

(5:1) - I AM COME INTO MY GARDEN, MY SISTER, MY SPOUSE: I HAVE GATHERED MY MYRRH WITH MY SPICE; I HAVE EATEN MY HONEYCOMB WITH MY HONEY; I HAVE DRUNK MY WINE WITH MY MILK: EAT, O FRIENDS; DRINK, YEA, DRINK ABUNDANTLY, O BELOVED. -

This verse is connected with chapter four. It describes the Lord coming into His garden to commune with His people. “*Myrrh with My spice*” speaks of the sufferings of Christ, which, though like myrrh, bitter to him, are like spice, of a sweet-smelling savor to God and to His people. The fruits of this is the salvation of His people and delightful to Himself. He provides a feast for Himself and for His people as He enjoys all the glory, and they enjoy all blessings. “*Honey*” and “*honeycomb*,” “*wine*” and “*milk*,” all stand for the precious Word of God, the Gospel of His grace in Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit who applies these truths to the hearts of God’s people and brings us to joy and assurance of salvation because of what Christ accomplished for us in His death. “*Friends*” and “*beloved*” describe all the people of God, sinners saved by grace, all who are washed in the blood of Christ and clothed in His righteousness.

(5:2) - I SLEEP, BUT MY HEART WAKETH: IT IS THE VOICE OF MY BELOVED THAT KNOCKETH, SAYING, OPEN TO ME, MY SISTER, MY LOVE, MY DOVE, MY UNDEFILED: FOR MY HEAD IS FILLED WITH DEW, AND MY LOCKS WITH THE DROPS OF THE NIGHT. -

We all need sleep for our physical bodies. But sleeping on the job is never good for us. This is the situation here. “*I sleep*” describes the soul in a state of coldness and indifference. Our lives as believers here on earth are marked with times of fervent joy in serving the Lord but also with times of negligence and carelessness. This is part of our inward warfare of the flesh and the Spirit. What we see here is the bride asleep when she should be awake and ready to hear the voice of Christ. She is asleep but not dead - “*but my heart waketh.*” A sinner saved by God’s grace can never be totally deaf to the voice of the Savior. Paul dealt with this same condition in Ephesus - “*Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light*”(Eph.5:14). This sad state of mind may show itself in a neglect of the means of grace. But even in these times of indifference, we who believe have good reason for encouragement. The Bridegroom will not let the bride continue forever in such a sad state. Christ continually calls us to return to our first love. He knocks at the door, not in anger, but out of love and concern for His bride.

Christ still refers to His bride as His sister, His love, His dove, His undefiled. These expressions of His love are to awaken her out of sleep. He revives her, not with legal threats of condemnation or loss of reward, but with expressions of love and grace (cf. *Hos. 14:4-5; Deut. 32:1-3*). His word is a refreshing wake-up call to His people. It is a light turned on to dispel the darkness of this sleep (*Psa. 119:105*). He reminds us of the glory of His Person and the power of His finished work to save us from our sins and give us the great treasure of eternal life and blessedness. This is a wake-up call that we need and often.

(5:3) - I HAVE PUT OFF MY COAT; HOW SHALL I PUT IT ON? I HAVE WASHED MY FEET; HOW SHALL I DEFILE THEM? - Most commentators claim that these are the words of the bride who has lost sight of the beauty of God’s grace in her salvation. She is so comfortable in her bed of indifference that she makes excuses for not responding to the voice of her Husband in a positive way. She is still the unworthy bride of a worthy Husband. Salvation is ALL OF GRACE!

(5:4) - MY BELOVED PUT IN HIS HAND BY THE HOLE OF THE DOOR, AND MY BOWELS WERE MOVED FOR HIM. - When the Lord put His hand in the doorlatch to open it, her heart was

moved for Him. The bowels refer to the emotions (*cf. Php. 2:1*) that stir up love. Just as it took the power of God to call us out of our spiritual death in conversion, the same power calls us to wake up and walk after and follow Him. When God is pleased to call us in this way, He draws us to seek after Him and more of His grace.

(5:5) - I ROSE UP TO OPEN TO MY BELOVED; AND MY HANDS DROPPED WITH MYRRH, AND MY FINGERS WITH SWEET SMELLING MYRRH, UPON THE HANDLES OF THE LOCK. - Here we see the sweet effects of God's grace in moving the bride's heart toward Christ, her Beloved. The Holy Spirit sets it before us under the illustration of the figures of hands dropping with myrrh and fingers smelling with the fragrance of myrrh. This is a picture of believers laying hold of Christ as our sin-bearing Who suffered in our place and died for our sins. He brought forth the only righteousness whereby God justifies us and from which we receive spiritual life. Here, the bride's God-given faith and love for her Husband is being actively exercised towards Him.

(5:6) - I OPENED TO MY BELOVED; BUT MY BELOVED HAD WITHDRAWN HIMSELF, AND WAS GONE: MY SOUL FAILED WHEN HE SPAKE: I SOUGHT HIM, BUT I COULD NOT FIND HIM; I CALLED HIM, BUT HE GAVE ME NO ANSWER. - Christ has withdrawn Himself from the bride. We know He would never abandon her or write her a bill of divorce, but He will at times withdraw His comforting presence temporarily from His bride. Why would He do this? It is to teach us once again of our great need of and dependence on Him and His Word. It is to show us anew how unworthy and sinful we are and how worthy and gracious He is. Consider King David when he committed adultery and murder. He did not lose his salvation, but he did lose the joy of his salvation (*2 Sam. 12:13; Psa. 51:12*). There are times that God's children must cry out in desperation, "*Hide not Thy face far from me; put not Thy servant away in anger: Thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation*" (*Psa. 27:9; cf. Psa. 69:17; 102:2; 143:7*). We must continually cry, "*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin*" (*Rom. 7:24-25*).

(5:7) - THE WATCHMEN THAT WENT ABOUT THE CITY FOUND ME, THEY SMOTE ME, THEY WOUNDED ME; THE KEEPERS OF THE WALLS TOOK AWAY MY VEIL FROM ME. - We are ALWAYS sure to find the voice of our Lord where God's preachers preach His Word, His Gospel which speaks comfort to us. When His bride searches for Him, He will always find her and bring her back to Himself with loving chastisements. He will always cause His people to realize their utter sinfulness, chastising them to make them realize even more their need of Him and to bring them to cherish even more His righteousness (*Heb. 12:11*). Smiting, wounding, and taking away her veil (bring her to shame) teach us that God's servants do not spare sharpness of speech in dealing with their hearers, but admonish them concerning their indifferent condition, removing any veil or covering of excuse (*Isa. 58:1*). Also, remember that when we seek to recover a brother or sister who has fallen into a bad spiritual condition, we must do so in humility and with grace, reminding them of what the Lord has done for them in Christ (*Gal. 6:1-3*).

(5:8) - I CHARGE YOU, O DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM, IF YE FIND MY BELOVED, THAT YE TELL HIM, THAT I AM SICK OF LOVE. - The bride is love-sick for her Husband. She pleads with the "*daughters of Jerusalem*" (brothers and sisters in Christ) to pray to the Savior on her behalf, knowing that He always hears the prayers of His people. This is true Godly sorrow over sin that the Holy Spirit uses to keep bringing us back to Christ (*2 Cor. 7:8-11*).