

# LIFE AND BUILDING AS REVEALED IN SONG OF SONGS

## Message One

### Experiencing Christ as Life by Loving Him as a Person

Scripture Reading: 1 John 5:12; S.S. 1:2, 4; 2:8-9; 4:1, 4

#### I. Life and building are the basic and central revelation of the Bible:

- A. Life is the content, and building is the corporate expression of this content.
- B. Life is just God Himself, and building is simply the expression of God as life in a corporate Body—cf. Gen. 2:9-12; Rev. 21:2, 18-19a, 21; 22:1-2a.

#### II. Life being a person—cf. 1 John 5:12:

- A. Life is God Himself—cf. Eph. 4:19.
- B. Life is Christ—John 11:25; 14:6.
- C. Life is the Spirit—Rom. 8:2a.

#### III. Our need to contact this Person who is life:

- A. 1 Tim. 1:14 says, “And the grace of our Lord superabounded with faith and love in Christ Jesus.”
- B. We receive the Lord by believing into Him—John 1:12.
- C. We enjoy the Lord by loving Him— 14:21, 23.

#### IV. According to Song of Songs, the lover of Christ is drawn to pursue Him for satisfaction—1:2—2:7:

- A. The Lord draws us with the cords of a man and with bands of love—Hosea 11:4a.
- B. The Lord wants His seeker to have a personal, affectionate, private, and spiritual relationship with Him—1:4, 2.
- C. The lover of Christ progresses by beginning with seeking and continues with finding. After finding comes appreciation which is followed by a rich enjoyment.
- D. The lover is then brought into the banqueting house where His banner over her is love. This is enjoyment to the uttermost.

#### V. Separated by a wall:

- A. “The voice of my beloved! Now he comes, leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. My beloved is like a gazelle or a young hart. Now he stands behind our wall; He is looking through the windows, He is glancing through the lattice.”—S.S. 2:8-9.
- B. This portrays some separation between the seeking one and the Lord.
- C. We love Him, but it seems that He is away. We love Him, but we do not have His presence. This is because we have loved Him for our goal and for our intention.
- D. The discrepancy between the Lord and the seeking one is caused by two different personalities.

#### VI. Needing to see this crucial turning point—2:8:

- A. John 11 shows us a real discrepancy between the lovers of Jesus and Himself, and this discrepancy is exactly the same as in the Song of Songs.
- B. The Lord is training and disciplining the seeking one to forget about herself, her personality, and her will, and to take the Lord Himself as her Person.
- C. The Lord will train us in one thing: to put our personality aside and to take Him according to His intention, His way, and for His goal.

#### VII. Our will must be subdued to His will:

- A. The Person we love is a stronger person with the strongest personality.
- B. We must be subdued and conformed to His personality, His will, His intention, and His goal.
- C. The discrepancy between the seeking one and the Lord in chapter two was due entirely to her strong will.

- D. In S.S. 4:4, "Your neck is like the tower of David, built for an armory: a thousand bucklers hand on it, all the shields of the mighty men.":
1. The neck signifies our will—cf. Exo. 32:9; Acts 7:51.
  2. After the natural will is dealt with, we will have a resurrected will.
  3. The crucified and subdued will is just like a flock of goats standing on the mountain side, but the resurrected will must be like the tower of David builded up as an armory where the weapons for fighting are kept—S.S. 4:1, 4.
- E. This is the lesson that we all must learn in order to really experience Christ as our life.

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## Message Two

### Eight Stages of Growth in Life

Scripture Reading: Song of Songs 1:9, 15; 2:2, 14; 3:6, 7, 9, 10, 11

#### I. A family of description with eight figures to describe the seeking one:

- A. A company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots—S.S. 1:9
  - 1. The horses signify natural strength in a worldly way.
  - 2. You may be seeking the Lord, but you drag the world behind you.
  - 3. In your seeking of the Lord, others are impressed not with the Lord, but with something of Pharaoh—Rom. 12:2a.
- B. Doves' eyes—S.S. 1:15:
  - 1. Doves' eyes signify the insight, the understanding, and the realization of the Spirit.
  - 2. The more we appreciate the Lord, the more our eyesight will be transformed.
  - 3. We no longer trust in our natural horse strength, but now we trust in Him—Phil. 3:3.
- C. A lily—S.S. 2:2:
  - 1. A lily signifies a life lived wholly by faith—Matt. 6:28-30.
  - 2. A lily is one of the Lord's seeking ones who lives on this earth, but not by this earth; she lives by trusting in God.
  - 3. By such a faith, she becomes as pure as the white lilies.
- D. A dove— S.S. 2:14
  - 1. In the Bible, the dove is the sign of the Holy Spirit—cf. Mark 1:10.
  - 2. As a dove, the seeker has practical faith in God.
  - 3. She has put away her trust in her horse's strength; how she has a living trust in God.
  - 4. After the dove stage, there is a long period of time between S.S. 2:14 and 3:6 where she was found in the clefts of the rock (the cross) and in the covert of the precipice (the Lord's ascension) to be permeated with the death (myrrh) and resurrection (frankincense) of Christ—cf. Exo. 17:6; 2 Cor. 4:10-12; Psa. 91:1.
- E. Pillars of smoke— S.S. 3:6:
  - 1. A pillar of smoke stands on the earth supporting the expanse.
  - 2. The apostles were pillars standing fast without shaking to uphold God's interest on the earth—cf. Gal. 2:9.
  - 3. The church of the living God is spoken of as the pillar and base of the truth— 1 Tim. 3:15.
- F. Solomon's bed—S.S. 3:7:
  - 1. As a bed, the seeker is now one with Solomon; she is one with Christ. Christ is the content and she is the container.
  - 2. The bed is for rest and victory in the night, signifying the church age, during the time of spiritual warfare, signified by the sixty mighty men who surround the bed.
  - 3. As a bed, Christ's lover is the victory of the overcoming Christ, full of the power of the overcomers among God's elect that carries Christ even in times of difficulties.

G. A palanquin—S.S. 3:9-10:

1. A palanquin is a stately, royal car carrying the rider in the day time.
2. The seeker is now the moving vessel of Christ who moves by being contained in her. He moves in her and with her.
3. The lover of Christ and Christ are in a union of triumphant celebration.
4. Christ's lover is a palanquin, a carriage for Christ, made by Christ Himself out of the resurrected, uplifted, and noble humanity (the wood of Lebanon), having God's nature (gold) as its base, Christ's redemption (silver) as its supports, and Christ's kingship (purple) as its seat—vv. 9-10.
5. The inside of the palanquin is inlaid with the love of Christ's seekers (daughters), signifying that the lover of Christ is one with all the seekers of Christ in love in the principle of the Body of Christ.

H. Solomon's crown—S.S. 3:11:

1. This is not the crown for kingship; it is the crown for Christ's espousal with us at the wedding day.
2. Incarnation was a "mother" who gave Christ His humanity as a crown, a treasure. The humanity that Christ put on in His incarnation and uplifted in His resurrection is His crown.
3. As Christ's human wife transformed with His divinity, we become a crown to Him—cf. Prov. 12:4a.

**II. When the seeking one was like a horse loving the Lord, she was full of her own opinions. Even as a little dove, she still had a certain kind of personality. However, when she becomes the pillars, the bed, the palanquin, and the crown, she has lost all her personality by being permeated with the myrrh and frankincense, the death and resurrection of Christ—cf. 2:14-3:5:**

- A. The union of the bed with its sleeper (vv.7-8), the union of the palanquin with its rider (vv. 9-10), and the union of the bride with her bridegroom (v.11) all signify the complete union of the lover with Christ, which has made her God's new creation in Christ's resurrection (2 Cor. 5:17).
- B. Now she only expresses the personality of Christ in His rest and in His move. This is the way for us to take Christ as our life. It is by loving Him as our Person, enjoying Him as our satisfaction, and experiencing Him in so many ways that we may become His full expression.

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## Message Three

### Becoming a Garden and a City

Scripture Reading: Song of Songs 1:11; 3:6, 9, 10; 4:4a, 6, 8, 12-16; 5:1-5; 6:2, 4

#### I. The Bible reveals that God's eternal will is firstly a garden and ultimately a city:

- A. The garden and the city include the whole Bible from beginning to end.
- B. The whole Bible shows us that our spirituality should not be only individualistic, but must be for the building.
- C. First Corinthians 3:9 says, "...you are God's cultivated land (farm), God's building."

#### II. The turning points for the seeker to progress from the crown to the garden:

- A. To the mountain of myrrh (death) and the hill of frankincense (resurrection)—S.S. 4:6.
- B. To mount Lebanon (ascension)—v. 8.
- C. To the valley—v. 8.

#### III. "A garden enclosed is my sister, my bride, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. Your shoots are an orchard of pomegranates with choicest fruit; henna with spikenard...with all the trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices."—S.S. 4:12-14:

- A. As the garden, she grows all the spices which are the attributes of Christ, the sweet aspects of the Lord's person.
- B. Formerly the Lord was the henna flower to the seeking one, now she grows henna flowers for the Lord—1:14: 4:13.
- C. He was her enjoyment, but now what He is has been wrought into her, and she is growing it back to Him for His enjoyment.
- D. Whatever flows out of this garden is the material for the building up of the city.
- E. By going to a mountain of myrrh and a hill of frankincense, she was wrought into the building—4:6.
- F. In the Song of Songs, the garden and the city are the very person of the seeking one which shows that she fully corresponds to the standard of God's eternal will.

#### IV. A deeper experience of the cross:

- A. "I sleep, but my heart is awake. A sound! My beloved is knocking. Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my perfect one; for my head is drenched with dew, my locks with the drops of night."—5:2.
- B. The Lord as the man of sorrows calls the seeker to deny our spiritual attainment to be such a suffering one with Him—Isa. 53:3; S.S. 5:2-5.
- C. By becoming a man, Christ denied what He was as God in order to come to the earth to accomplish God's purpose by suffering as a "man of sorrows."—Phil. 2:5-8.
- D. We need to fill up the lack of the Lord's affliction for His Body's sake—Col. 1:24.

#### V. "You are as beautiful, my love, as Tirzah, as lovely as Jerusalem, as terrible as an army with banners."—S.S. 6:4:

- A. She is so beautiful to the Lord, even as beautiful as Jerusalem. But to the enemy, she is as terrible as an army with banners.
- B. The city of Jerusalem signifies the building up of the Body, a corporate life—Rom. 12:5; Eph. 4:16.
- C. The Lord is not seeking some individually spiritual and mature persons; He is seeking a corporate Body—Eph. 1:23; 5:25b.
- D. The Christian life is not for the individual, but for a corporate Body—1 Cor. 12:27; Rom. 12:5.

#### VI. The building up of the Body is the goal of God's economy and our Christian life:

- A. Through her living in Christ's ascension as the new creation in resurrection, the lover of Christ becomes mature in the riches of the life of Christ so that she becomes the building of God and its safeguard, the holy city—6:4a; cf. Gen. 2:8-12, 18-24.
- B. We become God's dwelling place, His sanctuary, the Holy of Holies, by participating in the four stages of the divine romance revealed in Song of Songs—1:2-3; 2:14; 4:8; 6:4; Rev. 21:9-10, 16.
- C. To become the sanctuary of God is to be built up (related to the building up of the Body of Christ) in the growth in the life of Christ with its unsearchable riches unto maturity—Eph. 4:12-16:
  - 1. In the Old Testament the building of God is typified by Tirzah and Jerusalem; in the New Testament this building is the organic Body of Christ—v. 16.
  - 2. Ultimately, the building up of the organic Body of Christ, which is also Christ's wife (5:25-32), will consummate the New Jerusalem, the holy city as the consummation of the Holy of Holies, the mutual dwelling of God and His redeemed in eternity—Rev. 21:2-3, 16, 22.
- D. Through the dealing of the cross, we become the sanctuary of God; this sanctuary is the Holy of Holies, which is God Himself—S. S. 6:4a:
  - 1. When we enter into the Holy of Holies, we enter into God and become the sanctuary; that is, we become God in life and nature—Heb. 10:19-20.
  - 2. John 14:23 and Ephesians 3:17 prove that the God whom we are pursuing is making us His duplication; for God to make us His duplication means that He makes us His dwelling place, His Holy of Holies— Rev. 21:16.
  - 3. The lovers of Christ eventually become duplications of God in life and nature but not in the Godhead; this is the fulfillment of God becoming man that man might become God—the high peak of the divine revelation.

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### Message Four

#### Engaging in Spiritual Warfare and Being Equipped to Work with the Lord

Scripture Reading: Matt. 16:18; Eph. 6:10-20; Song of Songs 4:8; 6:10; 7:1, 4, 5, 7, 11-12

#### **I. When the seeking one becomes the city, she is also an army:**

- A. She is not just an armory as in the past (4:4) which is defensive, but an army which is offensive.
- B. It is not just a matter of defending the kingdom, but also of fighting for the kingdom.
- C. An army with banners signifies the seeking one has become an army marching in triumphant victory.

#### **II. Wherever the building of the church is, there is the need for spiritual warfare—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 6:10-20:**

- A. The Israelites who worked in the building with Nehemiah labored with one hand to build and with the other hand held their weapons for fighting the battle—Neh.4:17.
- B. In Ezekiel 37:2-10 all the dry bones, after being inbreathed with life, came alive to be built into the habitation of God; at the same time, they were formed into an army.
- C. The city is God's dwelling place, but it is also the fighting army to the enemy.

#### **III. Spiritual warfare is based on the victory of Christ—Heb. 2:14; Col. 2:15; 1 John 3:8:**

- A. The starting point of spiritual warfare is standing upon the victory of Christ; it is seeing that Christ has already defeated the enemy—S. S. 4:8; Rev. 3:21; 5:5-6:
  - 1. The Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil— 1 John 3:8.
  - 2. In His incarnation and human living Christ defeated Satan during the temptation in the wilderness—Matt. 4:1-11.
  - 3. Through death the Lord Jesus destroyed the devil, who has the might of death; He abolished Satan, brought him to naught—Heb. 2:14.
- B. The work of the church on earth is to maintain Christ's victory; the Lord has already won the battle, and the church is here to maintain His victory— Eph. 6:11, 13.

#### **IV. Spiritual warfare is a matter of the Body of Christ; we must fight the battle in the Body—Eph. 1:22-23:**

- A. Spiritual warfare is not an individual matter; it is a matter of the Body— 4:12, 16; 5:30.
- B. The church is a corporate warrior, and the believers together make up this corporate warrior— 6:10-20.
- C. If we read Ephesians from chapter 1 to chapter 6, we will see that warfare is a matter of the Body of Christ, and the Body is a new creation in Christ, in the Spirit, and in the heavenlies—2:6:
  - 1. If we do not have the Body life, we are not adequate to engage in spiritual warfare.
  - 2. In order to fight the battle, we must be in the reality of the Body—4:12, 16.
- D. After we have been formed corporately into an army, we will be able to fight against God's enemy— 6:11-12.

#### **V. "Who is this woman who looks forth like the dawn, as beautiful as the moon, as clear as the sun, as terrible as an army with banners?"—S.S. 6:10:**

- A. She looks forth as the dawn, the breaking of day—cf. 2:17; 4:6.
- B. There is no more shadow, no more darkness with her; she is completely filled with light as the moon and the sun—Prov. 4:18.

- C. "Return, return, O Shulammitte; return, return, that we may gaze at you. Why should you gaze at the Shulammitte, as upon the dance of two camps?"—S.S. 6:13:
1. Shulammitte is the feminine form of Solomon. The use of this name here indicates that at this point she has become Solomon's duplication, counterpart, the same as Solomon in life, nature, expression, and function, as Eve was to Adam (Gen. 2:20-23).
  2. The spiritual significance of the two camps as two armies is that we are more than conquerors (Rom. 8:37). It also signifies a strong testimony.
  3. There being two armies indicates that the country girl, the Shulammitte, was not alone. An army indicates the principle of the Body of Christ—Rom. 12:5.

**VI. The seeking one has reached the consummate attainment; she is now qualified to work with the Lord:**

- A. "How beautiful are your footsteps in sandals, O prince's daughter!"—S.S. 7:1a:
1. "Footsteps" indicate action which has already taken place. It is the beauty of her action and her move.
  2. Her move is not with bare feet, but with shoes keeping her feet from the defilement of the earth—cf. Eph. 6:15.
- B. "Her rounded thighs are like jewels, the work of the hands of a skilled artist."—S.S. 7:1b:
1. Jewels are precious gems which have been transformed by the skillful workman who is God Himself.
  2. Her thighs like jewels represent her standing power and stability.
- C. "Your neck is like a tower of ivory"—7:4a:
1. A tower of ivory means that her neck is full of resurrection life.
  2. Her neck is a tower ministering life in resurrection.
- D. "Your eyes, like the pools in Heshbon by the gate of Bath-rabbim;"—7:4b:
1. Eyes like pools are enlarged and broadened to cover the whole universe.
  2. A gate is for coming in and going out which implies communication of fellowship.
- E. "Your nose is like the tower of Lebanon, which faces Damascus."—7:4c:
1. The function of the nose is to smell.
  2. This is for safeguarding the Lord's work.
- F. "Your head upon you is like Carmel, and the locks of your head like purple. The king is fettered by your tresses."—7:5:
1. A lock is a bundle of hair which has been dealt with, plaited, and bound together signifying submission.
  2. Her submission is so high, with the color of purple, that it brings in the Lord's kingship and authority.
- G. "This your stature is like a palm tree, and your breasts are like the clusters."—7:7:
1. She is so full of life that she does not care for her own needs but mainly the needs of others.
  2. Her stature being like a palm tree signifies that she has a full stature of the fullness of Christ—Eph. 4:13.

**VII. "Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the fields; let us lodge in the villages. Let us rise up early for the vineyards; let us see if the vine has budded, if the blossom is open, if pomegranates are in bloom; there I will give you my love."—S.S. 7:11-12.**