

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XII

Issue 49

Published occasionally for Zion's mourners

Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:12-13

THE DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS

Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense. Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee. *Song of Solomon 4:5-7*

In John Bunyan's timeless classic, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, he mentions the "Delectable Mountains." He uses this name to describe that joyous place that Christians enjoy on their pilgrimage before entering the Celestial City.

Solomon here speaks of two "delectable mountains" of quite a different sort. As we have mentioned before, the book of Song of Solomon, is a very allegorical and beautiful poem about the unshakeable love of a BRIDEGROOM for HIS bride, and her responses to HIS overtures of love. He is quite candid in his description of this romantic love and attraction, using language which could perhaps cause us to blush, if it were intended for another purpose.

The carnal aspect of this description serves to emphasize the beauty of the pure love and desire which is expressed by this BRIDEGROOM for the one who is the object of HIS desire. The LORD has caused men to be attracted to the opposite sex in this world for the purpose of procreation and has ordained the carnal sexual relationship of a man and his wife, as a pure expression of their enjoyment and fulfillment with one another.

As with all things which are given, to men, for a pure purpose by GOD, men have taken and perverted it and used it in ways not sanctioned by HIM. Clearly the scripture teaches that this bond of sexual union is to be enjoyed only in the confines of the marriage bond, between a man and a woman, and is not given to mankind outside of that bond. Yet within those bonds of commitment, love, and trust, this union is most precious and completely without condemnation. *"Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."* (Heb 13:4)

When the LORD made the woman, HE made her to be perfectly desirable to the man, and in order to compliment that desire, made the man desirable to her. One of the prominent features which the LORD gave to the woman is her breasts, which are in a natural sense both useful in nurturing her children but also as an instinctively attractive feature of her body to the man. We usually laugh at such considerations but the plain fact is that such is true and the LORD is pleased to use this very feature to describe HIS attraction to HIS bride in Solomon's allegory.

The purpose of GOD in all of HIS creation is the magnification of JESUS CHRIST in the manifestation of HIS everlasting love for HIS bride. For this primary end HE has ordained the attraction of a man and a woman even as HE has ordained the marriage of a man and a woman as a demonstration of that perfect and sacrificial love of the bridegroom for the bride. *"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."* (Eph 5:31-32) Thus these "twins" or "two mountains" are also ordained unto the same end.

The imagery of these “two breasts” are clearly seen in Solomon’s frank but beautifully descriptive language as the BRIDEGROOM desires to lay in HIS beloved’s bosom the whole night, *“Until the day break, and the shadows flee away.”* HE is ravished with love for her and dotes upon her beauty as HE perceives her to be without imperfection, *“Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.”*

The Bride of CHRIST has beauty because HE has bestowed it upon her. She is seen in HIS eyes as having no imperfection at all, because HE has imputed HIS perfect righteousness to her and has removed any blemish which could possibly be found in her.. She has ever been perfect unto HIM, as HE made her, for HE has always beheld her as this pure object of HIS desire and unwavering love, having hidden her in HIS own bosom from before the foundation of the world. This is the very basis of HIS election of her and is that which is described as HIS “foreknowledge”.

Everything which the LORD would take delight in, CHRIST does provide in her behalf. Well has the hymnwriter said, “Jesus, thy blood and righteousness My beauty are, my glorious dress.” So HE takes perfect delight in that ONE whom HE has made spotless, she lacks nothing which HE requires and HE ever lives for her benefit. *“Seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” (Heb 7:25)*

Thus we are brought to consider HIS meaning in describing these “twins which feed among the lilies” which forms the delight which HE has in his bride as HE beholds that which typifies her beauty and that which HE delights to see in her.

One of these HE calls the “mountain of myrrh”. Myrrh is a “fragrant, gum resin with a bitter taste used in medicine as an astringent tonic, in perfumes, and in incense.” (Scott, Foresman Advanced Dictionary). It is one of the three gifts brought by the wise men of the East to lay before the LORD JESUS at HIS birth.

Its bitter taste describes the effects of sin upon men. Sin promises so much yet only delivers sorrow and ultimately death. Yet that which has a bitter taste to those who taste it yet yields a beautiful perfume in the nostrils of the BRIDEGROOM as HE is pleased to grant repentance from it to HIS bride beset and cast down by her own wickedness.

HE is personally acquainted with this “bitter perfume”, as HE took upon HIMSELF the very sin of HIS beloved Spouse, drinking the cup of wrath which was due unto her, draining its last dregs of condemnation and paying the price thereof with HIS own death on Calvary’s cross. HE has taken that which is bitter and acrid and made it into the most of beautiful of odors which waft up even to the very throne of GOD. *“I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. (Luke 15:7) “The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.” (Psa 34:18)* It is a place of true rejoicing as the LORD surveys that work which HE has accomplished and that one whom HE has purchased with HIS own blood. *“He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.” (Isa 53:11) “Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Heb 12:2)*

The other is called “the hill of frankincense”. Frankincense is also one of the three gifts brought by the Magi as gifts to CHRIST JESUS. Frankincense is also derived from the resin of a tree and is first mentioned in the scriptures as one of the ingredients in that Holy Anointing oil which was only to be used in the temple and upon the Priests. (see Ex.30:34) This oil was given its odor by the frankincense and was reserved for the enjoyment of the LORD alone. (see Ex.30:37).

As such it represents that one true worship which is both desired and sought out by the LORD, even as HE described it to the woman of Samaria, *“But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” (John 4:23-24)*

This is that pure worship which is alone given to those who are the Beloved of the LORD, who lean upon HIM and HE is pleased to dwell with her and to take HIS fill of love with her through the ages to come. *“My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies.” (Son 2:16)* mam