Session 15 – The Brides Final Intercession and Revelation 8:8-14

We have a little sister, and she has no breasts. What shall we do for our sister on the day when she is spoken for? [9] If she is a wall, we will build on her a battlement of silver, but if she is a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar. [10] I was a wall, and my breasts were like towers; then I was in his eyes as one who finds peace. [11] Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon; he let out the vineyard to keepers; each one was to bring for its fruit a thousand pieces of silver. [12] My vineyard, my very own, is before me; you, O Solomon, may have the thousand, and the keepers of the fruit two hundred. [13] O you who dwell in the gardens, with companions listening for your voice; let me hear it.[14] Make haste, my beloved, and be like a gazelle or a young stag on the mountains of spices.

A. INTRODUCTION

The final section of the Song of Solomon details the completion of the Shulamite's journey to intimacy and authority. Although it is the end of the Book, it is not the end of the story, because in reality, the identity and destiny of the Bride can now be lived out through eternity. Just as the wedding day is not the culmination of a marriage, but the beginning, so the completion of this journey is not the ending point, but the place of launching the Bride into the fullness of who she has been created to be.

It is my prayer that as we conclude the study of this Book, we will continue to pursue the journey with hope and faith, knowing that the outcome is certain, and that all that is required of us is to continue in daily humility, faith, and obedience.

B. THE BRIDE'S FINAL INTERCESSION FOR THE CHURCH

We have a little sister, and she has no breasts. What shall we do for our sister on the day when she is spoken for? [9] If she is a wall, we will build on her a battlement of silver, but if she is a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar.

1. The Bride has been vindicated before her brothers and before the larger Church because of the obvious fruit of her life journey. Where they have been critical and have lacked understanding, they now see her as she is, and come to her for intercession, and for wisdom and counsel concerning the immature Church. The Shulamite embraces their concern for the "little sister," and enters a place of unity in intercession – "we have a little sister." Here she is standing in a mature place of love and unity with the Body of Christ, identifying with and accepting the responsibility to pray for the emergence of the immature Church.

2. The "little sister" speaks of the immature Church, the people whose hearts are not yet awakened to the Bridegroom's love, and to the journey before them. Because they have not yet been awakened to the Bridegroom's love, they remain unprepared to face the strategies of the evil one to discourage and defeat them.

3. The "little sister" is still unstable in all her ways, easily affected by pressures, by circumstances, and by the ups and downs of relational stresses. She is little in faith, not having a developed sense of intimacy with God that leads to joyful obedience. She is immature in her ability to give spiritual nourishment to others. Having

not yet received the message of the Bridegroom's love deep in her own heart, she is not able to minister to others with authority and power.

4. The question of "what shall we do for our sister" speaks of the strategies of intercession and discipleship to prepare the immature Church for the coming of the Bridegroom, the return of the Lord Jesus. "In the day that she is spoken for" refers to the day of the Lord's return, when the Bride will be summoned to His side. The question here is, how do we prepare the immature Body of Christ for this all important day? Many of us are given the assignment of being evangelists to the Church, calling the Bride of Christ to prepare herself for the return of her Beloved.

5. The phrases "if she is a wall . . . if she is a door" speak of the discernment that must come forth concerning the identity and assignments that God has sovereignly given to His people. This implies listening to the Holy Spirit, discerning from Him how He has called and gifted His people, so that training and preparation may be made according to their design.

    a. The "wall" speaks of the protection of pastoral care ministries, of intercession, of prophetic insight. These ministries are released for the care and protection of the saints, the coverings over them in times of warfare. If she is a "wall," then they will build battlements of silver, or structures of ministry that will bring protection and redemption to the people of God.

    b. The "door" speaks of the ministry of the evangelist, one who opens the way for many to enter the Body of Christ. If the Holy Spirit reveals that this little sister is an evangelist, then she must be prepared accordingly. Encasing her with "boards of cedar" speaks of the fragrant and preserving character of Jesus clothing the Bride as she ministers to those lost in the world system. The cedar wood speaks of Jesus' humanity, giving her the grace to relate to people in their context. Yet, the wood is fragrant and preserving; in other words, she will not be infected by the evil she encounters as she opens the door of the Gospel.

C. THE BRIDE'S REVELATION OF HER MATURITY BEFORE THE PEOPLE

I was a wall, and my breasts were like towers; then I was in his eyes as one who finds peace.

1. The Bride is now able to stand confidently before God's people and declare her assignment to them. "I am a wall" – she knows that while her ***calling*** is to love Jesus with all her heart, soul, mind, and strength, her ***assignment*** is to stand as a protecting wall around God's people. She is to cover them in prayer, to teach them, and to nourish them in the truth of God's Word until they are able to feed on their own. She has been supernaturally strengthened to provide spiritual food for God's people, and they will be protected and equipped for battle by the nourishment she supplies.

2. Like other Biblical leaders, the Bride is secure in her identity because she has been consistently responsive to the King's voice, agreeing with Him concerning herself, and obeying His directives about her life and ministry. Paul speaks confidently of the certainty in his heart that he is leading by the grace of God, and not by the agenda of his own self-interest.

2 Corinthians 1:12, 15 For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience that we conducted ourselves in the world in...godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, and more abundantly toward you. [15]And in this confidence I intended to come to you...

3. John the Baptist knew by revelation who he was and therefore could declare his message with liberty and boldness.

John 1:22-23 Then they said to him (John the Baptist), "Who are you..? What do you say about yourself?" He said: "I am `The voice of one crying in the wilderness...as the prophet Isaiah said."

Luke 3:16 John answered...to all, "...One mightier than I is coming...

John the Baptist made this most amazing statement when introducing Jesus. He said, "Jesus is even mightier than I." He looked around the nation and couldn't find anyone else to be the standard to compare Jesus' might to. The best example was his own ministry. He said, "Jesus is even mightier than me." He had a clear understanding of how he stood in the grace of God.

4. This supernatural assurance releases powerful emotional dynamics. God will bring His people to this place of holy confidence where absolutely nothing can shake their faith. The Bride will also have this same testimony before the Lord even before her natural life is over. She will have the assurance that she accomplished all the will of God with all of her heart.

5. The Bride has found peace now before the eyes of the King. She has learned to live before the audience of One, responding only to His voice, seeking only the pleasure of His gaze. Therefore, she knows who she is, and what she is to do. There is no more striving, no anxiety about her place; she is settled and mature in her role. Because there is no striving in her, the King sees her as peaceful, and readily available to His leading and to His purposes.

D. THE BRIDE'S REVELATION OF HER ACCOUNTABILITY BEFORE GOD

[11] Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon; he let out the vineyard to keepers; each one was to bring for its fruit a thousand pieces of silver.

1. The Bride understands that there is a time for accountability before the Lord for what she has been given in ministry. She has been walking out the confession of 8:10, and realizes that there will be a time of standing before the Lord to give account for what we have done with what we've been given

1 Corinthians 3:11-15 [11] For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. [12] Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— [13] each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. [14] If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. [15] If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.;

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

2. The "vineyard" speaks of God's people worldwide (Isaiah 5:1-7). Israel was God's vineyard in the Old Testament, and the global Body of Christ is His vineyard in New Testament understanding. The vineyard at Baal Hamon speaks of the size and scope of the Body of Christ around the world. There is no other mention of this place in Scripture or in Israel's history. The words literally mean "populous," or "multitude." Jesus will have an accounting from His servant Bride for the labour entrusted to her.

3. Jesus has given charge of His vineyard to "the keepers," His servants who are to tend the vineyard, make it fruitful, and bring the fruit to the King at the end of the age.

Matthew 21:33 "Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner that planted a vineyard...and built a tower. And He leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country.

We are living in the time of the absence of the owner of the vineyard. Jesus is in the "far country" of Heaven, waiting for the timing of the Father to return to claim His prize. The Shulamite realizes that she is one of the "keepers," the servants of the King who have been given a stewardship that has accountability attached to it. We must see ourselves in both roles: the Bride with great intimacy and privilege, and the servants whose task it is to prepare the Bride for the Lord's pleasure.

4. There is a day of reckoning coming, when we will stand before Jesus and give account of what He has given us to do with His inheritance. Those who are unfaithful and self-serving with their stewardship will face harsh consequences, while those who are faithful will receive the pleasure of the Lord and a greater measure of inheritance.

Matthew 21:40-41 "Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes...He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease His vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons."

E. THE BRIDE'S REVELATION OF MATURITY BEFORE GOD

[12] My vineyard, my very own, is before me; you, O Solomon, may have the thousand, and the keepers of the fruit two hundred.

1. The Bride is able to stand in sober confidence before the King, presenting to Him the fruit of the labour of her hands. It is a sobering thing to be accountable to God, but what a powerful reality is in store for us who are faithful with what God has given us to do!

2. At the beginning of the journey, the Shulamite's vineyard was barren and unproductive. She had nothing to present to the King (see 1:6). She had been locked in the prison of performing according to the agenda of others, and therefore her own vineyard was unkempt. Now she says before God, "O King Solomon, O King Jesus, you know I have given you the thousand you have asked for. I have said yes in every area that you have required of me in these years and I have the assurance of a life that I've given myself wholly unto you." What a powerful assurance to have before we leave the earth!

3. The Bride is able to acknowledge that there are those alongside her who will share in the fruitfulness of her labour. These are the faithful ones who encouraged her, who worked with her, who were her comrades in her journey to intimacy and authority. This is encouraging to those who at times wonder why their lives are not as fruitful as some other more visible leader in the Body of Christ. We tend to compare ourselves with others instead of responding to the King's voice, but we can rejoice in sharing the reward that comes from walking alongside others in their journey.

F. JESUS' FINAL COMMISSION TO THE BRIDE

O you who dwell in the gardens, with companions listening for your voice; let me hear it.

1. Jesus speaks now to the Shulamite Bride as she is in her place in His gardens. She has embraced the lifelong assignment of being among His precious people, and has been found faithful in this place of service to God's people. This is a powerful affirmation for the Bride, because under the pressures of serving the larger Bride, she didn't quit or become offended, even though there were many opportunities to do so. She has found peace in her assignment, knowing that the key is maintaining intimacy with Jesus in the context of ministry. Her roots have gone deep in His love and purpose for her, and she has become stable and fruitful in it.

2. The King's companions are now listening for her voice. There is an influence that comes simply by enduring over time without becoming offended and bitter. There are many who have had powerful insights, but because of offense and bitterness, have lost their voice. The King is delighted in those who come through the journey without bitterness or offense, who are able to dwell in the gardens in peace and confidence, loving the Body of Christ, whose voice is desired among the people of God.

3. The King Himself wants to hear her voice. He has great pleasure hearing the voice of His Beloved, for it is sweet to Him (2:14). He longs to hear her voice in several ways:

    a. **Worship** – Jesus loves to hear the love-songs of our heart to Him. The reality of personal intimacy is never to be lost, or relegated to secondary status. The first commandment is to love Him with everything we are and have, and He longs to hear the voice of the Lover.

    b. **Declaration** – Jesus longs to hear the voice of the Bride speaking forth His words, whether it be to the Body of Christ in teaching, or to the lost in evangelism. Speaking His Word is one of the main ways that we partner with Him, and He loves to hear it.

    c. **Intercession** – Jesus ever lives to make intercession for us, (Hebrews 7:25), and it is His joy to share that ministry with His Bride. Isaiah 62 calls us to night and day partnership with God in the ministry of intercession. It is the primary way that His purposes are accomplished on the earth, and He longs to hear the voice of His Bride in that place of partnership.

G. THE BRIDE'S FINAL INTERCESSION FOR HIS RETURN

Make haste, my beloved, and be like a gazelle or a young stag on the mountains of spices.

1. She instantly responds to the 8:13 command with worship and intercession. “Come to me, and then come for me! Come to me now with your Presence being manifested, then come for me at the Second Coming.” She immediately obeys the exhortation to let Him hear her voice as she offers this final intercessory cry for Jesus to come quickly.

2. The Bride’s cry has all the components that the Lord Jesus longs to hear from her heart:
    a. Worship – she calls upon her Beloved. She misses Him, and the yearning of her heart is to be with Him face to face. This is the same cry as found in Revelation 22:17, where the Spirit and the Bride say “Come!”

    b. Intercession – she calls to Him to come quickly, for the yearning of her heart longs for His presence. The Apostle Paul spoke of this same kind of longing:

Romans 8:20-23 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God...For we know that the whole creation groans and labours with birth pangs together until now...but we also ...groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.

3. She calls to Him to come in His victorious strength and power, like a gazelle or a young stag. This is the same terminology as in Chapter 2, when Jesus was pictured as effortlessly conquering the mountains of opposition. The Bride is calling upon Him to return at the end of the age to bring an end to every opposition, and establish His Kingdom. The mountains of opposition will become the mountains of spices, the place of eternal worship and adoration. (They are no longer mountains of myrhh). The whole earth will become the dwelling place of God, brought to fullness by the presence of the King. This cry of intercession is the chief role of the Bride as we await the return of Jesus as King of kings, and Lord of lords.