

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

Song of Songs 7: 9-10

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the bible again. Today, we will continue reading Song of Songs chapter 7, verses 9 and 10.

The Lord praises this mature saint, whose stature is like a palm tree, able to match the Lord. The Lord describes this saint's ministry with three wishes: "May your breasts be like clusters of the vine, and the fragrance of your breath like apples, and your mouth like the best wine." These three wishes also indicate that true ministry pleasing to God must emphasize these three aspects. When he serves younger saints, he can richly and balanced supply faith and love, not only on the level of truth but also in experience, for he himself has received the Lord's abundant supply and is laden with fruit, hanging down in clusters. When he serves saints who are growing in life and participating in ministry, his focus is not on teaching truth or expanding the work, but on his breath exuding the fragrance of apples—that is, being filled with the essence of Christ, emitting the fragrance of knowing Christ from his breath.

Ministry is no longer mere work but, as Paul describes in 2 Corinthians 2:14-16, "Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life." When he serves mature saints, his mouth is like the best wine, for he himself has been filled with Christ, the heavenly wine.

When these mature saints offer sacrifices to God, he can present himself as a drink offering, poured out upon their sacrifices. As Paul said to the Philippian saints in Philippians 2:17, "Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all" (NKJV). This mature saint truly matches the Lord, fully understanding the ministry the Lord

desires. Thus, when the Lord says, “Your mouth like the best wine,” before the Lord finishes, he immediately continues the Lord’s words.

Verse 9: “And the roof of your mouth like the best wine. The Shulamite says: The wine goes down smoothly for my beloved, moving gently the lips of sleepers.”

In this verse, we see the relationship between this saint and the Lord, like a couple deeply in love for many years. As the husband speaks, the wife knows what he will say, so before he finishes, she interjects—not only to complete his words but to add her expression of love. That is, this saint knows the Lord’s original words were: “Your mouth is like the best wine, gliding over the lips of those who are asleep.” The saint hastens to speak, adding, “That goes down smoothly for my beloved.” The imagery of verse 9 is profoundly elevated, beyond the experience of most, and we can only glimpse it through the experiences of the apostles.

The highest realm of serving the Lord is that this servant is ready to be martyred at any time. He has been filled with the Lord and, out of love for Him, is willing to be poured out as a drink offering upon the faith of other saints. As Paul wrote to Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:6-8, “For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.” Paul testified to his young coworker Timothy, pouring himself out—this is the pinnacle of serving the Lord.

In our understanding, we may think it is Paul testifying to Timothy, but this mature saint tells us that this heavenly wine is for the Lord, “that goes down smoothly for my beloved.” Though the Lord praises this saint for his work, this saint never serves for the sake of work; he is entirely for the Lord. If in his ministry he has been made into a jar of fine wine, this wine is to be poured out for the Lord, to be His enjoyment and satisfaction. His sole desire is that the Lord may drink it smoothly, like the rich, mellow juice of precious wine flowing from the mouth to the throat, through the

esophagus, and into the stomach—a smooth sensation from the mouth to the throat to the whole being. He truly desires that the Lord may drink smoothly, for this wine was prepared for the Lord.

The Hebrew word for “smoothly” is meshar, the same word used in Song of Songs 1:4, “We will be glad and rejoice in you.” where it is translated as “rightly” in the sense of “rightly do they love you.” If we translate it as “rightly” here, it brings another layer of meaning. To others, this saint is remarkably mature, having sacrificed much, let go of much, and done much, earning admiration. Yet he himself cares nothing for this; he cares only for the Lord Himself. When he is made into a jar of fine wine by the Lord, he desires only to be poured out for the Lord. In his ministry, there is no work, no sense of achievement from work, no applause or praise from work. From beginning to end, he seeks only to please the Lord, and thus all he does is “rightly” done.

Dear brothers and sisters, may our ministry be so pure, done entirely for the Lord and unto the Lord. When we serve young saints, it is for the Lord; when we lead worship, it is worship to the Lord; when we prepare food, it is for the Lord; when we teach children, it is for the Lord. All ministry is for the Lord, with the Lord as the first priority—an exceedingly high realm.

“Gliding over the lips of those who are asleep” was originally the Lord’s expression, desiring that this saint’s mouth, like the best wine, would flow into the mouths of those who are asleep. Who are these “asleep”? Note that “asleep” here is plural. This does not refer to saints dozing in meetings but to a group of mature saints. Brother Watchman Nee explains that these are those who rest in the Lord, referencing the Lord’s Supper, where Jesus said He would not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom, when He would drink it anew with His disciples. Thus, Watchman Nee suggests this foreshadows the feast in the kingdom age.

Another interpretation comes from Psalm 127:1-2: “Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; for so He gives His beloved sleep.” These are the Lord’s beloved, whom

He grants restful sleep. They know God and serve Him, not by natural talents or abilities but by relying wholly on God. If God does not build the house, their labor is vain; if God does not guard the city, their watchful is vain. All self-effort is vain. These mature saints understand that everything comes from God, so they can rest in their service, for God takes all responsibility. They do the work God assigns, and the outcome is God's, allowing them to sleep peacefully.

Dear brothers and sisters, how blessed are those who can sleep peacefully at night, casting all cares and burdens at the Lord's feet, bearing no weight themselves. Everything comes from the Lord and returns to the Lord, so they can rest. These "asleep" share the same understanding of service as this mature saint, a deep calls unto deep. The Lord desired that this saint's wine-like mouth would flow into the mouths of these asleep, for they rely wholly on God. God desires this saint to pour himself out as a drink offering upon their service, a high expectation. Yet this saint's response exceeds the Lord's expectation, declaring that this heavenly wine is for the Lord, to be enjoyed by Him, to go down smoothly for Him, and through Him to flow into the mouths of those asleep.

The Hebrew word for "smoothly" is dabab, appearing only once in Scripture, with no other verses to clarify its meaning. Most translations, based on context, render it as "flowing gently." Darby's translation, "stealeth over," vividly captures the saint's intent: his wine is wholly for the Lord, his service done unto the Lord, and through the Lord, it quietly, imperceptibly flows to others.

Dear brothers and sisters, may we serve the church with such purity, serving the Lord alone, heedless of others' conditions, praise, or opinions. When our service is so pure, no difficulties will arise in the church.

Verse 10: "I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me."

"I am my beloved's" is a beautiful declaration. In Song of Songs 2:16, when he could not keep up with the Lord's call, he said, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." Needing to possess the beloved before belonging to Him—a stage of early growth.

By Song of Songs 6:3, “I am my beloved’s, and my beloved is mine.” in a later stage, he fully surrenders himself to the Lord first, and then the Lord belongs to him. But in 7:10, he declares only, “I am my beloved’s.” Whether the beloved is his no longer matters. In ministry, he must wholly belong to the Lord, with no work stemming from himself, only for the Lord.

His approach to service is so pure that he has confidence: when he wholly belongs to the Lord, the Lord will desire him. The Hebrew word for “desire” first appears in Genesis 3:16, after the fall, where God says to the woman, “Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.” “Desire” is a strong term, signaling love and trust, the wife’s destiny to rely on her husband in love. Thus, husbands must cherish and love their wives, honoring their trust. This saint is confident that the Lord desires him.

The Lord’s love for us is certain, beyond doubt. But are you confident that God desires you, that He would entrust Himself to you? If, like this saint, we pass through stages of life growth and serve with complete alignment with the Lord, with no personal motives, we can share this saint’s confidence: the Lord will desire us.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You! Through the Song of Songs, You help us understand that when one is fully aligned with You, their relationship with You is so intimate, their life so mature, their ministry so pure. All they do is wholly for You and unto You. Lord, elevate our understanding, increase our experience, and purify us in our service, that we may serve purely for You from beginning to end. May we, like this saint, have mature life, seasoned service, and pure devotion to You. Through daily Bible reading, devotion, and church service, may all be from You, for You, and unto You. We pray in the holy name of Jesus Christ.