

CCF Conference 2012
Saturday, Feb. 4
“Open to Me”

Last night we reviewed specific warnings within the Word of God, which He gives to those who have been allowed *by the Spirit of Grace* to come into a greater understanding of the Word of the Kingdom. We know that in the first parable in Matthew 13, the seed, which was broadcast by the sower was specifically identified by Jesus as the “Word of the kingdom.” **Matthew 13:18 "Hear then the parable of the sower. 19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom...**

We saw in Peter’s experience what happens to a person when he/she refuses to believe what the Lord says about the dangers that face those who understand this Word. Peter was the very disciple who answered the question that Jesus asked of them: “Whom do you say that I am?” Peter *knew* that Jesus was *the Christ, the Son of the Living God!* Then again at a time when many of the disciples were turning from following Jesus that Jesus said to the Twelve **John 6:67 ... "You do not want to go away also, do you?" 68 Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal [aionios] life.**

Peter did not believe Jesus when He told him that *they all* would ‘scatter’ whenever the Shepherd was stricken. Peter did not accept and believe what he had been told by the Christ, the Son of the Living God! Jesus even specifically called Peter out on this, telling him that he would deny Him three times that very night. Then when given the chance to watch and pray so as to not enter into temptation, he slept. That is very dangerous ground! The end result of all of Peter’s unbelief was that when the cock crowed that night, Peter left the lighted courtyard, went out into the darkness and wept bitterly! This is instructive for us.

One more thing to which we might want to give attention is the fact that “they all scattered”! Instead of remaining together, encouraging and exhorting one another during this very dark hour of temptation, they went their separate ways. Peter was alone as he followed Jesus from afar — separated even from the others — when he denied Jesus that night. He wasn’t with James or John or the others. He went his way, alone. And when confronted with temptation, three times he denied the very One for whom he previously vowed to die, even cursing with his last denial. The cock crowed and Jesus’ eyes found him! I really can’t imagine the moment. This is instructive for us.

Last night, we saw in the Word that we *would all fall a sleep!* Do we believe that? Why would it be so important for us to believe Jesus’ Word, that we would ALL fall asleep? It is because that, in itself, gives us the warning to be watchful, to wake up! In fact, the parable of the ten virgins ends with the warning: **Matthew 25:13 Be on the alert, then, for you do not know the day or the hour with.** You know the interesting thing about sleep is that you really don’t know you are sleeping until you wake up! Right? When you are awake, you KNOW that you are awake! However, when you are asleep, you

don't know you are asleep until you wake up! I think that herein is the reason for the admonitions in Scripture that we are not to forsake our assembling together, because we are to stir each other up! We simply may not know that we have fallen asleep (though I believe the Holy Spirit may try to let us know!).

Last night we also saw why Jesus began to speak to the crowds in parables. We saw that God may or may not permit a person to come into maturity. We saw the responsibility a person has when the Spirit of Grace allows him/her to come into an understanding of the secrets/mysteries of the kingdom. The responsibilities are great. The warnings are immense! Nevertheless, the blessings that come as a result of being granted the secrets of the Kingdom cannot/do not compare to anything this world has to offer. We KNOW that, right?

Last night, we came to the place in the Song of Songs where the king had taken the Shulamite woman to that place in the cleft of the rock, the secret place of the steep path (that leads upwards). We learned that it is at this place where God revealed His Glory to Moses, typifying for us that it is at this place wherein we can come into a greater understanding of the Gospel of the Glory of Christ. Therefore, today, we want to witness the continued journey of the Shulamite woman, as she grows in her love and desire for the king, having been taken to that place — the cleft on the rock, the steep pathway! Today we want to grasp a better understanding of the dangers along the way, the dangers of becoming sleepy on our journey, and the need we have one for another. The Song is just one of the places within God's Word that reveals potential dangers relative to the Bride of Christ. Lately it seems we are seeing the warnings all over the place. Perhaps God is trying to TELL us something!

The first place in the Song that we see the Shulamite woman falling into a dangerous place is at the beginning of chapter three. At the end of chapter two, the woman had certainly reached a level that would typify us coming into a good grasp of the kingdom of the King. And it is here that we see the first hint of danger for her. Chapter three opens with this: **Song 3:1 "On my bed night after night I sought him Whom my soul loves; I sought him but did not find him.**

Wait a minute! Where and how was she seeking him? It is evident that she still had a heart to seek him. She had *actively* sought him for a time, but then as time would have it in this world, she became a bit lazy, perhaps a bit complacent! She sought him from on her bed! How did she ever think she would find him from on her bed, a place of rest? This makes me think of the battle each of us has with our flesh, depicted by Amalek, the descendants of Esau, the son of Isaac, who represents for us the man of flesh. It was the descendants of Amalek (the Amalekites) who were the first enemy to come against the Children of Israel after they left Egypt during their trek to the Promised Land? Yes, it was the Amalekites, who do indeed picture for us our enemy, the flesh. The Amalekites came against Israel at a place called Rephidim (the very name indicates that this was a place of beds, a place of rest). It was here that the Amalekites attacked the weak and the young — a place, which was not to be their resting place, at a time when they were not to take their rest. It was this enemy with whom God told Israel they would have war from

generation to generation. It was only through the prayers of another (Moses on the mountain) that Joshua could defeat the Amalekites there in Exodus chapter seventeen. It is a great teaching for us concerning the ongoing battle each one of us has with our flesh, and why we need others to pray for us.

So it was upon her bed night after night that the Shulamite woman was seeking the one whom her soul loved. The text itself indicates that this was not just a moment in time, but rather a period of time — ‘night after night!’ It is not surprising that she could not find him. Finally, she came to her senses and thought:

Song 3: 2 'I must arise now and go about the city; In the streets and in the squares I must seek him whom my soul loves.' I sought him but did not find him.

We know that the king had already told her where she could find him. She had asked him at the first of their intimacy, back in chapter one, when he answered her specific question as to where he pastures his flock: **Song 1:8 "If you yourself do not know, Most beautiful among women, Go forth on the trail of the flock, And pasture your young goats By the tents of the shepherds.**

But here, some time later, she is seeking him from upon her bed. When she didn't find him, she got up and went into the city, looking for him in the streets and squares. She didn't find him there either. The literal translation of the word for *squares* is “broad places”. We know what a person finds on the broad path, right? Jesus told the disciples in **Mt 7:13 "Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. 14 For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it.**

Do you think the cleft of the rock, the steep pathway was narrow or broad? Do you think there would be many people at the cleft of the rock on the steep path, or just a few? How about on the broad path? Notice it was here — on the broad path — that the watchmen of the city found her: **Song 3:3 "The watchmen who make the rounds in the city found me, And I said, 'Have you seen him whom my soul loves?' 4 Scarcely had I left them When I found him whom my soul loves; I held on to him and would not let him go...**

She was looking for her king in places where he had not directed her to look. Of course, she did not find him in those places! How could she? He simply was not there! (This is instructive for us!) She should have known better, shouldn't she? Instead of finding the one whom her soul loved, she found the watchmen — the very ones whose task it was to sound the alarm of danger for the people. But look where they were when she found them — they themselves were on the broad path. They themselves had lost their way, as well. Look at what God said of the watchmen in Israel. And they answered her not. They had no idea where he could be found.

Isaiah 56:10 His watchmen are blind, All of them know nothing. All of them are dumb dogs unable to bark, Dreamers lying down, who love to slumber...

Jeremiah 6:17 "And I set watchmen over you, saying, 'Listen to the sound of the trumpet!' But they said, 'We will not listen.'

What do you think about that? How foolish was she to go to a place where he had not directed her, asking others if they had seen the one whom her soul loved. Did she think she would find him there? Did she think *they* would tell her? In the Song, we see that she did not find him *until she left* the watchmen! It wasn't until she left the city and the broad path that she found him. This is instructive for us!

Once she found him, she clung to him and would not let him go. Then the king did a very sweet thing for her. In chapter 4, it is obvious that he *not only forgave* her for her slack, but he *also revealed* to her once again how much he loved her, how he viewed her, and encouraged her that she has come into a level of maturity! (We covered this in the last session in December.)

Today I would like to pick up the story here, because there is more we can learn from this OT type of Christ and His bride. In her repentance, and in her finding the way to him once again, in chapter four he lets her know of his intent to marry her. Throughout chapter four and the first verse of chapter five, there are five instances he refers to her as his "bride", with four of those five times he also identifies her as his sister. Let's look at these instances:

Song 4:8 "Come with me from Lebanon, [my] bride, May you come with me from Lebanon..

4:9 "You have made my heart beat faster, my sister, [my] bride; You have made my heart beat faster with a single glance of your eyes, With a single strand of your necklace.

4:10 "How beautiful is your love, my sister, [my] bride! How much better is your love than wine, And the fragrance of your oils Than all kinds of spices!

4:12 "A garden locked is my sister, [my] bride, A rock garden locked, a spring sealed up. She had been set apart for a time, while she worked in her own garden, and finally she has produced enough fruit that she invited the king to come into her garden. Really it was *his* garden in which she worked to produce fruit for *him*. The woman said:
4:16 "Awake, O north wind, And come, wind of the south; Make my garden breathe out fragrance, Let its spices be wafted abroad. May my beloved come into his garden And eat its choice fruits!"

And the king does just that! He responded: **Song 5:1 "I have come into my garden, my sister, [my] bride; I have gathered my myrrh along with my balsam. I have eaten my honeycomb and my honey; I have drunk my wine and my milk. Eat, friends; Drink and imbibe deeply, O lovers."**

A sister is a sister *by birth* —an individual brought into the family through birth! A bride becomes a wife *by choice*! And so we see that here in chapter four and the first verse of chapter five, the king refers to her as his bride (his desire is to make her his wife) and then his sister bride. (She had been brought into the family.) Initially, she had asked him to *kiss* her, to *draw* her, to *tell* her. He has done so. He has given her all she needs to continue on the path that would lead to marriage. Even though there was a “bump in the road,” if you will, there in chapter three where she took a premature rest and sought him upon her bed night after night, she did eventually find him again, and when she did, she clung to him as if to never let go! And *as a result of all of that*, he now refers to her as his bride, his “sister/bride.” Perhaps he sees her potential in perseverance...which we know to be necessary in the antitype. Let’s remember the phrase: “my sister bride” as we continue in the story.

So here was a feast wherein Solomon could partake of the fruit that she had brought forth from her own garden, which she really knew to be his! And not only Solomon could partake of her fruit, but the other “lovers” as well! The others with whom she had been able to run! Solomon could gather his myrrh, his honey, his honeycomb; he has drunk his wine, and his milk from *her* garden (which was really his garden). Yes, she had produced much fruit! She had come into a very good amount of maturity! Who would have ever thought that *that which followed this* would have happened?

But then, as we know the course that life often takes n— yes, she slips back into sleepiness! And doesn’t that happen in our life? In the physical realm we know sleepiness often occurs after a large meal. God often uses things in the physical realm to teach us things surrounding the spiritual realm. It seems He is doing that here. (And remember, we often do not know when we are asleep. We only know when we are awake that we are not asleep!) Look what it says next: **Song 5:2 "I was asleep, but my heart was awake.**

How did it happen again??? Would we have expected that? Perhaps not. *Should* we have anticipated that? I think so! That is why we are warned so frequently in Scripture to stay alert, to be sober, to wake up, to stay steadfast, to assemble together! Because sleepiness can happen to each of us at any point in our walk with the Lord, until the moment we leave this earth! We *must* anticipate this! From the text, which we will get to, we should notice the growing seriousness of becoming sleepy again! After all of this...after his identifying that he desires to marry her, and make her his wife resulting from the work she had accomplished, the fruit she had born, she sleeps again! She says:

Song 5:2 "I was asleep, but my heart was awake. A voice! My beloved was knocking:

'Open to me, my sister, my darling, My dove, my perfect one! For my head is drenched with dew, My locks with the damp of the night.'

Please look closely at his address of her! Here in 5:2 he refers to her as “my sister, my darling, my dove, my perfect one,” but not “my sister bride”! Why did he not call her his sister/bride, only his sister? Well of course, the family relationship can never change! For example, Orpah was still Naomi’s daughter-in-law even after she turned back. Her

actions subsequent to her coming into the family cannot change her being part of the family. Once a person is in the family, her/she is always in the family, no matter what takes place from that point. The familial relationship is unchangeable. But this is not true about the potential of becoming his bride. *If she remained asleep*, she *would lose* her place as his bride! You know, it is not the falling to sleep that is the serious danger! ALL the virgins fell asleep! But the danger is *if we stay asleep*! And THAT is why we need each other! That is why we need to stir each other up, to provoke each other to love and good deeds, especially as we see the day approaching! Because when we are asleep, we don't know we are asleep until we wake up!

Before we look to see what is her response to his request, let's consider what he meant by what he said. Why did he want her to open to him? Exactly what was he telling her? These are his words:

'Open to me, my sister, my darling, My dove, my perfect one! For my head is drenched with dew, My locks with the damp of the night.'

His "head is drenched with dew..." Again, Scripture will interpret Scripture for us!

De 32:1 "Give ear, O heavens, and let me speak; And let the earth hear the words of my mouth. 2 Let my teaching drop as the rain, My speech distill as the dew, As the droplets on the fresh grass And as the showers on the herb.

He has an *infinite* amount of teaching/instruction that he wants to give to her. He pictures it for her as rain. His teachings, His instruction, His doctrine, will be as the rain falling to the ground, and that for a purpose! His speech, His Word will 'distil' as the dew, which covers the ground after the night, in the morning light. Droplets on the grass; showers on the herb. About what would his teachings be for her? Of what subject matter does he want to tell her more? What are the thoughts in his head, metaphorically described as his head being drenched with dew, his locks damp of the night? In the type, Solomon is speaking these words to his prospective bride. And he asks her to open to him, to let him speak to her. He has SO MUCH to teach her yet. Even though she has learned so much, there is still so much more! What would this be telling us in the antitype? Can we accept that there is still so much that our Bridegroom wants to say to us? About what would his teachings be? About what would his teachings concern?

Isa 55:8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Neither are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. 10 For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without watering the earth, And making it bear and sprout, And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; 11 So shall My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.

His Word that comes down from heaven like rain, like snow, like dew — for the very purpose of allowing the hearer to bring forth fruit — will not return to the Lord without

accomplishing the purpose for which it was sent. Can we accept that our Bridegroom wants to give us more and more knowledge, more doctrine, more teaching, *for the purpose of our bearing MUCH fruit?*

John 15:7 "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.

There is a Psalm, which reveals what is in the mind of God when He gives us His Word like the rain. Interestingly, this is a Psalm written by King David as a prayer for his son, Solomon. We know that David had a good understanding of the promises made to him by God concerning his descendant, who would sit on his throne. While this Psalm is a prayer for Solomon's kingdom, we can rest assured that this Psalm reflects the characteristics of the Coming Kingdom of the Christ:

Psalm 72:1 (A Psalm of Solomon.) Give the king Thy judgments, O God, And Thy righteousness to the king's son. 2 May he judge Thy people with righteousness, And Thine afflicted with justice. 3 Let the mountains bring peace to the people, And the hills in righteousness. 4 May he vindicate the afflicted of the people, Save the children of the needy, And crush the oppressor. 5 Let them fear Thee while the sun endures, And as long as the moon, throughout all generations. 6 May he come down like rain upon the mown grass, Like showers that water the earth. 7 In his days may the righteous flourish, And abundance of peace till the moon is no more. 8 May he also rule from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth. 9 Let the nomads of the desert bow before him; And his enemies lick the dust. 10 Let the kings of Tarshish and of the islands bring presents; The kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts. 11 And let all kings bow down before him, All nations serve him. 12 For he will deliver the needy when he cries for help, The afflicted also, and him who has no helper. 13 He will have compassion on the poor and needy, And the lives of the needy he will save. 14 He will rescue their life from oppression and violence; And their blood will be precious in his sight; 15 So may he live; and may the gold of Sheba be given to him; And let them pray for him continually; Let them bless him all day long. 16 May there be abundance of grain in the earth on top of the mountains; Its fruit will wave like the cedars of Lebanon; And may those from the city flourish like vegetation of the earth. 17 May his name endure forever; May his name increase as long as the sun shines; And let men bless themselves by him; Let all nations call him blessed. 18 Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, Who alone works wonders. 19 And blessed be His glorious name forever; And may the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen, and Amen. 20 The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

What was on the mind of the king that he wanted to tell her so much more? It would have certainly been about his kingdom! Then, too, let's remember that even the manna — the bread which came down out of heaven — was given in the morning dew upon the ground. The people were to go out in the morning and collect it daily...but on the SIXTH day, what were they to do? On the sixth day, there were to collect TWICE the

amount. We see the command spelled out in **Ex 16:4 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My instruction. 5 And it will come about on the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily."**

I wonder if we could say that, *now more than ever before*, we could be taught and understand twice as much as any other generation had been taught in times past, because we can collect the manna in the dew every morning as we are in the sixth day, anticipating the seventh day? Our King's head is drenched with dew; His locks with the damp of the night. Would we sleep through it? Or will we wake up and open to Him?

Here we are at the end of the sixth day, could the King of kings want us to be gathering twice the amount as has been gathered before? Take a look at these passages: **Da 12:4 "But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase."**

...8 As for me, I heard but could not understand; so I said, "My lord, what will be the outcome of these events?" 9 And he said, "Go your way, Daniel, for these words are concealed and sealed up until the end time. 10 Many will be purged, purified and refined; but the wicked will act wickedly, and none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand. (Remember those prophets who longed to look into these things, but could not understand them. This is a perfect example of that!)

And so the king comes to her and tells her "My head is drenched with dew..." a vast amount of knowledge he still had to give to her, if she would but open to him, if she would not sleep. The doctrine, the teaching would come as the dew, like the manna upon the earth. Well, how did the Shulamite woman respond to the king's asking her to open to him? Look at what she says:

3 "I have taken off my dress, How can I put it on again?] I have washed my feet, How can I dirty them again?"

What is she saying here? What does she mean she has 'taken off her dress'? We know in the antitype what it means for the bride to clothe herself in fine white linen. We know that in that future Day, it will be given to the Bride to clothe herself in the very righteous acts that she, herself performed — fruit that she had brought forth in her garden, which is really her garden in HIS field (Rev. 19:7)! But here, she had taken off her dress. Had she stopped performing righteous acts, having considered that she had produced enough fruit and she can take her leave of working in the field? Even though her heart was awake, she was asleep! Perhaps we can say of her: the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.

Notice, also that she said she had *washed her feet*. What would that depict for us? It reveals that she knows she has confessed her sins and that she is clean. The king, *even at this point*, calls her his "perfect one." The very term in the original language indicates

that he knows that she is *defiled, upright, pious*. But he drops the description of “bride” here. She was not at the finish line yet. While he had allowed her to “come to maturity”, she still ran the risk of not finishing well. She is in serious trouble if she doesn’t wake up! What will the king do to entice her to wake up and open to him? Here is what he did to entice her: **4 My beloved extended his hand through the opening, And my feelings were aroused for him.**

He acted on her behalf, but still did not force her. And we’ll see that she suffered consequences for her slowness to respond! The text goes on to say:

Song 5:5 I arose to open to my beloved; And my hands dripped with myrrh, And my fingers with liquid myrrh, On the handles of the bolt. 6 I opened to my beloved, But my beloved had turned away and had gone! My heart went out to him as he spoke. I searched for him, but I did not find him; I called him, but he did not answer me.

There are consequences to falling asleep at this point in the relationship. A missed opportunity! A period of time where he cannot be found again. Perhaps even more dangerous than sleeping at this point is the next consideration: Once she wakes up, would she give up, or will she patiently endure and continue to seek him until she finds him again?

You know, I have observed that — at a time such as this — it is really easy to give up. You feel so unacceptable to the king. You feel like He has hidden Himself to the point that He doesn’t want to be found again. And you can feel like you really don’t know what to do to go forward again. This is lie from the father of lies! Satan wants to dupe us into thinking that we really can’t find him again. But notice — the king’s myrrh had been left on the handles of the bolt, so as to remind her of their past relationship, both his sacrifice for her and her sacrifice for him. He had asked her to open to him. And though she hesitated, she finally did! And yes she was injured for the missed opportunity (the watchman found her and beat her), but she finally finds him again. What is interesting here is that she remembered! The daughters of Jerusalem asked her: **Song 6:1 "Where has your beloved gone, O most beautiful among women? Where has your beloved turned, That we may seek him with you?"**

And she remembers what he had told her: **Song 6:2 "My beloved has gone down to his garden, To the beds of balsam, To pasture his flock in the gardens And gather lilies.**

Perhaps we find ourselves having fallen from our first love. Do we have the passion we had at first? Have we become complacent and sleepy? If so, are we willing to allow earthly things fall to the wayside with respect to first place in our lives? We must remember what the Lord says to the Church at the end of the dispensation: **Re 3:20 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me.**

That is all we need to do! Open the door! He IS the door! Open the Word! He is the Word! We just need to get back into the WORD, and allow Him to tell us all that He desires to tell us! There is so much more to hear! So much more to believe! So much more to accept! But we need to WAKE UP! And then not faint, when He reproves us!

Although the letters to the Churches in Revelation chapters two and three would address the Body of Christ throughout the entire 2,000 year dispensation, from the Church that fell from her first love, all the way to the end of the dispensation to the Church that has Jesus on the outside, knocking in order to be invited in, we must realize that what happened over a period of 2,000 years with respect to the Church, *can happen to us over a short period time in our lives*. In a very short period of time, we could fall from our first love, then spiral down to being lukewarm, neither hot nor cold. Perhaps here is Jesus knocking on the door of our Church. Perhaps some of us have found that we have drifted into the sleepiness. And it is right here, right now that Jesus is knocking through the warnings we have been learning in the Book of Hebrews.

You see our Shulamite woman is not really unlike us, is she? No, there is nothing new under the sun! The human heart is the same today as it has been since the day in the Garden of Eden that Adam took the bite of that forbidden fruit. Oh yes, God has sent the redeemer to redeem us out of our slavery to sin, and here we are, with two natures within us. Just like the Shulamite woman who knew in our opening verses of the book that she was ‘black but lovely.’ She understood that she had two natures within her just like we do. She was black like the tents of Kedar, and white like the curtains of Solomon. And just like us, she had continual choices to make. She is our example, isn’t she? Actually this whole story is our example. Jesus not only wants us to know of the pitfalls, He also wants us to know that He is ravished in His love for us! And He will do EVERYTHING — we allow Him to do — in order that we can become His wife!

It is comforting to know that God has already explained to us what we are to do in the place of having fallen from our first love! We are to ‘Remember therefore from where we have fallen, and repent and do the deeds we did at first.’ And if we have any questions as to what it would look like to repent, and do the first things, the Book of Hebrews has a more detailed account:

Heb 10:32 But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings, 33 partly, by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated.

For a moment, think back to those days. Perhaps people at the Church you were attending just didn’t get you! Here you were studying God’s Word, and LOVING it, growing by leaps and bounds, and it seemed all that you got was criticism. Perhaps you thought people would understand your enthusiasm and excitement, and even want it too. But instead, **you endured a great conflict of sufferings**, didn’t you? And in some respects, you may have been **made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations**. And if you were not made a public spectacle, you became **sharers with those who were so treated**.

Hebrews goes on to say: **34 For you showed sympathy to the prisoners, and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better**

possession and an abiding one. Perhaps we accepted this type of treatment joyfully then, knowing that we were gaining something much more valuable than present accolades by men. We knew what God's Word said! And we believed it. So, 'bring it on'!

This is where we once stood. Let's check ourselves here... Has this knowledge become commonplace now? One thing I noticed about our woman in the Song of Songs in comparing what happened in chapter three to what happened in chapter five is this: In chapter three, while she may have taken her premature rest... she still had the desire to seek! "**On my bed night after night I sought him Whom my soul loves; I sought him but did not find him. She then arose and went out to find him.**

Compare this to what happens in Chapter five, after she has experience a good amount of spiritual growth; after she has brought forth spiritual fruit, enough that a great feast could be undertaken, wherein the king enjoyed her fruit and even invited friends to partake of the fruit of her garden. She fell to sleep!

Let's go back to the Book of Hebrews for a moment. Following up where we left off on how to remember what we did at first, the author goes on to say:

35 Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.

We have to endure in order to do the will of the Father... We must endure! What do you think the will of the Father would be in this situation? The king has told us: 'Open to me, my sister, my darling, My dove, my perfect one! *For my head is drenched with dew, My locks with the damp of the night.*'

And if we as individuals, have even gotten to the place where we thought we were rich and had need of nothing, Jesus, our King, has told us what we need to do. In remembering the things we did at first, He then says:

I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich, and white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see. 19 Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore, and repent. 20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me.

Don't take your dress off and be content there! Put it on again. Clothe yourself so that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed!

Don't rest on the fact that you have confessed your sins! Put your sandals back on bring the good news to the others sitting here!

**Isa 52:7 How lovely on the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news,
Who announces peace And brings good news of happiness, Who announces
salvation, And says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"**

Peter was stayed on course, even though he denied the very One for Whom he promised to die! And in the end, he did die for the Christ! Ruth didn't turn back, even though her sister-in-law did; Ruth did not allow herself to be influenced by a sister (I am sure she loved!) And the Shulamite woman got up! She continued to seek for him whom her soul loved, even though she was beaten up for it!

What will we do?

We must repent! We must remember what we did at first! Awe must buy the gold that Jesus offers. We must continue to clothe ourselves. And ask Him to give us the eye salve that we may see again! Be zealous. Repent! Open to Him, whom your soul loves!