

LIFE AND BUILDING AS REVEALED IN SONG OF SONGS

Message Three

Becoming a Garden and a City

Scripture Reading: S. S. 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 first a garden and ultimately a city—
Gen. 2:8-9; Rev. 21:2—22:5:**
 - 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 individualistic but must be for the building.
 - C. First Corinthians 3:9 says, "...you are God's cultivated land [farm], God's building."
- II. We need to see the turning points for the seeker to progress from the crown to the garden:**
 - A. The seeker goes to the mountain of myrrh (death) and to the hill of frankincense (resurrection)—S. S. 4:6.
 - B. She also goes to Lebanon (ascension), Amana (truth, reality), Senir (victory), Hermon (destruction of the enemy), and the leopard's mountains (the heavenlies, where Satan and his subordinates are)—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 to 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. The seeker is called to a stronger 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 her 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 afflictions 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 in 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 in 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.