

**Last time we began with the specific supplication of the bride, which, Christian should be the "OFTEN" cry of our hearts to Christ:**

"Draw me, we will run after thee"!

While she is to be commended for her desire and prayer, KNOW that her supplication was also a confession, and an acknowledgement of her own sin and spiritual weakness that she must be drawn to the One who is "altogether lovely". It is both commendable and lamentable!

Christian, do you pray like this? I believe THIS should be the heart-language and heart-cry of every child of God, and of every soul who knows the bridegroom personally, intimately. AFTER she was drawn to Him, she didn't linger or procrastinate, she RAN to Him!

Psalm 119:32: "I WILL RUN the way of thy commandments, WHEN THOU (God) shalt enlarge my heart"

Running to Him was an expression of her joy and love to Him! There is no other joy or gladness like this ...to be brought near to Christ!

The bride then confesses: "I am black but comely" (She is speaking to the daughters of Jerusalem)

Remember, the daughters of Jerusalem (I believe) represent true believers, but their love and affection for the bridegroom is NOT where the bride's love and affection IS for the bridegroom...

But her confession is also something for them to BEHOLD! I am black, but beautiful; (the church ~ the bride) is outwardly tried, tested, persecuted, and afflicted; like tents of Kedar that are darkened and scorched by the sun in the Arabian desert; but on the inside, (saith the bride), I am beautiful, like the curtains within Solomon's house!

Do not look or gaze upon me because of my outward infirmities and afflictions, (daughters of Jerusalem), because the King has brought me into His intimate presence! "My beloved is mine, and I am His"

**Song 1:6: My mother's children, were angry with me, and then we read of "vineyards" and "the bride's vineyard", which were her responsibility.**

Who are "my mother's children"? Brethren to the bride, those who should love her and be close, supportive, and helpful to her, but instead they resist and contend with her, like false brethren, and the religious "lost" of Christ's day and in the time of the apostles.

"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not". His Father should have been their Father, but sadly, they were false brethren!

But there is another family dynamic to consider here, it pertains to the Lord Jesus' human family, His brethren who did not believe Him to be Israel's Messiah.

Psalm 69:8: "I am become a stranger unto my brethren,  
and an alien unto my mother's children". (Family Foes)

This dishonor toward Christ from His family is a common dynamic for children of God with unbelievers in their families. Matthew 13:57

We will come back to this thought...but first...

**There are the vineyards. Vineyards of others and the bride's own vineyard, which were all committed to her care, made her responsibility, she was entrusted to keep them!**

The bride was trusted, diligent, watchful, and responsible, but in the keeping other's vineyards, she neglected her own vineyard.

This seems to be her complaint: "They made me keeper of the vineyards".

Consider the keeping of OTHER vineyards to be personal responsibilities and duties, or burdens put on us by others, or self-inflicted burdens and responsibilities, or even excuses... or all of the above, which become the cause of neglecting our own souls... Our own vineyard!

I have to go take care of this or that for this person or that person; I cannot miss this appointment; I must go, they called me, they need my help, I have to help them! And then there is: I can't miss work! Oh yeah, I can stay late, I can miss church! I will be there early; I will do my devotions later! I've got so much to do... I'm too tired now... my family can wait, but oh yeah, I can make time for you... tomorrow, tomorrow I will take care of my "family vineyard" .... Of my own vineyard!

The bride labored long in keeping the fields and vineyards of others, but she neglected her own vineyard, she neglected her own soul, her own family, her own spiritual needs. She strayed from her beloved: From His Word, prayer, meditation, the gathering and fellowship!

Now let me say this: We ought to be helpers of others in their needs; we ought to be devoted to Christ and to His church in this respect, there WILL BE people, who are close to you, who will call on you and even compel you to help them... there is nothing wrong with that...

But beloved, YOU CANNOT, YOU MUST NOT farm out your life, your labors, and your spiritual energies for others and neglect the needs of your own soul and your own devotion to Christ!

There has never, ever been any other human in the world who expended himself or labored for the needs of others more Christ! But even the Son of God did NOT neglect personal and intimate communion with His Father!

Matthew 14:23, Mark 1:35, Luke 6:12, 9:18

Back to my mother's children: One of the amazing realities of this dynamic of keeping and caring for the vineyards of

others; for those who are close to you... They'll still find reasons to be angry with you.

**In recognizing that she neglected had not kept her own vineyard,  
now she cried out to "her beloved One" for His presence once again!**

**Song 1:7-8**

TELL ME, where are you feeding your flock, where is your flock resting, so that I may come and rest in your presence and among your flock!

Follow the footsteps, O thou fairest among women!