

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

Song of Songs 4: 10-11

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the bible again. We're continuing reading Song of Songs Chapter 4, and today we will read verses 10 and 11.

Yesterday, we read that in the third stage of spiritual growth, the Lord gives a higher calling—this is a calling to ascend with the Lord. This calling is to bring the saint, from a heavenly position, into the knowledge of God's will and plan. It is to cause him to temporarily step away from his daily busy service and the many matters he needs to handle, and to come into a heavenly realm—to see the spiritual reality behind the material world, and the spiritual warfare taking place.

When Jesus was fulfilling His ministry on earth, He once took Peter, James, and John up to a high mountain and was transfigured before them. In that event, the Father specifically declared that they should listen to Jesus alone. For He had come to earth to carry out the redemptive plan predetermined by the Father. After Jesus' resurrection and ascension, God raised up Paul to be the apostle to the Gentiles, to fulfill the ministry of building the Church. God also specifically brought Paul up to the third heaven, to reveal to him God's eternal will and purpose.

What the apostles experienced in this heavenly calling is likely the same as what this saint experienced: "To look from the top of Amana, from the top of Senir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards." This saint ascends with the Lord and sees what Jesus Christ experienced in His descent from heaven during His incarnation. Christ was the Word that existed in the beginning—He is the only truth. To reach the top of Amana is to hold firmly to Christ as our truth, and from that position and foundation of truth, to look down from above.

When Christ was fulfilling His ministry on earth, He bore all aspects of Satan's attacks—including religious, political, cultural, material, and livelihood-related persecutions and methods. The disciples followed closely beside Christ and were

under His protection. Before leaving the world, Christ especially prayed for His disciples, and He confidently said that of those whom the Father had given Him, He had lost none; Christ became the armor for His disciples, shielding and guarding them.

Today, Christ is likewise the full armor of the Church. To reach the top of Senir is to put on the full armor that Christ has given to the Church so that we may safely look down from above. According to the Father's plan, Christ was crucified by men. Through the cross, He destroyed the devil who had the power of death, and through the cross, He opened the way to the Holy of Holies. This is to reach the top of Hermon—through the cross, we may boast in triumph over the devil.

With these three provisions of Christ, we are able to observe the enemy's arrangements and strategies of attack. It turns out Satan only has two main tactics. The first is the lions' dens, where many lions are raised to roar and frighten people, causing them to lose their position and standing of salvation, and to be devoured by lions. The second is the mountains of leopards, where many leopards, skilled in hiding and quick in action, are kept. These leopards attack people when they are off guard or relaxed. Saints who live carelessly or who harbor bad habits are easily attacked by the leopards and end up defeated or fallen.

The Lord called this saint to ascend with Him in order that he might come to know what true spiritual warfare is. It is not an earthly battle, nor a struggle against flesh and blood, but a battle in the heavenlies—against the powers of darkness in the spiritual realm. For the church to be protected, there must be saints who stand in the heavenly position, warring against the enemy through prayer. In response to this heavenly calling, the saint did not need to reply with words. A single glance of agreement, and the act of placing a chain upon his neck, expressed his willingness to obey—even to be bound by the Lord—to go with Him. This immediate and fully aligned action moved the Lord's heart. The Lord not only called him "bride" but also "sister," for his life had matured and he was now fit to match the Lord.

Song of Songs is a love song composed jointly with the Lord. At this point, a Selah—a musical rest—ought to be inserted, a moment to pause. During this pause, the

Lord indeed took him to the summit of Amana, the top of Senir, the peak of Hermon, the lions' dens, and the mountains of leopards—just as Paul was taken up into the third heaven. The Lord's timing views a thousand years as one day, so this rest may have only been one brief measure. This was the most crucial experience in the third stage of spiritual growth. Like Paul's ascent to the third heaven, it was a hidden experience—unspeakable words were heard, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Thus, the text only tells us where he looked from, but not what he saw.

The time spent in this experience may have only been a few minutes, yet the vision he saw brought a revolutionary transformation. Just as Peter, while staying in Simon the tanner's house, saw the great sheet descending from heaven—a vision which took several days to digest; Or as John, on the island of Patmos, saw the heavenly vision—a glorious revelation that took him months to record in the Book of Revelation. Although the time was brief, the impact on this saint was life-changing.

Following this, the Lord begins to praise the saint. At first glance, these praises may seem not particularly new or special—many are repeated from earlier—but within them lies a depth of meaning. May we all be able to read and perceive the beauty and wonder hidden within them.

Verse 10: “How fair is your love, My sister, my spouse! How much better than wine is your love, and the scent of your perfumes than all spices!”

The Lord still calls him “My sister” or “My spouse,” expressing that this saint's life and nature are now fully aligned with the Lord's. He has committed himself wholly to the Lord for life—he has already entered into a betrothal with Him. The Lord says, “How fair is your love! The smell of your love is better than wine.” Does this sentence sound familiar? In Song of Songs 1:2, when this saint first rose up to love the Lord and experienced that mutual affection with Him, he said to the Lord, “Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth—for your love is better than wine”. Back then, these were words the saint spoke to the Lord—spoken with a sense of unworthiness, and yet with deep longing to be closer to Him. He said, Your love is

better than wine, meaning that the Lord's love surpassed all the pleasures and delights this world could offer.

But now, it is the Lord who speaks these words to the saint. This saint has grown in the measure of life, possesses a nature that is in harmony with the Lord's, and—most precious of all—he follows wherever the Lord calls him, without delay. He has ascended to the summit of Amana, the peak of Senir, the heights of Hermon; he has gone through the lions' dens and the mountains of leopards. So obedient is he, that now it is the Lord who enjoys his love. Even the Lord declares: Your love is better than wine.

Earthly wine symbolizes the pleasures and blessings of the world. But what does the Lord's wine symbolize? In Leviticus, we read of the five basic offerings that were to be presented to God. In addition to these, there was sometimes a drink offering—an additional offering, in which wine was poured out upon the altar. This drink offering served to intensify the original offering, causing it to burn more fully and with greater fragrance. Those qualified to offer the drink offering were priests and Nazirites—people set apart for service to God. In the drink offering, God would “taste” the wine they poured out. Now, the Lord says to this saint: Your love is better than wine. This is truly beautiful—it is a most elevated commendation from the Lord.

“Your ointment is better than all spices.” In Song of Songs 1:3, when this saint first began to love the Lord, he said to the Lord: “Because of the fragrance of your good ointments, your name is ointment poured forth”. The Lord was full of the fragrance of ointment, so much so that the saint could not help but draw near to Him. But now, the Lord says that this saint also bears ointment—and the fragrance of his ointment is better than all spices. Where did the saint's ointment come from? In 1 John 2:27, it is written: “But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie—and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.”

It turns out that the Holy Spirit dwelling within the saint is like the holy anointing oil in the Old Testament. The Holy Spirit applies the Lord's grace within us; the anointing becomes our teacher in all things. Over time, this saint's spirit becomes filled with ointment. This saint also goes through many circumstances, submitting to the Lord's hand of shaping. The cross has done its breaking work in him—his soul has been broken, his old self has been transformed, and he has put on the new man, displaying the beautiful character of Christ. The anointing in his spirit flows into his soul. Now, when he interacts with others, the fragrance of the ointment flows out from him.

The Lord praises this fragrance as surpassing all spices. How can any earthly perfume compare with the heavenly fragrance that flows from a holy character? We now see that the love and ointment that were originally found only in the Lord are now expressed in this saint. At first, he delighted in the Lord's love and the fragrance of His ointment; but now, it is the Lord who delights in his love and the fragrance of his ointment.

Verse 11: "Your lips, O my spouse, drip as the honeycomb; honey and milk are under your tongue; and the fragrance of your garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon."

"My spouse, your lips drip as the honeycomb; honey and milk are under your tongue." Not long ago, the Lord praised her lips as a scarlet thread, and her mouth as lovely. This indicated that her lips had been redeemed, that she had learned not to speak much, and that no corrupt word proceeded out of her mouth. What she spoke were all words that edified others. After being brought up to heaven and seeing the nature of spiritual warfare, she also came to understand how severely the tongue can harm others—just as James 3:6 says: "And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell." She learned to control her lips, paying particular attention to every word she spoke.

The Lord also saw her transformation—her lips were not only redeemed and refrained from speaking unclean things, but they had gone further: they now dripped honey, like a honeycomb. Honey brings sweetness, joy, and satisfaction; especially to those who are weak and weary, eating honey can strengthen them. Her words were few, but each one dripped like honey, like honey slowly dripping from a honeycomb.

Within the honeycomb is stored rich, full honey. When honey is drawn from it, it drips slowly—each drop is essence. This indicates she had hidden the word of God richly in her heart, to the point of fullness, just like a honeycomb filled with honey. When someone had a need, she could speak a fitting word—sweet like honey—that immediately brought comfort, joy, and a sense of fresh nourishment. Not only could she help others solve problems, she also made them feel sweetly satisfied. “Honey and milk are under your tongue.” The area under the tongue is where various riches are stored. She had already made rich preparations. She had honey, and she had milk. When encountering someone who was weak, she could supply honey; when encountering someone who was spiritually young, she could supply milk. She could meet the needs of various kinds of people and help them grow.

“The scent of your garments is like the scent of Lebanon.” “Garments” refer to a person’s life and conduct—they are the outward expression of what a person is. This saint has already become so one with the Lord, just as it says in Colossians 3:9-10: “Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him.” The garments of this new man are full of fragrance, the scent of Lebanon—the beauty and fragrance of Christ’s humanity.

Dear brothers and sisters, every saint ought to have two garments, just as described in Psalm 45:13-14: “The royal daughter is all glorious within the palace; Her clothing is woven with gold. She shall be brought to the King in robes of many colors; The virgins, her companions who follow her, shall be brought to You.” We are that royal daughter. The first garment is woven with gold thread. According to the original Hebrew, it literally means “made of gold.” This is the first garment we received when we were saved—that is, Christ becoming our righteousness.

Even though we ourselves, before and even after salvation, were not particularly changed—we were still as corrupted and filthy inside—because we believed in Christ, we could put on Christ as our righteousness, and we were justified by God. It's just like the prodigal son in Luke 15, who, when he returned home, the father immediately ordered the best robe to be put on him so that he could sit down and enjoy the feast. This garment is precious, but it is objective. It gives us a position—a standing—as children of the Father God. But our life is still immature, and our nature has not changed much. Therefore, this garment has no fragrance.

The royal daughter's second garment is a robe of many colors. In the original, this means a garment of needlework—that is, one sewn stitch by stitch. This is the garment the Holy Spirit weaves in us, embedding the grace of the Lord into our being so that we can put off the deeds of the old man and put on the new man. This garment testifies of our transformation. This garment can emit fragrance—the fragrance of Lebanon.

The Lord praises His bride: her lips drip with honey—her words give others nourishment and sweetness. Her garments are filled with the scent of Lebanon—her conduct is full of the expression of Christ's humanity: upright like the cedars of Lebanon and exuding heavenly fragrance. This saint has truly become the bride of the Lord—fit to match Him. How wonderful this is!

Let us pray together: Lord, how we long to be like this saint, to receive the heavenly calling—to stand in a heavenly position, and to see the plan You have determined in eternity, and to know how we ought to cooperate with Your eternal will in our daily lives. Such a saint becomes not only Your rest, but also Your enjoyment and satisfaction. His lips drip with honey, and his garments emit the scent of Lebanon.

Lord, although we have not yet reached this state today, our hearts genuinely long for it. We hope that one day, we too may become Your joy and satisfaction. Help us to more fully consecrate ourselves, that the Holy Spirit may work freely in us. Remove all things in us that do not please You. Help us to put on the new man and live the life of the new man. As we read Your word day by day, help our life to grow,

our character to be transformed, and may our daily living bear witness that we belong to You. In the holy name of our Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen!