on the spirit plane.

It is amazing that Bro. Russell saw this truth so many years ago. A brother, George Fisher, wrote part of what used to be called the *Seventh Volume*. In the first part of that *Seventh Volume*, Clayton Woodworth explained the Book of Revelation predicated on comments from the *Reprints* and the *Volumes*. The title of the book was “*The Finished Mystery*,” and after the book was read, the mystery was still “*unfinished*.” Nevertheless, *The Finished Mystery* is a profitable book to study, even though not the answer. The comments that Bro. Woodworth took properly from the *Reprints* and applied to the Book of Revelation were helpful and connected (with the exception of Chapter 17). On the other hand, Bro. Fisher, not having enough information to rely on Pastor Russell for his explanation, went through the Song of Solomon verse by verse, word by word, and just inserted beautiful isolated thoughts with no overall picture or theme. Thus the Pastor’s conclusion about the message to Israel based on the Song of Solomon was startling; it was enlightening in that it gave a prophetic portent to the book. Moreover, the Song of Solomon is sequential in its content.

Q: Then at first, Israel will not warmly receive the Great Company’s message?

A: The Jews, especially those in Israel, will not warmly receive the message when they see that a Holocaust is coming and realize that the Great Company kept the information under cover. Momentarily the Great Company will be ashamed that they did not declare a *complete* message. Why did they refrain? Because to include information about the future Holocaust would have inhibited the popularity and growth of the message. However, what is happening is *providential*, for out of the momentary future shame will come a fullness of the Spirit and the Great Company class will be faithful unto death. In their disappointment of realizing they cannot be members of the Little Flock, the Great Company will need something to grab onto. This loss will be assuaged or compensated for by Scriptures such as “Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb” (Rev. 19:9).

Q: Are “daughters of Jerusalem” comparable to “sons of the prophets” in 2 Kings 2?

A: Yes. Dispensationally speaking, the Wise and Foolish Virgin Parable, the type of Elijah and Elisha, and the Song of Solomon account of the two classes who sleep and awake are

all related. Details in one account help to unravel details in another account.

Every step of knowledge makes possible another step of grace. And taking that step of grace makes possible another step of knowledge, etc., etc. Knowledge and grace go hand in hand. Developing the graces (the fruits of the Spirit) would be making one's calling and election sure. Knowledge is the *means* to developing the graces. Chronology, types, etc., are all important, but the promises are what round out the Christian.

Q: Would the "city" in verse 7 be Jerusalem?

A: Yes. Israel will be the only stable part of the world at that time. Isaiah 60 and other chapters show that the world will be wild in confusion, but the light will begin to rise on Jerusalem. "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising" (Isa. 60:1-3).

The Great Company's description of Jesus which follows in verses 10-16 is so beautiful that many have attributed it to the Bride. The same is true of Elihu's statements in Job. In fact, his speaking of and praising God and His attributes are couched in such grandiose terms that many brethren have concluded he pictures the Logos. Even some worldly people say that Elihu's statements are the most beautiful part of the Bible; they praise the Book of Job because of its poetic value and then particularly single out Elihu's comments. However, in between his statements are comments that nullify such a conclusion.

Song 5:9 What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? what is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?

The "watchmen," the "daughters of Jerusalem," will ask these questions of the Great Company. There are *two* applications, both of which are correct and *progressive*.

1. The "watchmen" and the "daughters of Jerusalem" are the Great Company class who come out of the nominal Church at the time of its fall. The more enlightened Great Company class, already out of Babylon, will praise the worthiness of Jesus to this less enlightened Great Company class. After Babylon falls, the Great Company from these two different backgrounds will be more wed together.

2. Other Scriptures indicate another "watcher" class at the end of the age. With Elijah and Elisha were 50 sons of the prophets who "watched." Finally the sons of the prophets joined Elisha. After Elijah's translation, the Elisha class knew that Elijah had been taken, but it took time for the sons of the prophets to be convinced. The very term "daughters of Jerusalem" implies a connection with *natural* Israel.

Verses 10-16 are the Great Company's answers to the questions of verse 9. They describe Jesus' qualities of excellence.

Song 5:10 My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.

The Great Company refers to Jesus as "my beloved." The countenance of the glorified, risen Lord beyond the veil is "white" (radiant, clear, bright). It reflects that he is "holy,

harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26).

Jesus is also "ruddy." Generally speaking, "ruddy" would refer to his pierced side, blood being a symbol of his faithfulness unto death. In other words, the risen Lord accomplished his ministry with faithfulness. But here "ruddy" describes Jesus' countenance and is a symbol of health, as in apple-red cheeks.

Comment: In 1 Samuel 16:12 David was described as "ruddy": "Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to."

Q: How can "white" be harmonized with "ruddy"? The two words are seemingly opposites.

A: A young person can have white flesh on his face but flushed cheeks when coming in from the cold. Jesus is fair and beautiful, but also has the appearance of health and life.

Comment: The word "ruddy" is a reminder of *Adam*, which means "red." Jesus is the Second Adam.

Reply: Jesus was the Second Adam at his First Advent as well as now, as the risen Lord. At his First Advent, Jesus was a perfect man, and a perfect man had to die in order to become the Second Adam as the *life-giver*.

The term "ruddy" incorporates several thoughts: health and virility were sacrificed on the Cross to obtain the health and virility of life that are to be given to the world. When Jesus died on the Cross, he earned the right to human life, the life rights that Adam had. Jesus will give those life rights to the world.

Comment: In the discussion on "white" and "ruddy" in the 1976 study, the following comment was made: "Not only was his face radiant, but his flesh looked healthy and somewhat masculine."

Reply: Yes, and masculinity would be the thought in 1 Samuel 16:12, the description of David out in the field. One who is exposed to the air many hours a day is strong, healthy, and virulent.

Jesus is the "chiefest [preeminent, the standard bearer] among ten thousand." The "ten thousand" would be the Church, the 144,000, a multiple of thousands (Jude 14).

Song 5:11 His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy, and black as a raven.

"His head is as the most fine gold." A halo or golden glow is around Jesus' head. A radiance surrounds angels as spirit beings, but Jesus' radiance being "gold" would picture divinity.

"His locks are bushy." "Bushy" means curly, waving, flowing. Jesus' much hair represents his superior consecration. His consecration to his Father is full and complete. The "locks" are also a symbol of consecration and remind us of Ezekiel, who was figuratively transported to Jerusalem by a "lock" (singular) of his hair, a symbol of the singleness of his consecration (Ezek. 8:3).

“His locks are ... black as a raven.” Black, being used here in a favorable sense, is a symbol of youth (gray hair pictures old age).

This beautiful description of Jesus shows:

1. If the Great Company class had been so inspired sooner, they would have made their calling and election sure.
2. If those whom God calls respond properly, they will be faithful unto death.

After the closing of the door, the consecration of the foolish virgins will become *real and deep*. At that time they will be *wise* and their vessels will be full of oil.

Song 5:12 His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set.

“His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters.” Jesus’ eyes being likened to those of a dove would mean they are sympathetic, compassionate, gentle, pure, and peaceable. Jesus is *truly and sympathetically interested* in his followers. This description is interesting when compared with the thought of his X-ray eyes like “a flame of fire” and their penetrating gaze in Revelation 1:14. Here in Song 5:12 the quality being emphasized is that Jesus’ followers can easily approach him and he will look upon them with gentleness.

“Rivers of waters” indicates Jesus’ eyes flow with sympathetic tears. He is easily moved to compassion. “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities” (Heb. 4:15). At this time, when the Great Company will be washing their robes in the blood of *the Lamb* in the time of tribulation, Jesus will gently and forgivingly look into their souls. Washing their robes “in the blood of *the Lamb*” means they will get the necessary sensation of being acceptable (Rev. 7:14). To give a strong message, one must feel close to the Lord. “Rivers of waters” means Jesus is easily moved by the tears of the penitent one.

“His eyes are ... washed with milk.” Jesus’ eyes are white, healthy, and pure, showing simplicity, sincerity, and approachability. “Milk” represents not only basic doctrinal truths but basic qualities of character and wholesomeness.

Comment: Usually when one cries, the eyes get bloodshot but not with Jesus. The thought is that although his sympathetic tears flow, they are in harmony with principles of righteousness. The Great Company will need to feel Jesus’ compassion, but they must also see where they have erred and will have to hold to his righteous standard.

Reply: Yes, the flowing tears wash Jesus’ eyes in harmony with the principles of truth. His forgiveness is predicated upon repentance and righteousness. His tears are the product of a principled character, and they flow on behalf of the penitent person, on behalf of that person’s tears.

“His eyes are ... fitly set.” To be handsome, one must not be cross-eyed or wall-eyed but have eyes that are “fitly set.” This trait shows purity of purpose and honesty of being.

Jesus' eyes are fitly set as gems in their enclosures. (A jewel not set properly can lose 90 percent of its beauty.) Jesus sees a matter perfectly and as it truly is. For example, when he looked at Peter following the three denials, his look was powerful medicine. It resulted in Peter's going out and weeping bitterly.

Song 5:13 His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers: his lips like lilies, dropping sweetsmelling myrrh.

"His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers." Here Jesus' cheeks, a symbol of health, are specifically mentioned. The plural form "spices" indicates fullness and variety. Spices are used to preserve, to counteract odors, and to provide flavor. The aromatic aspect would picture curative, medicinal properties. Herbs are used extensively in homeopathic medicine. This description of Jesus indicates medicinal and health qualities as well as sweetness. Both spices and flowers are fragrant, the spices being stimulating and the flowers being pleasurable and sweet. Jesus' cheeks are like the fragrance from trellised flowers or towers of perfume that spread abroad.

Comment: In the 1976 study it was said: "Jesus' cheeks have a fragrance in close communion—a healthy, refreshing, and invigorating quality for one in communication with him."

Comment: What flowery language the Great Company is using to describe Jesus!

Reply: If consecrated to this degree earlier, they would be part of the Bride class. Some do not realize that everyone who is called can make the grade. We must have faith that the Lord *is sincerely interested* in us if we respond to his leadings and teachings. The invitation to the high calling is *real and bona fide*. These glowing comments by the Great Company class show us how they will develop. Circumstances of the time will either make or break the consecrated who remain behind. The development of the Great Company class will be beneficial to the "daughters of Jerusalem," who are watching and ask, "What is thy beloved more than another beloved?"

"His lips like lilies, dropping sweetsmelling myrrh." "Lilies" imply pure, delicate, life-giving (resurrection) qualities. Jesus suits his counsel to the needs of those who request his direction.

"Myrrh," meaning "bitter," is a sweet-flowing herb. In Hebrews 2:10 Paul said that Jesus needed to be perfected for the *office* of High Priest, "For it became him, ... in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Jesus could be qualified or perfected for office *only through suffering*. The counsel that emanates from his lips is like sweet-flowing myrrh (wisdom). Through Jesus' experience of being perfected as God's official High Priest, he learned lessons in dealing with fallen mankind. These lessons will aid him, as the resurrected Lord, in giving counsel. He knows what counsel to give and how to give it. The words coming forth from his lips are not trivial but are medicinally beneficial. Taking medicine may not be pleasant, but the healing that results is sweet. This is especially true when a habitual fault is corrected.

Comment: Jesus' counsel is pure, tender, and wise.

Reply: "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46).

Song 5:14 His hands are as gold rings set with the beryl: his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires.

Revised Standard: "His arms are rounded gold set with jewels; his body is ivory work encrusted with sapphires."

"Hands" would be the forearms, that is, from the elbows to the tips of the fingers. Jesus' forearms have a *rounded golden* effect, showing that his workmanship with his followers is very gentle and soft—like the shepherd retrieving the lost lamb and cuddling it in his arms. His forearms are not muscular but gentle. "Gold rings" conveys the thought of rounded and gentle, with a soft firmness. Jesus' hands are skilled, like a weaver's. He has dexterous, skillful, rounded hands that do perfect workmanship on the individual he is assisting (the cassia quality—Exod. 30:24).

"His belly [that is, Jesus' body] is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires."

Comment: This verse proves that verse 10 was discussing Jesus' countenance, not his body.

"Bright ivory" would be very white ivory that glistens. The exposed parts of Jesus' body are of glistening, very white ivory. "Ivory" is a reminder not only of the ivory palaces whence he came and whence he returned (Psa. 45:8) but also of his noble qualities.

"His belly is ... overlaid with sapphires [lapis lazuli]." Lapis lazuli is blue with gold pyrites in it, which calls to mind the blue sky with stars—the heavens. Hence Jesus' body is overlaid with heavenly faithfulness. In other words, "His body is glistening ivory overlaid with lapis lazuli [draped in heavenly beauty]."

The blue can also be considered from another standpoint. "He [God] is faithful that [has] promised" (Heb. 10:23). That quality was developed in Jesus through his relationship with the faithfulness of his Father, for his character is like that of the Father in every sense. Also, he is faithful to those with whom he is dealing.

Song 5:15 His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.

"His legs are as pillars of marble." Stability is shown in the text "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out" (Rev. 3:12). "Pillars" are a symbol of strength, stability, support, and a staunch, dependable, reliable character. If a person is wobbly on his legs, his direction is affected. Jesus has a definite purpose. He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow (Heb. 13:8). We can depend on him with all our heart, soul, and mind; he is next to the Father in worship.

His legs are "set upon sockets of fine gold." A "socket" is a hole in which something is placed. In the Tabernacle arrangement, the tenons of each board fit into a hole in a socket. That socket base was sunk firmly into the ground so that just a little silver showed aboveground as a platform. The raised base or platform used today is a symbol of the socket that was sunk in the ground for stability.

“His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.” As the cedars of Lebanon were tall and erect, so Jesus has a stately bearing. One beholding Jesus would notice his stately mien and erect bearing, which indicate good character. The height of the cedars of Lebanon signifies that Jesus is “head and shoulders” over all others. Also, cedars emit a pleasant fragrance and thus have an invigorating influence. As one enters deeper and deeper into the Redwood Forest of California, the feeling of leaving the world increases. It is a feeling of being sheltered and separate. The padding of needles provides a deep silence.

Song 5:16 His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

“His mouth is most sweet.” In some translations “mouth” is “palate.” The palate is used for taste and it shapes the sound that comes forth. In other words, good and kindly thoughts are framed before utterance, so that Jesus’s words are delightful to hear. With us, too often we speak before thinking and unpleasant words come forth.

“Yea, he is altogether lovely” is a summation of the description of Jesus in verses 10–16. Jesus is the *sum total of beauty*, of all the graces.

“This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.”

Comment: After such a wonderful description, the “daughters of Jerusalem” will want to know Jesus.

Reply: Yes. The Holy Spirit will come strongly on the Great Company class, but first they will be despondent, crying and worrying about their relationship with the Lord. The disappointment will end up benefiting those who are rightly exercised. This secondary class will give a marvelous witness subsequently that will be especially helpful to the Holy Remnant. When the Kingdom is established, the order of blessing and status will be:

1. Spirit plane: Jesus, the Church, and the Great Company
2. Earthly plane: Ancient Worthies and the Holy Remnant, both of whom will be the nucleus of the Kingdom

Song 6:1 Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we may seek him with thee.

The Great Company, the foolish virgin class, has been speaking. Now the “daughters of Jerusalem,” the “watchmen,” in response to hearing the Great Company exult about Jesus, ask where he (“thy beloved”) has gone so that they too might seek him. Earlier, in Song 5:9, the watchmen asked the Great Company, “What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women?”

These questions indicate quite a change in heart condition among the watchmen class. The type of Elijah, Elisha, and the sons of the prophets seems to have a parallel here. After Elisha smites the Jordan, the sons of the prophets inquire of him, “Where is Elijah?”

“And he [Elisha] took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the LORD God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over. And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him. And they said unto him, Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty strong men; let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master: lest peradventure the spirit of the LORD hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley. And he said, Ye shall not send. And when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, Send. They sent therefore fifty men; and they sought three days, but found him not. And when they came again to him, (for he tarried at Jericho,) he said unto them, Did I not say unto you, Go not?” (2 Kings 2:14–18).

Song 6:1 shows the daughters of Jerusalem seeking: “Whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we may seek him with thee.” There is some similarity, a seeming tie-in, between the two accounts. In 2 Kings 2, the “sons of the prophets” make the inquiry and do the seeking. Who are the “sons of the prophets”?

Comment: They are the Holy Remnant, the present-day right-hearted descendants of the holy prophets of the past.

Reply: The “sons of the prophets” are a sincere element in Israel who are interested in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Another application which does not fit as well is that the “watchmen” and “daughters of Jerusalem” represent that portion of the Great Company who are forced out of the nominal Church when it falls. Bereft of the nominal system, they will at first be antagonistic to the Great Company class already out of Babylon, but then they will become more sincerely interested. This application and time period would be earlier than the Holy Remnant application, but both applications will take place *after the Church is gone*.

“That we may seek him with thee” indicates an interest in what the Great Company class has been saying about Jesus.

Song 6:2 My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.

The Great Company is speaking. “My beloved is gone down into his garden” is another way of saying the true Church is complete and the marriage has taken place. This verse ties in with Song 5:1.

“My beloved is gone down ... to the beds of spices.” “Beds” (plural) are raised mounds or terraces. Elevation helps the development of spices. “Beds of spices” are the graces, beauties, and virtues of the Bride class that Jesus will enjoy. Each member of the Little Flock will have individual characteristics and a distinctive personality.

“My beloved is gone ... to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.” Lilies are delicate flowers that picture purity, peace, simplicity, and humility—all characteristics of the Bride class. Lilies beautify a home when they are gathered and arranged in a vase.

Song 6:3 I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies.

The Bride now speaks. Verses 1, 2, and 3 are, respectively, the sentiments of the daughters of Jerusalem, the Great Company, and the Bride.

Comment: It seems harmonious to say the Church is speaking in verse 3 because she would then become the "thou" ("you") whom Jesus addresses in verse 4 and subsequent verses. Otherwise, if verse 3 is ascribed to the Great Company, it would sound as if Jesus were addressing that class in verse 4.

Comment: When Song of Solomon is set to music and sung in the future, the different voices for verses 1–3, followed by Jesus' voice, will be moving.

Song 6:4 Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners.

The Bridegroom responds to the glorified Bride. "O my love" would be "O my very, very close friend."

"Thou art beautiful ... as Tirzah." "Tirzah" has the thought of desirable, pleasant, delightful.

Tirzah was one of the five daughters of Zelophehad, who had no sons. When he died in the Wilderness of Sinai, the daughters wanted an inheritance. When this matter, which was not covered under the Law, was brought to Moses, God's answer was that the daughters should have an inheritance.

Numbers 26:33; 27:2–7 reads: "And Zelophehad the son of Hephher had no sons, but daughters: and the names of the daughters of Zelophehad were Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. Then came the daughters of Zelophehad ... And they stood before Moses, and before Eleazar the priest, and before the princes and all the congregation, by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying, Our father died in the wilderness, and he was not in the company of them that gathered themselves together against the LORD in the company of Korah; but died in his own sin, and had no sons. Why should the name of our father be done away from among his family, because he hath no son? Give unto us therefore a possession among the brethren of our father. And Moses brought their cause before the LORD. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, The daughters of Zelophehad speak right: thou shalt surely give them a possession of an inheritance among their father's brethren; and thou shalt cause the inheritance of their father to pass unto them."

"Thou art ... comely as Jerusalem." This description of the Bride is based on the beauty of Solomon's Temple. From a distance, how magnificent the Temple complex appeared sitting on the hilltop! As one approached Jerusalem, the Temple and the city were spectacular to behold. In the Kingdom, Jerusalem, and especially with the Third Temple, will be the most beautiful place on earth as the capital of the world. Just as the literal Jerusalem was well situated and *beautiful* to behold, so in a spiritual and figurative sense, the Bride or New Jerusalem class will be situated in prominence and *beauty* before the holy angels. Down here their beauty will be demonstrated in other ways.

“Thou art ... terrible [awesome] as an army with banners.” Army banners indicate victory. The glorified Church is victorious and like a well-trained, orderly army.

Q: Would the banners also be for identification, as in the promise in Revelation that the Church will have the name of her God, the name of the city of her God, and Jesus’ new name (Rev. 3:12)? They would be marching under this victorious banner of identification.

A: Yes.

Sooner or later, in God’s due time, every one of the 144,000 will be singled out by name and honored or displayed as an example of faithfulness. Their past deeds will be made known.

Song 6:5 Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me: thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead.

Imagine Jesus, “the chiefest of ten thousand,” being so enthralled and enamored by the faithful overcomers, by their previous lifestyle and faithfulness to his name and cause! Of course the blemishes will be erased lest they be distracting, so that the Church will be seen without blemish and with a victorious banner.

The Bride’s eyes will *overwhelm* Jesus emotionally. All of this class are with him here. The battle is over; they have made their calling and election sure.

Q: Will Jesus’ emotions be similar to Joseph’s when he was reunited with his brethren (Gen. 45:1,2)? He was so overcome with emotion that he asked all except his brothers to leave the room. Then he made himself known to them and wept.

A: Yes, that is a beautiful picture.

“Thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead.” Gilead was north of the Dead Sea and across the Jordan River to the east. Hair is a symbol of consecration. In what sense is the Bride’s consecration like a flock of goats? The reference is to the black-haired (cashmere) goats of the Middle East. Their thick, luxurious hair pictures the full, deep consecration of the Bride class, and Jesus appreciates this quality.

“Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father’s house; So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him” (Psa. 45:10,11). The forsaking of the earth and its attractions (Adam’s house), this removal from the worldly condition, makes the Church more appealing in Jehovah’s sight. (The Church is *Jehovah’s “daughter”*: “Hearken, O daughter.”)

Song 6:6 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.

These sheep are ewes, females. The Bride’s teeth are evenly paired—none are missing. Since teeth are used for eating and masticating, the thought is that the Bride has evenly fed upon the Old and New Testaments. This balanced diet resulted in spiritual health. The text “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by *every word* that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” proves that the Old Testament cannot be ignored (Matt. 4:4). There must

be an equal, balanced appreciation of the Old and New Testaments, for *God's Word* comprises *both*. We must be careful not to denigrate any Scriptures unless we know they are spurious.

In the present life, it is hard to always have wholesome, elevated thoughts. Beyond the veil, in perfection, how beautiful will be the thoughts, words, and deeds of the glorified Church!

Comment: The comments of Jesus here in Song 6:5–7 are a repeat of Song 4:1–3. There Jesus was looking for these qualities in the Christian in the present life. Chapter 6 is the assurance that this type of Christian will make the Bride of Christ.

Reply: Yes, it is important to have that interest *now*. We are responsible for the truth *that is available* in our given locale and circumstances. Here in the United States, the land of plenty, we are more responsible than the brethren in many other countries. The judgment is according to that which a man *hath*, as well as *hath used* (Matt. 25:29).

Song 6:7 As a piece of a pomegranate are thy temples within thy locks.

The pomegranate pictures the fullness of the graces of the Spirit. “Within thy locks” is literally “behind thy veil.”

Comment: In the discussion of Chapter 4, the thought of “within thy locks” was that even the hair is paired or twinned, indicating the doing of God’s will as expressed in the Old and New Testaments. Cheeks, teeth, and locks are all paired.

Song 6:8 There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number.

There are 60 *queens*, 80 *concubines*, and *virgins* without number. To date, this verse has not been satisfactorily explained as far as we know. Clues: The “virgins without number” (an unnumbered virgin class) seem to be the Great Company. The order of importance is (1) queens, (2) concubines, and (3) virgins. But other than the Little Flock, who are mentioned in verse 9 and thus cannot be included in verse 8, who would be higher than the Great Company class? Eventually the Ancient Worthies will have a higher ranking but not in this age (and context). Verse 8 seems to have a *spiritual* application, but since all will be males in heaven, the three categories of females are puzzling. (Of course, the Church is pictorially represented as female: the Queen, the Bride of Christ.)

“Virgins” are usually thought of as maidens in the household. In Old Testament times a “concubine” was next to a wife, for prior to the Gospel Age, there was no prohibition against having more than one wife. Concubines were not only permitted but were considered to be half wives.

Comment: When “threescore” valiant men were mentioned in Song 3:7, “60” was the *only* number in that context. Therefore, it was considered to be an *indefinite* number. The suggestion was made that the fact Song 6:8 mentions *two* numbers means they are *definite* numbers.

Comment: It is difficult to think of the Ancient Worthies as being “queens” because they

are not pictured as females.

Comment: The queens, the concubines, and the virgins are being compared to the “dove,” the “*one*,” of verse 9. Bro. Frey’s notes say that the contrast is between the one and the other women, over whom she excels, and that all of them, in one way or another, aspired to become the Lamb’s wife. The queens, the concubines, and the virgins were all in the running, but she is the *only one* to receive the honor. Later they realize not only that they did not make the grade but that the “choice one” deserved the higher honor, and they praise her accordingly.

Reply: What is being said, in effect, is that the queens, the concubines, and the virgins are all the Great Company, having spiritual aspirations.

Q: How can the “daughters of Jerusalem” be the same as the “virgins without number”? The daughters of Jerusalem were defined as professed Christians, not necessarily Great Company, and the virgins are now being defined as the Great Company.

A: All who name the name of Christ are professed Christians and nominal Christians, including the Little Flock. But there are the *real* nominal and the *merely* nominal. The Lord appreciates a person who makes a definite commitment of consecration and then, for the rest of his or her life, tries to live within the strictures of that consecration, sacrificing time, talent, money, position, education, etc.—even if that individual does not make the grade. The high calling is a character calling, a calling of those who love the Lord more than any other being. He appreciates those who believe in Christ first. Those who have never made a definite covenant with the Lord—no matter how good or intrinsically noble they are—have no standing with Him. The Ancient Worthies made such a commitment in the prior age; Hebrews 11 mentions what they did and sacrificed. Therefore, all three classes—queens, concubines, and virgins—would be consecrated, whoever they are.

Perhaps verse 8 will clarify in the future. A distinction may exist that we are not historically aware of. In the true Church, star will differ from star in glory, meaning that some will be above the others in the Little Flock. One distinction, a distinction in management, is that some will get ten cities, some five, etc. The rich and/or very intellectual who make their calling and election sure, having faithfully used their talents, will get a better grade and more honor in the Kingdom. Perhaps similar distinctions will exist among the Ancient Worthies. The only problem with inserting the Ancient Worthies in this interpretation is that it is hard to see them pictured as female.

Jesus magnified the Law. He was in agreement with the Law but made it stricter in order to get the divine nature. The Ancient Worthies of the past, who had sterling characters, will not get that reward. Jesus was the first to be given the divine nature.

Q: Could these three categories be gradations of the Great Company class from the standpoint that they will need encouragement after the Church is gone? If they think that even after the fact, even after the wedding, there is a possibility of degrees of favor from the Lord, they would be spurred on to a greater development of zeal and faithfulness. Knowing positively that they missed out on the high calling, they will need Scriptures to encourage them. Another point: verses both preceding and following verse 8 pertain to the Great Company while they are still here in the flesh. Since it is possible to “see” the

Bride in the sense of recognition, the queens, concubines, and virgins would not necessarily have to literally see the Bride in heaven at this point (Song 6:9). Chapter 5 shows the Great Company coming to their senses, and they have just given a glowing description of Jesus.

A: Verse 8 may be a categorization of a spiritual class with distinctions being made that we are not accustomed to using, but at present we do not know of other Scriptures to support this thought. Queens, concubines, and virgins could all be different categorizations of the Great Company class. And yes, the Great Company will use superlative terms in their praise for Jesus. In order to get life, they must be on fire with zeal for Jesus at that time. If only they had been this zealous earlier, they would have made their calling and election sure. They will come to their senses too late.

Q: Is Jesus speaking in verse 8, or is this an interjection by the Holy Spirit?

A: Verse 8 is a commentary by the Holy Spirit, and so is the second half of verse 9. "The daughters saw her, and ... they praised her" is a statement of a fact.

Song 6:9 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.

The Church are collectively considered to be "one." "She is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her." The "mother ... that bare her" is the Sarah Covenant, the "Jerusalem ... above,... which is the mother of us all" (Gal. 4:26).

"The daughters saw her, and proclaimed her blessed" is a better rendition than the King James, for how could that which is inferior bless that which is superior?

"Undefiled" in Hebrew means "perfect" in the sense of *maturity*—the Church is mature. Therefore, by inference the queens, the concubines, and the virgins without number are immature. In the final analysis, the Great Company will be overcomers, but not more than overcomers like the Church. There are heroes and superheroes, the Church class being superheroes.

Song 6:10 Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?

Leeser: "Who is this that shineth forth like the morning dawn, beautiful as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as armies encamped round their banners." "Shineth forth" seems to fit the context better than the King James "looketh forth" because the sun and the moon are being compared. The Church is beheld as lustrous and superlative. She shines forth as the dawn, that is, as a spectacular sunrise. On a clear morning the atmosphere seems to be cleaner; dawn has an unusual freshness and newness. The sun provides necessary warmth and light for plant, animal, and human life.

The Church are promised that they will shine as the sun. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament [the sun]" (Dan 12:3). "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13:43). The sun pictures the almost overpowering glory that the Church will receive. Historically, in the present life, the

Church has been clothed with the sun and stood upon the moon (Rev. 12:1).

“Fair as the moon.” Although not as bright as the sun, the moon has its own beauty and purity. A moonlit night is particularly beautiful.

“Terrible as an army with banners.” The NIV has “majestic as the stars in procession.” “Terrible” means “awesome.” The word “army” is supplied in the King James. Based on the heavenly comparison already drawn with the dawn, the sun, and the moon, one can take the liberty of supplying the word “stars.” God created the greater light (the sun), the lesser light (the moon), and from man’s standpoint the still lesser lights (the stars). (Actually the stars may be suns much larger than our own sun.) “Stars” could be the better thought. Either way the thought is one of *victory*: victory banners or a victory procession.

The Holy Spirit is commenting in verse 10.

Song 6:11 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.

The Revised Standard shows a paragraph break at verse 11.

Leeser: “Into the nut garden was I gone down, to look about among the plants of the valley, to see whether the vine had blossomed, whether the pomegranates had budded.”

This garden of nut trees is in a “valley” or ravine between two mountains. The Bride is speaking. She “went down” (came down here to earth’s atmosphere) to observe the nut garden (the Great Company class). A nutshell must be crushed in order to extract the nut or kernel, a pleasant food. Spiritually speaking, excruciating experiences bring out the inner development of fruit. This principle has been true all down the Gospel Age and thus also applies to the setting here, that is, after the Church is complete and glorified.

Q: Could the flourishing or blossoming vine and the budding pomegranates bring in other thoughts? Would the crushing of the nuts to reveal the “meat” refer to the hard experiences coming in the Time of Trouble?

A: Yes, and the Holy Remnant could be included, although the primary focus is on the Great Company. In Song 8:8 the Church beyond the veil say, “We have a little sister.” They are coming down to examine this secondary class.

Song 6:12 Or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib.

Amminadib can mean “my willing people” or “my princely people.” The Church goes down to see the garden of nuts and to find out whether the vine has flourished and the pomegranates have budded.

Notes from the 1976 study: “Before I was aware, my fancy [intent or soul] set me in a chariot beside my prince” (RSV). Since Amminadib pertains to leadership, “prince” is the correct translation. The Bride is speaking. The “chariot” is a conveyance, a speed vehicle that hastens one to a destination. Right after the wedding, the Bride has the Great Company so much on her mind that she races down to see her little sister. In her new state, she will be able to travel *rapidly*.

Reply: Yes, the thought of the Church being beside Jesus in a chariot would fit the context, for the pronoun “we” is used in verse 13. After the excitement and glory subside of finding themselves in the Little Flock, the Bride class will ask, “What about this consecrated one and that consecrated one?” It will be a natural development for them to be solicitous for those they had associated with. Jesus will be equally interested—and even more so in some instances.

Song 6:13 Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies.

In some translations, verse 13 begins Chapter 7, for a new setting starts here. Jesus and the Bride are speaking.

The “Shulamite” is the Great Company. The “two armies” are the two classes of Great Company: those in Babylon and those outside of Babylon. 2 Kings 2:9,10 tells of Elisha’s request for a double portion of Elijah’s spirit. Elijah’s reply, “If thou see me when I am taken from thee,” indicates the Elisha class is the Great Company outside of Babylon with a knowledge of present truth. They will understand that the last members of the Church are being taken. The Great Company who are still in the nominal system at that time will far outnumber those outside of the system, but because of present truth, those outside will be better informed. Those in the nominal system will be extricated at the time of its fall, just as Lot was pulled out of Sodom at the time of its destruction.

Elisha accompanied Elijah; hence Elisha pictures those of the Great Company who are conversant with, and companions of, the feet members. When Elijah smote the Jordan, he and Elisha walked across together. In antitype, therefore, Elisha has knowledge of present truth.

The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins indicates that the foolish virgins do get the oil. In the marketplace of experience (the great Time of Trouble), they wash their robes white in the blood of the Lamb and then return with their vessels full of oil, but to their chagrin, the door is closed. This parable lumps together both classes of the Great Company. In contrast, Elisha accompanied Elijah and saw what Elijah did—thus picturing only that portion of the Great Company who are familiar with present truth.

Comment: In Strong’s “Shulamite” means “peace,” and it is the feminine of “Solomon.”

Reply: Yes, and the word “peace” is *shalom*, *Solomon*, etc.

“Return, return” means “return to the Lord.” It is an exhortation or entreaty to the Great Company to *repent*. They will have to wash their robes. A contrite attitude will be necessary for reconciliation with Jesus and for their redemption.

“Return, return, that we may look upon thee.” “We” would be Jesus and the Church. “What will ye see in the Shulamite?” or “What do you see in the Shulamite?” is an interjection or extraneous commentary. Jesus and the Church answer, “As it were the company of two armies [a host].”

Comment: Verse 13 has two different speakers. “Return, return ... that we may look upon

thee" would be The Christ speaking. An impersonal comment by the Holy Spirit follows: "What will ye see in the Shulamite?" The answer from The Christ is "As it were the company of two armies."

Comment: If "Shulamite" means peace, it could be in the unfavorable sense of compromise. The Great Company are a *compromising* class. At least temporarily, they will not stand up for truth and principle the way they should.

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON SONG 6:13 follow, as presented by Bro. Frank several weeks later. They are inserted here for convenience.

First, let us read Genesis 32:1–5,13. "And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place *Mahanaim*. And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom. And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now: And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight.... And he ... took ... a present for Esau his brother."

The reason Jacob fled north in the first place was for fear of what Esau would do to him because Esau thought Jacob had fraudulently obtained the birthright. With the mother's (Rebekah's) cooperation, Jacob fled for his life to Laban's household with just a staff in his hand. Twenty years later, Jacob felt that enough time had elapsed, and he wanted to return to his home environs. Nevertheless, he thought Esau might still be angry. Genesis 32:1–5 gives Jacob's strategy to appease Esau. First, Jacob assured Esau he was not coming to take away anything temporal but was sending gifts to further appease him. Not only did the strategy work, but Esau declined the gifts. Before sending the message to Esau, Jacob was met by angels, to whom he said, "This is God's host." He called the name of the place where the angels met him "*Mahanaim*." The word "host" is the Hebrew *mahanaim*, and Song 6:13 translates *mahanaim* as "of two armies" or "of two camps."

At the recent Rockland Bible Students Convention, a question on Song 6:13 was asked that will be addressed further at this time. When Jacob saw the angels, he recognized that they were in two companies, but why did he call them "God's host" or "God's two camps"? Years earlier, before Jacob went north to Laban, he wanted assurance and he fell asleep on a rock "pillow." He dreamed and had a vision of a ladder between heaven and earth with angels ascending and descending *before* (in front of) the Son of man. These are the two companies: a company ascending and a company descending. Jacob called that place "Bethel" (house of God), indicating he had a miraculous experience there. It was as though he had communion with heaven. Now, on the return trip 20 years later and at a different location, he again saw *two companies* of God's angels. When he was going north, the location was named Bethel. Now, on his return, it was a place he called "Mahanaim," and he considered the angels to be an assurance that all was well, even though he feared.

The place Jacob named "Mahanaim" was across Jordan, ie, east of the Jordan River in Gilead. This location is verified in Scripture, as follows:

"And Moses gave inheritance unto the tribe of Gad, even unto the children of Gad according to their families.... And from Heshbon unto Ramath-mizpeh, and Betonim; and from

Mahanaim unto the border of Debir;... *And Moses gave inheritance unto the half tribe of Manasseh*: and this was the possession of the half tribe of the children of Manasseh by their families. And their coast was from *Mahanaim*, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and all the towns of Jair, which are in Bashan, threescore cities" (Josh. 13:24,26,29,30).

"But Abner the son of Ner, captain of Saul's host, took Ishbosheth the son of Saul, and brought him over to *Mahanaim*;... And Abner the son of Ner, and the servants of Ishbosheth the son of Saul, went out from *Mahanaim* to Gibeon" (2 Sam. 2:8,12).

"And unto the families of the children of *Merari*, the rest of the Levites, out of the tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam with her suburbs, and Kartah with her suburbs,... And out of the tribe of *Gad*, *Ramoth in Gilead* with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer; and *Mahanaim* with her suburbs" (Josh. 21:34,38).

"Then David came to *Mahanaim*. And Absalom passed over Jordan, he and all the men of Israel with him" (2 Sam. 17:24).

"And, behold, thou hast with thee Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to *Mahanaim*: but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I swore to him by the LORD, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword" (1 Kings 2:8).

"And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother. Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments: And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went. And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem. And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob. So Jacob came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan, that is, Bethel, he and all the people that were with him. And he built there an altar, and called the place Elbethel: because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother. But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Bethel under an oak: and the name of it was called Allonbachuth" (Gen. 35:1-8).

We will read Song 6:13 again: "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." First, the "two armies" are both spiritual. When the angels appeared to Jacob and he called them "God's host," the angels were spiritual. In the Bible the word "angel" signifies "messenger." Hence there were two companies of God's messengers.

While we are treading on unexplored ground, Pastor Russell's comments on Bethel opened the door to the thoughts that follow. When Jacob slept with his head on the rock pillow and saw the angels of God ascending and descending, the Pastor referred to these angels as the Great Company, a *spiritual* class. A spirit class can come down to earth and return, but an earthly class cannot go up to heaven and come back. The spiritual aspect is emphasized by the Hebrew name *Mahanaim*. Based on Jacob's experiences, a town in the

land of Gilead across Jordan was given the name of Mahanaim. More importantly, Mahanaim was in the tribe of Gad, which is a symbol of the Great Company. (We are trying to show the harmony of God's Word.) Furthermore, Mahanaim was one of the three Levitical cities given to the Merarites, who, the Pastor stated, also represent the Great Company. And Mahanaim was a borderline town for the tribes of both Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh across Jordan in Gilead. Manasseh pictures the Ancient Worthies beyond the Kingdom, when they will get a spiritual resurrection. (During the Kingdom the Ancient Worthies will be an earthly class, as pictured by the half tribe of Manasseh in Israel proper.) The two and a half tribes across the Jordan all represent *spiritual* classes: Gad pictures the Great Company, Manasseh represents the Ancient Worthies, and Reuben is the Little Flock.

"What will ye see in the Shulamite?" Two classes, two camps. In its *present* application, the Shulamite represents *two* divisions of the Great Company: those inside Babylon and those outside Babylon. The Shulamite was told to "Return, return"; that is, the Great Company will have to *repent*, to renew their consecrations, to wash their robes, etc. In the next or Kingdom age, the Ancient Worthies will be an earthly class, and the Great Company will be a spiritual class. Beyond the Kingdom Age, however, the Ancient Worthies will become a spiritual class higher in rank than the Great Company.

During the Kingdom Age, the Great Company class will be spirit beings. But there was another class on the back side of the Tabernacle called the Gershonites, who were a Levitical tribe with no inheritance in the land. The Gershonites picture a "Great Company" class prior to the Gospel Age. In other words, this consecrated class were overcomers and companions of the Ancient Worthies but not of the same caliber. Once the Kingdom is set up and the Ancient Worthies come forth from the tomb, this secondary class will receive their resurrection. Whether they will come forth in the Kingdom as spirit beings (like the Great Company of the Gospel Age) or as earthly beings remains to be seen. At any rate, this secondary class, having no inheritance in the land, will eventually receive a spirit nature. Regardless of which nature the Gershonites have during the Kingdom, the Ancient Worthies in the flesh will be superior.

During the Kingdom Age, the world of mankind will be resuscitated. The Great Company class of the Gospel Age will deal with those of mankind they are familiar with. In other words, as a spirit class, they will deal with those humans who were born during the Gospel Age era (during Wycliffe's day, Luther's day, etc.). And the secondary class of prior ages, the *sons* of the prophets (not the prophets themselves), will deal with those humans who lived *before* the Gospel Age (from Adam through the Flood and up to Jesus' day). Thus the economy of the divine plan is seen—none will be in a position from which they are completely estranged.

Of course the Kingdom Age is only temporary—let us say, for convenience' sake, 1,000 years long. What these classes do during the Kingdom Age is one thing, and what they will do beyond the Kingdom Age is another thing. Revelation 7:15 more or less indicates the Great Company class will occupy a position of messengers and servants and identify with Christ not only during the Kingdom Age but *forever*. "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him *day and night* in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them." They will be in a fixed office, their future being secured in many ways. With the Little Flock, however, the horizon will open wider and wider and wider. After the Kingdom Age, they will be given their own domains, and their

activities will be unlimited. The suggestion is that the Great Company class—at least the Great Company class of the Gospel Age—will be associated with the Bride class as bridesmaids, as messengers, forever. Whatever things are going to be done, there will be a rapport between the two classes.

Daniel 12:3 tells us the Ancient Worthies will be like stars and the Church as the sun. Therefore, during the Kingdom Age, the Ancient Worthies will be next to the Church in rank and honor. They will be “princes” in all the earth, whereas the Great Company will be messengers. Thus, after the Kingdom Age when the Ancient Worthies are given a spirit nature, they will have a role superior to that of the Great Company and they will serve in some fashion with the unending creation of God (just how the Scriptures do not say).

The *mahanaim* or two camps of the Great Company not only have a present application of those inside and outside Babylon, but they are a prophecy of the Kingdom Age and beyond. From one standpoint, the secondary class *before* Christ and the Great Company class *since* Christ are really both Great Company. These are two classes during the Kingdom Age. But notice that the city of Mahanaim, which is on the border between Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh, is actually in Gad (the Great Company class). Progression is shown: (1) the present, (2) an enlargement during the Kingdom Age to include the secondary class before Christ, and (3) beyond the Kingdom into the ages of ages. The fulfillment of half the tribe of Manasseh being across Jordan—ie, the spirit nature being given to the Ancient Worthies—will take place at the end of the Kingdom.

Q: How could the secondary class prior to the Gospel Age get a spirit change *before* the Ancient Worthies? Wouldn't the Ancient Worthies have to precede them?

A: I would think so, but technically it is not an absolute necessity because even if they were given a spirit nature, they would still be secondary. Whether they are down here or up there, they are secondary. The preferable thought is that they will be flesh like the Ancient Worthies during the Kingdom Age, but we are not dogmatic.

When the resurrection takes place, there will be two Great Company classes, those after Christ and those before Christ. Probably the Great Company class before Christ will be companions and associates of the Ancient Worthies, who will be established as princes throughout the earth.

Comment: A corroborating picture would be the two classes (or armies) of the Merarites and the Gershonites around the Tabernacle.

Reply: Yes. They have no inheritance in the land, but they are not on the level of the Kohathites (Ancient Worthies) or the Amramites (Little Flock).

Q: The thoughts presented make a lot of sense based on the use of *mahanaim* elsewhere, but as far as the Song of Solomon context goes, couldn't the two armies of the Shulamite who ascend and descend during the Kingdom Age be just the spiritual Great Company of the Gospel Age?

A: For that reason I leave the matter technically open because I do not know. Jacob's ladder is a Kingdom Age picture and it has “two armies.” However, I see no aberration or

violation of any law whether the secondary class prior to the Gospel Age is of spirit or earth nature during the Kingdom Age because either way the class is inferior.

The Ancient Worthies will be under the New Covenant until the end of the Kingdom because they need further instruction. The New Covenant, like the Old, is a *Law*. Those under the New Covenant will be under the tutelage of Jesus, and not directly under God. Hence more mercy can be extended to mankind in their growth and development, but eventually they will have to meet the full weight of the Law and come up to the character of overcomers. The Ancient Worthies have already proven their loyalty, but they need other lessons not received in their prior life. This reasoning indicates that the secondary class of the prior age will probably be an earthly class during the Kingdom.

Song 7:1 **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.**

Jesus, the Bridegroom, is speaking in verses 1–9. The description will take place when the Bride is beyond the veil.

“O prince's daughter” in the KJV creates a problem because neither the Little Flock nor the Great Company is in any sense the daughter of Jesus, and Jehovah is not called a “prince.” The RSV reads: “How graceful are your feet in sandals, O queenly maiden!” “Queenly maiden,” a term of royalty for the Bride class, is the better translation.

Comment: Psalm 45:13 calls the Church the “king's daughter.” “The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold.”

Reply: Yes, that is a reference to Jehovah. There are two “kings” in Psalm 45. Verse 5 speaks of “King” Jesus: “Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the *king's* enemies; whereby the people fall under thee.” (This verse will be fulfilled in the Kingdom Age.) Verse 11 speaks of “King” Jesus: “So shall the *king* greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him.” And there are two “God's.” Verses 6 and 7 read, “Thy throne, O *God* [a reference to Jesus], is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore *God, thy God* [that is, Jehovah], hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” The 45th Psalm shows activity near the end of the present age where Jesus will take unto himself his great power and reign. The “children” over whom he will reign start with the Ancient Worthies, who have to be raised and perfected.

“How beautiful are thy feet with shoes [thy footsteps in sandals].”

Comment: Beyond the veil the Bride's feet will be beautifully adorned with sandals as a result of her previous labors and faithful endurance of persecution.

Reply: The same principle is used in the character study of Jesus *in glory* in Revelation 1:15. The feet of the *risen, resurrected* Lord are described as glowing in a furnace. In other words, the description of Jesus in glory hearkens back to when he trod the earth in the furnace of affliction. Thus the Bride's beautiful feet *in glory* are also based on the *previous* life. We view the Cross of Christ as the epitome of Jesus' love for the Father, the Church, and those of mankind who will be obedient. While the Cross pictures death and suffering, we look back at the Cross as a finished picture of what Jesus *has done*. He *proved* his

worthiness and his love for God in coming down here to die such an ignominious death. His death also proves his concern for the world of mankind and his acquiescence to God's plan for other brethren to be associated with him in the Kingdom.

There is a future double application regarding the Bride's beautiful shoes and feet. *In glory* Jesus (1) looks *back* at what the Bride *previously* did and (2) *now* sees the appropriateness of her being clothed in a robe of gold and wearing beautiful shoes. This description of the Bride *beyond the veil* is fitting because of her *prior* faithfulness, love of righteousness, hatred of iniquity, etc.—because of her past footsteps.

Comment: In the Passover picture, the Israelites were to have shoes on their feet for the journey in the wilderness. In this picture those temporary shoes have been exchanged for the glorified shoes of the completed, perfected Church.

Q: Are the beautiful feet related to Ephesians 6:15, where the Church are told to have their "feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace"?

A: That Scripture applies to the Church in the present life. The Church's feet *in glory* are a reflection of the past, but now, beyond the veil, they have new (and different) shoes. It is like the robe of Christ's righteousness in the *present* life. The white robe of justification is *imputed* righteousness. Beyond the veil the saints will also have white robes, but these will be robes of *actual* righteousness.

"The joints of thy thighs are like jewels." Jewels are used for the movement of a watch to perpetuate its life, for jewels do not deteriorate like brass. Here the thighs indicate *movement*, action, and the jewels suggest *permanency* based upon prior character development. Henceforth the Bride class can be depended upon to pursue *in perfection throughout eternity* the same behavior that they manifested in imperfect flesh in the present life.

Comment: A thought presented in the 1976 study, which combines the remainder of verse 1 ("the work of the hands of a cunning workman"), is that the Church walks like a queen. Her grace is the product of *God's* workmanship, not something she had naturally. When *God's* work is perfected in the Church, the results will be to *His* praise, honor, and glory.

Comment: The reflection of light from the movement of the jewels would be beautiful to behold.

In the present life, the spark of intense love and zeal for the cause of God, which is common to all who will be Little Flock, is in an imperfect vessel. When the individual receives a perfect vessel, the beauty will be more manifest to other beings. Now Jesus must use X-ray eyes to see the true heart condition of his brethren still in the flesh. At present the Father and the Son can see that which truly motivates those walking in the narrow way, but in glory the motivations will be outwardly manifest. It will be apparent to all why an individual was honored with the divine nature.

When Queen Vashti was removed from the king's favor, a beauty contest was held. The candidates (prospective queens) were prepared and educated for months to see if they had the necessary qualities to be the wife and queen of the king. Hegai, picturing the Holy Spirit, took a special interest in tutoring and developing Esther. The result was that

queenly qualities were brought out in Esther, but the development took a little time. The parallel is the Church in the flesh—time is needed for development. The Holy Spirit of God—God’s intuitive knowledge—can note and prophesy accurately who will make the grade and who will not.

“The work of the hands of a *cunning workman*.” The Bride is not the product of human flesh but the product of the Holy Spirit working within each of the 144,000.

This description is given just before the marriage. Other activities must take place first when the feet members go beyond the veil. For example, each saint will hear Jesus say “Well done, thou good and faithful servant,” meet the other saints, and be acquainted with the duties of office (Matt. 25:21). In other words, even though the Bride class will be fit for the office, they must undergo an “orientation” process and be acquainted with the “rules and regulations.”

Song 7:2 Thy navel is like a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor: thy belly is like an heap of wheat set about with lilies.

The order of the description in verses 1–9 is feet, thighs, belly (or abdomen), breasts, neck, eyes, nose, head. Verse 2 describes two features of the abdomen: the navel (umbilical cord) and the belly. Why is the Bride’s navel likened to a “round goblet,” which lacketh not liquor or mixed wine?

Comment: This verse refers to her potential for child-bearing and productivity, to the potential development that comes through her as the Second Eve.

Reply: Yes. The umbilical cord pertains to the birth and development of each of the Bride class. A good mother can give good instruction to her children. The Bride’s maturity or rounded development resembles a goblet filled with mixed wine. “Mixed wine” in the good sense would be blended wine, indicating the Bride’s virtuous qualities. The second half of this verse ties in with the navel being like a goblet of mixed wine. A goblet of mixed wine would be extended to others. The queenly maiden is to be the mother of a regenerated race. She will be involved with Jesus in bringing forth people from the tomb, and her potential is very favorable for nurturing the growth and development of the human race.

“Thy belly is like an heap of wheat set about with lilies.” The suggestion is that this queenly maiden has great potential for giving birth. When in a family way, she will call or bring forth children out of the tomb and regenerate the human race. A “*heap* of wheat” signifies *abundant* fruitfulness and the capability to sustain as food. Elsewhere in Scripture a *sheaf* of wheat pictures the same thing.

“Set about with lilies.” Today with the fallen human race, some of the lovely things in nature immediately take on an evil connotation when they should not. God produced the organs for creating life. From His standpoint, the procreative process was well thought out. Perfect, pure minds would regard this process as very wonderful, but under present conditions, everything is befouled, besmirched, and depraved. The production of life should be considered in the beautiful sense as being “set about with lilies,” as being pure and ethereal. The end product, a little child, is looked upon as darling and delightful regardless of race; it evokes clean, beautiful, sweet thoughts. But actually the entire

process is appreciated when properly viewed.

The thought in verse 2 is that the Bride class has the capability of tutoring the world of mankind in the next age. This is a beautiful picture set about with “lily” (delicate, pure, and holy) thoughts. Jesus had to be made “perfect”; he had to suffer in order to become qualified for the office of King in the next age. “For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings” (Heb. 2:10). It was necessary for Jesus to receive this additional education, which had nothing to do with his character. He had a perfect character and maturity of thought prior to his suffering, but he needed the sufferings in order to be perfected for the office. And so the Bride, the queenly maiden, is shown beyond the veil as having been made perfect through prior sufferings and activities down here. Now she is fit for office in her new duties of the Kingdom.

Song 7:3 Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins.

The description of the Bride beyond the veil continues. Her two breasts represent the Old and New Testaments. Maturity of development is shown, with an equal balance of study and appreciation for both the Old and New Testaments.

The “young roes [fawns, gazelles]” indicate sensitivity. The Bride has so fully absorbed the principles of Scripture that she is very alert to and aware of the things that should be noticed.

Song 7:4 Thy neck is as a tower of ivory; thine eyes like the fishpools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim: thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus.

Verse 4 describes three features: the neck, the eyes, and the nose. “Thy neck is as a tower of ivory.” From the standpoint of the human physique, this description calls attention to the Bride’s grace, nobility, and regal bearing. One who possesses *natural* nobility has a regal stature, but once nobility is *manufactured*, it becomes pride and stubbornness (a stiff neck).

Q: In parts of Egypt, white rings were placed around the woman’s neck. Is Solomon alluding to these?

A: Yes. The rings raised the chin and kept the head up so that this position became natural.

Comment: “Queenly maiden” is the better translation for verse 1. In harmony with the thought of a queen, the Bride walks gracefully, the carriage of her neck shows nobility, and her nose indicates regal bearing.

Reply: Yes. Ivory is usually white, a symbol of natural purity. The Bride’s regal bearing is not legislated but is the product of right thought and conduct.

“Thine eyes like the fishpools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bathrabbim.” Heshbon, a beautiful elevated city in Transjordan, is mentioned in connection with the journey of the Israelites and their entering the land of Canaan (Deut. 2:30). The name of the gate, Bathrabbim, is appropriately in the feminine. How are the Bride’s eyes like fishpools?

Note from the 1976 study: The Bride's eyes look like the two pools near the gate of Bathrabbim. The water is interesting to look at, for it takes on different aspects. Hence the Bride is a class with depth; they are thinkers, analyzers, meditators.

Comment: Fish pools would be very reflective, and the Bride's eyes reflect her Lord and her love for him.

"Fishpools" (plural) would mean two fishpools, one for each eye. If eyes are described as vacuous, the person is empty-headed. The Bride's eyes indicate the opposite: variety, depth. "Heshbon" means "intelligence, stronghold." "Bathrabbim" is defined as "daughter of many."

"Thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus." "Lebanon" means "white." Nobility is the thought with the nose. The curvature of the nostrils used to be associated with good birth; the shape of the nose shows refinement. The consecrated down here may be anything but noble in appearance, but those who make their calling and election sure will get a *glorious* body. It is not a person's fault if he or she is lame, hunchbacked, etc., in the present life. Each of the 144,000 will be a beauty queen, as it were, from Jesus' standpoint. We should keep in mind that this is a description of the *finished* Bride class beyond the veil. She has *true* nobility, not assumed nobility.

Comment: Her refined sense of smell is attuned to spiritual things.

Reply: The nose is used for decision making, for discernment. The olfactory nerves are important for detecting danger.

Song 7:5 Thine head upon thee is like Carmel, and the hair of thine head like purple; the king is held in the galleries.

"Thine head upon thee is like [Mount] Carmel." The eastern side of Mount Carmel is beautiful pasture. "Carmel" signifies "fruitful field."

Comment: Verse 5 carries on the thought of queenly nobility and regality.

The unusual descriptions of the Bride in verses 4 and 5 show this picture is not sensual and unclean in the normal sense. The natural anatomy is thus purposely avoided for portions of the description.

"The hair of thine head [is] like purple." Of course purple is the color of royalty. The NIV has "Her hair is like royal tapestry."

"The king is held [captive, bound] in the galleries [or in her tresses]." "Tresses" are long locks of hair. The implication is that the Bride's hair is long and flowing. In other words, Jesus will take joy in fellowshiping and conversing with his saints in glory. Even down here, profound wisdom sometimes comes forth out of the mouth of babes. In glory, all the beautiful characteristics of the Bride class will no longer be inhibited. No longer will evil thoughts be able to intrude into the mind.

Note from the 1976 study: Jesus is swooning over the Bride's beauty and charm. He is

captivated. He realizes she is the daughter of Jehovah, the product of God's workmanship.

Q: Jesus has been speaking, but wouldn't the end of verse 5 ("The king is held in the galleries") be a change to an impersonal comment by the Holy Spirit, for the observation is made about King Jesus?

A: Yes, it is an outside perspective or interjection from either the Holy Spirit or the Father, and so is the next verse.

Song 7:6 How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!

"Love," a noun, is a quality here, not a personality. Verse 6 is a summation of the Bride's beautiful characteristics and physiognomy; ie, "She is altogether lovely, altogether fair."

Song 7:7 This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes.

Jesus, the Bridegroom, is talking about his Bride. Why is she likened to a palm tree?

Comment: As one views a palm tree, the eyes are drawn upward to the palm fronds and the fruitage at the top. The fruit grows heavenward.

Reply: Fruit at the high level suggests spiritual fruitage or development.

Comment: The palm tree is stately.

Reply: Yes, a perfect palm tree is beautiful.

Comment: Ezekiel's Temple will have palm trees.

Reply: Yes, and they will be prolifically used.

Comment: Palm trees tend to grow in tropical climates, which are subject to hurricanes. Their ability to withstand turbulence and storm fits the Church.

Reply: Yes, they have a resiliency—almost like a bow that bends to shoot an arrow and then wants to straighten up again.

Comment: Palms can picture victory, as when palms were strewn in Jesus' path at his triumphal entry.

Comment: Bro. Frey's notes say that the palm tree grows in the desert where there is water. Also, it "is an endogen, i.e., it is unlike *many* other trees where the life is in the cambium layer, directly beneath the outer bark. The palm tree, on the other hand, grows from *deep within*." In other words, the life of the palm tree is not a surface life but a life deep within the tree. And the palm tree has foliage year round.

Reply: The main point is about water. The palm tree manages to get what water exists in a desert. Two or three palm trees can indicate an oasis.

"Thy breasts [are like] to clusters of grapes." "Of grapes" is incorrectly supplied. With the

palm tree the thought would be “clusters of *dates*.” Dates are a sweet delicacy.

Comment: Rebekah, picturing the Church, will be the mother of thousands of millions. Her breasts being like clusters of dates indicates she will nurture these “children.”

Reply: Yes, that thought is brought out as we get into the picture. The Church will possess qualities that benefit and nurture the world of mankind in righteousness.

Song 7:8 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;

Jesus continues to speak. “I will ascend the palm tree” is the best way to express the thought (it is more refined than “I will climb up,” as in some other translations). Jesus would ascend to the fruitage at the top of the palm tree.

“I will take hold of the boughs thereof.”

Comment: Jesus desires to sample the fruit. The fruit of the Bride class is the attraction.

“Thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine.” Here the Bride’s breasts are compared to clusters of grapes, suggesting that the breasts supply nutriment to the babe who desires development in truth from the Old and New Testaments. The development takes place in the present life as preparation for the next life. Stated another way, we are practicing physicians now, hoping to become qualified for a full-fledged role in the future. If properly developed, we will be able to help others in their development.

“And the smell of thy nose like apples.” The RSV is better: “and the scent of your breath like apples.” In the Old Testament “nose,” “face,” and “mouth” are somewhat interchangeable terms depending on context. The scent of the Bride’s breath is like *oranges* (apples are not the right thought). Oranges have a sweet, delightful flavor and smell.

Q: Does this part of verse 8 tie in with Song 2:3, where the prospective Church described Jesus as the apple tree among the trees of the wood? She sat down under his shadow, and his fruit was sweet to her taste. In other words, she partook of his fruits, which were the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Now the smell of the fruit that she tasted is on her breath.

A: Yes, her character development is pleasing to the Lord. As Christians obey God’s Word and the instructions and doctrines of Christ and his apostles, they proportionately become pleasing to the Lord. In feeding on the Master’s fruitage, the Bride class develops the fragrance of that fruitage so that a sweet fragrance comes forth from her mouth.

Song 7:9 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.

The roof of the mouth is the palate, which is used for taste. For Jesus to describe his Bride in this fashion is a real compliment. Kissing is subtly referred to, implying a lingering communication, closeness, and sweet fellowship.

Comment: The RSV reads: “And your kisses like the best wine that goes down smoothly,

gliding over lips and teeth." A footnote has "lips of sleepers" for "lips and teeth."

Notes from the 1976 study: Poor wine has sediment and impurities and is sour. Good wine just flows down and is delicious without coating the teeth. Jesus is saying to the Bride, "Your kisses are like the best wine." Kisses are expressions of endearment. Jesus will drink the wine of joy with his Bride, and there will be *personal* communication, *face to face*. When the Church class speaks, those with the proper spirit listen. Jesus listens. We will relax with Jesus beyond the veil, whereas now we are constantly on guard to say and do what is right.

Q: Could the reference to sleepers be that when the Church class speaks, those who are sleeping wake up, being enthralled by the words flowing forth?

A: That is a good thought. When the Bride speaks, others take note, especially the Master.

God looks down on planet earth and sees us as fallen human beings who have left the world and dedicated our lives to serve His cause as best we can. He sees our continuing desire to please Him as we keep pressing onward in spite of our stumblings and problems. He is interested in our development and pleased as we progress toward the standards He has set up. In contrast, the world lives riotously, seeking pleasure, being miserly, and having demeaning character traits. God knows the limits of our capabilities; He knows we cannot perform perfectly in the present life because of our fallen flesh. *To will* perfectly is possible, however. God, with His Holy Spirit, knows what part of our words and actions is genetically attributable to Adamic weakness and what part is willful. He knows how to separate the old man from the new creature. Any progress toward the new creature is outstanding because it is done through the Bible, through reading a *book*. Thus is the *power* of God's Word manifested and the free choice of the individual in making decisions and doing deeds.

Comment: Before the feet members are taken off the scene, they will give a special message that will cause those who are asleep in all strata of society to wake up.

Song 7:10 I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me.

The Bride is speaking in verses 10–13. "Beloved" is the clue; she calls Jesus "beloved." Jesus has just finished a description of the Bride. Based on that description, the Bride can say, "I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me."

Song 7:11 Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages.

The Bride is suggesting to Jesus: "Let us leave the courts of heaven and go forth to inspect what is happening down on planet earth with the Great Company. Let us go down to the field [to earth] and lodge [stay temporarily] in the villages." "Villages" (plural) means they would inspect different places, for the Great Company will be scattered.

This activity will take place after the marriage. During the marriage and the accompanying festivity, the custody of earth will be put into the hands of rotating shifts of the holy angels lest things down here get too out of hand through Satan. The remaining consecrated and the Holy Remnant will need protection. When not on duty in earth's atmosphere, the holy angels will be attending the marriage activities. However, after the

marriage ceremony is over, The Christ will get down to business, their first concern being the Great Company, their “little sister” who did not make the high calling.

Q: How could the Church *tell Jesus* to come with her? Wouldn't it be more appropriate for Jesus to make the suggestion to the Church?

A: No. Not only is “beloved” masculine in the Hebrew, but because they are married at this time, the Queen can make the suggestion to her King.

Comment: The suggestion would also show the Bride's willingness to continue with the Father's plan. “Now let us get back to work” would be the thought.

Q: Song 6:11 describes an inspection of the garden of nuts. Do verses 10–12 refer to a *second* inspection period?

A: Yes.

Song 7:12 **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 Bride continues to speak. “Vineyards” (plural) would be the Great Company, the Holy Remnant, and the world of mankind. There are different vines and different fruitages, each in their own order. All of the vines will need development without tampering with their free moral agency.

(1) The first concern will be the Great Company. Under the circumstances of this time frame, they will develop proper fruitage. Not only will they repent and wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb during the Time of Trouble, but after the initial period of surprise, disappointment, and remorse, their mood will be one of *joy*. Even though they lose out on the high calling, they will later become enthused in serving the Lord. Thus the “tender grape” will appear and develop into fruitage meriting the spirit nature.

(2) The development of the Holy Remnant will also be a concern because they will be hand picked for survival, their names being written in a book (Dan. 12:1; Isa. 4:3).

(3) The world of mankind will be developed after the Kingdom is inaugurated and throughout the remainder of the Millennial Age.

Q: Will the marriage supper take place before or after the Holy Remnant is brought through Jacob's Trouble?

A: There are two aspects of Jacob's Trouble. At first Jacob's enemies will be the forces of Gog coming down from the north, for the Adversary wants to eliminate Israel. Miraculous divine intervention will be necessary to stop the hordes. At that time also, the fallen angels will be released from their chains of darkness, the first object of their vengeance being the Great Company. The unrepentant fallen angels will be permitted to accomplish their dispatch, for the destruction of the flesh of the Great Company will result in their spirit being saved. The next object of vengeance of the fallen angels will be natural Israel. In the time period before the Lord intervenes, Gog will actually capture

Jerusalem, ravish the women, etc. Thus a mixture of humans and demons will be involved in the future trouble on Israel. Regarding the fallen angels who materialize when their chains of darkness are removed, their destruction will occur before the Kingdom begins. The fallen angels who do not materialize when the prison doors are opened will be reserved for further trial and judgment.

The mass materialization of fallen angels is described as the enemy coming in like a “flood” (Isa. 59:19). Guardian angels will protect each of the Holy Remnant to make sure that the “third part” will go through the fire and be saved (Zech. 13:8,9).

The coming down of Jesus and the Bride to observe the development of the Great Company (Song 7:11,12) will occur before the loosing of the fallen angels en masse against the Great Company and the Holy Remnant. “Let us go down and lodge in the villages and observe how the fruitage is developing and the pomegranates are budding with the Great Company.” “Pomegranates,” with multitudinous seeds, picture the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Jesus and the Bride will look to see if the Great Company has attained the mark of perfect love. However, no actions will be taken—just observation at this time. The Christ will be intensely interested to see the progress because the stakes will be high. The success or failure of the Kingdom hinges on the outcome and the blood being released for the Ancient Worthies and the world of mankind.

The original question was whether the marriage supper would take place before the Holy Remnant is saved. That is a fine point of distinction. We know that a period of time—perhaps weeks—is involved with Israel before the rescue of the Holy Remnant because half of the inhabitants of Jerusalem will be taken into exile. With the Great Company, however, the destruction of their flesh will take place at a specific time: in a day and an hour. *Technically*, there will be time for the marriage supper before the rescue of the Holy Remnant, but whether or not that is the case remains to be seen. The Church will be on the scene and active for the deliverance of the Holy Remnant and the resurrection of the Ancient Worthies. “Saviours [*plural*] shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the LORD’S” (Obadiah 21). Since the Holy Remnant are to be hand picked by name, they will have to be under guard through the *entire* period of time. During the marriage supper as well as previously—that is, during the marriage itself—a custodian relationship down here will safeguard those whom God has determined shall be preserved. Since the Great Company have to die, their type of safeguard will be of a different nature; it will be a *time* feature. With Israel the holy angels will be sufficiently employed as guards so that the marriage supper can take place without undue concern for the Holy Remnant. Perhaps a change of guard will take place so that those holy angels who stand guard duty, and thus cannot attend the marriage, will be relieved of their posts by other holy angels so that they can attend the marriage supper.

It is possible that when the materialized unholy angels dispatch the Great Company class, they themselves will be destroyed, leaving just earthly Gog and Magog to continue havoc against Israel. If the unholy angels who materialize are not destroyed beforehand, it is hard to see how the marriage supper can take place with such a tremendous force loosed.

Comment: Proof that verses 11 and 12 are a second inspection period of the Great Company would be the similarity of language to Song 6:11. Both texts mention the flourishing vine and the budding pomegranates. Also, there seems to be a contrast between singular and plural in verse 12. Jesus and the Bride go down to the vineyards

(plural) to particularly inspect the vine (singular). Of the several vineyards, they will concentrate at this time on the one vine(yard), the Great Company.

“There will I give thee my loves.” Jesus interjects this comment at the end of verse 12.

Song 7:13 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.

The Bride is speaking to Jesus, verse 13 being the last of the sequel from verse 10 on.

“Mandrakes” pertain to regeneration. In the Old Testament, Leah and Rachel used them for fertility.

The Bride has laid up “all manner of pleasant fruits [of the Holy Spirit], new and old.” This verse expresses the spirit and attitude of the Bride class. The questions we should ask are: “Is this my spirit? Have I come up to this level of thinking? Have I laid up all manner of pleasant fruits for Jesus?” If we are not thinking along this line but instead are thinking, “Oh how nice in the resurrection to see my mother, Pastor Russell, etc.,” this is demeaning. Those who would be of the Little Flock must cultivate the proper attitude in their hearts. They must desire to shower Jesus, when they see him, with that which they have been laying up in store and sacrificing for—namely, with their affection. If we do not have this desire, we will not be of the Little Flock. The goal to strive toward is the mark of perfect love as well as the desire to see Jesus. Those who truly expect to see him will purify themselves. The intense desire to see Jesus will influence the present life.

“Old” fruits are the fruits of the Holy Spirit we are told to develop. “And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity” (2 Pet. 1:57). These fruits are the standard.

“New” fruits are something of our own that is laid up, something pertaining to or peculiar to our own individual temperaments and personalities. Each of the 144,000 will have a certain type of affection that he or she wishes to tell the Master—an expression of *individual* appreciation.

Song 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.

Song 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.

Song 8:3 His left hand should be under my head, and his right hand should embrace me.

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

Song 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.

Ostensibly the Bride seems to be speaking, but since the Church is already glorified and the Song of Solomon has been sequential for the last few chapters, the Great Company would be speaking here for several reasons. One reason is that a new chapter is properly indicated in Song 8:1 with a change of cadence. Another reason is that the glorified Church *beyond the veil* would not utter the words in verse 4. Chapter 8 is a sequel to the story in the Song of Solomon, in which the Bride class is now complete and attention is being focused upon the Great Company class. At this point in time the Great Company class will have renewed zeal that will be just as fervent and at just as high a level as that of the true Church—but belatedly. They will get the equal portion of the Spirit and the oil and be enthusiastic. They would have made their calling and election sure if they had awakened to this fact in sufficient time.

Verse 5, which is a commentary by the Holy Spirit, is the key to identifying the speaker of the first four verses as the Great Company. The words in the King James “brought thee forth” do not convey the thought that unlocks the Scripture, but the Revised Standard does: “Who is that coming up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? Under the apple tree I awakened you. There your mother was in travail with you, there she who bore you was in travail.” The word “travail” alerts us because the Sarah Covenant does not travail. The Hebrew word *chobal*, which is translated “brought thee forth,” is used many times in the Bible but seldom in the sense of “travail.” Nevertheless, one of its meanings, besides “brought thee forth,” is “travail” because the root word basically means destroy, consume, hurt, harm, trouble, pain—all very negative. Therefore, the Hebrew word in this context is emphasizing the pain and struggle associated with childbirth. In addition to the Sarah Covenant, which is the “mother of us all” (Gal. 4:26), there is the Rachel Covenant. Sarah brought forth only Isaac, and the Great Company is not identified with Isaac. Also, no pain is associated with the Sarah Covenant. Rachel, however, died in connection with the birth of Benjamin, who pictures the Great Company class in this setting. Earlier Rachel brought forth Joseph, who represents The Christ, Head and Body. Therefore, it can be said of Rachel as well that she is the “mother of us all.”

Verse 4, as used elsewhere in Song of Solomon, should read: “I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake *love*, until it please.” “Love” is a condition, not an individual. Previously the word was used exclusively for only the true Church. Now here, at the *end* of the book, the same expression is repeated *after* the Church is complete. For this additional reason, the Great Company class is speaking.

Now we will consider verse 1 with the Great Company in mind. “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.” (The verse can also end with “they would not despise me.”) A “brother” is mentioned. Certainly Christ is the brother of the true Church, but he is also the brother of the Great Company class, who are yearning for recognition by the Master. The door was abruptly shut in Matthew 25:12 when Jesus said to the Great Company, “I know you not.” In other words, up to the time of the closing of the door, they had not measured up to the level in which Christ recognized them as really being of the Bride class. Even though we are all born as babies in Christ in the Sarah Covenant, that does not mean we are acceptable as part of the Bride, for we must grow up into Christ, into manhood, to a mature standard. After the Bride is complete, the Great Company class, being disassociated, will long for some recognition. Those in Babylon who survive its fall will begin to question their relationship to God. When they see the

destruction of what they thought was the Church of God, they will be in great confusion momentarily. They will say, "We have given our life and have been laboring and thinking that this is the Church of Christ, but now it is destroyed. What is our position?"

This period will be one of *reevaluation* for the Great Company class, who will realize they failed to make the Bride class. "The harvest is past,... and we are not saved," they will say (Jer. 8:20). Several Scriptures indicate this poignancy of expression and feeling in regard to where they stand in their relationship to the Lord. Knowing they have missed out on the high calling, they will long for comfort and assurance from Jesus that they are still in the brotherhood. The "mother," then, in the expression "sucked the breasts of my mother" is Rachel, the mother of The Christ as well as of the Benjamin class.

The implication in "when I should find thee without" is that the little sister has a feeling of alienation. She is yearning to find Jesus. If such be the case, she would embrace him without embarrassment with the confidence that she really is in the brotherhood, even though not of the Bride.

"I would lead thee, and bring thee into my mother's house, where you would instruct me" (verse 2). (Several translations have "where you" instead of "who would.") Now she, the Great Company, is amenable to instruction. She is longing to know how to become pleasing to the Lord.

"I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate." The Great Company class does truly love the Lord. Although confused and experiencing a measure of doubt, she is longing for a closer communion and walk with God and with Christ. She has pent-up feelings of affection for Christ, "spiced wine" within her being. She would like to express her love to Jesus in a more personalized sense (like kissing her brother) and to unburden her feelings to the Master without embarrassment.

Then "his left hand should be under my head, and his right hand should embrace me" (verse 3). Verse 4 shows the Great Company will get that for which she longs: "I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake love, until it please" (corrected translation). Up until now, the situation was tentative. "O that you were my brother so that I could kiss you and reveal to you my innermost affection." She begins to feel the love and relationship that the Bride class formerly enjoyed. With the Holy Spirit coming down (pictured as Elijah's mantle or the oil) will come knowledge, understanding, and increased faith and zeal (2 Kings 2:13,14; Matt. 25:8-10). The Great Company will get these benefits and get them *strongly*, as also shown in Habakkuk 3:18. "Yet will I *rejoice* in the Lord, I will *joy* in the God of my salvation."

"Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" (verse 5). The Pastor applied this verse to the Church coming out of the wilderness in 1799, the end of the 1,260 years. But the year 1799 does not fit smoothly into the Song of Solomon at this point. However, the scapegoat going into and returning from the wilderness would fit in regard to the Great Company. The flesh must be destroyed so that the spirit will be saved. After that experience the Great Company will lean on the arm of her beloved in a secondary sense, realizing that whatever is received, it is from the Lord. Even if on a lower level than the Bride class, the association with Jesus will be blessed.

Verse 5 continues, "I raised thee up under the apple tree." The thought is "I *awoke* thee."

She is awakened under the apple tree by Jesus. Earlier the Great Company class was lethargic. The Bride class got up out of bed of her own volition to search for the Master, but the Great Company made excuses when the Master was at the door and then arose too late. Finding that Jesus had gone, she went out to search for him.

In summary, all of the above details combined seem to apply to the Great Company, not to the Church. As will be seen in verse 6, when love is rekindled in the Great Company, it becomes a *consuming* spirit. They will become as zealous as the Little Flock. Once this revival takes place, *nothing* can drown it out—just as with the Church. The implication is that there will be coals of fire and overwhelming experiences, but the Great Company will survive and lean upon the arm of her beloved in the wilderness experience.

Q: Who are the “daughters of Jerusalem” in the context of verse 4, which is a different situation than earlier in the Song of Solomon when the same words were used? “I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake love, until it please.” Would the daughters of Jerusalem be natural Israel, which was the definition back in Chapter 5?

A: Yes. The Great Company class will be very close to Israel in its hour of need in the future. In at least one *Reprint* article, the Pastor gave this interpretation, which was probably based on Song 5:8.

Chapter 8 started with a feminine group wishing they could embrace Jesus as a brother. Whereas the true Church will be in union with Christ as his Bride at this time, the class speaking will still be down here in the flesh, ie, the Great Company. This secondary group will get the Holy Spirit with fervency. (The foolish virgins will get the oil; Elisha will get a double portion of Elijah’s spirit.)

Song 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.

In harmony with the context, the Great Company are speaking. They are manifesting a spirit and affection for Jesus just like the true Church—but too late to be of the Bride.

In what sense is jealousy as “cruel as the grave”? In what sense are the coals thereof “coals of fire”? Based on context, the word “jealousy” can be considered in either a favorable or an unfavorable sense. Here the jealousy is favorable; it is pure, wholesome, and fervent. Another instance of proper jealousy is Exodus 20:5, “Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for *I the LORD thy God am a jealous God.*” The Heavenly Father will always keep His relationship separate and distinct. “I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another [not even to Christ]” (Isa. 42:8). As Emperor of the universe, Jehovah is the sole God. He is jealous of that role and will not allow it to be tampered with. “For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, *even a jealous God*” (Deut. 4:24).

In regard to marriage, a husband should be jealous if anyone makes advances to his wife, and vice versa. On a higher level, the Apostle Paul said, “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*” (2 Cor. 11:2).

Examples of wrong jealousy are Cain’s attitude toward Abel, coveting a neighbor’s wife,

and Joseph's brethren selling him into slavery. A synonym for jealousy is envy.

"Hope deferred maketh the heart sick [sad]" (Prov. 13:12). In this setting of Song 8, the Great Company are aware that they missed out on the high calling. Now they aspire to be a true sister to Christ, which is a lower hope, but they still want a spiritual resurrection and they want to be with the Lord under circumstances where they can manifest their appropriate affection for him. Originally the Great Company had the same aspirations as the Little Flock, but subsequently, after realizing they lost out on the marriage, the knowledge will come "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb" (Rev. 19:9).

After realizing they missed out on the marriage, the Great Company will want to be associated with Christ and show their affection for him. When the feet members are taken, if the consecrated left behind have this desire, they will make the Great Company. Even if they meet a martyr's death, they will be faithful. The last members of the Great Company class will receive a violent and sudden change of nature through the instrumentality of the fallen angels. Though the Great Company be overwhelmed with the most vehement flame, they will not compromise. Their attitude will be similar to that of the Reformers of the past, who were ready to endure whatever the Lord's providence deemed necessary for their development. Too late the Great Company's love and zeal will be just like the love and zeal of the Little Flock.

Comment: A *Reprint* article says that proper jealousy is not jealousy *of* another but jealousy *for* another—for his interests and his welfare.

Q: In the expression "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm," the heart is inward and the arm is outward. Is the Great Company asking for inward and outward assurances of the Master's love for her?

A: Yes. There are so many Scriptures, but they are fragmented. The foolish virgins will have a feeling of woe and disappointment initially, but joy will come later. "Although ... there shall be no herd in the stalls [etc.]: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation" (Hab. 3:17,18). Even though all around appears negative for the moment, yet the Great Company will receive a spirit of power. This feeling of power will carry them through to being faithful unto death. It is essential to keep in tune with God's Word and to understand what is happening in the world. That is why the consecrated are told to forsake not "the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is," but to exhort "one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:25). When times are hard, the principle of assembling together with those of like precious faith should be followed as much as possible.

Song 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.

Leeser ends the verse, "If a man offered for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly scorned." When Simon the sorcerer wanted to buy the Holy Spirit with money, the Apostle Peter gave him a strong tongue lashing for even suggesting such a thing. The principle is the same here: true love cannot be bought with money or goods.

Some translations insert a personality at the end of the verse ("men would utterly despise

it," for example); that too would be a proper thought. Those who have an appreciation of right and wrong or standards of good and evil would despise the attempt to buy love. Therefore, "contemned" means "despised."

Note from the 1976 study: "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it" can be explained as follows: In a very hot fire with molten metal, water actually increases the intensity of the fire. Hence persecution makes love get more fervent.

Q: Who is speaking in verse 7?

A: This is a commentary by the Holy Spirit. It is a statement of fact as to the veracity of the thought expressed by the Great Company in the preceding verse. The Holy Spirit interrupts frequently toward the end of the book, and these interruptions will be effective when the Song of Solomon is sung.

Comment: The Great Company do not really understand the love that exists between Christ and his Bride. They lose the prize because of worldliness, and yet if a person should give the sum total of all his worldly possessions for love, he could still be rejected.

Reply: There are different perspectives, each of which has its own value. With gray matters in the mind or experience of an individual, the consecrated one is more apt, according to the fallen flesh, to drift into worldliness. When conditions are no longer gray but black and white, the questions will be: Are you going to recant or not? What is your final decision? Those who get life in any form will make the right choice. Some have to be forced into the predicament where they will not allow their souls to be overwhelmed and cave in to the situation. Such black and white situations will manifest whether one really loves the Lord. It is in the gray areas where people are wobbly in their decisions. Mistakes are made when the lines are not definitive. When conditions occur that jeopardize the life of the Great Company, they will make the right choice—just like the *faithful* Christian martyrs of the past. Incidentally, many martyrs are forced into a situation; they do not act voluntarily for the love of Christ. Even worldly people will die for what they consider to be a principle. For example, some extremist Moslems die for a cause. However, *true* love is dying for the naked principles of God's truth without injuring others. A Christian should be willing to stand up for a true principle and die for it. True faith would be great intelligence as regards loving God's Word and the principles set forth therein.

Song 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?

The "little sister" is the Great Company, and the pronoun "we" would be particularly the Bride but also the Bridegroom. While the Bride is talking more actively here, she is turning to Jesus and looking for his direction: "What shall we do for our little sister?" "In the day when she shall be spoken for" implies that a time will come at the end of the age for the cutting off of the Great Company (as well as the Little Flock earlier).

Comment: The lack of breasts shows not only the lack of development of the Great Company but also the idea that she cannot be the mother of thousands, as Rebekah will be. She does not have the ability to feed the world of mankind as the Bride does.

Reply: The Great Company will have some development but not to the extent of the Bride class.

Comment: This is the third inspection period: Song 6:11, 7:12, and now 8:8. The Little Flock will be watching and inspecting what is happening with the remaining consecrated still in the flesh.

Reply: Yes, and the inspections will take place after the wedding. When the excitement of the wedding wears off a little, the Bride class will get moved as to what will happen to her companions still in the flesh.

During the Gog and Magog invasion, a “flood” of fallen angels will materialize and come down here on the earth. Many will concentrate on natural Israel. Because the Great Company class *must expire* when the due time comes, they will not be protected like the Holy Remnant. Therefore, when the fallen angels cascade down, their first thought will be to destroy the Great Company class—and they will be successful. After the Great Company are off the scene, the fallen angels will turn their attention to natural Israel, but a buffer will be set up to protect the Holy Remnant. Sequence: (1) the Great Company class are undeveloped, (2) they become developed, and (3) their flesh must be destroyed so that their spirit will be saved.

The word “little” is important in “little sister.” The Great Company will far outnumber the Church, but collectively, she is *little* in comparison and in development.

Song 8:9 *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.*

The Bride has just said, “We have a little sister who hath no breasts.” Now comes the statement “If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace [turrets or towers] of silver.” In other words, the little sister will develop beyond the wall condition. Although the Great Company lack breasts, they will develop into turrets of silver (silver being a symbol of a secondary class).

Q: Is the wall a wall of faith?

A: Yes, even though she has not developed up to the standard of a fit mother, a secondary class of silver will be developed upon the basis that is there. The sons of Levi will be purged as gold (Little Flock) and as silver (Great Company) (Mal. 3:3).

“If she be a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar.” “Cedar” means the Great Company will get everlasting life, security, a home, and service in the future. They will be servants on a high level. “Boards” suggest not only housing but a firming or shoring up. She will be buttressed up as an enclosure and obtain an inheritance.

But why should the Great Company be a “door”?

Notes from the 1976 study: The Great Company should be a wall of faith, keeping the world out and the faithful in. Regarding the door, if the Great Company have an outstanding weakness, they must overcome it. The flesh must be destroyed so that the spirit will be saved. If the Great Company exhibit repentance and overcome the weakness,

they will be enclosed with boards of cedar. If the breach, the opening, is repaired, they will get salvation, everlasting life. The door is a breach through which people can go in and out. Some of the Great Company class have insufficient development (the “wall”); others have a weakness that must be repaired (the “door”). Hence two divisions of Great Company are indicated in this verse.

In verse 9, The Christ (the Bridegroom and the Bride) in glory are speaking among themselves concerning the condition and the welfare of the Great Company class still down here in the flesh. The setting is at the very end of the Gospel Age. “If she be a wall” means “if she be undeveloped,” turrets or towers of silver will be built upon that wall. “If she be a door, we will surround her with boards of cedar.” In the great Time of Trouble, the Great Company class will be the target of the enemy. Under such trying circumstances, they will need special care or protection. The “door” means they are liable to intrusions that would interrupt their spiritual development. Therefore, Jesus and the Bride decide to grant the Great Company class a measure of protection as new creatures. The enclosure would be like a stockade to figuratively surround them and protect them from onslaughts that might harm them as new creatures. “Cedar” implies life, a preservative, for if the Great Company are damaged as new creatures, their eternal welfare will be jeopardized. They must be brought up to a certain minimum state in order to even get spirit life, for once they attain their spiritual reward, their trials are over. Hence they must be developed up to that standard while still in the flesh.

The “wall” signifies that the Great Company need development. The wall or foundation is there, but it must be built upon. The “door” indicates that the Great Company need protection from intrusion that would hinder their development as new creatures. The scapegoat will be taken out into the wilderness not for the protection of the flesh but for the destruction of the flesh and the preservation of the new creature.

Song 8:10 I am a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found favour.

The little sister is speaking, and now she is a “wall”—she has developed sufficiently to be of the Great Company. Her breasts are like towers. She has attained maturity.

Comment: The “door” of verse 9 is a level of vulnerability which she has reinforced.

When the Great Company develop and find favor in the sight of God, Jesus, and the Church, it will be time for their departure from the earthly scene. As new creatures, they will have developed strength of character and stability within themselves.

Song 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.

“Baal-hamon” means “lord of a multitude.” In Old Testament usage, “Baal” often began the name of a *place* where Baal worship was practiced, eg, Baal-zephon (Exod. 14:2). However, here “Baal” has a favorable connotation. Originally “Baal” was good, but in time, when the worship of Jehovah went astray, the name was corrupted and became associated with false worship.

Solomon portrays the risen Christ. In his vineyard at Baal-hamon, he was looking for

fruit. The vineyard would be down here on earth, for the setting beginning with verse 8 continues to be the visitation of Jesus and the Bride to inspect the consecrated left behind, ie, the Great Company. Therefore, the “multitude” of Baal-hamon is the Great Company.

Verse 11 is a commentary by the Holy Spirit about the vineyard. What is the implication about the vineyard? Solomon let out the vineyard to keepers, who took care of it so that it would bring forth fruit. The principle of the vineyard in the Gospels is as follows: We each have a vineyard—and hence a responsibility to develop fruit according to the Master’s pleasing. In order to develop this fruit, we must be a branch of the true vine, which is Christ. Only in union with Christ can we bring forth the type of fruit that is pleasing to him and the Father. However, the setting of verse 11 is down here at the end of the age, and the owner of the vineyard expects each of the keepers or custodians to bring him a thousand pieces of silver for the fruit from the vines. Down through the Gospel Age, the keepers of the vineyard were the consecrated, who were joined to Christ, and each was expected to bring forth fruit. But verse 11, at the very end of the age, is speaking of the Great Company class after the Church is complete; it is telling what the Lord of the multitude expects from each of the Great Company class.

Song 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.

The way the King James is worded (and other translations), it is difficult to understand the contrast between the 1,000 pieces of silver and the 200. Solomon expects a thousand pieces of silver (shekels) from each of the keepers. (Since vines are being kept, the fruitage has to be converted into money.) The 1,000 pieces of silver are what *Solomon receives* from each keeper of the vineyard, and the 200 pieces of silver are what each of *the keepers* receives. To be more specific, verse 12 is telling what is expected of the Great Company class at the end of the age.

In review, Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-haman. He let out the vineyard to keepers, and each one is required to give him a thousand pieces of silver.

“My vineyard, which is mine, is before me.” Who do the pronouns “my,” “mine,” and “me” refer to? Solomon (Jesus) is speaking. Then in the same verse, the speaker changes so that the remainder of the verse is a commentary by the Holy Spirit: “Thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred.”

The number 100 symbolizes perfection—in this case, perfect *human* nature, which the world will receive. The 200 pieces of silver represent the higher reward that each of the Great Company will receive, that is, spirit nature. After the Church is complete beyond the veil, the Great Company will realize they lost out on the high calling. They will then desperately crave the spirit nature, not wanting to die in vain. The double benefit (the 200 pieces of silver) is related to the tithing system. The Levites, who received a tithe for their services, picture two classes, each in a different age: (1) a class in the flesh in the Gospel Age who are devoted to the Lord and have no inheritance in the land, and (2) a class who minister in the next age. Of course the tithe is 10 percent, so the 200 pieces of silver (or 20 percent) informs the Great Company that they will receive a higher reward than an earthly tithe or an earthly nature down here; that is, they will receive a spirit nature but not the divine nature (the 1,000 pieces of silver). True, the 1,000 pieces of silver will be given to Solomon, but with the Church being Solomon’s Bride, the income goes to both.

Therefore, “my vineyard” refers to Jesus’ vineyard and, inferentially, his Bride.

In time the Great Company class will be as zealous and as appreciative of the truth as the Bride—but too late to be of the Little Flock. After they see that they have lost out on the high calling and they renew their consecration, they will praise Christ with even more beautiful language than the Little Flock. The dreadful conditions prevailing at that time will be conducive to this sentiment. So well will the Great Company describe the Master that those listening will say, “Tell us more about this One. We want to know who he is.”

Review: *All down the Gospel Age*, the requirement of each of the keepers of the vineyard has been 1,000 pieces of silver. But verses 11 and 12 are discussing the Great Company *at the end of the Gospel Age*. The lesson is that the same will be expected of them as was expected of the Little Flock, for when any of the consecrated get their change, they must have been so tried and proven that they will never sin in the future. *Complete dedication* is expected of all the consecrated. The Little Flock do this spontaneously of their own volition and zeal, whereas the Great Company need to be prodded. The Great Company will get a reward of 200 (instead of 100) pieces of silver. The Bride, the Queen, gets 1,000 pieces of silver, the same divine nature that Jesus has. (An earthly illustration is that a husband and wife who are in agreement have their money in the same joint account.) Therefore, in verse 11 the dispensational “keepers” are the Great Company, whereas down through the age, they were all of the consecrated, for all have a responsibility to develop fruit. Stated succinctly, the 1,000 pieces of silver picture complete consecration, and the 200 pieces of silver represent the spiritual reward that the Great Company will get for faithfully rendering the 1,000 to Solomon. By implication the saved world of mankind will get 100 pieces of silver (everlasting life here on earth) as a reward.

An alternate view would be that the Great Company are speaking in all of verse 12. In this interpretation, which is not the preferred one, the Great Company, who will each have a vineyard, realize the requirements in verse 11. If they are faithful keepers of the fruit and render proper service, they will each receive 200 pieces of silver. The underlying principle is that all who receive life on any plane—Little Flock, Great Company, world of mankind, etc.—must give 100% devotion to God and to Christ.

Comment: The Song of Solomon seems to be laying a stronger and stronger premise for a strengthening of the Great Company who remain behind when the Church is complete.

Reply: Yes, that fact becomes more and more manifest. The Song of Solomon is dispensational in character.

The thought of a garden or vineyard has two aspects: (1) The vineyard is in the heart down here *in the present life*. Hopefully, the seed of truth enters a good and honest heart so that it will bring forth the proper fruitage: 30-fold, 60-fold, or 100-fold (all of which picture divine nature). The problem is for us to *maintain* a good and honest heart. (2) The garden *beyond the veil* is a *finished* garden, which has already brought forth the fruit. Jesus enters this garden.

REVIEW OF CHAPTER 8 THUS FAR: In the consideration of the Song of Solomon, it becomes more and more apparent that most of Chapter 8 is a description of the Great Company class, and earlier portions of the book support this conclusion. In fact, the Song of Solomon is unique in showing the existence of the Great Company and in furnishing

so much detail. A number of types give clues about the Great Company, but it is only one clue here and one clue there. What is so different about the Song of Solomon is that the heart, soul, and character of this class are presented—their line of thinking, their emotions, and their actions. Even the type of Elijah and Elisha furnishes only a little information about the Great Company's activity after the Elijah class is off the scene.

The beginning of Chapter 8 shows the Great Company class realizing they did not make their calling and election sure, for they aspire to be a sister to Christ. "O that thou wert as my *brother* [not Bridegroom]," they say to Jesus. Although they miss out as the Bride, they want Jesus' affection, for all of the consecrated have staked their lives on heavenly hopes. Just because the Great Company lose out on the chief calling does not mean they lack emotions or do not appreciate Jesus' sacrifice and what he has done for them personally. Thus they will want their eternal abode to be with the household of Christ.

This desire to be a sister of Christ, which is a lower level than being of the Bride, takes place down here in the flesh. None of the consecrated know until they die and are awakened from death whether they made the Little Flock or the Great Company, and of course the Second Death class do not awaken at all. Other Scriptures also show the realization by the Great Company that they missed out on the high calling.

Next the Great Company implore Jesus from the standpoint that they have the same mother as the Little Flock, that is, the Sarah Covenant. Sarah had only one child, Isaac, but prophetically speaking, "more are the children of the desolate" than the children of the other seed (Isa. 54:1). Thus Sarah will have other seed after the development of the Isaac class. In fact, the Sarah Covenant will bring forth the whole universe. The yet unpopulated realms will be populated by The Christ class. "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD" (Isa. 54:1).

The Great Company now have the same desires for fellowship with Jesus that the Little Flock had earlier. They long to be with him and hear him speak. After all, if the multitudes were enthralled to hear Jesus speak, how wonderful it would be to continue to hear him speak in future ages! There would be an unfolding of his character and a depth of understanding of his merits beyond our current understanding through Scripture. Through Scripture we now see only "through a glass, darkly"—1 Cor. 13:12.

The Great Company will appeal to Jesus from the standpoint that they were nurtured from the Old and New Testaments under the Sarah Covenant. Whereas much earlier in the Song of Solomon, the Church was seen to come out of the wilderness in 1799, the beginning of the time of the end, in verse 5 the Great Company come out of their wilderness—the wilderness into which the scapegoat is sent "for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. 5:5). While at this time at the end of the age, the Great Company will experience grief, bitterness, and frustration upon finding the door closed, yet there will be a gradual building up of joy with the realization that all is not lost and that, compared with mankind, they will have a favored inheritance in the heavenly realm with the privilege of, say, seeing God and hearing Him sing. When the Great Company realize that they must die in order to obtain their inheritance, they will be, as it were, almost as good overcomers in meeting death as the Little Flock was earlier. The sentiments of the Great Company will be, "Waters cannot

drown our love." They will get the Holy Spirit as Elisha and the Foolish Virgins did. After the Little Flock is complete, the Great Company can be considered a calling, a legitimate hope and aspiration.

In verse 8 the interjection is made, "We have a little sister." "We" implies there is a communication between Jesus and the Church as they come down to earth's atmosphere and observe the Great Company class. Song 7:11,12 describes an earlier inspection period as lodging in the villages and going early to the vineyards (particularly the Great Company and the Holy Remnant of Israel). The glorified Christ will be concerned with the development of these vineyards, for the Great Company will be ministers of the Kingdom in a lesser sense underneath the Ancient Worthies. Song 8:11,12 mentions Solomon's vineyard called Baal-hamon (he had other vineyards as well). "Baal-hamon," which means "lord of a multitude," is possibly a play on words referring to the fruitage of the Great Company class under the tutelage, unbeknownst, of Satan himself as the "lord." This conclusion is based on 1 Corinthians 5:5, which says that this class will be taken out into the wilderness for the flesh to be destroyed by the Adversary so that the spirit will be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. The "vineyard" under this "lord" would be the particular development site of the Great Company at the end of the age. A fully consecrated life ("one thousand pieces of silver") is what Solomon expects, but the reward for their labors and dedication is 200 pieces of silver. The Great Company has a work to do after the Church is gone, and as a reward for helping the Holy Remnant, they will get 200 pieces (ie, two 100 pieces) of silver. The angels ascending and descending Jacob's ladder portray the Great Company assisting in the communication between the Ancient Worthies and the Church in the Kingdom. During that time the Great Company will be rewarded with two natures: a spirit nature plus the ability to materialize. They will have no executive authority whatever but be as messengers communicating to the Ancient Worthies the precepts given to them by the Church.

As for the Ancient Worthies, their reward at first will be a perfect human life. They will be raised perfect physically and mentally but not in character development, for they will have lessons to learn under the New Covenant. Nevertheless, their faithfulness and loyalty to God will have been established. Their perfect human nature will embrace tremendous powers, but at the end of the Kingdom, when the rest of the saved world of mankind is also perfect, the distinction between the two classes will not be apparent. Therefore, at the end of the Kingdom, the Ancient Worthies will be given a spirit resurrection, namely, the "heavenly city" to which Abraham aspired (Heb. 11:16).

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

The Great Company are addressing Jesus, the One who "dwellest in the gardens [*plural*]." Beyond the veil the Church can be considered *collectively* as one garden or, like here, as 144,000 *individual* gardens. Similarly, each consecrated heart is a garden, hopefully containing the soil of a good and honest heart. For the Little Flock, the garden that is cultivated down here will be transferred to a higher level above.

The "companions" are the glorified Church. The word "companion" is proper for the Church, for innermost thoughts can be exchanged between two true companions. The Church in glory will be not only a Bride but "companions" of Jesus, implying a communication they longed for in the present life. In times of real trial and trouble, one

is not interested in chronology and controversial doctrines but in character development and obtaining the approval of Jesus. The learning time is now, but when one is being burned at the stake, the thoughts are of *salvation* and the desire is to be with Jesus.

“Cause me to hear it,” spoken by the Great Company, expresses their personal yearning and desire to have the companionship of Jesus. The principle is like wanting to be a servant in a household just to observe the lord of that house out of admiration. Their sentiments will be, “How nice to be with Jesus even in a secondary capacity!” David had the proper spirit: “For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness” (Psa. 84:10).

Song Chapter 8 reveals the emotions and feelings of the Great Company class when they realize, from current events, they have not made their calling and election sure. A voice from heaven will inform them that the bride “hath made herself ready” (Rev. 19:7).

Song 1:5 describes the true Church as “black, but comely”—on the sidelines, as it were. The prospective Bride asks, “What can I do to have a closer walk with Jesus?” The advice is given to follow the footsteps of the flock. As a minority, she longs for closer communication with the Master. She is a misfit laboring in the vineyard, feeling neglected. After the Little Flock is off the scene at the end of the age, the Great Company class will have a similar experience, desiring a closer walk with Jesus and the spirit nature. Such is their entreaty in verse 13. The Great Company will want reassurance. Similarly at present, when we are at a low point, we want some kind of providence or reassurance that we are still the Lord’s.

Comment: An emphasis on the word “me” helps to show the longing and the plea of the Great Company at this time: “The companions hearken to thy voice: cause *me* to hear it.”

The Song of Solomon, more than any other book in the Bible, gives an insight into meaningful values.

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

This verse reverts back to the present life. The prospective Bride is speaking to Jesus, her “beloved”—similar to the way she spoke to him in Song 2:16,17. The Apostle John expresses the same principle in Revelation 22:20, “Even so, come [quickly], Lord Jesus.” In other words, this addendum or closing verse of the Song of Solomon applies to the true Church while they are down here.

Comment: Verse 14 is like a summary in looking back at the whole book. The Church are saying, in effect, “The plan is unfolding, and we can see it, but we are still in the flesh. Come quickly, Lord Jesus!”

The Song of Solomon

(1988 Abbreviated Study by Bro. Frank Shallieu)

Song of Solomon Chapter 1

Song 1:1 The song of songs, which is Solomon's.

"The song of songs." This expression is much like other Hebraisms such as "the heavenly of heavenlies" and "the Holy of holies"; it means that this is the most important of all songs in Jesus' sight. Solomon, a figure of Jesus, was the author under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. In the early part of the book, Jesus is the *absent and risen* Lord. Subsequently he is the *returned and risen* Lord. The Song of Solomon will be sung in the future with a chorus and a refrain, somewhat like Handel's *Messiah*. Of all the songs Solomon wrote, which total 1,005, this one alone is recorded in Holy Writ (1 Kings 4:32).

Verse 1 is a preface. Verse 2 starts abruptly, impulsively, with the main theme.

Song 1:2 Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine.

The potential Bride, the espoused virgin of Christ, is speaking down here on earth. Kisses in the Orient were generally cheek to cheek; hence "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth" is a term of endearment whereby the Church in the flesh asks for Biblical assurances, utterances, and promises of Jesus' abiding love and close affection.

"Thy love is better than wine." "Wine" portrays the joys of the truth. Many appreciate the truth because it removes the fear of death (hellfire) and shows that God has a plan to establish a Kingdom of righteousness and justice for all through Jesus. However, this love of verse 2 is on a higher level. It is a *personal affection* that the Church has developed through *repeated and constant* meditation ("kisses" plural) upon God's Word.

Song 1:3 Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.

"Virgins" (plural) indicates a *class* (not an individual), a multitudinous seed, the potential future Bride of Christ. A hymn begins, "Jesus, the very thought of thee with sweetness fills my breast." He is the hope of every contrite heart, of all the meek who reverence God and His Son. The very mention of Jesus' name evokes these sentiments.

Song 1:4 Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee.

We know the *Father* draws the potential Christian to Jesus to make a decision. Verse 4, where the Bride asks Jesus to "draw" her, presents a different viewpoint; ie, those who *previously* were drawn of the Father desire a further, closer relationship with Jesus.

"Draw me, we will run after thee." All she needs is a little encouragement and she will eagerly pursue the race of the high calling.

“The king [Jesus] hath brought me into his chambers.” The “chambers” can be considered from several standpoints. The Christian has a variety of chambers (rooms) or experiences of joy and sorrow. The Holy of the Tabernacle is alluded to in part. The Bride class has been brought into the Holy (Jesus’ chambers). The Bride is expressing her desire to be led from the Holy in the present life into the Most Holy beyond the veil.

“We will be glad and rejoice in thee.” This rejoicing is not a mere inward satisfaction of gladness, which is an emotional inspirational feeling, but an *outward expression* of the inner gladness.

“We will remember thy love more than wine.” The Bride class acknowledges the endearments and promises of God (“love” is in the plural). There is a cumulative effect of mentally feeding on these wonderful themes and precious promises in Holy Writ pertaining to the high calling.

“The upright love thee.” The upright ones are attracted to the promises of being with Jesus.

Song 1:5 I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.

The Church continues to speak, although this verse is sort of a break in thought.

This class recognize that by nature they are imperfect and children of wrath, as were others, but they also realize that they are not at home in the world. Having forsaken the world, they long for the Master and know he appreciates their sentiments, for during the Gospel Age, *very few* have truly responded to the gospel message.

“I am black, but comely.” The Church is trying to assure the Master of her heart’s sincere desire or intent in spite of her blemishes.

“Daughters of Jerusalem,” a term frequently used in the Song of Solomon, takes on different connotations depending on context. Here the true prospective Bride is telling of her feelings as she finds herself in the midst of others who express the same hope. From Jesus’ standpoint, there is a distinction between these two classes. Just as there is a difference between the Little Flock and the Great Company, so there is a difference between the Little Flock and those who profess to be Christians in the nominal system. In verse 5, those of the (prospective) true Church are telling of their experience down through the age. For much of the Gospel Age, the wheat grew amongst the tares, and because of the preponderance of tares, the wheat field became a tare field. The wheat class in this environment have been mourners in Babylon, yearning for a restoration of hope and a closer communion with the Father through Jesus.

“I am black ... as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.” In the Middle East, the bedouin tents were made of black goats’ skins sewn together, and they could be enlarged as the family grew. Outwardly the tents appeared irregular and unsightly, but they could be beautiful on the inside. (Similarly, the Tabernacle had a black seal-skin covering but was glorious with gold on the inside.) The Bride compares herself not only to the bedouin tents that were beautiful on the inside but to Solomon’s tent, which also was black on the

outside but especially luxurious and glorious within.

Song 1:6 Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother's children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept.

"Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me." Here is a class who have been servants. And so true Christians have been recognized in the nominal system down through the Gospel Age, but generally they have not been placed in positions of honor and leadership. Usually they were assigned to tasks that would help the leadership and the denomination rather than Jesus. Here the figure is of a woman who has been doing servile and menial work in the vineyard for such a long time that the sun's rays have darkened her skin. The professed "noble" Christians look down on her blackness as undesirable.

"My mother's children were angry with me." "My mother's children" refers to Jerusalem above, which is "the mother of us all," the "mother" of the Isaac seed, the "mother" of those who are running the race of the high calling (Gal. 4:26). One reason the prospective Bride class were not put in positions of leadership was that they asked too many questions and were not satisfied with the conditions that existed in the Church. Therefore, they were kept occupied all day doing menial work called here a "vineyard." At the end of the day, exhaustion set in, and as a result of being kept so busy, this class have not more fully and clearly understood the Lord's Word. They have kept the vineyard of others (the professed Church, as it were), but not their "own vineyard."

Song 1:7 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?

The prospective Bride is pictured as a veiled woman. Usually a veiled woman was a harlot, one already married, or one in mourning. However, this veil is one of ostracism or nonrecognition.

Song 1:8 If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents.

The Lord enjoins the veiled woman to look for those who give evidences that they are true Christians and to follow and associate with such living examples. She is to be numbered among the true friends of Christ, among those who are close to him ("the flocks of thy companions"). This class are to nurture their families, their "kids," their little ones, in a better environment. This broad picture applies throughout the Gospel Age.

Song 1:9 I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots.

Jesus continues to speak in verses 9 and 10. "Chariots" (plural) indicates that the longing one represents a class. With the Hebrew being "mare" (singular) and the Septuagint being "horses" (plural), she is likened to a "company" or team of mares. In some respects, female horses were more prized for Pharaoh's chariots than the male ones. The mares that were selected to be closely identified with Pharaoh were the choicest in the kingdom,

and in this case, "Pharaoh" would be either Jesus or the Heavenly Father depending on circumstances. The thought of "mares" signifies a female class, spiritually speaking.

Song 1:10 Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold.

The mares' cheeks were comely, the halter being ornamented on both sides with jewels. The neck was also adorned, having chains of gold. Among the hundreds of chariots, Solomon's (Jesus') would stand out.

Song 1:11 We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver.

"We" would be the Heavenly Father and Jesus. The Bride class will receive the divine nature (gold) standing in truth (silver). The pillars that supported the Most Holy veil were set in sockets of silver, whereas the pillars at the entrance of the Holy had sockets of copper. In the present life the prospective Bride's hope of the divine nature (gold boards) rests in her justified human nature (copper sockets). If faithful, she will end up standing in sockets of silver.

Song 1:12 While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.

The wise virgins are again speaking (through verse 14). Here they allude to Spikenard Mary, who anointed the Master during the last week of his earthly ministry with precious ointment valued at a year's salary. The Spikenard Mary class try to show their appreciation of the Lord in various ways at the expense of their own wealth or possessions.

Song 1:13 A bundle of myrrh is my wellbeloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.

Song 1:14 My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of Engedi.

The prospective Bride compares Jesus to "a bundle of myrrh" and "a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of Engedi." Verse 13 refers to a custom in ancient times when water was a scarce commodity and had to be doled out carefully. Women back there often put little linen bags containing myrrh between their breasts to function as a deodorant. Proof that this is the correct interpretation is verse 14, which compares Jesus to camphire in the vineyards of Engedi. The bundle of myrrh, like the camphire (a type of cypress or cedar tree), had a purifying, refreshing, exhilarating effect.

The little bag of myrrh is being compared with the shade of the camphire in the vineyards of Engedi. The vineyards were exposed to the rays of the sun, so for comfort and respite from the heat of the day, the workers went to small temporary shelters or to cypress trees, whichever were available. Spiritually speaking, the Tabernacle is a temporary tent or shelter for the Lord's people in their journey through the Wilderness of Sin.

"He" in verse 13 should be "it": "it [the bag of myrrh] shall lie all night betwixt my breasts."

Frequently in the Song of Solomon, the Bride uses the expression "my beloved" to refer to Jesus. This helps us to know who is talking: Jesus or the Church. For example, the

Bride is speaking in Song 2:9.

Song 1:15 Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes.

Jesus now responds.

Song 1:16 Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed is green.

“My beloved,” being the Church’s term for the Master, indicates that the wise virgins are speaking here and in the next verse. The “bed” would be a couch. In other words, this couch of leisure is like a knoll of grass. In the desert condition of the present life, there are green oases on which to rest and talk things over with the Master (instead of lying on the hot sand). “Green” grass suggests life. In these moments of rest and fellowship with the Master comes proportionate exhilaration.

Song 1:17 The beams of our house are cedar, and our rafters of fir.

While, spiritually speaking, this relationship exists in the present life, it will continue on into the next life. As the cedar wood, the cypress, the fir, and the evergreen are symbols of everlasting life, so these momentary experiences of pleasure and refreshment will become eternal. In the Tabernacle, acacia *wood* was overlaid with *gold*, suggesting that this class in the *temporary* Holy life end up in the *permanent* Most Holy life. It is a *continuing* condition. In other words, the golden boards of the Holy represent this perpetual relationship in the *present* life, and the golden boards of the Most Holy represent this perpetual relationship in the *future* life.

Song of Solomon Chapter 2

Song 2:1 I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.

The prospective Bride is speaking. The “lily of the valleys” indicates her humble spirit. The “rose of Sharon” does not refer to a particular species but to a multitude or *variety* of lowly flowers, beautiful in array, that persist at a certain season of the year in Israel on the Plain of Sharon.

Song 2:2 As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.

Jesus responds, making a distinction between the other “daughters” and this particular daughter. Jesus acknowledges that the prospective Bride is as the “lily” of the plain (or valleys) and that she is as the “lily among thorns.” (There are different kinds of “daughters”: those who are closer to the Little Flock and those in the nominal system, who are further removed.)

Song 2:3 As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

The Bride class speaks in verses 3–6. As Jesus said that among the daughters, she is special, so the Church responds that “among the sons” of God, Jesus is special—he is head and shoulders over all others. The Church was likened to the “lily of the valleys,” but Jesus is likened to a much larger “apple tree,” which provides shade and succulent fruit to

assuage thirst. Also, the apple tree is *upright*. Possibly the tree is an orange tree rather than our Western apple tree.

Song 2:4 He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.

In the Holy, the cherubim on the ceiling represent divine protection, providence, grace—cognition of the Bride class running for the high calling.

Song 2:5 Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love.

“I am sick of love”; that is, “I am lovesick.” The “flagons” were probably cups of wine, picturing deep doctrinal truths that provide additional comfort.

Song 2:6 His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.

The “left hand” guides our mental faculties. How can we have a true relationship with Christ on this high level unless we are familiar with his Word? What we know about Jesus comes from the Bible. Therefore, in proportion as we are familiar with that Word, we are guided by the Lord in a proper affection and love for Christ. To have this close relationship, we need Jesus’ leadership, we need the Holy Spirit, and we need the providences of both Jesus and God to direct us to the proper Scriptures and their understanding.

The left hand guides in kissing, while the right hand, being stronger, goes around and embraces and hugs the Bride class. Thus Jesus’ “left hand” directs the prospective Bride’s mental faculties in the correct avenue, while his “right hand” represents the promises of God, the basic Scriptures of comfort and strength, and God’s providences on behalf of the Church.

Song 2:7 I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please.

Fawns, deer, are gentle, delicate, innocent, endearing creatures in the forest that startle easily. Just the breaking of a twig alarms them. Verse 6 told about the left hand guiding and the right hand embracing, and now verse 7 gives the admonition to the “daughters of Jerusalem” not to interrupt this close fellowship between Jesus and the Church. The “daughters of Jerusalem” are not true daughters, not the Bride class, but they are close to the Bride class with somewhat similar hopes. The “daughters of Jerusalem” are warned not to disrupt the relationship. For example, if two brothers are having close fellowship at a convention, a third brother rudely thrusting in a handshake can break up the relationship, and that particular experience of close fellowship can never be repeated. The party doing the disrupting will be held responsible and will not be of the wise virgin class. The “daughters of Jerusalem,” those having the same hopes as the wise virgin class, very often unknowingly do this. When we hurt the feelings of another consecrated one who is truly His, God holds us very responsible and records this in His book of record. The New Testament indicates how this harm can be done along other lines.

“I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem.” Who is speaking? The pronoun “he” is used in the KJV, but the Hebrew has “she.” Is the Bride speaking as the “she,” or is Jesus speaking about “love,” which is female in the Hebrew? The RSV seems to have the proper thought: “until *it* please.” “I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, ... that you stir

not up nor awaken this relationship until it [love] please" (paraphrase). Just let love be until it comes to a natural termination. Therefore, this is an expression of the Holy Spirit. It is as though the Holy Spirit is saying, "I am warning you: Do not interrupt this close fellowship between the King [Jesus] and his chief lover [the Bride class]." The expression is something like 1 Timothy 4:1, "Now *the Spirit speaketh expressly*, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith."

Song 2:8 The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.

Song 2:9 My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, showing himself through the lattice.

The Bride class is speaking in verses 8 and 9 and the first part of verse 10 ("The voice of my beloved ... said unto me"). She likens Jesus to a roe or young hart leaping upon the mountains. He shows himself "through the lattice." The context is now drawing a dispensational picture of the end of the age, coming to the *parousia*, the invisible Second Advent. (Prior verses showed the Bride down through the Gospel Age.) Now, in a special sense, an enlightening or opening up of the Word is made possible. The various interlocking doctrines and time prophecies—their harmonization—enable us, as we look through (even though imperfectly) a dark glass, to see Jesus on the other side of the "lattice" looking down at the Bride class. In a special sense, Jesus shows himself at his Second Advent.

Song 2:10 My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.

Song 2:11 For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone;

Song 2:12 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;

Song 2:13 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.

The Bride class reports what Jesus had said: "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 [etc.—through the end of verse 13]." This is the beginning of the Second Advent and the time for the raising of the sleeping saints. Jesus called this class forth from the tomb in 1878. The "winter" that is past (verse 11) does not refer to the winter Time of Trouble yet future. Rather, Jesus was calling to the saints who had persecuting and trying experiences down through the Gospel Age. They finished their course in faithfulness, and now comes the time for their reward. We are so self-centered that sometimes we forget about the saints who have been raised and are now with the Master. Their "winter" is past; the "rain" is over for them.

The "fig tree" putting forth her green figs also suggests 1878. Present truth has enabled us to behold the Master with more definitive delineation. Promising evidences of change are all about. Even though conditions are getting worse, the sunrise will follow the clouds.

Song 2:14 O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the

stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.

Now Jesus speaks of those still in the flesh in the present life. The “dead in Christ” rose first, those who were asleep in the grave. Afterward those who remain here will have their change. Until then, they figuratively dwell “in the clefts of the rock” by faith. They have a secret staircase of communion with God through prayer—a Jacob’s ladder, as it were. Faith and prayer make communion possible. We must stay close to both God and Jesus in fellowship through the Scriptures and personal, private prayer in order to receive the refreshment necessary to faithfully finish our course.

Song 2:15 Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.

This verse is tied in with the instruction of verse 14, but here the Bride class is speaking.

The “little foxes” are little violations or acts of negligence that jeopardize our relationship to Christ. The “foxes” distract; they nibble and run away. We must “take time to be holy” and speak oft with the Lord; we must commune with him.

Song 2:16 My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies.

Jesus feeds among the “lily of the valleys” class (Song 2:1).

Song 2:17 Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether.

Verse 17 takes place before the dawn—but after 1878 when the sleeping saints were raised. In other words, it takes place during the time the ones who remain behind are enjoined to have closer fellowship with the Lord. The Apostle Paul told us to forsake not “the assembling of ourselves together ... and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (Heb. 10:25). We are living in a day when we cannot afford to be negligent with regard to fellowship. Not having fellowship will have its effect; it will wean us away whether we know it or not. “Until the day break” would be sun rising, when all will be made aware that the reign of Christ has begun.

The Bride class still here in the flesh is pleading with Jesus that “Until the day break, and the shadows [on earth of ignorance, pride, prejudice, etc.] flee away [are broken],” he will “turn ... and be ... like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether [of separation].” Those of the spiritual Kingdom class already gathered to the Lord in the air are called the “mountain of the Lord,” but there is also a “mountain” down here on the earth. Proof: the “stone” class are cut out of the “mountain” (the earth) without hands (Dan. 2:45). There is a gulf between the raised saints in earth’s atmosphere and those still in the flesh. The class remaining here wishes that gulf would be bridged quickly, *before* the sunrise. When sunrise occurs, the Church class will be complete.

Song of Solomon Chapter 3

Chapter 3 shows that the Church class do not need to be prodded to seek the Lord. They are resting comfortably in their bed, thinking about the Master the way David used to think about God while out in the fields as a shepherd. This bed is one of comfort and rest.

(We are in a wonderful position today feasting on present truth. Unfortunately, the attitude can be one of complacency.) While resting, the Church class become uneasy, so they rise up, move to the door, and go out to look for the Master. In other words, *of their own volition*, they go out to find him.

The prospective Bride is not satisfied but is ever seeking to come closer to the Lord. While searching for him, she has some discomfoting experiences. "I sought him [but did not find him]" (verse 1). Again, "I sought him, but I found him not" (verse 1). And a third time, "I sought him, but I found him not" (verse 2). When she goes beyond the watchmen but a little way, she finds him "whom my soul loveth" (verse 4).

The third chapter is contrasted with the fifth chapter, which describes the attitude of the Great Company class.

Song 3:1 By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.

The Bride class are speaking in verses 1–4. While meditating on their beds of repose, they are trying to have closer communion with their Lord, but something is lacking. In verse 1 they have not yet arisen. "By *night*" refers to a period at the *end* of the age.

Song 3:2 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.

Not satisfied, they arise from their beds of ease or comfort and pursue their desires by going out in the "broad ways" and the "streets" of the "city" in search of a closer walk with Jesus. Initially in their search, they do not find him.

The "rising" is related to the arising of the wise and foolish virgins from their slumber. When the cry comes, "Behold the bridegroom," they all go forth, but the foolish virgins lack a supply of oil and their lamps are going out. After the wise virgins enter, the door shuts behind them.

Song 3:3 The watchmen that go about the city found me: to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?

Song 3:4 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.

The class who go "a little" beyond in their effort and search are the wise virgins, and we know from the parable that they do enter the marriage and the door shuts behind them. "They that were ready went in with him to the *marriage*" (Matt. 25:10). This event is future. When the door shuts, it will close the wise virgin class into the marriage. The Bride class's passing "but a little" beyond the "watchmen" pictures their getting further advancement in light and understanding.

"I passed but a little from the watchmen" (paraphrase). The wise virgin class are looking not merely for the signs of the Lord's presence but for the meaning of events that are transpiring in the light of God's Word. Although the "watchmen" are the more prominent ones before the public gaze, although they are looked to as being informed,

when the prospective Bride class come in contact with these various “watchmen” individuals, they do not get what they want. When they go just a little beyond the watchmen in their effort and search, they are rewarded.

“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.” We know that only the Lord can take the Bride into the marriage, into the Sarah Covenant (into the “mother’s house”). In the type in Genesis, *Isaac brought Rebecca* into Sarah’s tent, and that would be the proper perspective, not vice versa. However, Song 3:4 states this from an emotional standpoint. It is as though this class have been so disappointed time and again in their search that when they find Jesus, they are truly enlightened and will not let him go. They want to enter the marriage.

Song 3:5 I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please.

Again, the Holy Spirit says, “I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem,... that ye stir not up, nor awake ... love until it please [until love comes to its own natural conclusion].”

Song 3:6 Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?

Verses 6–11, which are a complete break in thought, are a commentary by the Holy Spirit to fill in a certain picture. A question is raised in verse 6: “Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke?” This is an allusion to the Wilderness of Sinai and the Tabernacle arrangement, in which three fires were burning: (1) the burning without the camp was a stench in the eyes of the world; (2) the burning in the Court on the Brazen Altar was a sweet savor; and (3) the burning of incense took place in the Holy on the Incense Altar. The incense had various ingredients, including frankincense, so the fragrance that ascended up over the Second Veil into the Most Holy was a mixed fragrance.

Song 3:7 Behold his bed, which is Solomon’s; threescore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel.

The Ark of the Covenant or “hope chest” in the Most Holy represents The Christ. The box underneath pictures the Body members, the lid on top represents Jesus, and the *shekinah* light above is the evidence of God, who is over all. (The order of importance is thus shown: God over Christ, and Christ over the Church.) Song 3:7 is talking about the Ark of the Covenant or palanquin, picturing the Church class in transit in the wilderness.

Verse 7 is saying that the Church class are specially guarded. The allusion is to the body guards for Solomon’s own palanquin or chair when he was carried in it. As used here, “threescore” is a Hebraism that means an unspecified number. We use similar expressions today, such as “just a minute,” meaning not literally 60 seconds but a short indefinite period of time.

Song 3:8 They all hold swords, being expert in war: every man hath his sword upon his thigh because of fear in the night.

The Church class are providentially safeguarded en route so that they will not be harmed

as new creatures, all things being equal. Hence the consecrated can be considered “immortal” until they die. A providence shapes their ends. Even the ceasing of their earthly life is programmed and will occur when the Lord sees fit.

Song 3:9 King Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon.

The “wood of Lebanon” was a choice cedar wood. The cedars of Lebanon were very tall and long-lasting, and they were noted for their hard, durable wood.

Song 3:10 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.

Verse 10 tells of the intricate workmanship put into Solomon’s “chariot.” “Purple” is a symbol of royalty, and the Church class are destined for rulership—to be Queen, as it were. The “chariot” is for the *true* “daughters of Jerusalem,” in contradistinction to the merely *professed* daughters of Jerusalem mentioned earlier in the Song of Solomon. Solomon’s chariot is for the *true* daughters of Jerusalem, a select class.

Note: The definitions of the terms “watchmen” and “daughters of Jerusalem” change in the Song of Solomon *according to context*. Nevertheless, there is a relationship with these varieties and changes.

Song 3:11 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.

Verse 11 is a picture of the “daughters of Jerusalem” being elevated to the “daughters of Zion,” meaning the Church triumphant. They are now at the throne scene with the antitypical King Solomon at the marriage. “In the day of his espousals” refers to the marriage, which was looked forward to and anticipated for so long. This is the *fruition of their hopes*—the Tabernacle class end up in the Temple condition of permanence, prominence, and beauty. This is the glorification of the Church. The faithful saints, who are raised to spirit nature in earth’s atmosphere, will all be glorified together at this time.

Song of Solomon Chapter 4

Song 4:1 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.

Now Jesus speaks to the Church (verses 1–5). “Thou hast doves’ eyes within thy locks [of hair].” In the Middle East, the eyes of a dove are particularly large and very soulful and meaningful. Jesus likens the Bride to a dove, and especially its beautiful eyes looking out from a thicket. Her locks of hair are comparable to the thicket. In both cases, the beautiful eyes would be seen. Of course the “locks” picture consecration—the Bride being a consecrated humble class.

“Thy hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead.” Some of the goats in the Middle East have thick, beautiful, soft black hair. Cashmere comes from such goats. Prize goats such as these grazed Mount Gilead on the Transjordan side.

Song 4:2 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.

The Bride's teeth are paired: two eyeteeth, two bicuspid, etc. Her teeth are beautiful and *evenly matched*; ie, their development is equal—they are shorn evenly. This class ruminates on and masticates the truth. Like David, who loved the Law, they meditate on God's Word day and night whenever there is a free moment. This class rightly divides the Word of truth; they rightly divide truths that are vital to their relationship to Christ and the making of their calling and election sure. In whatever age these Christians live, when dispensational truth is available, they are apprised and pursue it as if it were hidden treasure.

"Which came up from the washing." The hair of the sheep was very shaggy and sometimes stained for identification purposes, but when the sheep were shorn, they appeared smooth and even. Lesson: When Christians shed forth earthly adornments, they are more attractive to the Lord.

"None is barren among them." When a person talks or smiles, a missing tooth in front is very obvious. It detracts from one's looks. Here Jesus is quite satisfied with the appearance of the Bride. She has fulfilled her requirements.

Song 4:3 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.

The lips are a *natural* red beauty—no cosmetics are involved. Some naturally have rosy cheeks and perfectly formed lips. Here this class has conformed to the image of Christ and become proportionately desirable from his standpoint. Having forgotten their father's house, they have all these adornments of the Spirit.

"Thy speech is comely." Normally a man does not want a woman who is too aggressive. Jesus is looking for humility, simplicity, and meekness in his Bride. Sarah is an example of one who had natural grace and beauty that emanated from within.

Her temples or cheeks "are like a piece of a pomegranate." Just as a pomegranate is red and round, so from a natural standpoint the Bride's cheeks have color, health, and beauty with a proportionate roundness that is pleasing. A pomegranate is *filled* with seeds and, when ripe, is delicious and even exhilarating. Its flavor is the combination of many fruits. Hence some have likened the juice of the pomegranate to the fruitage of love. If love is the composite of all the graces, so the taste of the pomegranate is one of rounded-out Christian character and spiritual development.

Song 4:4 Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.

First, Jesus talked about the femininity and the grace of the Church class. Now he talks about them as being good soldiers of the Cross. They have courage and strength as well as meekness, docility, and quietness—a most unusual combination.

Song 4:5 Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies.

Back to the femininity aspect. “Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins.” This description refers to the Bride’s balanced and mature development from both the Old and the New Testament. To just read the New Testament and ignore the Old Testament would result in lopsided development. The Word of God is composed of *both*. Under the Law, it was forbidden to separate the wings (Old and New Testament) of a fowl.

“Which feed among the lilies.” We are the product of our thinking. The lily is a delicate, graceful flower that is symbolic of resurrection and purity. In contradistinction to thoughts of the world, thoughts of Christ are like feeding among lilies. Certain delicate truths are necessary for making our calling and election sure.

Song 4:6 Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense.

The virgin class speaks in verse 6. She is saying that in the meantime, “until the day break, and the shadows flee away” (that is, before day breaks and the shadows flee away), “I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense.” It has been suggested that the “mountain of myrrh” refers to the crucified Lord on Calvary, “myrrh” being associated with death, the death of Christ. The “hill of frankincense” refers to the resurrection of Christ, being the hill of praise. Thus the theme of death and Calvary is contrasted with the theme of resurrection, the dead Christ with the risen Christ. Both were essential. “I will get me” to these means the Church class thinks of their Lord in this capacity.

Song 4:7 Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.

Song 4:8 Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions’ dens, from the mountains of the leopards.

Jesus speaks in verses 7–15. Amana, Shenir, and Hermon are all the same Mount Hermon being described in different languages. Just as Jesus at his First Advent went to the top of a mountain away from the world to commune more closely with his Father in prayer, so the Bride class tries to get into a condition or climate that is as close to Jesus as possible. In this mountain are leopards and lions. In times past, these animals frequented Mount Hermon and the adjacent mountain range. The Bride class tries to get away from the Adversary and the other “animals” of terror, as it were, to have a higher plateau of thought and closer communication with the Lord.

Song 4:9 Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.

Her eye is single to the Lord. “If thine eye be single” (Matt. 6:22)—that is, if thine eye be one, if it be concentrated—then Jesus will say, “Thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes.” “This one thing I do” (Phil. 3:13).

“Thou hast ravished my heart ... with one chain of thy neck.” The reference is not to one link of a chain but to one chain. The “chain” is the marriage vow.

Song 4:10 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!

Song 4:11 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.

Jesus certainly gives a wonderful description of the Church class. They may not be much to look at in their earthly abode, and they may not even be recognized as outstanding by one another, but the Lord knows the innermost thoughts of the heart. He is interested in truth, doctrine, orderliness, and all the lovely things predicted of the future, but he is *madly in love with this woman*. Years ago talks were given about the pearl of great price, saying it was restitution, the hope for the world. But no! *The pearl is the Church*. In the parable, the man sold all that he had in order to purchase the field because he wanted the pearl. The field is the world and the pearl (the Church) is in the field. We must have the right priority of thought. It has been said improperly from the platform that to think the pearl is the Church and not restitution is to be high-minded.

The Church class are both Jesus' sister and his spouse. When Eve was taken from Adam's side, she was his sister in a sense, as well as his wife. This comparison is another correspondency between the First Adam and the Second Adam.

"Thy lips ... drop as the honeycomb." Honey is in the honeycomb. Very often in foreign countries, the wax of the honeycomb is considered valuable. Both the wax and the honey are useful, and there is a certain pleasure in eating both. With the honey of verse 11 being a superior kind, Jesus is saying that he is well pleased with the thoughts and the words that come forth from the lips of the Bride class.

"Honey and milk are under thy tongue." In contradistinction, another class are nothing but thorns, and under their tongues is the poison of asps. "Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips" (Rom. 3:13). They have nothing fruitful, beneficial, or constructive to offer. On the other hand, the thoughts and words of the Bride class are all "honey and milk." At one time in the past when the Israelites were in Egypt, the Holy Land was described as the land of milk and honey. Spiritually, the Christian is brought from the darkness of Egypt (the world) into the Land of Promise.

"The smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon." A pine forest can seem like a land of silence, which is conducive to meditating on God's Word. As one enters the Redwood Forest, for example, the atmosphere gets quieter and quieter, and the tall trees are like the Lord's cathedral.

Song 4:12 A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.

Spiritually, Jesus likens the Church class to a virgin who has not known man. This special love and reverence are held sacred and inviolate from any others. The Bride class will not let this particular love for God and Jesus be violated. They love God and Jesus above themselves, above their families, above their friends, and above the world's opinion of them. The Bride is "a garden inclosed" awaiting the nuptial arrangement of the future. The "spring" is like the water of life. Water will issue forth from the temple. The Spirit and the Bride will invite all to partake of the waters of life in the Kingdom (Rev. 22:17). Jesus said to the woman of Samaria, "The water [truth] that I can give is like

water within yourself [immortality] whereby you can water and refresh others" (John 4:14). Those with the divine nature will have the ability in future ages to give life to other beings. The life that we have down here is a God-given arrangement for man and woman to have a child, but they do not create the child. *God* biologically arranged within human beings the ability to have children. However, in the future the Church with Jesus will be able to create life—a much different ability.

Song 4:13 Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard,

Song 4:14 Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices:

Many of these ingredients are in either the incense or the holy anointing oil.

Song 4:15 A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.

The "steams from Lebanon" flow with cool and pure waters from the melted snow of Mount Hermon.

Song 4:16 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.

The Church class now speaks. In view of what she has heard Jesus say about her, she wants to attain this development. She desires to come into harmony with this arrangement, to cultivate these fruits of the Holy Spirit in her life to please the Master. However, she realizes that some of these things can be developed only by persecution, opposition, sickness, hardship, etc.—the "north wind." Notice that she mentions the north wind prior to the south wind. If adversity is necessary to develop these fruits, she wants it. "If we suffer [with Christ], we shall also reign with him" (2 Tim. 2:12). One who has no persecution is a bastard—not even a legitimate son. "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons" (Heb. 12:8). "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12). So the perspective Bride says, "Awake, O north wind, and blow, but I would like the pleasant south wind experiences too." She asks for comforting experiences as well as trouble. The words of the hymn "Though It Be a Cross" would apply: "Nearer, nearer my God to Thee, this is my heart's desire. Each day to journey by Thy side, to this do I aspire. To gain this honored place so dear, all things I count but dross. Use any means to lift me up, e'en though it be a cross. This is my heart's sincere desire, 'Nearer my God to Thee.' O draw me closer though it is a cross that raiseth me." The Christian walk is a mixture of bitter and sweet experiences. In nature a cold winter is needed, as well as warmth, to properly develop certain plants.

"Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits." The "pleasant fruits" were previously mentioned as pomegranates, apples, spices, etc.

Song of Solomon Chapter 5

Song 5:1 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.

Verse 1 should be the concluding verse of the preceding chapter. Notice that in verse 16 of Chapter 4, the spouse or Church class is pictured as saying, "Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits," and the garden theme continues in verse 1. Also, Song 5:2 is a complete break in thought and should begin Chapter 5.

Jesus' "sister," his "spouse," is the Little Flock. "Myrrh" pictures the hard experiences necessary to qualify the priesthood for their calling in the next age, commencing with Jesus as the Head of the Church to make him sympathetic in dealing with man's infirmities. "Spice" portrays the pleasures of truth and fellowship. "Honeycomb" and "honey" are a play on words. Usually "wine" represents doctrine, and "milk" is the rudiments of the Word. However, in this case the "milk" is confined to the Gospel Age experience, and the "wine" applies to the Kingdom Age experience.

"Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." In the Hebrew, the word "friends" is in the masculine, but that does not prohibit an application to the Church class when they are beyond the veil. For the Song of Solomon, *The Finished Mystery* has many good comments.

Song 5:2 I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.

Verse 2 begins a picture of the condition of the Great Company class at the very end of the age. It is the extremity of night—almost time for dawn and the dew of the morning to appear. Time prophecies indicate the proximity of the Kingdom and the time for the completion of the Church. The Great Company class hear the Master's voice but do not respond as quickly and as alertly as they should.

Song 5:3 I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?

The foolish virgins reason that they are in bed. They have put off their day garments and are in their night clothes. With their being in a position of slumber and repose, it would cost them something to respond. Having already washed their feet, they do not want to get them soiled.

Song 5:4 My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him.

Jesus enjoins the foolish virgins a second time by putting his hand at the hole of the door and rattling the lock as though attempting to get in. The "time lock" would be the time prophecies, which are coming to a fulfillment. Not only is this the day of Jesus' presence, but the marriage is imminent.

Song 5:5 I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweetsmelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock.

Now the Great Company begin to appreciate the prophetic declarations in the Lord's Word, but too late—the Master has gone! Had they been more alert and responded

sooner, Jesus would have been there.

Song 5:6 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.

Verse 6 harmonizes with the foolish virgin class getting the oil, getting a replenishment of the Holy Spirit in their hearts, so that now they have the desire to follow and join Jesus. In the parable, the foolish virgins go to the marketplace to buy the oil. When they return, they plead for the door to the marriage to be opened to them, but *the door is shut!*

Song 5:7 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.

Song 5:8 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am sick of love.

“Sick of love” means lovesick. Now the Great Company are very earnest. Being lovesick and wanting to follow the Master, they each have the attitude “I have lost him and am not in communication with him. Can you help me?”

Song 5:9 What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? what is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?

Song 5:10 My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.

Here the foolish virgin class praise the Master. Notice their description of Jesus in verses 10–16.

Song 5:11 His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy, and black as a raven.

Song 5:12 His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set.

Song 5:13 His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers: his lips like lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh.

Song 5:14 His hands are as gold rings set with the beryl: his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires.

Song 5:15 His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.

Song 5:16 His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

Song of Solomon Chapter 6

Song 6:1 Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we may seek him with thee.

Song 6:2 My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.

In verse 2, the Great Company feel they are companions of the Master, and they are now zealous for his presence and the close fellowship they could have had by being more alert and responsive earlier (like the Bride class of Chapter 3 who enter into the marriage).

Song 6:3 I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies.

Song 6:4 Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible [awesome] as an army with banners.

Verse 4 is a break in thought. Here Jesus is addressing the Bride class, not the Great Company.

Song 6:5 Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me: thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead.

Song 6:6 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.

Song 6:7 As a piece of a pomegranate are thy temples within thy locks.

Verses 4–7 apply to the Bride class. The Master is enthralled by this fair maiden.

Song 6:8 There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number.

The “virgins without number” are a large but unnumbered class. The thought is not that there are exactly 60 queens or 80 concubines, but that there are people in the nominal system, especially the early Church fathers, who have been revered and eulogized as great religious leaders. “Saint” Augustine is an example. Whether or not they are true Christians, we do not know in the present life. We should not denigrate them because we do not know what their relationship to the Lord was, but it is nice to think that some made their calling and election sure. Those in the nominal system who have been esteemed most highly are the “queens,” and lesser lights are the “concubines.” The “virgins without number” would be the Great Company class, who are nondescript and have no special history as far as the world is concerned.

Song 6:9 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.

The Little Flock are “one.” The queens and the concubines “praised her [by singing Hallelujah to the Lord].” In other words, when those who had the greater reputation in the present life see who make their calling and election sure, they will acknowledge that, indeed, those of the Bride class are worthy of such affection from the Master. The former “great” ones will join in the chorus of praise in the future.

Song 6:10 Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible [awesome] as an army with banners?

This question should be a statement. The Bride class are pictured in Revelation as a woman with the sun beaming on her body, 12 stars crowning her, and the moon under

her feet. This was the Church of Ephesus, considered in purity and pristine beauty at the beginning of the Gospel Age even though she was pregnant with one who would later be born as the man of sin. The pure woman was not responsible for the illegitimate man-child that came forth from her. Now, as the glorified Bride, she is truly “fair as the moon” and “clear as the sun.” The Christian army in its victorious march is on display.

Song 6:11 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.

Verses 11–13 return to the subject of the Great Company class.

In the interval of time between the wedding in heaven and the later marriage supper festival, the Great Company class will be developed. Here is shown the concern of the Bride for the foolish virgin class because they too have dedicated their lives to Jesus. Therefore, the Bride goes down to the “garden of nuts,” which is a lot different from her own garden of spices, fragrances, and flowers that exude love and affection (Song 4:12–5:1). The “nut garden” class are harder to break, yet they have a value. The shell must be broken (the flesh must be destroyed) in order to bring out the good qualities that exist there but do not come forth in an open and incense-like type of fragrance and devotion to the Master. The Great Company must be helped to complete their consecration.

Song 6:12 Or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib.

Song 6:13 Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies.

The Finished Mystery has the correct thought that “Shulamite” means “my uneven one.” The Great Company are uneven in their development.

The “two armies” would be (1) the Great Company class *outside* the nominal Church and (2) the Great Company class *inside* the systems. (The “two armies” here do not include the Little Flock class, who come out of the systems earlier.) The Great Company class outside the nominal systems have been familiar with present truth; the other element are not, but they will become enlightened as the end of the age draws near. This spirit-begotten class in Babylon will come out and be rescued just like those who are already out of Babylon and in present truth. These two companies are *uneven* in their development. One has a lot of knowledge of truth but not too much development; the other has quite a bit of development but not enough knowledge of truth.

Song of Solomon Chapter 7

Song 7:1 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.

Song 7:2 Thy navel is like a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor: thy belly is like an heap of wheat set about with lilies.

In the Lord’s sight, the Bride class have tremendous potential, which is developed through the Holy Spirit.

Song 7:3 Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins.

This verse refers to the beautiful and graceful character development of the Bride class through Old and New Testament doctrines.

Song 7:4 Thy neck is as a tower of ivory; thine eyes like the fishpools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim: thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus.

While the wise virgin class is a very beautiful woman in the Lord's sight, jarring language such as verse 4 shows the picture is not sensuous or unclean in the normal sense.

Regarding "Lebanon," being in a pine forest produces an exhilarating feeling; the air seems to be purified by the cedars. Evidently in Lebanon, the atmosphere and the elevation where the cedars grew were invigorating.

The "fishpools" of Heshbon were still pools that were pleasurable to behold. In other words, the Bride class has a transparency of character that is refreshing to the Master. Imagine the Master being thrilled with fellowship from this class! Future communication will be even closer.

Song 7:5 Thine head upon thee is like Carmel, and the hair of thine head like purple; the king is held in the galleries.

The "king" (Jesus) is enthralled by seeing what the Bride class, his spouse, does down here in the flesh. "The king is held in the galleries." He is awestruck by how the Bride class reacts under such unfavorable circumstances. In the mud and swamp environment down here, a beautiful lily class develops.

Song 7:6 How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!

Song 7:7 This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes.

Song 7:8 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;

Song 7:9 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.

Verses 7–9 are a slight break in thought with Jesus now speaking. The verses are like love-making, but strange applications are purposely inserted. For instance, "thy nose [is] like apples" and "thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine." Jesus wants to spiritually embrace this class but uses language to show he is not interested in them according to the flesh. In both men and women physical beauty, more than beauty of character, usually influences marriage—but that is not the case with the Lord. These strange analogies are introduced to make sure we realize the Song of Solomon is not speaking according to the flesh.

Song 7:10 I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me.

The wise virgin class speaks in verse 10.

Song 7:11 Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages.

The Bride speaks in verse 11.

Song 7:12 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.

In connection with this inspection, after the marriage, of the condition that exists on the earth among the foolish virgins who are left behind, the concern for their development is a priority. While Song 6:11 tells of the Bride's going down to the nut garden with compassion and interest in the success and rescue of the Great Company class, now Jesus joins the Bride in inspecting the field in the world. They are coming down to see how things are prospering. Of course Israel, sometimes pictured as a "vine," will be inspected too. Hence the word "vineyards" is *plural*.

Song 7:13 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.

With regard to the activity of The Christ after the wedding, several factors are involved. One is the rescue of the Great Company class. Another is the rescue of Israel from utter destruction. "Saviors" (plural) shall arise on Mount Zion (Obadiah 21). The Church will be privileged to fellowship with the Master in connection with this rescue-mission work. The Bride and the Bridegroom will jointly participate.

Song of Solomon Chapter 8

Song 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.

Song 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.

Song 8:3 His left hand should be under my head, and his right hand should embrace me.

Chapter 8 is again a complete break in thought. In verses 1-3, the foolish virgin class is speaking.

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

Song 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.

Verse 5 is a break in thought. Who "cometh up from the wilderness"? The Pastor applied this verse to the Church coming out of the wilderness in 1799. However, based on the perspective of the pictures given here and the type of message, an application back in 1799 does not seem compatible. We will have to digress.

In the Leviticus 16 offerings of the bullock and the Lord's goat, some seemingly strange

things have not been explained. In fact, it is surprising that questions have not arisen. *Tabernacle Shadows* is a key that opens the Book of Leviticus to a certain extent (for instance, it describes what the bullock, the Lord's goat, and the scapegoat represent), but now that we have definitions, when we review Leviticus 16, a number of things are left unexplained. The following is an example.

Leviticus 16 pictures the Day of Atonement. Moses was instructed to tell Aaron how the ceremony should be carried out. Aaron had to get a bullock and a goat to be presented as a sin offering. First, the bullock was slain and its blood taken into the Most Holy and sprinkled seven times on the Mercy Seat. Then Aaron, the high priest, came out and the Lord's goat was slain. Its blood was collected and also taken into the Most Holy and sprinkled seven times on the Mercy Seat. Again the high priest came out. This time he went to the Brazen Altar, and mixing the remaining blood from the bullock and the Lord's goat, he sprinkled the combined blood on the horns of the altar. The Pastor explained this activity in one sense by saying the Church has a share in the sin offering—a startling revelation! But the animals were not dealt with any further at this point—only the blood was treated. Next Aaron took the live goat (the Great Company) and gave it into the hands of a fit man to be turned over to Azazel (Satan) in the wilderness (for their development). The Great Company is involved in atonement in another sense.

The sequence is significant. After the high priest took the live goat, put both hands on it, confessed over it the iniquities of the children of Israel, and sent it by the hands of a fit man into the wilderness to die, he went into the Tabernacle (on the side) and changed into the garments of glory and beauty. Then the high priest came out, and instead of continuing the sin offering, of which only the blood had been dealt with, he took the animals of the *burnt offering and offered them first, followed by the sin offering*. This sequence represents what will be done after the Church is complete and the marriage has taken place. The burnt offering shows God's acceptance of the blood of the sin offering, and that acceptance will be realized by the world, as shown by Aaron's coming out in garments of glory and beauty and offering the burnt offering and the remains of the sin offering—and even his taking the sin-offering carcasses “without the camp” (Lev. 16:27).

From one standpoint, the order of events pictures how the world has viewed Jesus and, later, the Church. As the Apostle Paul said, “Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach” and be burnt as a stench in the nostrils of the professed people of God (Heb. 13:13). But in Leviticus 16 when the high priest offered the burnt offering *followed by the sin offering and the burning of the sin-offering carcasses outside the camp*, that does not mean these activities were taking place then. Rather, the sequence shows *the world's being made aware of and appreciating the acceptance of Jesus and his Church* and the loving devotion of The Christ in connection with laying down their lives as a sin offering on behalf of the world. In the Kingdom the people will understand that the carcass of the Lord's goat was burnt outside the camp because the Church class needed those experiences to prove their worthiness and fitness to be elevated to the glorious position of the divine nature.

Note: All of these things take place *after* the high priest changes his robes and *after* the sprinkling of the blood. The sprinkling of the blood of the bullock means the death of Jesus, which took place almost 2,000 years ago, but the sprinkling of the blood of the Lord's goat will not occur until the Church is complete—a date yet future. But even when the blood of the Lord's goat is sprinkled, restitution will not immediately follow. Instead the

blood is deposited in the bank, as it were, for the effects (restitution, etc.) will not take place until after the development of the Great Company.

In the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins, when the foolish virgins leave to get oil, the wise virgins go into the marriage. When the live goat goes into the wilderness, the high priest goes into the Tabernacle to change his garments—this would be the time of the wedding.

This digression about the Tabernacle helps us to understand Song 8:5. “Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?” At a future date, *after* the Church is complete and *after* the marriage has taken place, the Great Company will lean on the arm of her beloved as they come up out of the wilderness.

Song 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.

Song 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 [despised].

Song 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?

The Church class is speaking.

Song 8:9 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.

The speaker in verse 9 is The Christ.

Song 8:10 I am a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found favour.

The Great Company responds. Now, *after her wilderness experience*, her “breasts [are] like towers.” She was a wall, but she had no breasts (no spiritual development). “Then was I in his eyes as one that found favour.” The Time of Trouble will develop and mature the foolish virgins. They must feel estranged in the wilderness (the trouble or tribulation) so that they will wash their garments in the blood of the Lamb and be restored to a desirable condition. The foolish virgins did get the oil. They went to the marketplace and returned with the oil—but too late! However, if they properly respond to the tribulation condition, the Great Company class will be matured, restored to favor, and rescued as a secondary class.

The coming up out of the wilderness (verse 5) refers to the rescue of the Great Company class, who will be forced out into the wilderness for the destruction of the flesh so that the spirit can be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. The salvation of the spirit is the Master’s part, but the destruction of the flesh is Satan’s task.

Song 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 [to Solomon] a thousand pieces of

silver.

Song 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.

In connection with the vineyard work, our consecration and our efforts to serve the Lord are wholly predicated not upon works but upon doing His will. (However, doing the Lord's will would eventually involve works as an indicator of our faith.) The Lord looks for our *faith*. As for the vineyard work, "a thousand pieces of silver" are given to the lord of the vineyard, Solomon (the glorified Jesus). The faithful workers in the vineyard get a 20 percent reward for their efforts.

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

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