

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

Song of Songs 8: 8-10

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 are going to read Song of Songs Chapter 8, verses 8 to 10.

The central theme of Song of Songs chapter 8 is of a saint who is mature in life, rich in experience, and skillful in spiritual operation, patiently waiting for the Lord's return—the day of being raptured. Verses 1–10 of chapter 8 describe the sighing of this saint while still in the flesh. He understands that before the Lord returns, his body has not yet been redeemed, and his flesh is still present, so he cannot be fully and truly united with the Lord. He longs for the Lord to be like his brother, so He can witness how he received instruction in the house of grace, drink the fragrant wine made from the juice of pomegranates, and enjoy intimate fellowship and embrace in love. At this moment, the Lord gives a command to all the saints in the church: do not disturb, do not awaken this mature-in-life saint. Perhaps this is the Lord's final such command—that he may rest in the Lord's love until the Lord's return.

Verses 5 to 14 of chapter 8 can be seen as describing this saint's life in the church while waiting for the Lord's return—before he is raptured. Every saint who patiently waits for the Lord's return is not alone, but lives within the church life. He is not passively waiting, but becomes an example to others in loving the Lord. In serving and helping younger saints, he co-labors with other saints; in the work of ministering to the Lord, he is able to give an account to the Lord, and also share rewards with his fellow workers. The section concludes with a brief conversation between the Lord and him. Chapter 8, verse 5, describes how the mature saints in the church see him coming up from the wilderness—the wilderness of material things, the wilderness of the soul, and the wilderness of religion—leaning upon the Lord, coming up with Him, and they all exclaim in admiration: “Who is this coming up from the wilderness, leaning upon his beloved?”

The Lord first bears witness for him, that he has gone through the Lord's workmanship, and has been nurtured in many ways in grace, thus growing to such a stature. He then directly responds to the Lord's testimony, expressing how deeply he loves the Lord—a love that cannot be quenched by many waters, nor drowned. This mature and experienced saint does not testify of his ministry, nor of his office, but of how deeply he loves the Lord. His love for the Lord becomes a pattern for all the saints.

Dear brothers and sisters, most churches today are too work-oriented. They often boast about how many people were baptized, how large their building is, how beautiful their worship is—yet they do not realize that the church that satisfies the Lord the most is one where the saints all bear testimony of how they love the Lord. For in the end, the church is to become the Bride of Christ, and the most important thing between the church and Christ is the love relationship. Today, when we read verses 8 to 10, they speak about how to serve the younger saints in the church.

Verse 8: “We have a little sister, and she has no breasts. What shall we do for our sister in the day when she is spoken for?”

At the beginning, the "we" mentioned here should refer to the saints serving together in the church, and this includes the mature saint as well. Perhaps he is one of the leading ones, and in the process of waiting for the Lord's return, he actively participates in various services within the church. The church is a living Body, and the most important ministry within the church is how to nurture the younger saints.

“We have a little sister, and she has no breasts.” To the Lord, the church is His Bride, therefore the church is feminine in nature. The younger saints in the church are all "little sisters," whether they are brothers or sisters. That “she has no breasts” means she has not yet matured in matters of faith and love. This little sister might be our children at home, the children and youth in the church, or newly saved saints who have just received mercy. Their faith has begun to sprout—they have accepted Christ as their Savior for life—but in terms of growing in faith, they are just starting out. Being justified by God, reconciled with God, dealing with the flesh, becoming

sanctified, being renewed and transformed, and ultimately being glorified in the body—these foundational truths and the experiential reality of them are still unfamiliar to them. Their faith needs nurturing.

Likewise, they have had some initial experiences in love. They have experienced the redeeming love of Christ, who gave His life, but they still lack experience in the Lord's supply in love, His support in love, His comfort in love, His strengthening in love, and so on. They also lack the practical experience of loving one another among the brothers and sisters. They still need to be nurtured in love. Dear brothers and sisters, if you have been in the church life for some years, you should ask yourself: Are there any "little sisters" around you? The nurturing of life is the most important ministry in the church and is a work in which every saint must participate.

The growth of a young saint requires nurturing in many areas: the teaching of truth, the care and cherishing of their humanity, the cultivation of character, the development of disposition, and experience in handling practical matters. A healthy church ecosystem is one in which every saint participates in service and is able to contribute their portion to help the younger saints in the church. When the saints love one another and build one another up, the church can grow along the path of life and ultimately become mature.

"What shall we do for our sister in the day when she is spoken for?" Do not only focus on the fact that the younger saints in the church have undeveloped breasts or that they cannot yet discern their left hand from their right. If they are not properly nurtured, the day when someone comes to "speak for" them—a day of proposal—will come all too soon. All kinds of people, matters, and things will come to seek their heart—some good, some bad, some positive, and some negative. Without sufficient preparation, we truly will not know how to handle it.

Generally speaking, there are two completely different types of proposals. The first is Satan's proposal. Satan is the ruler of this world, and his bride price is exactly what is described in 1 John 2:16: "For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world." Satan uses the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life to lure the

younger saints in the household. If the little sister in the house has not been properly nurtured, she will easily fall into the lust of the flesh and be unable to extricate herself. Or she may fall into the lust of the eyes—pursuing things that appear noble on the surface but are actually contrary to the truth of the Lord—thus falling into a snare. Or she may pursue the pride of life: reputation, status, power, and so on. These are all things the world seeks, but they have no eternal value.

The second type is when the Lord comes to propose. If the young saints receive healthy nurturing in the church, they begin to walk the path of life's growth. He responds to the Lord's call of love—this is the first stage of growth. He begins to respond to the Lord's call in resurrection—this is the second stage of life growth. When he reaches the third stage, the Holy Spirit personally testifies that he is the one for whom the crown was made on the day of Solomon's betrothal—the crown that his mother placed on his head. At this point, his engagement to the Lord is confirmed.

“What shall we do for our sister in the day when she is spoken for.” The word translated as “do” in the Chinese Union Version is from the Hebrew word ‘asah, which simply means to act or to do. This word appears four times in the Song of Songs, and each translation varies. The first three occurrences determine how we should act in the fourth. The first occurrence is in Song of Songs 1:11: “We will make you ornaments of gold with studs of silver.” The words “make” and “stud” come from the same Hebrew root ‘asah. This describes how the young saints, recognizing their lack of spiritual beauty, add certain outward, man-made adornments. We must help these young saints by making for them “braids of gold and studs of silver”—that is, helping them understand Christ's redemption and incorporate aspects of the divine nature into their humanity.

The second occurrence is in Song of Songs 3:9: “Of the wood of Lebanon Solomon the King made himself a palanquin.” The word “made” is again ‘asah. The wood of Lebanon refers to the noble humanity of Christ, meaning we must help the younger saints live out a life filled with the virtues of Christ.

The third occurrence is in Song of Songs 3:10: “He made its pillars of silver, its support of gold...” The word “made” here is again ‘asah. This means helping the young saints to uplift Christ’s redemption as their testimony, and to take God’s nature as their foundation. These three instances of “making” represent the preparation and nurturing of the young saints. Then, when the day comes that the Lord comes to propose, we will be able to properly handle (or “do”) the matter of their engagement.

Verse 9: “If she is a wall, we will build upon her. A battlement of silver; and if she is a door, we will enclose her, with boards of cedar.”

This verse mentions, “If she is a wall... if she is a door.” What do wall and door mean? Which building has only a wall and a door? Surprisingly, there is one—it’s described in Revelation 21, where the Bride, adorned and prepared, the New Jerusalem, descends out of heaven. This city has no temple in it, for “the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple”. From the detailed description in this passage, we see that this city is square in shape and only has walls and twelve gates. The final destiny of all the saints from both the Old and New Testaments is to become the walls and gates of the New Jerusalem.

“If she is a wall, we will build upon her a battlement of silver.” The wall is for distinguishing between what is inside the city and what is outside. Inside the city is the testimony of God; outside is the world. When a saved saint begins to be separated from the world, he begins to grow into a wall. This is actually a basic function of spiritual life. The life of God is incompatible with the world. When the life of God is manifested, it naturally separates a person from the world.

If the little sister in the household begins to take the form of a wall, then we must build a silver tower upon it. The word “we” refers to the serving saints in the church. If they serve the church according to God’s will, and if the younger saints are becoming walls, then the saints must quickly build a silver tower on that wall.

Silver represents redemption, and the size of the tower is determined by the height and width of the wall. A smaller wall may require just a turret at the corner, while a larger one may support a full watchtower. The purpose is to defend against enemy attacks and protect the city wall.

When a young saint begins to be separated from the world, the one who becomes most unwilling to let go is the enemy, Satan. He will use every tactic to attack. Therefore, the saints in the church must build a silver tower for his protection—based on the effectiveness of Christ’s redemption, we must construct such a tower to withstand Satan’s attacks.

“If she is a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar.” The door is the entrance that controls access into the city. The first step in the growth of a young saint is becoming a wall, meaning separation from the world. The second step is learning to be fully open to the Lord. When a saint learns how to open himself, the positive side is that he can now receive the riches of the Lord in every aspect. But the negative side is that the enemy—who disguises himself as an angel of light—will also seek opportunities to slip into the city. Therefore, he must be specially guarded and protected.

“We will enclose her with boards of cedar.” Cedar wood represents Christ’s firm, upright, and noble humanity. The saints who serve in the church must grow in a beautiful, Christ-like humanity, so that they can surround and protect this young sister who has grown into a door. With gentle and pure humanity, they help ward off all unclean and harmful influences—those “monsters and demons” (figuratively speaking) that should not enter the city. This serves as a special reminder to all the serving saints in the church: beautiful and godly humanity is extremely important. Especially when serving young believers, we must not rely solely on rigid laws and regulations, saying “You must not do this” or “You are not allowed to go there.” Rather, we must protect and guide the saints in a sweet and tender humanity—just as Christ would.

Verse 10: “I am a wall, and my breasts like towers; then I became in his eyes as one who found peace.”

At this point, the mature and seasoned saint declares, “I am a wall.” He has already grown to a full and complete stature. He has become a broad and towering wall, fully separated from the world and bearing a strong testimony. “And my breasts like towers” – his breasts are like towers on the wall. He has not only become a great wall, but towers have been built on it.

The word for “tower” here in Hebrew is migdal (מִגְדָּל), which appears four times in the Song of Songs, and is consistently translated in English as tower, turret, or pavilion. The first appearance is in Song of Songs 4:4, where the Lord praises her neck as “like the tower of David, built for an armory,” which symbolizes the ability to withstand the enemy’s attacks. The second time is in Song 5:13, describing the Lord’s cheeks as “a bed of spices, banks of scented herbs,” portraying intimacy with the Lord and the lessons of death and resurrection. The third time is in Song 7:4, where “your nose is like the tower of Lebanon”—symbolizing a spiritual sense of discernment, able to distinguish what does or does not belong to the Lord.

Now, in this passage, his wall has grown, and towers are built on it, showing he supplies the younger saints with faith and love. When he nurtures the younger saints, he supplies them not just with teaching, but with his own spiritual experience. “Then I became in his eyes as one who found peace.” As he serves the young saints, he remains in the Lord’s presence, under His gaze. He knows the Lord is watching, and he’s fully aware that the Lord approves of his service. “In his eyes”—the Lord is spoken of in the third person, because this saint is deeply aware of the Lord's presence in his work. He watches the Lord, and knows the Lord is watching him.

He is certain that he is like one who has found peace in the Lord’s eyes. The Hebrew word for peace here is shalom, the root of the name Solomon, the king of peace. So the peace described here is not merely an inward peace of conscience, but peace as seen in the Lord’s eyes. And since peace is the very name of the Lord, this service is not only peaceful, but is filled with the presence of the Lord Himself. Under the

Lord's gaze, under His supply, and under His guidance, those who are served by this saint also obtain peace.

Here we see a beautiful picture of church life: The young saints are receiving the proper supply and care. According to their level of life: If she is a wall, a silver tower is built on her; If she is a door, boards of cedar are set around her. May this also be the reality in the church where we serve today.

Let us pray together: Lord, we see a vision of a mature and seasoned saint, faithfully serving in the church. He ministers according to the spiritual stature of the younger saints, with the goal that they may grow properly and reach spiritual maturity. Lord, bless my church—may every young saint, whether children, teenagers, or newly saved believers, receive balanced supply. May they become a testimony of Christ. In Jesus Christ's holy name, we pray. Amen!