

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Song of Songs 3: 7-8

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the bible again. This week we will continue reading chapter 3 of Song of Songs. Today we will read verses 7–8.

A saint, being shaped in the hand of God, has gone through the second stage of experience, and his being is now filled with the fragrance that comes from the knowledge of Christ. As he comes up from the wilderness, his form is like pillars of smoke. A group of seasoned saints in the church, seeing him from afar, ask one another: Who is this spiritual person?

In fact, they all know this saint; perhaps they had even helped him before. How is it that after a period of not paying attention, he has grown into such a mature stature! This is an exclamatory question—what they are really asking is not “who” he is, but “how” he has grown into such maturity. He is now completely different from before; they must re-acquaint themselves with this spiritual person.

Following this, in verses 7–10, one among the group of seasoned saints directly answers—not by saying who he is, but by describing what kind of person he has become after the Lord's workmanship. Verses 7–8 speak of him becoming the Lord's rest; verses 9–10 speak of him becoming the Lord's move. Today, let us read verses 7–8.

Verse 7: "Behold, it is Solomon's couch, with sixty valiant men around it, of the valiant of Israel."

"Behold, it is Solomon's couch"—"Behold" directly answers the question, "Who is this?" Perhaps the one speaking even pointed at the saint coming up from the wilderness and said, "Behold"—meaning, "Look carefully." When you look, you know immediately: he is Solomon's couch. The Song of Songs tells the love story of

Solomon seeking the love of a country maiden. Spiritually, it speaks of the Lord seeking after us. Solomon prefigures the Lord.

The Hebrew word “mittah” can be directly translated as "bed" or "couch"; thus, the KJV renders it as "bed," and the ASV as "couch." Therefore, in this verse, translating it as "bed" or "couch" is more appropriate. The reason the Chinese Union Version translated it as "sedan" (or "palanquin") is because verse 9 mentions Solomon's palanquin. The translators thought verse 7 and verse 9 referred to the same thing, so they changed "bed" into "sedan." However, with spiritual insight, we realize these two verses emphasize different things—one concerns the Lord's rest, the other His move.

Thus, any translation should respect the original text. Here, I must stress again: when reading the Bible, we must respect the words originally used. Sometimes, due to our shallow understanding, we think the Bible is wrong and change it to what we think is correct, but end up distorting the original meaning. Therefore, when we encounter things we do not understand, it is better to admit our lack of understanding than to casually alter the Scriptures.

This saint who came up from the wilderness is compared to Solomon's bed, meaning he is the place of the Lord's rest; he has become the Lord's rest. Recall Song of Songs 3:1: during the second stage of experience, he first sought the Lord on his own bed, searching from the head to the foot of the bed, taking the Lord as his own rest. At that stage, the Lord called him in resurrection, asking him to arise and go with Him. Now he has paid the price; he has arisen and gone with the Lord—through the wilderness, and now coming up from it. He has matured; he has become the Lord's rest.

Dear brothers and sisters, when we first follow the Lord, we must first learn that the Lord is our rest. Especially amid life's tempests, we must see that the Lord still reigns. As long as we are in the Lord, we can enjoy rest. However, now, this saint who loves the Lord has gone through two stages of experience. The Lord has performed sanctification and transformation upon him; he has grown to the point where he has become the Lord's rest—how tremendous is such growth! The Lord

has found rest on earth. This bed may be upon a palanquin, or within a tent, but here the emphasis is on the Lord's rest, not the Lord's move.

The Lord can rest. Besides this saint becoming the Lord's bed, there are sixty valiant men surrounding it, all valiant men of Israel. The sixty warriors encircle the bed, protecting the Lord's bed, allowing Him to rest. When Moses was on Mount Sinai and received the blueprint for building the Tabernacle, the courtyard was to be made with fine linen curtains, hung upon sixty pillars. Exodus 27:9–19 tells us: twenty pillars on the south and north sides, and ten pillars on the east and west sides, totaling sixty pillars. These sixty pillars, with the curtains hanging on them, separated God's testimony from the world.

Likewise, these sixty valiant men are like those sixty pillars, surrounding the Lord's bed, enabling Him to rest. Six is the number of man; ten is the number of human completeness. Thus, sixty valiant men signify the full expression of man rising up to maintain God's testimony. Here we see a perfect coordination: There is a saint, loving the Lord and shaped by His hands, who has become the Lord's bed, allowing Him to rest; and surrounding this bed are sixty valiant warriors.

If not for these sixty warriors faithfully protecting it, the enemy would come to disturb and prevent the Lord from resting. Thus, for the church to become God's testimony, to allow the Lord to rest, two kinds of coordination are needed: warriors on the outside protecting, and a bed on the inside where the Lord can rest.

Verse 8: "They all hold swords, being expert in war. Every man has his sword on his thigh, because of fear in the night."

These sixty valiant men of Israel all hold swords and are expert in warfare. The church's testimony has both an aspect of rest and an aspect of warfare. Moreover, there must be warfare first before there can be rest. Just as God first raised up King David, the king of warfare. He expanded territory, captured Jerusalem and Zion, thereby bringing forth King Solomon, the king of peace. Solomon then built the temple, so that God could rest in the Holy of Holies.

David spent his life in warfare. In 2 Samuel 23, the mighty men of David are listed, and in 2 Samuel 23:13–17, the touching deeds of three warriors are recorded. At that time, David was in the cave of Adullam, while his hometown Bethlehem was occupied by the Philistines. David longed for his hometown, especially the water from the well by the gate of Bethlehem. These three warriors, upon knowing this, risked their lives to break through the Philistine camp, and drew water from the well to offer to David. Yet David refused to drink it but poured it out to the Lord, saying: "Far be it from me, O LORD, that I should do this! Is this not the blood of the men who went in jeopardy of their lives?"

Here we see the loyalty of the three warriors, and David's respect for God and love for his warriors. The church also needs warriors, and the Lord is our David. We must be loyal to God, and the Lord loves us.

The sixty warriors surrounding the Lord's bed all hold swords and are skilled in warfare. Their swords are girded upon their thighs, ready to defend against terror in the night. Night is the time when the enemy acts wildly, always seeking opportunities to destroy God's testimony. Thus, at night, the warriors must draw their swords, keeping the scabbards on their thighs, always ready for battle. These warriors are all experts in warfare. They do not initiate attacks but stand ready to defend against nighttime terrors. When the enemy comes to raid, their swords are already drawn, and they can immediately resist.

In Ephesians 6:13–17, the warriors' equipment is described: Girding the waist with truth; Putting on the breastplate of righteousness; Having the gospel of peace as footwear; Taking up the shield of faith; Wearing the helmet of salvation; And holding the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

Dear brothers and sisters, A saint who can become the Lord's bed during the night is not only one who loves the Lord and has been shaped by God, but one in whose presence the Lord can rest. He is wholly consecrated to the Lord, laying down himself entirely, making the Lord his sole priority; He has no more personal preferences or decisions. He is also someone who knows how to coordinate with others. He understands that his presence alone is not enough to bring the Lord full

rest, because the enemy would come and attack during the night. He coordinates beautifully with the sixty valiant warriors around the Lord's bed, not disturbing the Lord's rest.

In our church life, we must also learn to appreciate the saints around us—especially those who may not speak much but serve faithfully behind the scenes. Whether it is in cleaning, love feasts, hospitality, audiovisual ministry, or children's service—every aspect of service in the church is for the maintenance of God's testimony. Each of them is a mighty warrior. Because of these warriors who defend against nighttime terrors, those saints who have become the Lord's bed can truly allow the Lord to rest.

Dear brothers and sisters, may the Lord find rest in the church where we are. Inside, we need some saints to become the Lord's bed; outside, we need sixty valiant warriors to protect the church, so that Satan has no opportunity to raid.

Let us pray together: Lord, we see that because of love for You, this saint has passed through two stages of spiritual experience and growth. Now he comes up from the wilderness, not only like pillars of smoke, full of the fragrance from knowing You, but he also becomes Your bed, allowing You to rest. He also coordinates well with other saints, surrounded by sixty valiant warriors defending against the terrors of the night. Lord, we truly hope that in the church where we are, there would be such a harmonious and restful scene—allowing You to enjoy rest, and exalting Your testimony; shining like lights in this crooked and perverse generation. Bless the church and our church life. We pray in the Holy Name of Jesus Christ.