

蘇格蘭屬靈遺產

金 屑 集 Gold Dust

麥克臣 Robert M. M'Cheyne

- ✓ 一個人是什麼樣子，只要看他怎樣在神面前屈膝，這樣判斷準不會錯。
- ✓ 看自己一次就應當同時看基督十次。
- ✓ 渴慕得著更多屬靈的豐富肯定是蒙恩的標記。
- ✓ 如果我聽見主在隔壁為我禱告，我就不怕千軍萬馬。
- ✓ 只要時時活在神面前，與永世相比，沒有一件事是大得了不起的！
- ✓ 何等甘甜想到為神工作辛勞了一天，到了夜間能在祂的笑臉籠罩下安然躺下。
- ✓ 一個基督徒若不是切切等候主的回來，就一定會有缺憾。
- ✓ 我深知道基督最近的時候，也就是撒但最忙的時候。

『關鎖的園』(雅歌 4:12)

麥克臣 Robert M. M'Cheyne

「我妹子，我新婦乃是關鎖的園。」(歌 4:12)

作新婦是根據立約，作妹子則是享有同樣的生命。有人只作主的新婦而忽略了作妹子，滿足於主的救恩，而忘記了最終的目的乃是要像祂。當基督看上了一個罪人，不只是用慈繩牽引她歸向自己，最後乃是要她作妹子，將自己的性情和美德灌輸給她，好使她與神的性情有份。

SERMON VII.

"A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed."
—SONG iv. 12.

Doctrine.—The believer is Christ's garden.

I. The name here given to believers.—"My sister, my spouse," or rather, "my sister-spouse." There are many sweet names from the lips of Christ addressed to believers: "O thou fairest among women," i. 8; "My love," ii. 2; "My love, my fair one," ii. 10; "O my dove," ii. 14; "My sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled," v. 2; "O prince's daughter," vii. 1. But here is one more tender than all, "*My sister, my spouse*," iv. 9; and again, verse 10, and here, verse 12. To be spoken well of by the world is little to be desired; but to hear Christ speak such words to us, is enough to fill our hearts with heavenly joy. The meaning you will see by

what Paul says, 1 Cor. xi. 5 : "Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles?" He means power to marry one who is like-minded—a sister in the Lord ; one who will be both a wife and a sister in Christ Jesus—a *wife* by covenant, a *sister* by being born of the same Father in heaven. So Christ here says of believers, "My sister, my spouse," that they are not only united to Him by choice and covenant, but are like-minded also.

II. *These two things are inseparable.*—Some would like to be the *spouse* of the Saviour, without being the sister. Some would like to be saved by Christ, but not to be made like Christ. When Christ chooses a sinner, and sets his love on the soul, and when He woos the soul and draws it into covenant with himself, it is only that He may make the soul a sister,—that He may impart his features, his same heart, his all, to the soul. Now, many rest in the mere forgiveness of sins. Many have felt Christ wooing their soul, and offering himself freely to them, and they have accepted Him. They have consented to the match. Sinful and worthless and hell-deserving, they find that Christ desires it ; that He will not be dishonoured by it ; that He will find glory in it ; and their heart is filled with joy in being taken into covenant with so glorious a bridegroom. But why has He done it ? To make you partaker of his holiness, to change your nature, to make you sister to himself,—of his own mind and spirit. He has sprinkled you with clean water, only that He may give you a new heart also. He brings you to himself and gives you rest only that He may make you learn of Him his meekness and lowliness in heart.

(1.) *Inseparable.*—You cannot be the spouse of Christ without becoming sister also. Christ offers to be the bridegroom of sin-covered souls. He came from heaven for this ; took flesh and blood for this. He tries to woo sinners, standing and stretching out his hands. He tells them of all his power, and glory, and riches, and that all shall be theirs. He is a blood-sprinkled bridegroom ; but that is his chief loveliness. The soul believes his word, melts under his love, consents to be his. "My beloved is mine, and I am his." Then He washes the soul in his own blood ; clothes it in his own righteousness ; takes it in with Him to the presence of his Father. From that day the soul begins to reflect his image. Christ begins to live in the soul. The same heart, the same spirit, are in both. The soul becomes sister as well as spouse,—Christ's not only by choice and covenant, but by likeness also. Some of you Christ has chosen ; you have become his justified ones. Do you rest there ? No ; remember you must

be made like Him,—reflect his image; you cannot separate the two.

(2.) *The order of the two.*—You must be first the spouse before you can be the sister of Christ,—his by covenant before his by likeness. Some think to be like Christ first,—that they will copy his features till they recommend themselves to Christ. No, this will not do. He chooses only those that have no comeliness—polluted in their own blood, that He may have the honour of washing them. “When thou wast in thy blood,” Ezek. xvi. 6. Are there any trying to recommend themselves to Christ by their change of life? Oh, how little you know Him! He comes to seek those who are black in themselves. Are there some of you poor, defiled, unclean? You are just the soul Christ woos. Proud, scornful? Christ woos you. He offers you his all, and then He will change you.

III. *To what Christ compares believers: “A garden enclosed.”*—The gardens in the East are always enclosed; sometimes by a fence of reeds, such are the gardens of cucumbers in the wilderness; sometimes by a stone wall, as the garden of Gethsemane; sometimes by a hedge of prickly pear. But what is still more interesting is, they are often enclosed out of a wilderness. All around is often barren sand; and this one enclosed spot is like the garden of the Lord. Such is the believer.

(1.) *Enclosed by election.*—In the eye of God, the world was one great wilderness,—all barren, all dead, all fruitless. No part was fit to bear anything but briars. It was nigh unto cursing. One part was no better than another in his sight. The hearts of men were all hard as rock, dry and barren as the sand. Out of the mere good pleasure of his will, He marked out a garden of delights where He might show his power and grace, that it might be to his praise. Some of you know your election of God by the fruits of it,—by your faith, love, and holiness. Be humbled by the thought that it was solely because He chose you. Why me, Lord? why me?

(2.) *Enclosed by the Spirit's work.*—Election is the planning of the garden. The Spirit's work is the carrying it into effect. “He fenced it,” Isa. v. 2. When the Spirit begins his work, it is separating work. When a man is convinced of sin, he is no more one with the careless, godless world. He avoids his companions—goes alone. When a soul comes to Christ, it is still more separated. It then comes into a new world. He is no more under the curse—no more under wrath. He is in the smile and favour

of God. Like Gideon's fleece, he now receives the dew when all around is dry.

(3.) *Enclosed by the arms of God.*—God is a wall of fire. Angels are around the soul. Elisha's hill was full of horses of fire. God is round about the soul, as the mountains stand round about Jerusalem. The soul is hid in the secret of God's presence. No robber can ever come over the fence. "A vineyard of red wine: I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." Isa. xxvii. 2, 3. This is sung over thee.

IV. *Well-watered garden.*—Watered in three ways. *First*, By a hidden well. It is the custom in the East to roll a stone over the mouth of a well, to preserve the water from sand. *Second*, By a fountain of living water—a well always bubbling up. *Third*, By streams from Lebanon.

(1.) "*A spring shut up.*"—This describes the Spirit in the heart. in his most secret manner of working. In some gardens there is only this secret well. A stone is over the mouth. If you wish to water the garden, you must roll away the stone, and let down the bucket. Such is the life of God in many souls. Some of you feel that there is a stone over the mouth of the well in you. Your own rocky heart is the stone. Stir up the gift of God which is in thee.

(2.) *A well of living water.*—This is the same as John iv.,—a well that is ever full and running over. Grace new every moment; fresh upspringings from God. Thus only will you advance.

(3.) *Streams from Lebanon.*—These are very plentiful. On all sides they fall in pleasant cascades, in the bottom unite into broad full streams, and on their way water the richest gardens. The garden of Ibrahim Pacha, near Acre, is watered with streams from Lebanon. So believers are sometimes favoured with streams from the Lebanon that is above. We receive out of Christ's fulness,—drink of the wine of his pleasures. Oh for more of these streams of Lebanon! Even in the dry season they are full. The hotter the summer, the streams from Lebanon become the fuller, because the heat only melts the mountain snows.

V. *The fruit.*—The very use of a garden is to bear fruit and flowers. For this purpose it is enclosed, hedged, planted, watered. If it bear no fruit nor flowers, all the labour is lost labour. The ground is nigh to cursing. So is it with the Christian. Three remarkable things are here.

(1.) *No weeds are mentioned.*—Pleasant fruit-trees, and all the chief spices ; but no weeds. Had it been a man that was describing his garden, he would have begun with the weeds—the unbelief, corruption, evil tempers, etc. Not so Christ. He covers all the sins. The weeds are lost sight of. He sees no perversity. As in John xvii. : “They have kept thy word ; they are not of the world.” As in Rev. ii. 2 : “I know thy works.”

(2.) *Fruits.*—The pomegranate—the very best ; all pleasant fruits. And all his own. “From me is thy fruit found ;” “His pleasant fruits,” verse 16. The graces that Christ puts into the heart and brings out of the life are the very best, the richest, most pleasant, most excellent that a creature can produce. Love to Christ, love to the brethren, love to the Sabbath, forgiveness of enemies, all the best fruits that can grow in the human heart. Unreasonable world ! to condemn true conversion, when it produces the very fruits of paradise, acceptable to God, if not to you. Should not this make you stand and consider ?

(3.) *Spices.*—These spices do not naturally grow in gardens. Even in the East there never was such a display as this. So the fragrant graces of the Spirit are not natural to the heart. They are brought from a far country. They must be carefully watched. They need the stream, and the gentle zephyr. Oh, I fear most of you should hang your heads when Christ begins to speak of fragrant spices in your heart ! Where are they ? Are there not talkative, forward Christians ? Are there not self-seeking, praise-seeking, man-pleasing Christians ? Are there not proud-praying Christians ? Are there not ill-tempered Christians ? Are there not rash, inconsiderate ones ? Are there not idle, lazy, bad-working Christians ? Lord, where are the spices ? Verily, Christ is a bundle of myrrh. Oh to be like Him ! Oh that every flower and fruit would grow ! They must come from above. Many there are of whom one is forced to say, “Well, they may be Christians ; but I would not like to be next them in heaven !” Cry for the wind : “Awake, O north wind ; and come, thou south ; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out.”