

THE DISCOVERY OF FULL ACCEPTANCE 4:1 - 5:1

AN OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER FOUR: The Beloved describes His bride in detail reassuring her that His love has not diminished one degree because of her sin. Jesus declares that her love for Him overwhelms His heart. The Spirit leads her to the Mt. of Crucifixion in order to deal with areas of her life that are holding her back. After that, to her amazement, He begins to describe her as a garden possessing different kinds of fruits and spices. She prays that He will come into the garden of her life and enjoy the fruits and spices for Himself. Her Beloved Bridegroom first takes for Himself what He desires from this garden and then shares it with others.

Now let's return to the scene where the bride awakes from slumber and is keenly aware of her Beloved's presence. Her heart beats faster as she opens her eyes and meets His loving gaze. Speechless, she felt His **"first love"** love fill her soul. So many thoughts flooded her heart. No earthly language could express what was bursting within her spirit.

Then a pang of grief pierces through her. Doubt looms its ugly head. *"Does He still love me as He did, before I refused to go? Will I remain His special love in spite of what I did?"* At the precise moment these questions flashed through her mind He reached for her hand and held it O so gently.

Immediately there was a witness in her spirit that nothing had changed! He just looked at her doves eyes. There was joy in His gaze. She was experiencing again the wonders of a Spirit-filled heart in full fellowship with her Beloved! O what a delight to His holy soul! For this is why He died and rose again!

PRAY WITH ME: *"Lord, as You speak to my wounded heart, cause it to receive every word of intimate healing of Your love. Praise Your Holy Name for Your grace and infinite compassion! In Jesus' name, amen!"*

So often we punish ourselves with self-doubt, believing the lies that we are hopeless because we have totally failed. We say to ourselves, *"I can never be used again!"* But, praise God, He reassures us that His heart never, never changes in its intensity of **"first love"** love for us! Receive now dear bride, dear reader, the heart of your Bridegroom as He speaks to you, oh so quietly, oh so reassuringly but oh so powerfully! Listen to His heart as He proclaims His love to you...

V.1 "Behold, thou art fair (beautiful), my love, behold, thou art fair (beautiful), thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks (veil): thy hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead."

Even though this bride had refused to go with Him, her eyes were still **"doves' eyes"**. All she wanted was Him alone. When she read His Word her eyes were focused on His voice. The only problem was getting her feet to move when He beckoned her to come. She had become satisfied with having Him all to herself (1:1-2:17). The Bride did not realize He wanted to take her to higher levels of intimacy and it would come through fellowship with other Spirit-filled lilies who had experienced Him in the same way.

He looked deep into her eyes for the longest time. Breaking the silence of love He spoke with full joy, *"Your eyes are what thrill Me the most. Dear bride of My heart, the window of your soul, those wonderful doves eyes are saying to Me, I belong to You alone. You alone satisfy the longing of my heart.' Your eyes are still doves eyes. Even when I was away and hurt so deeply because you would not go with Me, I could never get the wonderful glimmer of your eyes out of My mind. Thank you for surrendering your all to Me."*

Doubts had crept into her mind, but here He is reassuring her heart. Nothing had changed concerning His fervent love for her. As she looks into His eyes, her heart melts. Holding on so tightly to His nail-scarred hand, she expresses with joy, *"My Beloved, You have '...delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.' (Psa. 116:8). Thank You, thank You, I feel so clean and reassured now."* And so with you dear loved one of the Lord, look into His eyes with **"doves' eyes"** and listen to His reassuring words. Let your heart melt before Him in overwhelming adoration because you know by the Spirit He hasn't changed toward you! Praise God!

Husbands, observe carefully how your heavenly Bridegroom handles His bride. There is no scolding, no negative statements concerning the past. No accusing tone! He made sure she knew that His heart had not changed. Also, we who are in spiritual leadership need to learn a lesson here in how we are to deal with our Lord's bride in the church setting.

What we have here is an amazing revelation of what our Beloved sees in us who have fully surrendered everything to Him for His pleasure and His use. When we fail Him, as a surrendered believer, the spiritual pain is excruciating. We see ourselves as an undesirable, spiritual failure to the One we love. This is why the Song of Solomon is so important. We are able to see ourselves through His eyes. Drink in, my brother and sister, the words of Your Beloved to you, **"Behold, thou art fair (beautiful), my love, behold, thou art fair (beautiful), thou hast doves' eyes...."** This is what He sees in you as existing already even after your "failure"!

Jesus told Peter that he would deny Him before the rooster crowed three times in the morning (**John 13:36-38**). Yet in the very next breath Jesus says to him, **"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me."** (**John 14:1; 14:27; 16:16**). How could Jesus say that to him? The sin of forsaking Him would be horrible. Jesus knew his heart's deep committed love for Him. It wasn't perfect but look at Peter's heart in **John 13:5-9**. Peter's surrendered love declares, *"No way will my Rabbi wash my feet, I love Him too much!"* Unacceptable to Jesus, Peter's surrendered love pleads, *"Lord, wash me all over!"* Jesus knew that when he would deny Him, Peter's deep love would immediately repent and cause him to weep bitterly (**Matt. 26:75**). A truly surrendered believer responds to sin in the same way! An unsundered believer is dull to his sin. He might go weeks, months or even years before any type of confession comes from his mouth.

He dealt gently with them. Why? He knew that they truly were surrendered to Him and very much in love with Him. Read **John 16:27**! The word for **"love"** in that passage is *"phileo"* (deep emotional love), the very same word used concerning the Father's love for Jesus in **John 5:20**! Instead of being angry at them, Jesus reminds them of the *"phileo"* love the Father has for them because of their *"phileo"* love for Jesus!. Peter was told by the Lord that he would follow Him later. Praise God for their surrendered hearts. Their sin was not as grievous to Jesus and the Father as it would be to them. He lovingly deals with Peter (**John 21:15-17**) and Thomas who willfully sinned (**John 20:26-28**). Yet, Thomas was given the greatest revelation of the deity of Christ ever in being restored. They would sin out of weakness (caught off guard) not out of wickedness (deliberate)!

Your Beloved speaks quietly in your spiritual ear and says twice, **"Behold, thou art (beautiful)"**! Why twice? Because you find it so difficult to believe it the first time. He sees you as His bride, His one and only love. You see yourself as a failure. He sees this as a growing, perfecting time to better serve Him. Say with me, *"By my faith Lord, help me to see as You see me. Thank You for letting me know You are patiently changing me through my failure. Dear Jesus, fill me with Your Spirit of wisdom."*

"...within thy locks (veil)..."

Her locks or veil conceal a portion of her face. Some things Your Beloved shares with you are only meant for you and Him alone! The world will see a changed life but it is unable to appreciate, in any way, the spiritual secrets from the Word shared with you by your Bridegroom. Many times unsundered believers will get jealous over what you share with them. Be wise with whom you share spiritually precious things. We must learn from Mary the mother of Jesus, who could have shared amazing things about her Son who was so different in His birth and His ability to speak with the leading thinkers of Israel at twelve, plus His sinless life as a child. Other mothers wouldn't understand. It says in **Luke 2:51** that she kept or hid these things in her heart.

"...thy hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead."

When you are in love, every little detail about the object of your love comes into sharp focus. Also your Beloved cares deeply about every detail in your life. In this chapter and in chapters six and seven, the Lord Jesus reveals the joy every aspect of her spiritual beauty brings to Him. It gives Him great joy to see how you love Him in so many little ways in your spiritual walk. What a blessed shock to the bride it will be when her Beloved reveals all that pleases Him about her in just a few moments.

He loves her hair and will make loving mention about it again in **6:5** and **7:5**. Do you have *"spiritual"* hair that is attractive to Him? Goats from Gilead were known for their beautiful, long hair. It was their glory! What then is this *"spiritual"* hair that so captivates her Beloved? Let the Holy Spirit unlock the secret. Turn to **Numbers 6:1-5**. Hebrew women would make a special vow before the Lord for a season. They gave up legitimate things in their daily lives in order to focus wholly on the Lord. It was a vow of dedication and separation. It was called a *"Nazarite vow"* and in the Hebrew *"Nazarite"* means to be *"consecrated"*, *"devoted"*, and *"dedicated"*. They were not to even cut their hair.

Oh dear Christian, can you see that long hair is symbolical of surrendering to the Lord, longing to please Him alone? **I Cor. 11:15** tells us that a woman's hair is a glory to her. It is precious to her! Do what Mary of Bethany did with her glory (hair) in **John 12:1-6**. So too with the lady in **Luke 7:44** who wiped Jesus' feet with her tears of love using her surrendered glory (hair)! Let us take our glory, our will (**Psa. 42:1-2, 63:1, 73:25, 84:2, 119:20**), kneel in surrendered love, and spiritually anoint His nail-scarred feet with that costly perfume of our will. Break it over His feet. O how this gives Him great joy!

PRAY WITH ME: *"Dear Lord Jesus, You are my only reason for living. You are the joy of my heart! You alone bring meaning in my daily walk! May my 'spiritual' hair, the submitting of my will, grow more and more beautiful to You each day!"*

V.2 "Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came from the washing, whereof every one bear twins, and none is barren among them."

Beautiful teeth make for a beautiful smile and a pleasant expression. Teeth are used for eating food. A full set of teeth help the body digest food for nourishment. They unlock the excellent taste of some foods through chewing. She has a full set of teeth which are beautiful to her Beloved. Her Beloved knows that she loves to eat the word of God (**Jer. 15:16**) and is able to take it in fully. O how this pleases His heart. She loves His word. She spiritually feasts upon it. Why? Because the Beloved shares secrets in her spirit for her alone through His Word! His dear bride has food to eat that others know not of (**John 4:32**). How it gladdens Him to see the full set of spiritual teeth. He does not have to hold back and only give her baby food. She is able to receive the deeper truths of His heart (**Heb. 5:12-14**).

What does the Lord find in your mouth dear Christian? Does He find figurative teeth being used to hurt others (**Psa. 35:16; 57:4**)? Does great disappointment sweep over His countenance when He discovers that you still have baby teeth and cannot take in deeper revelations from His heart? O may He find, to His soul's great delight, a full set of teeth pure and clean before Him.

"...like a flock of sheep...which came up from the washing..."

Sheep are helpless, totally dependent. They tend to wander away without realizing it. When they wander away for any length of time the sheep usually get dirty and matted. In this case her teeth are compared to shorn sheep. These sheep spiritually represent Christians who are pure in heart and motive. Shorn sheep are totally clean from outside impurities. In other words, her mouth is a joy to Him for He finds no uncleanness, gossip, anger, cursing or discouragement coming from her out of it. What keeps us spiritually clean today? The application of His Holy Word (**John 15:3; Eph. 5:26,27; Psa. 119:11**). If we submit and abide in His Word then the Holy Spirit will do the cleansing in us. Tell the Lord you are willing to let His Word do its work in you.

"...everyone bear twins, and none is barren among them."

Praise God she has a full set of teeth. In other words she is able to take solid spiritual food from the Word and not just the milk (**I Pet. 2:2**). Thank the Lord for the spiritual milk but spiritual milk alone cannot give the needed strength for life's problems ahead. We must begin to eat more solid spiritual food to develop into a strong disciple for Christ. Read carefully **Heb. 5:13-14 and 6:1,2; Eph. 4:15**. She is able to "chew" on the Word and savor it. Chewing helps us unlock the flavor of the food we are eating. So with a full set of spiritual teeth she is able to savor those subtle meanings underneath the surface of the word. She is able to taste things from His Word that others miss. A fully surrendered heart to the Lord gives you a full set of spiritual teeth. A baby or a young child does not have a full set of adult teeth. So many remain spiritual children and cannot be given deep devotional thoughts by the Holy Spirit from His infinite Word! They can only handle milk at this point!

Dear blood bought Christian, is your mouth attractive to your Beloved? Place into your Beloved's care the words of your mouth. Say with the Psalmist (**Psa. 19:14**), **"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer."** Let Him have control of the responsibility of your mouth and the meditation (what you spiritually chew on) of your heart! I can hear her now, all she can talk about is the Lover of her soul, **"I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth."** (**Psa. 34:1**). The angels who minister to her, love it; other lilies who fellowship with her, love it; but most of all He is greatly blessed by it!

Always keep in mind that above everything else He possesses, you are the Lord's portion (**Deut. 32:9**). If you desire this, claim **Psa. 81:10**! O the shame! O the sadness to be spiritually barren! Pray **Psa. 119:18**, "**Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law** (Word)."

PRAY WITH ME: "I yearn with all of my heart to please You Lord, so control the words of my mouth by the power of the Holy Spirit. I want to speak the Word in faith and love (**Gal. 5:6**) and see You do mighty things in me and for me. Holy Spirit wash me clean by the living Word of God (**John 15:3**). May no criticism or sarcasm be found there. I claim and stand upon **Psa. 19:14**. Make it real in my life. May my mouth always be in agreement with Your Word! Dear Jesus, praise Your Holy name!"

V.3 "Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely (lovely): thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks (veil)."

Listen to His heart dear Christian as He speaks of Your lips: "O my lovely bride, your lips are a scarlet thread! My blood has changed the way you talk! You now love to speak of Calvary and My blood. Before, it was filled with empty, worldly chatter. Praise for Me is continually flowing from your lips to My heart (**Heb. 13:15; Psa. 34:1**)! Remember the new song that I placed within your heart, I love the way you sing it to Me (**Psa. 40:3**). The sweetness of My words permeate your conversation in all that you say!" This is not necessarily a real tune but your life living in harmony with His heart which produces a perpetual song of love.

The scarlet brings out His beauty in you! Stop for a moment and meditate on the word "scarlet" (in the Heb. "shani"). It refers to a small insect through which the dye for the color scarlet was obtained. It was extracted by crushing the eggs of this worm-like creature. Please read **Exodus 26:31** where it speaks of the beautiful veil in the tabernacle in which scarlet was one of the colors to be embroidered in it.

Now read **Hebrews 10:19-20**. Those passages will unlock the secret of what the veil represented - the flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ! In **Exodus 26:31** an untranslated Hebrew word appears along side of the word "shani" and it is the word "tolaath". The word "tolaath" refers also to the color scarlet or red. "Shani" is the product (red dye) which is obtained from the "tolaath" (worm). Keep in mind that sinful mankind is referred to as a worm (same word for scarlet) in **Job 25:6** and Jacob (Israel) also in **Isaiah 41:1**!

Dear dove of His heart, meditate on the depths to which your Bridegroom would go to have you as His bride. **Isaiah 1:18** states, "**Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet (shani), they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson (tola - worm), they shall be as wool.**" Do you understand now what Jesus had to become in order to take away your sin? In **II Cor. 5:21** it states that God caused His own Son to become sin itself for us! Your Beloved had become a worm (us, sin)! When Jesus was on the cross and He said, "**...My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?**" (**Matt. 27:46**). Jesus was quoting **Psalms 22:1**. This was a prophetic Psalm concerning the crucifixion of Jesus (read **Psa. 22:16**).

Read **Psa. 22:1-5** and see what was going on in Jesus' heart while on the cross. The Father answered the requests of former Jewish leaders but would not hear the cries of His own Son. O how this was like a knife wound in the soul of the Father's Beloved Son. Verse 6 reveals why the Father was painfully silent, when Jesus cried out in His heart, "**But I am a worm ("tolaath"), and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.**"! He was saying, "I have become a helpless, passive, naked and defenseless worm! I am not even a man whereby You may answer My cry to You, Father."

Remember, In order to obtain the scarlet, crimson dye, the "tolaath" had to be crushed! In **Isa. 53:5** and **10** it tells us that the Messiah would be "**bruised**" (Hebrew "**crushed**" and so translated by other versions)! Praise God, as the Father crushed His Son, the worm, the cleansing, saving blood came forth for His bride. It would be used in giving her a spotless wedding garment (**Isa. 61:10; Rev. 19:7-9**)! Is your heart not touched by this revelation of the depth to which your dear Lord went for You, becoming a dead, putrefied, crushed soul?

With the application of the scarlet, her mouth is being made ready to speak things that will please her Beloved as never before. It will take place in her after she goes to the mountain of myrrh and the hill of frankincense. Her lips will pour forth words that will please Him immensely (**v.11**)!

O WORSHIP HIM WITH ME NOW; BOW YOUR HEART: "My Lord, my God, my Redeemer, my Bridegroom I prostrate myself before You. I worship You! I adore You! I praise You! I exalt You! I ascribe unto You glory, honor, power, riches, wisdom and blessing! You alone are worthy! O my Bridegroom You were crushed as a worm for me. Your blood flowed directly to my dead, sinful heart and wiped away all that offended Your infinitely pure heart! Praise Your name! Praise Your name! Praise Your name! O dear Holy Spirit, ever keep the scarlet upon my lips. O how I love the eternal blood of Jesus, my Lord, my Bridegroom. Dear Lord Jesus may Your eyes never cease to be pleased, for the scarlet will always remain there for You to know just how sacred and precious I consider it. Abba Father, praise Your holy name for You gave to me Your very heart, Your Son (**John 1:18**), and crushed His heart out of eternal love for my soul! Glory to God! Hallelujah!"

"Alas, and did my Savior bleed? and did my Sovereign die? Would He devote that sacred head for such a worm as I?"
(original version - Isaac Watts)

To that question the answer comes thundering from the throne of God, "**YES!, YES!, YES!!!!**"

"...thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks (veil)."

Pomegranates are red and produce a red fruit juice. Red represents the blood of the Bridegroom. But now it appears on her temples instead of her lips, why? Let the word of God unlock the secret. Read **Exo. 28:33,34; 39:24-26**. Pomegranates were embroidered upon the hem of the Levitical priest's robe. The priest represents sacrifice and worship to God so also the Pomegranates. Pomegranates were carved on the Temple (**I Kings 7:18:20**). The actual Temple in Jerusalem, built by Solomon, was the place designated by God where true sacrifice and worship was to take place. As a blood bought believer, her temples (the place of her thinking process) represent the area where she will choose to sacrifice to God and worship Him. What she spoke of with her lips was constantly on her mind. And what was on her lips – praise and worship concerning her Beloved within the "holy place" behind the veil of her mind! The Holy Spirit declares in **I Pet. 2:5,9**, "**You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.**" **V.9 "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."**

Listen for a moment to her thoughts as she privately communes with her Beloved, "O my eternal Husband take me! All of me! I sacrifice myself (**Rom. 12:1**) in surrender to You day by day and minute by minute! I wouldn't have it any other way my Husband. I am not my own but bought with a price, Your precious, precious blood! O that precious blood, it has justified me (**Rom. 5:9**), redeemed me (**Eph. 1:7**), forgiven me (**Eph. 1:7**), drawn me near to Your heart (**Eph. 2:13**), given me peace (**Col. 1:20**), cleansed me (**I John 1:7**), given me a family (**I Cor. 10:16; Eph. 3:14,15**), overcome the enemy (**Rev. 12:11**), allowed me into the most sacred place in the universe - the holy place (**Heb. 10:19-20**). I will glorify the One whom my soul loveth with my body (**I Cor. 6:19-20; I Pet. 1:18-19**)!" O how beautiful were her temples to Him; O what joy this gave to His heart!

Here the Lord speaks of her temples being like a piece of pomegranate. The pomegranate has been opened. It is seen as a slice. So many know about the doctrine of worship and the blood but never really open up and get deep inside of true worship. The Beloved loves to see the "open" pomegranate. Does He see that in you, dear Christian?

The fruit of the pomegranate is in the seeds. If the seeds are red then they may be eaten and the sweetness savored. If the seed is not red it will taste bitter! Thoughts are seeds! "**For as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he....**" (**Prov. 23:7**). "Dear Lord, I want my mind to be pleasing to You. I want Your mind to control mine since Your word says that I actually possess the mind of Christ (**I Cor. 2:16**). May it become active in me (**Phil. 2:5**)." The price He paid for you to become His bride is spiritually incalculable. "**For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.**" (**I Cor. 6:20**).

O how important it is to apply the work of Calvary to everything that would enter your mind. Isn't this where true sacrifice and worship begins? Let every TV, video and radio program; every magazine, periodical and book be filtered through the blood and the Word of your Bridegroom. What seeds you allow to be sown in your mind will soon produce a harvest for good or bad. If you sow the good seeds of His Word in your mind and you abide (continually obey) in that Word it will result in producing a pleasant crop of adoration and service for Your Bridegroom to enjoy (**II Cor. 9:8-12; Mark 4:13-20**).

Blood bought parents, are you willing to be an example of the Bride of Christ to your family? Teach them by your actions how to filter everything through the blood. Let only "red" seeds be eaten in your family! Save your children from the bitter seeds planted in their minds through secular television. I have seen two and three year old children use curse words (very filthy language) in a fit of stubbornness not knowing what they meant but knowing these "seeds" are used in anger! Don't let new age cartoons permeate their thinking. You as parents, and they as your children, will reap a bitter harvest!

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

The neck in scripture represents the human will (see comment 1:10). How beautiful is the one whose will is submerged into Jesus' will. Her Beloved, the Lord Jesus, was the perfect example of sacrificing His will. He never made a decision nor did He ever speak a word that was His own. Read carefully **John 5:19,30; 7:16; 8:28,42; 12:49; 14:10!** Who can ever forget the words that dropped from His lips in full surrender to the will of the Father in the Garden of Gethsemane, **"...nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done"**? Are we not called upon by the Holy Spirit to be, **"...imitators of God as dear children"** (Eph. 5:1)?

To Jesus, her neck (her will) was beautiful. Is mine? Is yours dear Christian? The Lord speaks of her neck being **"like the tower of David"**. David in the Hebrew means **"beloved"**. Because she has allowed the Holy Spirit to have total control of her life the bride has a neck like her King whose name is **"Beloved"**! When Jesus becomes King of your life, then you will come to know and experience all that His name **"Beloved"** means. King David did not have an army with awesome numbers. No, David's military strength was in his **"tower"**! David speaking about the Lord in **Psalms 61:3** says, **"For Thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy."** God is our tower! Go to the tower and take one of His shields to stop the enemy in his tracks. Whether against Goliath or any other enemy the battle is and always will be the Lord's by faith (**II Chron. 20:15!**)

It is very significant that the Beloved sees shields around her neck. Shields protect us! She is ready and prepared to fight, not in her will but in His will! The Bride has many enemies (**"principalities and powers"** Eph. 6:12) because she is her Beloved's precious possession. She has no strength in herself. But she does have the Lord's shields. The most important shield in scripture is **"the shield of faith"** (Eph. 6:16). **I John 5:4** states, **"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."** There is only one good fight and that is **"the good fight of faith"** (I Tim. 6:12). It is good because godly, Holy Spirit filled faith in His word is always victorious! Even when it looks as if you are defeated true faith waits and waits and waits knowing God will keep His promises. Yes, the victory is ours because of Him! Glory to God! As Satan beat on the Savior at the cross to break His will, unbeknownst to him, a shining shield was being forged that no devil could ever penetrate. The name on that shield of faith was "Jesus is Lord"! The Lord is our Shield of Faith. No devil's fiery missiles can ever penetrate it. When the attacks come we pick up the shield, but in reality the Holy Spirit is holding it in the powerful arm of God's strength (**Jer. 32:17**).

"...a thousand bucklers (shields)..."

A **"thousand"** represents blessing the Lord with multiple sacrifices (see **I Chron. 29:20,21**). When lilies come together they give to the Lord sacrifices of thanksgiving, praise, joy and even their bodies. This insures that the shields of the Beloved are around the necks of the Lord's lilies. They are ready to stand against the enemy. Take note what praise does to the enemy, (Compare **Matt. 21:15-16** with **Psa. 8:2; II Chron. 20:14-23**) Listen to the lines of two old hymns:

*"O for a thousand tongues to sing my great redeemer's praise, The glories of my god and King, the triumphs of His grace."
"Thou suffered the cross and the torment, that I might forever go free, A thousand, a thousand thanksgivings, I bring, blessed Savior, to Thee!" (Charles Wesley)*

She is seen as having many shields not just one. How can this be? When we come together with other surrendered believers to do spiritual warfare against the enemy, their shields of faith become ours. We are seen as one body fighting the enemy. She is viewed as if she were many mighty soldiers of her Beloved. O how important it is to be in one accord in prayer and praise with other lilies, loving Him and interceding for others (**Acts 1:14; 2:42,46; Phil. 2:2**). We must endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (**Eph. 4:3**). We who are many are still one body, the body of Christ (**I Cor.10:17**).

Her Beloved sees her full of faith! She doesn't, but He sees deep into her spirit. What a joy! What a comfort! What assurance of heart to know that He sees us in this manner! Surrender is the ultimate act of faith. She had done this in the beginning of the Song. She did not realize just how strong she was in Him because of her momentary failure! Dear Christian, take in these descriptions for yourself so that the enemy may not get a foothold in your life through discouragement and self doubt. The enemy will do anything to bring division between believers. The result - NO POWER! All of our shields drop off our neck and we are spiritually exposed and extremely vulnerable! "O God help me! **'...to lay aside every weight and sin which so easily besets (traps) us....'** (Heb. 12:1)". To some the Holy Spirit warns, "Your church is seriously weak because you are so self-willed including the pastors and members of the flock. When are you going to quit fighting each other and take ground from our true enemy?" Pray with all of your heart, "Lord deliver us from such a spirit. Help us to humble ourselves and allow You to work out the differences! May these moments be an occasion for the fruit of Your blessed Holy Spirit to appear in our walk!"

Listen in as Jesus encourages her, "My beautiful lily, promise Me that you will unite your heart together with other of My lilies to pray and praise. Right now it is difficult to understand, but our relationship will grow even deeper. You think that the fellowship we had alone could not be surpassed, wait 'till you experience Me with other lilies who have the same kind of heart as you! My power will flow through you against the enemy as you never thought possible! You will receive new revelations of My heart because You are with them! Oh how I love you! Trust Me My dove! Trust Me!"

PRAY WITH ME: "O my wonderful Husband, how often I have disappointed Your heart by exposing my neck to the enemy without Your protection. I have been so willful but, praise Your name, You have freely forgiven me and placed a thousand of Your shields on my neck and fastened the latch. I love You with all my heart, dear Lord! Holy Spirit cause me to use the shield of faith always in my daily walk, only and forever for Your glory and honor my blessed King and wonderful Husband."

V.5 "Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins (of a gazelle), which feed among the lilies."

The breasts represent faith and love. The key to this is found in **I Thess. 5:8** which tells us to put on the **"breastplate of faith and love"**. It is very interesting that for the first time her breasts are described as twins. Her relationship with Him has been based solely on love for Him (chapters 1 through 3). When it came time for her to exercise faith and leave with her Beloved she did not. The balance was not there. Her faith needed to be developed and that was the purpose of the dream. Now she has both! Her breasts are full of love and faith!

Gazelles are known for their quickness (**II Sam. 2:18**). The word **"gazelle"** in the Arabic means **"affectionate"**. Also, the word for gazelle is the exact same Hebrew word translated **"beauty"**. In **Isa. 24:16** it is used in reference to giving **"glory"** to God. It is very instructive that the lady in **Acts 9:36**, who was raised from the dead by Peter was named Tabitha (Dorcas). Tabitha is the Hebrew word and Dorcas is the Greek word for **"gazelle"**! This woman abounded with deeds of kindness, mercy and charity. A spiritual gazelle is one who sees a need and quickly and quietly rushes to meet that need. How blessed she must have been (**Acts 20:35**)! What a beautiful Christian she was. Read her story found in **Acts 9:36-44**.

Our bride here has breasts that are twins, in other words they are balanced. **I Cor. 13:2** warns us of the great danger of having faith and yet lacking love. At the end of **I Cor. 13** the Holy Spirit also emphasizes the importance of faith. She has a spirit filled love flowing through her in power because of her faith! She is full of faith and full of love. The Holy Spirit instructs us in **Gal. 5:6** that, **"...faith...worketh by love."** Little babies feed on the nourishment of their mother's breasts. They are held close to the mother's heart as they feed and feel the security of that young mother's embrace. How does this happen spiritually? The bride is now ready to feed others with Holy Spirit filled faith and love. The Holy Spirit will lead younger ones into her life and they will simply snuggle up to the Word of God that is in her. Then the Holy Spirit releases the nourishment of His faith and love from the Word into their spirit. She is filled with that which only pleases God, faith (**Heb. 11:6**) and she is filled with God's character, love (**I John 4:8**). How could Jesus, her Beloved Bridegroom, not be pleased?

PRAY WITH ME: "Dear Father, may there be a spirit filled balance in my walk. May faith-filled streams of living water of love flow through me, first to Your throne and then to those around me. Use me to do the works that my Bridegroom did and even greater works for Your glory (**John 14:12**)! I love You and You alone. Thank You for the faith and love which You have given to me (**Rom. 12:3; 5:6**)! In Jesus' wonderful and blessed name amen!"

"...which feed among the lilies."

Surrendered believers long to be with other surrendered believers. Glory breaks out! The presence of God almighty is felt and those who experience this are filled beyond human words! The bride had experienced this kind of glory when she fellowshiped with her friends the virgins. The Holy Spirit spoke to her heart, *"Don't you remember how your heart was filled when you were listening to your friends speak about Him?"* In her heart she answered *"Yes, and I could never get enough! How could I have missed it?"* The Holy Spirit responded, *"This is what it means to feed among the lilies. Your Beloved wants you to have more and it comes through gathering with those of a virgin heart and who feed upon His bread! Remember, He said that His spiritual body is true food and His spiritual blood is true drink (John 6:53-58)."*

Gathering with those who love Him is absolutely essential. Together, we feast upon testimonies of His heart and power in our lives. Together we drink from His cup of praise and worship. Together we feed upon His sweet Word (Jer. 15:16). This is true communion, true fellowship (*"koinonia"*) (I Cor. 10:16,17). This is when we begin to ***"comprehend with all saints what is the length and breadth and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fulness of God!"*** (Eph. 3:18-19).

Listen in again to fullness of His heart being poured out to her. *"O how you deeply touch My heart. In all of your submissiveness, your love for Me flows. The spiritual beauty that is in you brings so much glory to Me. My beautiful bride, your heart is all Mine. What joy it is for Me to bring My angels and bid them to gaze at you (Eph. 3:10). You are so filled up with My beauty, My goodness and mercy. My glory shines so much brighter when it is combined with other lilies as you, My love. You long to care for others who belong to Me. I love you so much for it! You are the joy that was set before Me at the cross (Heb. 12:2). There is still work to be done in you. I must increase and you must decrease. Soon, My lovely bride, you will climb the **"mountain of myrrh"** and begin to walk in a holiness you never thought possible. Trust in My love My beautiful dove!"*

There is nothing more beautiful, no image more endearing, no sight so captivating as Jesus seen in the walk and ways of a spiritual lily! Eternal love flows and flows back and forth from their hearts to each other and to those around them! She is now prepared to go through one of the most difficult spiritual experiences in her Christian walk, crucifixion of the self-life. Listen to her response...

V.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."

You know, myrrh (1:13) represents the work of the Beloved on the cross for her and in 3:6 she had been reminded, through the dream, that He provides the myrrh and frankincense for her! Hallelujah! He is the great provider, Jehovah-Jireh! He, the spiritual myrrh, was crushed in crucifixion and His blood came forth! It is the power of the blood that dispels the shadows (Rev. 12:11)! We must be willing to go to the mountain of crucifixion with Him. It will be painful, but oh the resulting power and presence of God in your life! We cry out for the blessings of the abundant life and the Holy Spirit directs us to go up to the mountain of crucifixion. We struggle, resist, whine and hesitate! Find out if there is anything you are not aware of by praying **Psa. 139:23,24**. Ask God to search you. If nothing comes to mind then you are okay. If there is something, then listen to the following:

In her heart the Holy Spirit quietly speaks, *"You are unaware of the bondages present in your life. Your heart yearns to please your Beloved. I have filled you with faith and love, now it's time to deal with the real problem - self which rises up and snares your spiritual feet in subtle, sinful traps. Look in the distance and you will see a mountain and a hill. One is the Mountain of Myrrh and the other the hill of Frankincense. To truly please your Heavenly Husband you must climb that mountain!"*

Conviction swept through her soul. Sinful attitudes and actions long buried and forgotten came to mind: a bitter, unforgiving spirit concerning an abuse in her childhood and a lie that had gone unconfessed to mention a few. She felt so dirty. She cried out in her soul, *"He will never love me knowing these things about me! What can I do to get rid of them?"* The Holy Spirit said to her heart, *"Look to the mountain! The answer is there!"* She said, *"I am willing to go. Tell me, what is on that mountain?"* The Holy Spirit replied, *"Only when you arrive there will it be revealed to you."* In strong words of faith she spoke, *"Yes, I must go if this is the only way to deal with my sinful self-will."* A peace filled her heart. It was a gift from the Holy Spirit. In her mind the precious Holy Spirit caused her to hear the voice of her Beloved, ***"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you: not as the world gives, give I to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."*** (John 14:27).

Here was a crucial test of faith. The Lord's bride is going to a place where she had never been before! Why would she go? She knows just how important **"myrrh"** and **"frankincense"** are because of the dream-vision just experienced.

Already, she could feel godly sorrow working repentance in her heart. She had received eternal forgiveness from Him when she received Her Beloved as Savior and Lord. But lingering deep inside her soul was an uncrucified will. Although she had peace to proceed up this difficult mountain, painful things of her past - the unforgiveness, hurtful things said about others, hidden bitterness and pride all rose up in her to be dealt with. She knew in her heart that unless her will was dealt with there would be no real intimacy, no real walk in ministry with her Beloved. The Holy Spirit spoke gently into her soul, *"Have you forgotten the awful separation you endured not long ago?"* A dreadful emptiness swept through her soul. Just the thought of separation from Him again gave her new strength to climb. The Holy Spirit continued, *"Victory is at the top of this mountain. When you reach the peak you will begin to walk in beautiful, loving holiness. A new and deeper relationship with the One whom you love with all of your heart will result."* With that word, the bride took another giant step upward!

"Until..."

Praise God for the word **"until"**! To her it was a word of faith anticipating victory. The *"how"* of victory will be revealed to her on the **"mountain of myrrh"**. The Holy Spirit now reassures her heart as she climbs step by step, *"Because of your words of intensive expectation (faith), victory is coming into your life."* David knew about this, when all seemed hopeless in that cave. The devil hammered him with this thought, *"You will be dead by morning by the hands of Saul!"* but David spoke faith words in **Psalm 57:1**. ***"Be merciful unto me, God...for my soul trusteth in thee...until these calamities be overpast."***

In those first steps up this imposing mountain severe attacks of discouragement race through her mind. There is no beauty on this mountain. It is foreboding and threatening. The higher she climbs the darker it becomes. Fearful sounds of thunder come crashing into her ears. The prince of darkness sends a chilling wind of no hope through her soul. No weapon is spared by the enemy to hinder her from making this ascent. Satan knows that if the Lord's bride makes it to the top she will have daily victory and the shadows of the little foxes will begin to disappear having no effect on her! She cringes and begins to turn away. The Holy Spirit reminds her, *"You must climb this mountain. What you will learn at the top will change and empower you to have healing and victory over bondages and the controlling self-life! You will feel your Beloved's love as never before!"*

Fear once again grips her soul. But all of a sudden her Beloved appears to her and whispers, *"Bride of My heart, you know how much I love you, your willingness to go to the mountain of myrrh pleases Me beyond all that you can imagine. The Holy Spirit will be with you through the whole process. He will give you My strength. (Deut. 31:6; Heb. 13:5)."* With this blessed assurance she continues and all the time saying to herself, *"I am pleasing the Love of my heart!"* As she continues upward onto this mountain of darkness and evil she hears the Holy Spirit say to her heart, *"Keep your spiritual eyes on your Beloved. Think about Him. Meditate on His words given especially for you. Worship Him. The darkness and evil will not have power over you as you climb." (I Cor. 15:57; Rev. 12:11).*

The dreadful darkness and diabolical coldness of self-will surrounded her. Winds of unspeakable shame and guilt struck at her trying to force her off the mountain. But each time, she did exactly as the Holy Spirit directed her. He reminded her of **Psalm 119:130**. All of a sudden in the darkness there was a lamp for her feet and a light for her path. She thought, *"It is amazing how one look at my Beloved takes the fear out of the evil surrounding me."*

She reached the top and what seemed to be an eternity was but a moment in time. The Holy Spirit asked her to walk into the darkness with all the fearful peals of thunder around her. With hesitant steps she enters. What she saw there was repulsive to her soul. She shrank back in horror. It was her Beloved on the cross. Tears running down her cheeks she heard Him speak in tones of excruciating pain from the cross. *"Come closer, consider the cost of making you My bride."* Gazing at Her Beloved's torn and mangled body caused her to turn back in horror. At that very moment her Beloved cried out in anguish, *"My God, My God why have You forsaken Me?"* The Holy Spirit pulled the curtain away and what she saw was much more terrifying than what had happened to His precious body. The most unimaginably hideous looking dark images of sin formed: murders, adulteries, blasphemous words of slander, violence, hatred and so much more. Then came the demonic attack: laughing, mocking, spewing out filthy slime against His mind. They kicked, they howled, they screamed, they tempted, they tortured Him with unspeakable acts. What was once holy was being crushed and conformed to the most grotesque evil image possible. The Holy Spirit brought to her mind, *"My Beloved not only took my sins (John 1:29) but He actually became my sin (II Cor. 5:21). My Beloved not only took my curse but became it (Gal. 3:10,13)."* All the curses of **Deut. 28** poured over His soul (tumors, boils, madness, blindness, pestilence, fever etc. **vs. 15, 21, 22, 27, 28, 35, 59**; read **Matt. 8:17**).

She was made to look at her Beloved's spirit. What had been filled with the Holy Spirit and the glorious fellowship of the Father, now had been forsaken and left entirely empty. The chamber of His spirit became filled with anguish and loneliness. As she wept the Holy Spirit said to her spirit, *"Do you now understand why a terrible darkness fell from the sixth*

hour to the ninth hour while your Beloved was on the cross (**Matt. 27:45**)? You are seeing Him in all His physical, emotional and spiritual hideousness. You are seeing what it meant for Abba Father to 'crush' His own Son (**Isa. 53:5,10**)."

She cried out, "O my Beloved I never realized the depths to which You went. I did this to You!" On His face she could see how deeply He was "**despising the shame**" (**Heb. 12:2**). No words could describe it. Fierce flames erupted from His innermost being as He cried out in pain. She saw her face in the midst of all those flames of evil which enveloped His soul (**Rev. 20:14,15**). The Holy Spirit spoke once again to her heart and said, "*These are the flames of the second death you deserved to suffer. Your Beloved is taking the penalty you deserved! He loves you that deeply!*"

It was too much for her to bear as she fell to her knees sobbing and filled with a love for Him she had never felt before. Streams of living water began to flow from her heart to the cross. When she looked up again, she saw in His eyes an unspeakable joy. That Spirit-filled water flowing from her heart to the foot of the cross was the "**joy that was set before Him**" so that He could "**endure**" her hell.

The Holy Spirit spoke gently to her spirit, "*What you are about to see will be the key to overcoming the power your sin nature has within you. Those habits, attitudes and actions do not have to overpower you* (**Rom. 6:14**). Never forget what is about to be revealed to you. This is going to make the dream given to you not long ago a reality in your daily walk with the Beloved."

She looked once again at the soul of her Beloved. She saw her sin rising up within Him to take control: the lust after things; the criticizing words of gossip which had fallen from her lips; the arrogant pride; the strife caused by angry thoughts and words; unholy things she had watched, read and heard; the spirit of irritation and aggravation; the selfish coveting after things! Each evil separately rose up to take over and chain Him in its evil grasp. Each sin was enthroned upon a black throne. Emblazoned upon each throne were these words, "**I WILL NOT HAVE THIS MAN REIGN OVER ME! I will reign over my own life!**" Then, in the midst of the sin sitting upon the throne, her face appeared exuding self-seeking, arrogance! Out of her mouth came, "*I will raise my throne above the most High! I am my own god! My will and my desires alone!*" This sight was too much for the bride and she fell on her face crying out, "*I did this to my Beloved. Send me to hell! I deserve eternal punishment.*" At that very moment she heard the Beloved cry out, "*Father, forgive her for she knows not what she has done!*" A drop of His blood appeared over her heart and an inexpressible peace swept over her. The gentle Holy Spirit whispered, "*Your Beloved's blood was placed upon your heart when you received Him as Lord and Savior.*" Her spirit fell back into the arms of the Holy Spirit and proclaimed, "*Not my will! Not my will!*" She then looked back to the soul of her Beloved in all of His pain and watched her sins, iniquities and transgressions try to overtake Him.

Just as they were about to prevail a drop of His blood fell on each sin giving Him full victory over everyone of those evils. The Holy Spirit spoke, "*Did you see what just happened to all those evil urges which live in your sin nature? Your Husband won a victory over each one of them! All during your lifetime these sins will separately attempt to take over the throne of your heart and rule you. They must be dealt with individually. Listen to what I wrote you, '**Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed** (rendered powerless) **that henceforth we should not serve sin.**' (**Rom. 6:6**). Notice the word '**might**'. It is still possible for you to be controlled by sin while you walk on earth.*"

The Holy Spirit continued to explain, "*Jesus not only paid for the penalty of your sin (an eternity of punishment in the '**lake of fire**' - **Rev. 20:14,15**) but also won a victory over the power of sin to control you while living on Earth. What you need is to know how to daily use His victory to overcome these sins which will attempt to rule you. Don't ever forget how your Beloved defeated each sinful thing. Let your heart hear these words which I wrote just for you and you will know how to have victory, "**...reckon (consider) yourselves to be dead** (to be separated from) **indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**" (**Rom. 6:11**). For example, gossip rises up to rule your heart. By faith say to that sinful temptation or attitude, '*You have no right to control me, Jesus' blood has already defeated you. I consider myself separated (dead) from your power to control me. My Beloved won a victory over you and I am alive in His victory. I don't**

have to battle you. Your problem is not with me but with Jesus who is my Lord. He is the ruler of my heart right now!" The Holy Spirit said, "*Now you know how to stop sin. Remember, apply this each time when sin attempts to take over! Do it thirty times a day and you will have thirty victory celebrations.*"

The Bride, filled with joy amidst this awful scene at the cross said, "Yes, yes, I understand now. It's not my battle. My Husband's blood defeated the power of each unrighteous thing in me. All I have to do is apply it each time." The Holy Spirit excitedly said, "Then, what I wrote to you will actually be a living reality, '**For sin shall not have dominion** (power)

over you: for you are not under law, but under grace.' (Rom. 6:14). *It is all accomplished by your faith in the Word (Rom. 6:6-14). Then, sin's power will retreat in defeat! You are to live and walk by faith."*

Dear Christian, you and I must bring our old habits of independence to His cross and see them as having been crucified (**Rom. 6:6-14**)! We must take all of the attacks of the enemy to the cross and cease trying to fight them in our own strength (**II Cor. 4:7-18**)! We must be willing to go to the place of our birth (Calvary) and allow the cross to blot out what weakens our relationship with Him! He must increase and we must decrease (**John 3:30**) and it is realized only by daily going to the cross. The result will be **Gal. 2:20**! This is a sign of being a true bride of the Beloved, "**And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with all its affections and lusts.**" (**Gal. 5:24**)! This is true spiritual warfare! Make it a habit! The crucifixion of the flesh is simply surrendering that sin to Jesus' victory and your soul to His Lordship. His victory becomes your victory by faith as you proclaim each time His victory which has already defeated the power of these sins to control you, "*Not my will but thine be done. Jesus' victory is my victory!*" Please read **Rom. 1:17**, **I John 5:4** and **Rev. 12:9-11**, it will be very clear.

Dear reader, do you see why you first must go to the mountain of myrrh then you will experience the hill of frankincense! No wonder He instructed us to never forget His death through the communion! The mountain of crucifixion is the most difficult mountain we will ever have to climb. Our independent sinful nature fights it with all of its strength! This is the place where He will increase and we will decrease. It is the place of true surrender! Every right that we hold dear is placed at the foot of the cross! O how we struggle to keep what we think we possess, yet in reality, it all had always belonged to Him in the first place (**James 1:17; John 3:27**). Everything: our gifts, talents, abilities, hurts, desires, job, family, positions and habits must be placed at the foot of the cross and recognize His power over them! This is that for which Paul pressed toward the mark, the high calling which is in Christ (**Phil. 3:13-14**), to become more like Christ and have His image seen by the world (**Rom. 8:29**).

"...the hill of frankincense."

After surrendering daily each sinful temptation to the Lordship of our King, then we go from the mountain to the hill! Coming down is so easy. No real energy is needed. When you reach the hill you will feel a refreshing peace, purity and holiness sweep over your soul, your walk and your ways (see **3:6**)! Why so effortless? Because the Holy Spirit is in control and it is by His power and might we are walking! The hill of holiness brings peace that passes understanding and joy unspeakable (**Phil. 4:7; I Pet. 1:8**)!

The bride looks down from the mountain and sees this beautiful hill. She already feels a refreshing breeze and lovely fragrance flowing from there. She takes a step toward the hill, her heart begins to pound as she feels the presence of her Beloved near. All of a sudden He appears. She rushes to His arms and He says, "*Come with Me, we will go together. This is what I have been waiting for.*" Holding tightly to His strong arm they were immediately transported to the hill. He pauses and places a hand on each side of her face, then peers deep into her eyes and exclaims love filled tones...

V.7 "Thou are all fair (beautiful, lovely), my love; there is no spot in thee."

O what Jesus sees in us that we do not see in ourselves! She is absolutely beautiful to Him. Before (**1:15** and **4:1**) He had said that she was fair, beautiful, lovely, but now He uses the word "**all**"! The struggle of our "**will**" up the mountain of crucifixion was very difficult, but one look from His eyes and these words from His lips made it worth it all! He has just described eight aspects of her physical features. Eight is the number of new beginnings (eight people in the Ark in **Gen.8**; the eighth day is Sunday - resurrection). This is where we truly become the Lord's portion to His heart (**Deut. 32:9**)! O how lovely the walk of holiness is to your Beloved!

PRAY WITH ME: *"O dear Abba Father, may I always see things through Calvary's eyes, through eyes of holiness. Is there anything in me not pleasing to You my dear Bridegroom? Dear Holy Spirit reveal it to me (Psa. 139:23,24), then I will take it to the mighty mountain of myrrh so that I may walk on the holy hill of frankincense in Your peace and power! Your words and Your thoughts are too high for me, too wonderful for me (Isa. 55:6). What You see in me must be so because You are truth. I heard You say them to my heart by the Holy Spirit! I do not see what You see in me, but in faith I receive these amazing words of love for me from Your heart. If only I had understood earlier that You were not looking for perfection in me while I walked this earth, but simply a total surrender of my will to You. You are patiently transforming me into Your image through the dear Holy Spirit and that makes me beautiful to You! My soul is flooded with worship for You. In Your most worthy name Beloved of my heart, my Lord and my God, amen!"*

V.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."

Here is a new invitation to **"come away"** with Him. Having had her **"will"** crucified there was only one answer, **"Gladly will I go with You, my loving Husband!"**

As she and her Beloved walk together hand in hand the Holy Spirit reveals to her what the enemy is really doing and how he does it. **"Leopards like to hide among the flowers. Their spots become a camouflage. Thus, the very thing that makes the leopard beautiful, becomes a deathtrap to the unwary on which he preys. At Calvary your Beloved defeated every lion and leopard lurking to devour you! Never forget what I wrote in Eph. 1:22,23, "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." (I Cor. 15:27; Heb. 2:8)."** With a discerning spirit of holiness, we are shown what the enemy is really doing and we act on that revelation. It might be just a feeling about a situation that something is not right or a doubt comes to your mind. It is the Holy Spirit warning you. You simply act on it and your walk is kept safe.

When we make the spiritual decision to be separated from the shadows, our Beloved steps in and says, **"Come with Me"**. The Holy Spirit declares in **II Cor. 6:17** to, **"...come out from among them, and be ye separate...."** The interesting thing in the Greek is that the first part of this verse is your responsibility and the second part is God's responsibility. **"Come out"** is in active voice meaning that you must take the first action with your will. **"Be separate"** is a verb also and it is in the passive voice meaning that it is to be done to you. If you have the desire to come out and take the first step, then the power of the Holy Spirit will be experienced in that specific area of your walk. The Beloved receives all the glory.

Lebanon was a beautiful country bordering Israel but it also was a compromising nation. Dear reader, allow Jesus to take you away from compromise. Do you compromise your eyes with what you watch? Do you compromise your ears with what you are willing to listen to? Do you compromise your commitment by loving something more than the Lord? Have you now decided to apply the cross to all of these shadows and want His holiness to fragrance your walk? He says, **"I am right here to do it for you, come away with Me from all the shadows. If you are willing to come out then I will work it out (Isa.26:12)! I will take you by the hand through the blessed Holy Spirit and lead you away from all that endangers you (lions and leopards)!"** Praise His holy name! Satan's weapons (**Isa. 54:17**) will be formed against you (fear, depression, hurt, etc.) but they will not prosper. Shadows will come back but as you continually turn your eyes upon Jesus (**Heb.12:2-3**) the shadows of earth will grow dim and disappear in His light!

Jesus will not only lead you out but He will also lead you up to **Mt. Amana**. **Amana** comes from a Hebrew root word that means **"confirm", "believe", "establish", "support", "faithful", "trust"**. What a spiritual mountain that is! A place where what is right and what is wrong is confirmed. You are given spiritual discernment! His faithfulness becomes your strength and establishes your faithfulness to Him. Through His blessed support you will learn to trust wholly. **Mt. Amana** is none other than His word revealed by the Holy Spirit!

Jesus will not only lead you out but He will lead you up to **Mt. Shenir** and to **Mt. Hermon**. The meaning of **Shenir** is not clear. However, in **Deut. 3:1-9** it is mentioned as a border of the territory taken by the Israelites from their enemies. Dear bride it is extremely important to realize that your enemies have been defeated. Before you can progress in Spirit filled intimacy with your Bridegroom you must know that Jesus has already defeated your enemies. O how quickly the enemy gets our focus off the victory of **2:8**. Have you forgotten the testimony of that verse? Go up to Shenir and see how your enemies have been defeated.

Did not the Lord say in **Deut. 3:2**, **"...Fear him not...."**? Go up to Shenir and look down at your defeated foes in the valley. Stop and meditate on **John 16:11**. Jesus stated that the **"...prince of this world is judged."** He did not say **"will be"**! It was a foregone conclusion before He ever went to Calvary that the enemy was defeated. Look at **John 16:33**. Just before the cross Jesus declared the victory as having been accomplished, not **"will be"**! **"...be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."** Think about these verses as you sit with your Bridegroom on **Mt. Shenir**: **Rom. 8:31; I Cor. 15:57; II Cor. 2:14**.

Now you are ready for a trip to **Mt. Hermon** (meaning: **"devoted"** and **"destroy"** or **"destruction"**). Praise the Father that He would allow us to be taken to **Mt. Hermon** by His beloved Son where true Holy Spirit, **"first love"** love devotion is developed and maintained. It is a place where self, through devotion to Him, will be progressively destroyed and the joy of the Spirit filled life is established in you on a daily basis until your Beloved takes you to your permanent home in glory. It is

a place where we become devoted to one another. We truly care about His body - our brothers and sisters who hurt. We will be of one mind and heart with each other focused on the Lord.

The early church knew about **Mt. Hermon** for they were devoted and steadfast, **"And they continued steadfastly (devoted) in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and in prayers (Acts 2:42)."** Because of this steadfast devotion and beautiful unity, did the early church see the enemy being destroyed? Yes! Am I devoted to what Jesus was devoted - love for the Father and love for the family of God? Then Satan's foothold in the church will be broken and God's power will be demonstrated in dramatic transformed lives!

PRAY WITH ME: "O my Lord and O my God cause me to hear what has just been proclaimed. You love me with a love that cannot be described. You have a plan already set for my life and You only ask me to come with You. You have led me and are still leading me into all truth (**John 16:13**) by the dear Holy Spirit and I am filled. What joy! What peace! What contentment! What purity! What righteousness! What strength! What a vision! You are all of these to my soul! Glory to Your Holy name! Thank You, thank You, thank You, thank You with all of my heart!"

V.9 "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou has ravished my heart, with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck."

Can these words really be in the Word of God? Is it possible that the God of my heart would utter such emotional words from His soul about me? This is beyond comprehension. All because of the bride's willingness to go with Him to the Mountains! He has not changed and still loves for us to spiritually walk with Him, hand in hand along the pathway planned for each of us individually before the world ever existed (**Psa.139:16**). And this excites Him! Why, because our willingness to go demonstrates our deep trust in Him and full love for Him.

This very same heart of His which was broken and pierced for His bride's sin is now totally taken with her ("**ravished**") in overwhelming love in what she has become! It is as if she totally steals His attention so that He can think of nothing else. And no wonder, she is the Lord's new creation! What does Jesus see in her? His own beauty of holiness that is beginning to rise from His surrendered blood bought bride.

PRAY WITH ME: "O dear Lord, I can say that Your awesome person has ravished my heart, but it cannot be that Your perfectly pure heart is ravished with me! How can You say to me that You are overcome with my beauty; overcome with joy and delight over me; overcome because I am totally pleasing and attractive to You? This revelation is too much for my spirit to bear. I prostrate myself in holy wonder before You. As You look upon all that heaven is - its glorious splendor, how is it possible for me to ravish Your heart!? If I so move Your heart with just a glance of loving obedience in one of my eyes, then I pray, please, please increase my capacity to love and obey You more. O dear Jesus, I long to ravish Your heart every minute of the day until I see You face to face and be overcome with that first look from Your eyes!"

Dear blood bought bride, you are standing on holy ground right now. Sit in holy silence and wonderment. Let these thoughts directed to you from Your Beloved penetrate the deepest portion of your heart! Don't rush through this precious moment. Read and reread this verse and say, "He is saying this about me!" Let it sink in just how much your love moves Jesus, your Bridegroom!

Jesus proclaims that His heart is "**ravished**" by us twice so that you can believe and accept it without question. For the first time He calls her "**my sister**". This is the intimate family relationship we have with Him (**Eph. 3:14,15,16**). Before Jesus could take her (us) to be His "**spouse**" He first had to become one of us, a human being. So He became our kinsmen after the flesh, see (**Phil. 2:5-7**).

Read **Psa. 107:2**. The word "**redeemed**" is used and in the Hebrew "**kinsmen**" and "**redeemer**" are the exact same words. Read **Ruth 4:6**. The word used for "**kinsmen**" or "**relative**" is the same word used for "**redeem**" in that passage. Jesus is our "**Kinsman-Redeemer**"! **Luke 19:10** says, "**The Son of Man** (our human relative) **came to seek and to save that which was lost.**" (redeem - buy us back). He had to become a human first before we could be His "**spouse**"! And O what a desire for us and what cost to Him! I love it when I hear Him say, "**my sister**", "**my spouse**"! Praise God He uses the possessive word "**my**". It is blessedly reassuring to hear Him say, "**You belong to Me!**"

"...with one chain of thy neck."

This is the chain made by the Lord to adorn her neck in **1:11**. She gladly displays it around her neck so that all might know to Whom she belongs, loves and obeys. O how this fills His heart! Do those with whom you come in contact

see Jesus in your life? Are you delighted to have Him displayed in your walk and talk? Dying to self (**Mt. Hermon**) allows more and more of His image to be seen in us (**Rom. 8:29; II Cor. 4:10**). Surrendering each fleshly moment is dying to self!

She is not embarrassed to display the chain of surrender and the crucified life to others. It represents all that honors Him through her choices and actions that please Him. Her life is like a living letter being read by all (**II Cor. 3:2-3**). The chain says, *"I belong to my Beloved alone! He has changed me and my life is no longer mine (Gal. 2:20)." It is His to do with it whatever He desires (Phil. 2:13)*. He knows best. Her devoted love moves Him so deeply that He shares His heart to her by saying...

V.10 "How fair (beautiful) is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices!"

Why is her love so beautiful to Him? What is it that He sees in her eyes? Previously, He described her features but now, for the first time, it is her love! What's the difference about her love now? It is love that is controlled by faith and an all-consuming passion to please Him. She was willing to have the unproductive, worthless areas of her life taken to the **Mountain of Myrrh** for crucifixion. Next, she chose to walk in holiness (**hill of frankincense**), fully separated to Him. This demonstrated to her Beloved that she would do anything to please Him. There had been a dramatic change - she willingly went with Him allowing the Holy Spirit to deal with her self-life. This is exquisite spiritual beauty to Him. For what pleased Him pleased her. Once again He shares His heart with her, *"You have no idea just how much I love to quietly look at you. I walk all around in the room of your heart and see so much of My glory there. That is why I enjoy it when you just sit for a while and have a devotional time with Me during the day. Others get so busy with the temporal and forget Me. Sadly, I'll have to wait until they get to Heaven to see the change in them."*

"...how much better thy love than wine..."

Wine represents joy (**Judges 9:13; Psa. 104:15**). Think of it! The Lord looked out over the universe at His marvelous creation, and said, **"It is good!"** What pleasure it must bring Him. The glory of the stars and galaxies, surely they must be enough! Yet, He says, *"That is not enough to satisfy My heart's need for love!"* He gazes upon the faithful Seraphim, with their wings folded, crying out **"holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty!"** day after day (**Isa. 6:3**)! Surely, the joy He derives from them will suffice! He looks, but O the emptiness! They are not enough to make His heart complete! The Beloved watches intently the ever obedient angelic realm, but His heart still has the longing. Then He looks at you, dear surrendered believer and exclaims, *"Her love and passion for Me satisfies My heart! One glance of her loving gaze overwhelms Me. O how much better is her love than all the joys of My glorious creation!"* He speaks with intensity to all the hosts of heaven, *"There is nothing like her! Nothing! Absolutely nothing!"*

"...how much better the smell of thine ointments than all spices."

She had applied the myrrh and frankincense with the merchant's powders! All the beautiful characteristics of a Holy Spirit-Jesus filled life. The fragrance thrilled Him. It was a heavenly fragrance of Himself. Her eyes, her neck, the fragrances spoke clearly that she was wholly filled up with Jesus her Beloved! The bride was living in **Rom. 13:14**, **"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof."** A Christian who displays Christ brings a sweet refreshing aroma in this world that is filled with a stench of evil. Once again Jesus gazes at His beautiful blood bought bride and says over and over, **"How beautiful! O how beautiful! Father, thank You for giving her to Me (John 10:29)!"**

PRAY WITH ME: *"O Lord, I am ready to burst, this is too much for me to ponder. In grace I accept these amazing revelations of Your heart to me. O my Beloved, is it true that there is nothing which is able to turn Your heart away from loving me for even a microsecond? Praise You dear Bridegroom of my heart - there is absolutely nothing which will distract You from being consumed with me. O precious Holy Spirit may there never be anything that attracts my eyes away from my all glorious Lord! Holy Spirit guard my ears, my lips, my eyes! May I have only one purpose in living, that I continually increase in pleasing Him whom my soul loveth! I worship You! I adore You! I magnify Your glorious name dear Lord Jesus!"*

V.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."

Her lips bring the Beloved great happiness. He once again takes note of the joy the lips of His bride brings to His

heart! Why? In **1:2** she yearned for Him to kiss her with the kisses of His mouth. O how He enjoys kissing us with precious revelations from His Word. But now she gives back what He had given to her - the Word with thankfulness and praise! She now kisses her Beloved with what He has abundantly blessed her. This is the first time her lips are described as being filled! The first step was the application of the scarlet (the blood) in verse **3**. Her lips have been made ready to bless His heart only after the life changing experiences on the **mountain of myrrh** and the **hill of frankincense**. The surrendered life has brought her to this point.

"Honeycomb, honey"

She is filled with His Holy Word. How do we know? The expressions of **"honey"** and **"honeycomb"** represent the Word. Honey and milk speak of abundance (**Ex. 3:8**). The delights of the Word of God are compared to honey dripping from the honeycomb (**Psa. 19:9,10; 119:103**)! Nothing pleases Him more than faith-filled words speaking out the very oracles of God. It was her faith working through His love that made her lips exquisite to Him (**Gal.5:6**)! Only faith pleases Him (**Heb. 11:6**). How did all of this come about? As she obeyed Him and left the dangers of the lion's den and mountains of leopards (**4:8**), she walked and listened to the Lover of her soul. Like the honeycomb which is patiently filled with its delectable sweetness, so also is the heart of this adoring bride, filled with indescribable word revelations of Jesus, (**John 14:21**) which always come through a loving, obedient heart. Jesus Himself said in **Luke 6:45**, **"...for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh."** Are you, dear Christian, so filled up with Jesus, who is the Word, that your lips automatically overflow with honey of praise and thanks?

"...milk..."

Milk also represents the pure Word of God (**I Pet. 2:2**). The bride began to take it in when she first came to know Him in surrender. It had fallen on **"good ground"** and was now bearing fruit for Him (**Matt. 13:23**). Those beginning joys found in His Word never left her. She still counted precious the first simple truths which led her into a deeper walk with her Beloved Husband.

Lips that please the Lord Jesus Christ are those that are in agreement with His word. It begins with a heartfelt prayer to Him. Listen to her prayer! *"I love You so much my dear Bridegroom and want to please You always, so I ask You to, 'Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.' (Psa. 141:3)!"* Time passes and He has fulfilled that prayer request with wonderful results. She prays again, *"Thank You my Beloved Husband, I am so blessed by You among the children of men. Grace is poured into my lips from You (Psa. 45:2). I am so thrilled that I find my lips joyfully praising You more and more (Psa. 63:3,5) since I prayed Psa. 141:3! O how quick You were to answer it. My lips have continued to greatly rejoice in singing because of Your redemption in my soul (Psa. 71:23)! You have caused many to be touched spiritually through what has come from my lips and what a pleasure it is to see them blessed by You through me dear Lord (Prov. 10:21). You have given me spiritual discernment as to what is acceptable to say (Prov. 10:32). Your knowledge has made me a exquisite jewel in Your sight my glorious Husband (Prov. 20:15). My heart is bowed in thanksgiving to You, my Love, for I can sense Your approval and pleasure of what You hear from my lips. Only You could have changed my lips! I love You so much!"*

You now understand why the Beloved is so taken up with her lips again. Is this true of you? If not, pray **Psa. 141:3** and **Psa. 19:14**! Dear Christian bride, then your Bridegroom will speak verse **11** to your heart!

"...and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon."

O yes, when you are filled up with Jesus your spiritual garments will exude the wonderful fragrance of Jesus Himself - the garments of salvation and the robe of righteousness (**Isa. 61:10**)! The cedars of Lebanon gave off a wonderful scent. The cedar tree speaks of the perfect, sinless life of Jesus. The wood of this tree was rot-resistant, strong and stately (see **1:17**). Garments placed in a cedar chest have a special fragrance all their own. The surrendered believer's life is **"hid in Christ"** (**Col. 3:3**) and as we sit quietly enwrapped in His arms, His fragrance permeates us. He is the cedar (**1:17**). O to have His fragrance (presence of the Lord) observed in our daily walk by others! Every believer has been resurrected from the spiritual dead, but so many are still wearing spiritual grave clothes (old habits and bondages brought over into the new life. The abundant life is activated exclusively through daily surrender of each circumstance to Him. Each time you do this you are proclaiming, *"I love You Jesus!"* It's the spiritual fragrance of Lebanon my friend!

PRAY WITH ME: *"O dear Lord, may my heart gather Your honey 'till I overflow! You alone are the sweetness,*

richness and nourishment of my life. I ask that Your fragrance, the fragrance of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience and love (Col. 3:12-14) be so predominate in my walk that my family and friends will be blessed by You! O my Beloved, I delight only in You! Take me! Use me! Love through me! Get only glory from me! Flow through my lips with faith-filled words. Glory! Glory! Glory! Praise Your holy name my Beloved! I love You and only You!"

V.12 "A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed."

Dear Christian, what a beautiful compliment from Your Beloved to have your life be called a **"garden"** by Him! Did you know that God has His own garden, it is called **"the garden of the Lord"** in **Isa. 51:3** and the garden of Eden is called **"the garden of God"** in **Ezk. 28:13**. God's wedding present to Adam and Eve was a garden in which He had already prepared for them. In that original garden a loving God placed all manner of wonderful things to be enjoyed through touch, taste, smell and vision. It was a place where God, longing for fellowship, could walk with man and share the wonders of His creation. It was the perfect setting for discussion, deliberation and devotion. God walked and talked with Adam in the garden. It was none other than Jesus Himself for He is the **"Word of God"** (**John 1:1**); He is **"...all the fullness of the Godhead bodily"** (**Col. 2:9**). He is **"...the express image of his (God's) person..."** (**Heb. 1:3**)!

O what infinite heart-wrenching pain Jesus must have felt when Adam and Eve chose another one to walk with after having committed spiritual adultery (**James 4:4**). The garden of their heart turned into hideous weeds of wickedness as did the actual physical garden. But, praise God, four thousand years later Jesus the Creator (**John 1:3,10**) came back to earth to restore what sin had so corrupted. He created a new spiritual garden for the heart of every believer. The Holy Spirit would plant it by applying the precious blood of Jesus to the spirit of man! Man would become a new creation in Christ Jesus (**II Cor. 5:17**). This wonderful spiritual heart garden would once again be a place where God and man could share intimately.

A garden is where seeds are planted. Praise God for the powerful seed of the Word of God which was planted in the garden of our heart by the Holy Spirit (**I Pet. 1:23**)! Are you lovingly, with great expectation, meditating on your Bridegroom's Word? Are you expecting a great harvest from those seeds being planted into your heart? Here's how it is accomplished.

This garden of the heart is made spiritually beautiful through absolute surrender of the believer's will to the Lord (**Rom. 12:1**). New and precious fruit begin to grow there for God and His children to enjoy. It will only happen as the Bride gives over the garden of her heart to the Father, the **"husbandman"** or **"gardener"** (**John 15:1-11**). With the Father having full rights to the garden of your heart, He instructs the Holy Spirit to break of the **"fallow ground"** (**Jer. 4:3; Hos. 10:12**). In grace He does for us what He had asked Israel to do! In this garden, through the power of the Holy Spirit, are planted glorious eternal seeds of His Word (**Matt. 13:23**)! O the blessed fruit that is produced: **"love, joy, peace, longsuffering (patience), gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance (self-control)"** (**Gal. 5:22-23**)!

So significant is the garden symbolism that her Beloved Jesus died, was buried and rose in a garden! **"Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid."** (**John 19:41**)! We know that there was a garden at the tomb because Mary Magdalene mistook her resurrected Lord to be a gardener (**John 20:15**). In the midst of the first garden was the tree of life. In the midst of Calvary's garden was the tree of life (Jesus on the cross).

In the first garden there was the tree of knowledge of good and evil and in Calvary's garden Jesus, the all good God, became that tree. He became sin - all that was evil. Calvary was the place where all the evil in the universe was exposed. Praise God, the bride now may eat freely of the fruit of Calvary and have all that is good, pure, and righteous produced in the garden of her heart. It will be progressive in her walk as illustrated in **John 15 "fruit"** and **"more fruit"** (**v.1**), **"much fruit"** (**v.5**). It's the tilling and the pruning that is not enjoyable to us. Thank God for the resulting **"peaceable fruit of righteousness"** (**Heb. 12:11**).

It was in the garden of Gethsemane where Jesus often prayed. In the original garden Adam **"fell"** before Satan. In this garden, three times Jesus fell to His knees in prayer and then finally on His face sweating great drops of blood. It was in Gethsemane the soldiers of Satan fell before Jesus the **"I Am"** (**John 18:4-6**)! Prayer, praise, power and victory are all found in God's garden.

Dear, dear bride of Christ, what is in your garden? Is it a place where Jesus can come and enjoy all manner of spiritual fruits (**4:16**)? Can your Beloved Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ, find in your heart all that He sees in the garden of this bride's heart (**4:12-15**)? Or does He approach the gate of the garden of your heart, open it, and find all manner of

spiritual weeds and thorns such as unforgiveness, jealousy, gossip and selfishness? Does He then quickly shut the gate walking off with His eyes toward the ground wondering why His Father (**John 15:1**) was not allowed into the garden of your heart to change it?

But this is not true of our bride in this Song! Since surrender, the Beloved sees eternal wonders in her beautiful heart garden. Let the Holy Spirit reveal all the specific joys in this garden which caused Him to earlier exclaim, **"...how beautiful is thy love...my spouse..."** He is so moved that He must share in loving detail what is so glorious about her garden. He takes her hand and says.....

"A garden enclosed (locked or sealed)..."

Because she has sought Him and found Him (**3:4**) and afterwards came away with Him from the lion's den and the mountain of leopards there is no longer a place where the **"little foxes"** can get in and do damage to the vines in her garden! Does the Holy Spirit have the only key (your will) to the garden of your heart? When the Father and the Son appear at the gate does the Holy Spirit have the key of your will to let Them in to have intimate fellowship and lead you into a special service?

This bride's heart is separated unto her Lord. It is only for Him! This **"garden enclosed"** (locked or sealed) speaks forcibly of the need of holiness (sanctification, separation). This is what pleases the Beloved so much, a heart separated (**locked**) from meaningless worldly things and desires, for that which has no value, and those things which pollute the mind and soul. He has been given full, loving control. His bride will not read, watch or listen to what she knows her Lord would not be pleased with (**Psa. 101:3**). It is not a struggle to her because she is in love. Who would ever want to hurt someone with whom they are in love (**John 14:23**)? Unthinkable!

It is extremely important to understand what brings about true, continuous, joyful holiness in the garden of your heart. The tools for cultivating a holy garden are the promises of God. **"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."** (II Pet. 1:2-4).

Please note the words: **"HIS divine power", "hath GIVEN", "are GIVEN"**. Our Lord has given you everything to make joyful, separated living a reality. He does not need your energy (see **Zech. 4:6; Phil. 2:13; II Cor. 4:7-9**). He needs your submission and a perseverance that rests on Him alone. The results will be an unspeakable strength and purpose never before experienced. You will truly begin to travel from **"glory to glory"** (II Cor.3:18)!

Consider these verses on holiness: **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."** (II Cor. 6:17); **"Having therefore these promises (II Cor. 1:20; I John 5:14,15), dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."** (II Cor. 7:1).

How can I cleanse myself from that which displeases my Beloved? It is by exercising your God given faith (**Rom.12:3**) and confessing to the Lord, **"I can't but You can"**! The Holy Spirit gives you a promise from the Word. Then you speak that Word to the problem by faith (firm conviction) and the problem will either disappear (**Mark 11:23,24**) in God's timing or He will give you His strength enabling you to bear it (**I Cor. 10:13**)! It is in these circumstances you begin to know just how real God is! His praise will become a way of life. It will be a holy compulsion!

Your only part is to take the first willing step. Look again at **II Cor. 6:17**. Remember, **"come out"** is active voice and **"be ye separate"** is actually a verb in the original Greek that is in the passive voice. As you know, passive voice means you have nothing to do with it, it must be done to you! Praise God! You take the first step of separation in each circumstance you are facing and the Holy Spirit steps in and empowers you to continue in the victory. Isn't the Lord good? Give our God praise!

How often we have tried to put on the whole armor of God (**Eph. 6:11-18**) and yet at the first sign of attack we cave in and are defeated. So many of us miss the verse just before the admonition to put on the whole armor of God. It says, **"...be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might."** **"be strong"** is in the passive voice which means we have nothing to do with it. It is saying, **"be made strong"**! So before I try and put on the whole armor I need to say to the

Lord, "Lord I do not have the strength to carry the needed spiritual armor for battle but You do. I am willing to do battle so I submit my will to You." All the other verbs are "active" such as "put on" making it your responsibility. How do you put it all on? It immediately happens when you fulfill **verse 18!** You begin to pray the Word in faith, truth, righteousness and peace then the spiritual armor is activated completely. Praying God's promises is doing spiritual battle in the Holy Spirit! His power is activated in victory.

Do you want a perfect picture of holiness (separated unto Him and under His total control)? Then picture yourself, dear love of Jesus' heart, in the embrace of His arms (read **2:6; 8:3!**). Holiness is simply full surrender to His arms!

Listen to her speak, "My Beloved, I never realized until now how secure it feels to be sealed by You, to be enclosed and protected by You. My heart has changed so much since I have turned everything over to You. I want to please You alone. My love for You has grown so much more intense. I am now sensitive to the 'little' things that displease You. Thank You for being so patient with me."

PRAY WITH ME: "Abba Father, I come to Your throne of grace with one purpose only, make the garden of my heart totally separated from the deadening effects of the world's way of thinking and doing things which displeases You so much. Come wonderful, eternal Gardener and till the soil of my heart in whatever manner You desire! I know it will only result in that which is good and holy. I ask You to fulfill this promise in my heart, '**And I will put my spirit within you, and CAUSE you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.**' (Ezk. 36:27) so that I can please You! In the name of Your dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ and by the power which is in His blood, amen!"

"...a spring shut up, a fountain sealed."

Why is the spring of her heart shut up and the fountain of her heart sealed? At this point her heart is for Him alone and no one else. He must receive the first fruits of surrender: love, worship, praise and adoration flowing to His heart. The Jews were instructed to do that at harvest time (**Num. 28:26; Neh. 10:34,35**). When the garden of her heart is fully developed and the fruit and spices have come to harvest, then she invites her Beloved into her garden which she calls His garden in **V.16**. After He has received His loving, first portion, then He allows others to be blessed from the garden of her heart and drink of the springs of living water (see **5:1!**)

But for now it is sealed, waiting for Him to come at the appropriate time to enjoy a heart filled with faith, filled with love and filled with the Holy Spirit. And when He opens it up, from the spring and fountain of her heart shall flow rivers of living water - refreshing, delightful waters of submission and obedience flowing back to His heart (**Eph. 5:18-19**). As she listens to His quiet voice her heart pounds with love for Him. She questions, "Am I dreaming, or is this all for real? Can it be the Bridegroom of my heart, the God of the universe, has said all of this to me - to me, a nobody in the eyes of the world!"

He takes her by the hand and says, "Let's walk together in the garden for awhile, My love. And as we walk, I will show you just what I see inside of you that causes My heart to overflow in love." He gives her hand a gentle squeeze as they begin to walk. Beaming with joy He excitedly says, "Look how your garden is filled with My favorite fruits and flowers! They are so beautiful to Me My love." He stops and just takes in the joy of all the beauty of colors and the fragrances. "My love, look, look over there - you have these wonderful yellow Henna flowers in your garden. Let's get a little closer."

He picks a flower and puts it in her hair. "That flower is so beautiful, let me just step back and enjoy looking at you for a moment. I can't wait to share the flowers, fruit and spices of your heart with My friends (**Rom. 8:29!**)"

This is almost too much for her. The bride is having such a difficult time paying attention because her heart is overflowing walking so close to Him. She whispers, "Dear Husband, my heart is about to burst. Forgive me for not speaking." It was a greater fullness of her spirit than she had ever experienced. Arm in arm they continued walking. Pausing, the Beloved breathes in the magnificent fragrance, then, with one sweep of His hand over the garden, He says, "Your garden, look at it My love..."

V.13 "Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire (henna), with spikenard,"

O grasp this verse dear one of His love! The Lord has a special order in listing these very special plants! First, her heart is seen as an orchard of pomegranates with other precious plants dispersed among them! The pomegranate was

dealt with in **V.3** and now her Beloved sees, not just one pomegranate, but a heart garden filled up with worship. Her heart is filled up with love for the blood of Jesus; her heart is filled up with sacrifice of praise for Him; her heart is filled up with surrender to Him! The Beloved puts His arm around her shoulder and says...

"So many of my people give Me a pomegranate to taste once or maybe twice a week. What I love so much about you is that I may come into your garden at anytime during the day and there are many, many pomegranates just for Me to pick. Thank you so much for allowing My Father, by My Spirit, to plant those seeds and cultivate them."

The first fruit in our life must be the pomegranate. Without praise and a love for the precious blood of Christ, service to the Lord is meaningless. Can it be said of You by the Lord as He looks at your garden - *"My bride is an orchard of pomegranates"*? Listen to the Bridegroom excitedly speak with joy to His Father about His bride, *"Thank You My Father for cultivating in My bride's heart garden so many beautiful spices and fruits (John 15:1). She is so lovely to Me. I love to look at her. You have filled My heart, Abba Father, with the joy You promised Me when I went to the cross (Heb. 12:2)! Thank You for giving her to Me (John 10:29)!"*

"...with pleasant (choice) fruits..."

No matter what, we will have some kind of fruit in our lives: some of poor quality, some of good quality, some of choice quality. What makes the difference? The pomegranate! Abiding in Him with true, heartfelt worship, praise and obedience (**Isa. 43:21; John 4:23,24; 15:1-5**) produce the fruit of the spirit! She is pleasant to Him! Am I? Are you? Do we care?

"...henna, with spikenard."

"Henna" speaks of resurrection and joy (see **1:14** for detailed comments). O how our Beloved loves the **"henna"** for it tells Him that we are filled with His resurrected life (**John 10:10; Phil.3:10**). It is the life where our ways are controlled by the Holy Spirit through the precious promises of the Word. O dear surrendered believer, the **"henna"** needs to be seen desperately in our lives. Young believers are watching and learning from us. Do they see the Spirit filled life, the abundant life, the transformed life, the consistent life; in other words, the power of the resurrected life? The unsaved around us need to see Jesus in our hopes and habits; in our mouth and in our movements; in our attitudes and activities. May we have done to us as was done to Lazarus when he came forth out of the tomb (**John 11:43-44**).

Allow the Holy Spirit to take off the grave clothes of the old self-ways. Lazarus came forth, he demonstrated that he had life but he did not have it more abundantly until the grave clothes came off. When the grave clothes came off the new, abundant, resurrected life was fully demonstrated for all to see! Notice that others were responsible for that act. We must allow others who are Spirit-filled in the body of Christ to minister to us by the power and unction of the Holy Spirit (**Eph. 4:16**). Humble yourself before Almighty God and allow members of His body to help unwrap those things in your life which hinder your spiritual walk. We need each other. That's the way the body of Christ spiritually functions.

It is significant that the Holy Spirit mentions nine specific items which make the bride's heart garden so beautifully attractive. Isn't it interesting that **Gal. 5:22-23** lists nine characteristics which make up the fruit of the Spirit. Note carefully that the fruits and spices are mentioned in pairs except for the pomegranate. Why? It is the blood of Jesus, first and foremost that causes the other fruits and spices to grow.

Spikenard was obtained by crushing a root. It is the independent human will that must be crushed and replaced with total surrender to the Lord's will found in His word and lived out by the power of the Holy Spirit. It was Mary of Bethany who gave up the most precious possession she had, 300 denarii of spikenard perfume (representing her will). She anointed Jesus' head and feet with it. This consummate act of worship meant so much to the Lord that He never wanted Mary to be forgotten (**Mark 14:9**)! The resurrection life (henna) never appears in the life of the believer without the sacrifice of the will, broken over the Bridegroom's feet.

PRAY WITH ME: *"Dear Abba Father, Gardener of my heart, till the soil of my garden until pure spikenard is obtained. Nothing less will do! I yield the rights to my garden into Your loving, caring hand. I humble myself under Your mighty hand. I humble myself before those You send into my life to change me. As they "tough love" me by unwrapping the grave clothes and point out the dross I will accept it from Your hand. Empower me to change. I cannot do it alone! In*

V.14 "**Spikenard and saffron...**"

Saffron is used in cooking for flavoring and coloring. It is obtained by drying the stigmas and parts of the styles of the autumn crocus. Approximately 4000 flowers yield about one ounce of saffron. Obviously, much time was required to produce the saffron. Perseverance (**James 1:12**) is needed in extracting the saffron. As with us, much time is needed to "**grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ...**" (**II Pet. 3:18**).

With our will (spikenard) daily sacrificed to Him then the saffron will be produced. Saffron was also used as a deep yellow dye. Yellow is the color of gold. Gold, represents the glory and Deity of the Bridegroom as we will see in comments on **5:11,14,15**. A totally yielded life will allow the Holy Spirit to produce Jesus' glory in the garden of her heart. The word of God states that "**God is good**" and "**God is love**". It has a sweet fragrance (**Psa. 19:7-10; 119:103**). O to have the saffron produced in the heart, God in control and seen in the walk of the bride. Then it becomes "**not I but Christ living in me.**" (**Gal. 2:20**)!

Think of it, 4000 flowers needed for one ounce of saffron. And as the bride yields thousands of moments of her will to the will and direction of the Lord, a sweetness appears in her manner of living and in her relationship with others.

PRAY WITH ME: "*Dear Lord Jesus, may Your Father cultivate the spiritual soil of my garden to see a wonderful harvest of saffron and producing the yellow dye which will be indelibly stamped on my walk. May more of You be seen in me as my garden is tilled by the Father (John 3:30)!*"

V.14 "**...calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense...**"

Calamus is referred to as sweet cane in **Isa. 43:24** and in **Jer. 6:20**. In **Exo. 30:23** it is called "**sweet calamus**". When its leaves are crushed it gives forth a fragrance like that of ginger. It was used in the making of the holy anointing oil (**Exo. 30:23**). So sacred was this oil to the Lord that He warns in **Exo. 30:32,33** that the precise proportions of mixture were not to be duplicated by another Hebrew. It was to be used for Him alone! So serious was the secrecy of the mixture of the anointing oil that if violated the offending person would be cut off from his people! Interestingly, three of the four ingredients to be used in making the holy anointing oil are found here in the garden of her heart!

The root word for "**calamus**" means "*to stand upright.*" The oil was used to set apart (anoint) items of the tabernacle and the priests to God. Those chosen to be kings of Israel were anointed with this oil. They filled lamps with oil for light. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus' light shines through us. Oil is symbolical of the Holy Spirit. O dear reader this is the heartbeat of God, to have us separated unto Himself. To stand upright in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit and be changed into the image of the Beloved brings great joy to Him. He looks with great pleasure at the calamus in her heart garden.

O how He loves to feast His eyes upon it. It tells Him that His life is her life and His desires are her desires! May you dear soldier of Christ "*stand upright*" for Jesus. Calamus represents the Spirit led Christian standing against the enemy in the power of His might (**II Cor. 1:24; Gal. 5:1; Phil. 1:27; Eph. 6:10-17; I Pet. 5:12**). What a glorious sight it is to see the Christian soldier advancing against the enemy (**II Tim. 2:3**). As the Bridegroom feasts His eyes upon all that is beautiful in her garden, He beholds the cinnamon connected with the calamus and what a sweet aroma it produces. Why is it so important to have the cinnamon with the calamus?

Cinnamon is an evergreen tree from which it is extracted and this is accomplished by cutting away the bark of the lower branches. Calamus represents the power of God. She gives Him the right to scrutinize her inner motives as well as her outward walk. The Holy Spirit begins to mix in the cinnamon and the work of Calvary concerning the crucifixion of the flesh and applies it to her attitudes and daily walk. Cut away from her are weights and sins which so easily beset her (**Heb. 12:1,2**). Although it hurts to have this process take place she keeps her eyes steadfast on Him, "**looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of (her) faith**". With the cinnamon applied she now stands upright in the power of the Holy Spirit by the Word of faith! O how this displays the glory of God in her life!

"with all trees of frankincense..."

O how important is the frankincense (see **3:6** for detailed comments). As you know, it comes from a Hebrew word meaning "*to be white*". All of the above fruits and spices in her garden are interspersed with the trees of frankincense

(holiness) and the separated walk. All that her Beloved sees in the garden of her heart is pure and righteous. He loves purity for He is purity itself! Frankincense was used in the tabernacle worship and it was one of the gifts of the wise men worshiping the child Jesus. Purity must be in the heart for worship to be acceptable to the Lord. It is accomplished by heartfelt confession (**I John 1:9**) when we do sin, along with continual surrender and submission to His heart found in His Word.

PRAY WITH ME: *"Dear Father, how I praise You for the love You have bestowed upon me in Your Son. O how Your beloved Son loves me! Thank You Holy Spirit for opening my eyes to all that will please Him. Continue to work on the garden of my heart so that Your Son's heart will overflow with joyous love because of the spiritual fruit produced there. In Jesus' magnificent name, amen."*

The bride is astonished with all her Beloved sees in her. Tears begin to well up in her eyes. She has never felt so much love in all of her life. He gently lifts her head so as to have her eyes meet His. What she sees causes her heart to almost burst. She could feel a grateful love flowing from Him to her heart. He whispered, *"Thank you My love for giving to Me the most precious gift you possess, total surrender of your will to Me! This is why I died for you! This is why I rose from the grave for you! This is why I sit on the throne and intercede for you continually (Heb. 7:25)! O how this fills My heart with tender affection for you! I am consumed with love for you My bride. The garden of your heart is so, so beautiful My love, for it is a reflection of My very heart!"*

PRAY WITH ME: *"Dear Lord Jesus, 'Search me...and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked (Hebrew: hurtful, harmful, offensive) way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.' (Psa.139:23,24). I want the frankincense to fill my heart garden so that You will see no spot or blemish which would bring disappointment to You!"*

V.14 "...myrrh and aloes..."

"My bride, I see you are still wearing the little pouch of myrrh around your neck I gave to you (see 1:13 for comments). She looks up at her Love and says, "I look at it often my Beloved Husband. I can't tell You how many times I have simply held it in the palm of my hand when the enemy attacked me. It always reminds me of Your complete victory on the cross crushing Satan's power. It reminds me that I belong to You and Your victory is my victory! It makes me feel so secure." She snuggled up against His strong arm and was quiet for a moment. With a twinkle in her eye she pulled out a little box she had kept hidden since they had stepped into the garden. The box was beautiful. Without looking up she put her hand out and said, "This is a gift I have kept for You and I would like You to open it my Love." His heart beats faster as He lifted up the lid of this love gift from His bride. In it was one small cup sealed and a piece of unleavened bread.

Placing her hand under His she said, *"I have so long wanted to have communion with You. Would You mind if we just sat down in this pleasant spot in the garden of my heart and have communion, just You and me my Husband?"* Quietly they sat down together. He held both the little cup and bread in His hand. *"My Bridegroom, the bread is so precious to me. Not only did You infinitely love me and have all my sins placed in Your holy body but that piece of bread says that I am Your body today (I Cor. 10:16,17). I share being Your body with all the others You have redeemed! Wow, what a glorious thought my Love!"*

You could see how much it meant to Him in all she shared. O how He loved to be loved! Still holding His hand a floodgate of His attributes and character came forth – on and on she spoke – *"You are my Shepherd, Friend, King, God, Deliverer, Keeper, Forgiver, Encourager, Burden Bearer, Healer and Provider...!"* She spoke about each one in detail. All the Lover of her heart could do was quietly squeeze her hand. So ravished was His heart by her love and glances He could not speak. Hours passed but it only seemed to be a moment. Then all was quiet, He placed the bread in her hand and said, *"Thank you so much for loving Me! There are no words to express what this gift of yours means to My heart. I can see the myrrh has become a pouch of loving remembrance to your heart! Thank you My bride!"*

When she took the bread the Holy Spirit filled her with joy unspeakable. So blissful was this intimacy it was as if the world and all its cares did not exist. Intimacy with Him was a little taste of heaven. Taking the cup she quietly gazed

upon it for the longest time. Lifting her head up, tears of thankfulness welling up, she looked into His eyes and said, *"Thank You for every drop of Your life's blood that fell from the cross for me!"* She drank it and they just sat there noticing the beautiful flowers springing up all around them in the garden of her heart. He said, *"I am so blessed that you have allowed My Abba Father to cultivate it in your garden (John 15:1). The crucified life is the blessed life! It takes away those things*

that would keep us from enjoying this kind of special intimacy."

After this they often had communion together. It was a time for reflection, remembrance, repentance, rededication, loving, adoring, worshipping and praising Him. We are to never forget the reason for all the miracles, conversions, healings, revelations! It was all because Jesus was crushed for their iniquities – He was the myrrh. There would be no room for self-pride or exaltation!

The **myrrh** was coupled with the **aloes**. Interestingly, in **John 19:39** both were connected in the burial of the Lord Jesus' body. Aloe was highly valued and used for incense and perfume. One reason for wearing perfume is to be noticed or have someone else attracted to you. Let the sweet aroma of a heart filled with Jesus be your attraction! The aloes were obtained from the inner core of that particular tree. The process they used was to bury the aloe tree logs. I understand that the reason for this "*burial*" was due to the hardness of the wood. The outer part would decay making it possible to get to its heart and extract the inner core of resin. The result revealed a beautiful grain and it could be highly polished. O how this sounds like the dying daily to self so that the fragrance and beauty of the new man may be released (**Rom. 6:6-14; II Cor.4:7-18**).

In chapter 1 she kept the myrrh between her breasts. It is a reminder of His eternal protection even while she sleeps. Her heart needed to be kept safe from nightmares or attacks from without while she rested. In **Psa. 45:8** aloe is mentioned in connection with the garments worn by the Son of God. We know that this Psalm speaks of the Son of God because **V.8** is quoted in **Heb. 1:8** by the Father concerning His only Son! The Lord has clothed us with His garments of salvation and with His robe of righteousness (**Isa. 61:10**). How appropriate that the last of the plants and spices mentioned should be the aloes (the inner core of our spiritual being). Her heart is filled with the incense of adoration and the perfume of holiness. O what joy this brings to His heart! What pleasure to His eyes!

"...with all the chief (finest) spices."

Finally, the Lover of her soul reveals that her garden is producing the finest of spices. Spices are added to various foods to make what tastes good taste great. One never ingests spices by themselves. Each spice is to be used with care in order to enhance a particular food. So it is with us, members individually in the body of Christ, your life is to touch others, to enhance and make beautiful their own walk. This bride's heart has been made ready to fellowship with other lilies. Prior to this she only wanted to be with Him alone.

She knew that her Beloved loved to be with other lilies (**2:16**). Now her garden is ready to bless Him and His lilies. He will take from her spiritually exquisite garden and share it with them (**5:1**). Each of us have been given by the Holy Spirit gifts and talents to be used for the good of others in the body of Christ (**Eph. 4:15-16**). Our "*little*" spiritual spice combined with other's spiritual spices cause us, the living temple of the Holy Spirit, the body of Christ, to minister godly love for one another (**John 13:35**). The Holy Spirit will bring believers next to your branch to receive a particular fruit needed in their lives. As the various spices of love are shared the spiritual body of our Lord becomes more outwardly beautiful. His image is more and more seen in us together.

As we totally surrender our will to Him, all the right spiritual spices will be applied to each daily circumstance. The Holy Spirit will be at work in each situation and most of the time we will be unaware of it. He will make sure that there will be: a right word given to renew; a loving touch for compassion; a peaceful look to encourage; a kind deed to show someone in need that God does care; a thoughtful telephone call to lift the spirit; a note of thankfulness to show an appreciative heart; a word of loving correction to one going astray. Read **Matt. 25:34-40**. It is a beautiful illustration of having the finest of spices in our garden and then be unaware that others were being blessed by them. Because you are so filled with Jesus, ministering to others just happens so naturally without thinking about it.

PRAY WITH ME: *"Praise You Father that You are the Gardener of my heart (**John 15:1**). I give You glory that You can take the garden of my heart and produce such wonderful things in it and bring such pleasure to Your beloved Son. Thank You Lord that not only do You get the first fruits from my garden but You share them with others (**5:1**). Thank You Lord for making me a blessing! In Your powerful name Lord Jesus, amen."*

V.15 "A fountain of gardens (or a "garden fountain"), a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon."

PRAY WITH ME: *"O Lord, my Redeemer, my Shepherd, my King, my all, make this verse real in my heart and in my life. O dear precious Father, cause my heart to gush out the rivers of living water and allow all those who touch my life*

be touched by the presence of the Holy Spirit in my heart (John 7:38,39)! Fill me, fill me, fill me to overflowing so that others may have their parched lives refreshed. O caring Husband just to have one touched by Your grace and truly make a difference in their life will fill me with eternal thanksgiving. You have commanded, in Eph. 5:18, to be continually filled with the Spirit. O that is my holy desire! In Your name which is written in bold letters over the door to my heart Lord Jesus!"

In the Greek **'be filled'** in **Eph.5:18** is in the continual present tense and it is passive voice meaning that it must be done to you. Every day you need to pray, *"Fill me Lord with Your Spirit so I may walk in Your ways, in Your wisdom, in Your humility and have fulfilled in me Your blessed will."* Keep in mind this is not a feeling you are asking for. But if you are surrendered to Him this filling takes place (see **I John 5:14-15** and **Matt. 7:7**). Praise God, it is not our responsibility to fill ourselves, it is His! He then gets all the glory from the path set out for us that day. For a vessel to be filled it must be emptied. That happens each time we surrender!

A garden fountain is enjoyable to look at and listen to. It has a refreshing sound that can cause one to relax. Out of her garden is the flowing of rivers of living waters. She is Spirit-filled to overflowing! The word **"living"** is the Hebrew word for *"fresh"*. She has that continual fresh anointing from the Holy Spirit in her heart. Notice that the words **"enclosed"**, **"shut up"** and **"sealed"** are no longer mentioned as in **V.12**. There was the private time with Him alone, but now, the Lord will share the goodness of the garden with others. The order is interesting. First we must be an empty open vessel so that spiritual water may flow through us. I must have the Holy Spirit pour the living waters of His word into my spiritual vessel. Then, as the Holy Spirit directs, the streams of living water begin to flow in refreshment to others. Praise God!

"Streams from Lebanon" presents a beautiful picture of what it means to be a Spirit-filled, fruit-bearing believer. The snow from Lebanon's mountains melts in the spring and flows downward replenishing the land below, not only with water but with needed minerals to grow healthy crops. Keep in mind that these waters flow without effort! The mountain symbolically is surrendered to receive the heavenly blessing of pure white snow. So also with us, without any human effort, we simply *"stand upright"* (calamus) in the power of the Holy Spirit on the mountain of God's holiness and allow the pure water of the living word (**John 15:3; Eph. 5:25,26**) to gently *"snow"* down upon us. Sometimes we read the Word of God and it seems as if we are receiving nothing from it; that is the *"snow"* for it just stays there doing nothing (much like the planting of seed which remains dormant for a while). Then at the appropriate time the blessed Holy Spirit, at the request of the Husbandman (the Father), causes the warmth of Jesus' pure light to shine upon that stationary snow and it begins to flow into our heart garden and after having accomplished its purpose, it then flows in blessing to those all around us to the valleys in their daily lives. May the Lord fulfill the prayer of this old hymn in me, *"Channels Only"*.

*"Emptied that Thou shouldest fill me, a clean vessel in Thy hand;
Thou who boughtest to possess me, in Thy fullness, Lord, come in.
Jesus, fill now with Thy Spirit hearts that full surrender know;
That the streams of living water from our inner man may flow.
Channels only, blessed Master, but with all Thy wondrous power
Flowing through us, Thou canst use us every day and every hour!"* Mary E. Maxwell

Before we leave this wonderful verse, meditate for a moment on a previous thought from **V.12**. Jesus prayed, died, was entombed and rose in a garden! All of us need a garden experience to be truly pleasing to the Lord. In the garden of our heart we need to be devoted to prayer and there, each day, lay down our will and die to self. When little shoots of discouragement, gossip, jealousy, envy and other weeds appear they will easily wither by simply saying, **"not my will, but thine be done"**. Then we will rise up and walk in the abundant life of resurrection power. His image will be stamped on your walk (**Rom. 8:29; Phil. 3:10**)! For a garden to really be productive and flourish, fertilizers are used. Reckoning yourself to be dead is the spiritual fertilizer of the resurrected life (**Rom. 6:11,14**). Fertilizer is usually matter that

is going to be allowed to decay if it hasn't already. Then it is ready to be used! Don't ever forget that the fertilizer of the resurrected life is the decaying matter of the self-life! He turns the curse into a blessing because the Lord our God loves us (**Deut. 23:5**)!

To the bride these words (**vs.12-15**) were absolutely unthinkable, impossible! She had only seen disappointment and defeat! But she knew that it had to be true because her Beloved, who is the truth (**John 14:6**), said it was so. Satan had tried to blind her eyes from what was really going on in her garden. She now desires more of His beauty. With all of her heart she prays...

V.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."

She now gladly wants for the **"north wind"** to blow upon her garden. North winds in Israel were cold, bitter and harsh but necessary in order to fully develop the taste of fruit and the fragrances of spices. Farmers do not harvest the oranges or grapefruit until after the first cold snap so that their taste reaches maximum sweetness. **James 1:2** teaches, concerning the blowing of the **"north wind"** here, to **"...count it all joy when ye fall into diverse temptations."** (see **James 1:3,4** for the wonderful results). The Holy Spirit, who is the wind (**John 3:8**), allows difficulties to come into Your life. Why? So that you can be used by God to minister to someone else who is going through the exact same hurt you had previously experienced (**II Cor. 1:1-4**)!

We are called on at times to endure hardness for the Lord (**II Tim. 2:3**) yet, all the while our garden is being developed to the fullest by these **"north winds"**. The north winds do come (**Rom. 5:3-4; 8:35,38**) and when they do we just snuggle up into **"Abba Father's"** arms (**Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6; Mark 14:36**) and He takes care of us as they blow (**Heb. 4:16**)! While His Spirit enwraps us, at the very same moment the Father's hands are continually working in the garden of our heart (**John 15:1**). How absolutely beautiful all this is!

We are so afraid of the **"north winds"**, yet in them His power and presence will be felt through those blasts of cold air (**I Cor. 10:13; Phil 4:6,7; II Cor.4:7-17; Heb.13:5-7**). Sometimes we bitterly complain about the harsh north winds and then confess the sinful attitude. Better to come through those winds understanding their purpose. It makes it so much easier. We will come through those winds having been lifted up higher than ever before and knowing Him in a way that we could never have known in any other way. Because of what He revealed about Himself to us during those times, **Rom. 8:27,31-39** and **I Thess. 5:16-18** become very real to us. We praise and worship our Beloved as never before! Mary, Martha and Lazarus knew all about the **"north winds"** (**Luke 10:38-42; John 11**) but they ended up with the glorious **"south winds"** of service, fellowship and victory in **John 12:1-6**!

Then she asks that the **"south winds"** be allowed to blow upon her garden. These are the gentle, warm south winds of special revelation (**John 14:21; 15:15; 16:13**) of God Himself! These are the winds of true Spirit-filled Christian fellowship (**Eph.6:18-19**) and winds of ministering to the **"household of faith"** (**Gal.6:10**). These are the winds of His powerful presence falling upon us in prayer and meditation of His Word. These are the caring winds reaching out to the lost (**Matt. 25:34-40**) and the winds of our heart of worship and adoration for Him in the Holy of Holies (our private, intimate time with Him)! *"Blow upon us dear Holy Spirit with Your north and south winds of fullness! Breathe them upon us in full surrender of heart!"*

Notice very carefully that the **"north winds"** are first but, praise God, you will always end with the **"south winds"** if you are entirely surrendered to the Holy Spirit and the Word of God! She is thrilled that so much has been produced in her garden. Her Beloved is pleased that she wants Him to come and receive and be filled with joy. O the joy of giving, especially to the Lord. It is so true that, **"...It is more blessed to give than to receive."** (**Acts 20:35**). She speaks the desire of her heart...

"...Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits."

May we be so sensitive to the Holy Spirit and hear the voice of our Beloved saying, *"It is time for us to come apart and rest for awhile. Let us go where I can sit with you and feast upon the spiritual delicacies from our heart garden."* (**Mark 6:31; John 6:3**). He knows when it is best.

The eternal seeds of His Word have been planted and have grown into the wonderful fruit of His Spirit! With a heart garden filled with the Holy Spirit then you will feel free to invite the Lord Jesus into it for fellowship (special time of devotions) where He just enjoys you alone. O the purity of her garden. There is nothing in it that she would want to hide from Him.

Notice that she now calls it **"his"** garden and rightly so! It was He who created the garden in the first place. His Father tends the garden and His Spirit gives continual life to the Garden. All this produces the Bridegroom's image in the resulting fruit and spices. O praise God, He owns me, wholly and totally! IT IS HIS GARDEN!

PRAY WITH ME: "Yes, yes come in and eat! Eat and be satisfied! Eat with joy! Eat from what Your Father's hand by the power of the Holy Spirit hath wrought in me! O eat Your choice fruits my loving, Beloved Husband! Eat the fruit of my surrender and submission. May there be much, much more as I abide in You and Your Word abides in me (**John 15:7-11**).

Chapter 5 - The Discovery of Full Acceptance (cont.)

The Beloved responds:

5:1 "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spices; 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 (lovers)."

Notice that the Beloved answers her prayer immediately. He does not say, "**I will come**" but "**I am come...**". He cannot wait to get there. What satisfaction awaits Him. A mature bride having her garden filled with all sorts of blessings for His heart to enjoy. O my dear friend, can you not see the Beloved here touching every flower, plant and tree. Do you not see the infinite joy, pleasure and satisfaction written in every expression on His lovely countenance? Observe how many times the word "**my**" appears in this verse. Everything belongs to Him. He is only enjoying what is rightfully His by creation and by redemption (**Ezk. 18:4; I Cor. 6:19-20**).

If you listen carefully you will be able to hear Him speaking to Himself and to His angels. He proudly proclaims, "**this is MY sister, this is MY bride.**" He pauses, touching the various items in the garden, you can almost hear Him saying, "Abba, Father, what an amazing Gardener You are! All Your patient work of pruning has created this magnificent garden, thank You!" The angels observe in holy wonder (**Eph. 3:10**). They are filled with praise for what they do not understand - this marvelous redeemed heart.

The order - my sister, my spouse is quite significant. He is reminding her that He had to first become part of the human family and be her "**kinsman Redeemer**" before she could become His bride and He her Bridegroom.

"...my myrrh with my spices..."

O how often the "**myrrh**" is mentioned by the Holy Spirit in this song. We are to never forget it! The "**myrrh**" represents so much in scripture. Remember, the "**myrrh**" was obtained by crushing! He, the Worm, was crushed by the Father on Calvary (**Isa. 53:10**). His "**myrrh**" was the crushing of His soul by His loving Father at Calvary for my sin. He became everything that His Father hated. It had been as bitter as myrrh can be. But now the "**myrrh**" had turned into a sweet joy with all of the added "**spices**" of the surrendered life. She had received the "**myrrh**" and it was being applied to her daily walk. O look at the results dear reader. Bitterness turned into ultimate joy for Him whom her soul dearly loved!

What a joy it is for Him to gather His "**myrrh**" with His spice (Hebrew: "**balsam**") from her heart. She was now experiencing the power of the crucified life. Her old sin nature was under the control of the power of Calvary. Sin no longer had rule or dominion over her walk (**Rom. 6:6-14**). She is walking in His victory. The "**myrrh**" is connected with balsam from which comes healing balm. Praise God for the healing virtues of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the atonement there is healing for body, soul and spirit (Read **Isa. 53:5; Psa. 103:3; Matt. 8:14-17**). What had been ashes in her life - now became beauty beyond imagination (**Isa. 61:3**). It took time but it was worth it. O the inexpressible delight, O the glory this brings to His Abba Father! O how He loves to see His Father filled with joy!

This is the first time the Beloved has had, for any extended period of time, a real spiritual intimacy with her. The garden of her heart was made ready so that they could enjoy the highest and most intimate relationship possible. This does not just happen. The spiritual maturity comes from "**abiding**" (Please read **John 15:7-11**). To abide has the meaning, "**to remain, steadfast, continue, endure.**" Staying close to the Lord no matter what is going on is the key to obtaining spiritual insight, victory, direction, wisdom and growing in love for the Bridegroom. It comes through prayer, praise, and trusting in the Word of God daily in every circumstance. You don't give up even when you fail! The secret - she abides with Him on the Mountain of Myrrh, dying to self.

The bride knows that she is perfectly loved by Him no matter what (**I John 4:18**). She knows that her faithful Bridegroom is always refining her imperfect steps. There are no more doubts but simply a total reliance on His loving heart and wisdom. She abides with Him in a blessed walk of holiness on the holy hill of frankincense!

"...my honeycomb with my honey..."

He now partakes of the honey and the honeycomb. The orchard had flourished more than anyone else had ever expected. Exquisite flowers, luscious fruits and the finest of spices had been produced. The bees came, creating their honeycomb, then taking the precious pollen, made honey! **Pro. 16:24** helps to unlock the meaning for us: **"Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones."** **Psa. 19:9-10** also is revealing to us for it says, **"The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb."** She had taken the Holy Word of God and by faith stood on the promises. By that she found out just how sweet to the soul they can be. She stood on the judgments and precepts of the Word and found them to be true and righteous! She willingly applied the judgments of her Beloved to her life in the power of the Holy Spirit. What joy this brought to her Beloved as He partook of the **honey** of His word and the **honeycomb** that flowed from her surrendered, abiding heart!

He first takes the **honey** of His word, for she has been lovingly obedient to it. Next, He takes the **honeycomb** of her surrendered heart garden. The **honeycomb** is longer lasting. He not only is receiving immediate joy from the **honey**, but there will be more joy for Him to come in the future. So often the Lord gets a few joyous spiritual spurts from us - a few praises at church during an exciting moment and maybe a *"thank You Lord"* in the morning after reading a meaningful passage from His Word. But all is forgotten on Monday during the busyness of the day! However, in the surrendered heart, there is an ongoing praise - love relationship with her Bridegroom in her spirit all week long. Does your Beloved have any honeycomb from the garden of your heart that He can enjoy in the middle of the week as well as taking in the honey of your heart on Sunday? We owe it to Him! As the Holy Spirit keeps reminding us, this is the joy of **Heb. 12:2,3!**

"...my wine with my milk..."

Next, the Beloved drinks His wine with His milk. **Wine** speaks of joy and gladness (**Psa. 104:15**; see **1:2** for comments) and **milk** speaks of the purity of God's holy word (**I Pet. 2:2**). The Beloved's bride had reached the place of experiencing **Eph. 3:16-20** for she was **"...filled with all the fulness of God."** It is the Bridegroom Himself Who takes in deeply the **wine** and **milk**. He is filled with joy and purity of her surrendered heart! Then, He invites other lilies intimate with Him to...

"...eat O friends; drink..."

Abba Father speaks into the heart of His Beloved Son and says, *"Son of My heart this garden of Your bride is filled to overflowing. It's time to share the glory with Your friends."* The Beloved's eyes sparkled with delight knowing the joy that would be His in sharing the goodness of her garden with His **"friends"** (**John 15:14**). He stops and directs their attention to the beauty of some flower, fruit or spice. He lifts up and examines a sample of each of them with a satisfying eye, then beckons others to see and taste. He exclaims to those with Him, *"Isn't that exquisite My friends!"* He adds one of the chief spices to the fruit and says, *"Try this! You will never taste anything more delectable! This combination is rare and only comes from My garden!"* This is Holy Spirit led, body ministry supplying what other believers need through her garden (**Eph. 4:15,16**).

The Beloved's friends, the lilies, could see the glow on His face and the gleam in His eyes. There is nothing like sharing with others what has brought joy to your heart! There is a special pleasure and satisfaction just looking at the expressions of appreciation and wonder on their faces as they see what you see and experience what you have experienced!

He took time to describe to them the unspeakable condition in which He had originally found her garden. They were overawed at His power to transform a life! There was no trace of the ugliness concerning the former state of this garden. They all knelt down and praised the Father who was so faithful to watch out over the condition of this surrendered garden (**John 15:1**); they praised the Son whose image permeated the garden (**John 15:5**). They all gave thanks for the Holy Spirit who was the power behind the cleaning up and restoring of this beautiful garden (**John 15:3; 16:13-15; Eph. 6:17**) through the blood of Christ and the Word of God.

In heaven, the dear Abba Father speaks to His Beloved Son, *"My Son, tell those who are looking at Your bride how she has been used to bless others. She so pleases My heart also. I will instruct the Holy Spirit to send others into her pathway and they will be blessed by the fruit that has been produced in Your vine, My Son."* And so brought into her life were those in need of the spiritual fruit which appeared on her branch in the Vine. They came, they picked the fruit, they

grew stronger in the Lord. Here are some of the testimonies:

There was a little girl who had been hurt so deeply by unloving parents - she met the bride one day and picked off a large portion of Jesus' love. It made such a difference. Her heart was healed! O how they rejoiced and praised the Lord together.

On another occasion the bride "*happened*" to be standing near some people who were expressing great concern over a family whose father had lost his job. The bride secretly found out where they lived and anonymously sent \$500 special delivery to them. It "*happened*" to be the exact amount needed to pay the mortgage of their house that month. They were on the verge of losing it. The note inside simply said, "From Jesus!" The fruit of kindness tasted so good to them.

A few months later she learned that a friend of hers lost a husband. The bride spent many nights with her friend caring, comforting and doing all the practical things that needed to be done. The terrible emptiness began to be lifted. The fruit of peace was so needed at that very time. A "***peace that passes understanding***" miraculously filled her!

On another occasion where the bride worked there was a very irritating co-worker. The bride prayed each day for the situation and the attitude. Then came the unexpected opportunity to do her a kindness. One day that irritating co-worker came and apologized for how badly she had treated the bride. She thanked the bride for being so longsuffering and for the kindness shown her. It gave the bride an opportunity to witness for Christ. The co-worker, who had tasted the bride's fruit of self-control, said, "*I don't know how you put up with me. If it were me in your place I would have had a few "choice" words to say.*" The bride said a quiet prayer to her Beloved, "*Lord, little does she realize how often I was on the verge of "losing it". Thank you for Your self-control! Thank You for controlling my words, You sure do keep Your promises (Psa. 19:14)!"*

Dear surrendered branch in the Vine, the Bridegroom wants to do the same thing in your garden. The fruit of the Spirit that is produced through total submission. The Holy Spirit will lead people over to your branch. Some will need a taste of joy, others will need to digest some kindness, and still others will need a dose of patience. God will invite them into your life to distribute to them His fruitfulness through you. They in turn will continue to have the Lord do a work in the garden of their heart! As our dear Bridegroom sees it, there is actually only one garden. It is made up of a myriad smaller gardens (**I Cor. 10:17**). Praise God her soul had become a "***watered garden***" (**Jer. 31:12**)! The glorious result was the fruit of faithfulness. She was faithful to pray, read the word, lovingly obedient, patient and faithful to care for others.

Before we travel on into deeper heart revelations of the Bridegroom, notice once again the words "***my***" in **5:1**. As was shared before, all you are and think you have in reality belongs to Him. Don't attempt to hold on to it for selfish reasons. If you do, it will impede the anointing of God's leading and peace in your life. Give back everything in your life to Him: your house, money, time, goals, spouse, children, job, will, emotions, etc.! Surrender what already belongs to Him and see how wonderful the garden of your life will become through His power and care! "***The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.***" **Psa. 24:1.**

PRAY WITH ME: "*O precious Father, move on my garden so that I may experience being filled with all the fullness of Yourself! May the garden of my heart produce all that is good so that You may share it with many who are in great need. I love You and belong to You alone. Take me and mold me as You have planned, for I know it will produce joy unspeakable and give You the glory due Your name! In the name of my Beloved, the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen and amen!"*

PAUSE FOR A MOMENT AND GO TO THE PRAISE LIST AT THE END OF THIS BOOK. SELECT A FEW WORDS OR PHRASES WITH WHICH TO PRAISE YOUR DEAR BRIDEGROOM.