

**(8:1) - O THAT THOU WERT AS MY BROTHER, THAT SUCKED THE BREASTS OF MY MOTHER! WHEN I SHOULD FIND THEE WITHOUT, I WOULD KISS THEE; YEA, I SHOULD NOT BE DESPISED.** -

The bride of Christ continues with the same theme that has woven its way through every chapter of this book, namely, a desire to KNOW Christ more intimately and to be more keenly aware of His ever-abiding presence with her at ALL TIMES. This is every believer's desire and the essence of true growth in grace and in knowledge of Christ (*Php. 3:7-9; 2 Pet. 3:18*). True peace and assurance do not come to a sinner saved by grace by looking within. We do look within, but our self-examination is meant to drive us to look outside ourselves and look more to Christ and His righteousness for our whole justification before Holy God. Here, her request is that Christ be, not only a husband, but also a "BROTHER" to her. This reminds us of the Gospel truth of the kinsman-redeemer where the law required an able and willing near-kinsman to redeem a person out of debt. Christ is the Kinsman-Redeemer of His brethren. His nursing on the breasts of her mother refers to His incarnation in order to do the work of a near-kinsman to redeem His brethren (*Isa. 9:6-7; Heb. 10:10-17*). Believers in the Old testament looked for Messiah to come in the flesh. Being one with Christ by adoption, sharing the same Father (*John 20:17*). From here, we can see seven advantages which we as God's children gain from Christ being our elder brother.

(1) "*When I should find Thee without*" - All whom God has chosen in Christ, all whom Christ has redeemed, WILL seek Him and find Him. But where will we find Him? We will find Him outside the confines of sinful human religion, culture, and philosophy - "*Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. (Heb. 13:12-13)*". After Christ came into this world, He was hated, despised, and rejected by the Jews - "*He came unto His own, and His own received Him not*" (*John 1:11*). But, thank God, after His death, Christ was (and is) preached in the Gentile world, and all those who are citizens of spiritual Israel (God's elect, both Jew and Gentile) seek and find Him where His Gospel is preached. All His sheep own Him publicly, and they are not ashamed to call Him their own by their participation in the ordinances and truths of His Gospel before all men (*John 1:12-13*).

(2) "*I would kiss Thee*" - This metaphor describes God-given faith in and love for Christ. The psalmist wrote, "*Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him (Psalm 2:12)*". All who are members of His body, His bride, are brought by God to embrace and cling to Christ by means of all the grace given to them by the Holy Spirit. The Lord brings these graces to light and into exercise as we rest on His glorious Person and His finished work of redemption.

(3) "*Yea, I should not be despised*" - In clinging to Christ and pleading His blood (His righteousness imputed to us) as our only ground of salvation, we can rest assured of His love for us. We can be assured, even though we deserve His hatred and wrath, that neither is aimed towards us; for we are objects of His love, grace, and mercy (*Rom. 8:33-39; 1 John 4:10*).

**(8:2) - I WOULD LEAD THEE, AND BRING THEE INTO MY MOTHER'S HOUSE, WHO WOULD INSTRUCT ME: I WOULD CAUSE THEE TO DRINK OF SPICED WINE OF THE JUICE OF MY POMEGRANATE.** -

(4) *"I would lead Thee"* - It may seem odd that the bride speaks of leading the Bridegroom. We know HE is our supreme leader and always leads and guides us on our way. But this is not the leading of any authority that we have. In the original language this describes leading one who has triumphed over our enemies and, with respect and honor to Him, coming before Him and casting our laurels at His feet to worship Him. As servants of Christ, believers lead Him as ushers lead the master or as men go before kings to honor them as victorious conquerors (*cf. John 12:12-13*).

(5) *"And bring Thee into my mother's house"* - This is the advantage and blessing of true worship in the house (family) of the Lord. When we gather to worship God in spirit and in truth, we rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh (*Php. 3:3*). Christ is always with us, but we can be said to bring Him with us as we bring Him in our hearts and in His Word.

(6) *"Who would instruct me"* - This could read, "THOU would instruct me." God's people are taught of Christ by His Spirit and His Word, and all things are made known as we look at HIS word through His glory (*Luke 24:27,44-48; John 5:39-47*).

(7) *"I would cause Thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate."* - The idea here is not the church feeding Christ for nourishment as if He needed to be fed by us or needed anything from us for His own life and success. He is the one who feeds us with the bread and the water of life and grace. The idea here is the people of God (His bride) bringing Him pleasure by honoring Him with the sacrifices of praise and worship. In the days of King Solomon, the use of spiced wine and the juice of pomegranate was considered the most excellent form of celebration (*Song 5:1*). Spiced wine represents the joys of the Holy Spirit, and the juice of the pomegranate represents the gifts and graces of salvation.

**(8:3) - HIS LEFT HAND SHOULD BE UNDER MY HEAD, AND HIS RIGHT HAND SHOULD EMBRACE ME.** - This was stated in *Song 2:6*. The word "should" does not appear in the original manuscripts. It should read, *"His left hand IS under my head, and His right hand DOTH embrace me."* After seeking the Lord previously and not finding Him, now He returns to His bride, putting His left hand under her head and taking her in His arms and satisfying her desires. The meaning is that Christ condescends to His longing bride, willingly giving her the comfort and assurance of His presence. All who are saved by God's grace, all who are washed in Christ's blood and clothed in His righteousness, are safe in the arms of Jesus.

**(8:4) - I CHARGE YOU, O DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM, THAT YE STIR NOT UP, NOR AWAKE MY LOVE, UNTIL HE PLEASE.** - This is the third time the church has issued this charge to the daughters of Jerusalem (*cf. Song 2:7; 3:5*). It is a way of stating our desire not to have our sweet rest and comfort in Christ interrupted. If in this life it is interrupted, let it be at HIS appointed time. Let us not be used in an evil way to corrupt or divert believers looking to and resting fully in Christ and His righteousness alone. This charge is the result of having such access and being so familiar with Christ that her desire is to prevent ANYTHING from interrupting the assurance and comfort of His blessed presence. As members of the bride of Christ, as true believers in Him, we should take great care to let NOTHING come between us and our Lord (*2 Cor. 11:2-4*). Communion with Christ is the only thing that lifts us up above the cares and concerns of this life. When we are keenly aware of His presence, we should endeavor to keep Him ever present with us and seek to honor Him with the gifts and graces He has so richly and freely bestowed on us by the Holy Spirit.