

# ADDRESSES ON THE SONG OF SOLOMON

by

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## CHAPTER EIGHT

### SONG OF SOLOMON 8:8-14

“**What shall we do for our sister?**” (Song of Solomon 8:8).

THIS question was put by the bride to the bridegroom after she had been brought into the full enjoyment of the privileges that he delighted to lavish upon her. He had found her a shepherdess there in the hill country, and loved her and won her heart in those trying days when she felt herself so despised and neglected. Brought to the palace and united in marriage to the king, enjoying to the full his tender consideration and surrounded by the evidences of his affection, she could not keep from thinking of the little mountain home from which she had come.

She thought of the dear old mother who had raised her and cared for her after the father’s death, for it is evident that the mother was a widow, and the family by superintending the king’s vineyard earned a precarious living; and then she thought of the little sister, much younger than she, who had none of the privileges that she was enjoying.

And as she thought of her, she seemed to say, “***This bridegroom of mine, my king, the one who has loved me and brought me into these privileges, cannot but take an interest in my family, in my household, and I am going to speak to him about that sister of mine.***”

And so she turned to him in the tenderest, most confiding way, and said, “***I have a little sister, a little undeveloped sister, up there in the vineyard. I am concerned about her. Is there not some thing we could do for her? What shall we do for our sister?***”

And he responds at once,

**“If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she be a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar.”**

You see, this is just the oriental way of saying, *“I am so glad you spoke to me about that little sister of yours; I am so glad that you have not forgotten her and her needs. It will be a real privilege for me to show my love for you by what I do for her.”* And so he uses the striking figures of the wall and the door as he asserts his willingness to help. It was as though he said, *“Whatever her circumstances are, and whatever her needs are, I will be delighted to minister to them and I will make you my agent in doing it.”*

*It seems to me this expresses one of the very first evidences of union with Christ.*

We are no sooner saved ourselves, no sooner rejoicing in the knowledge of Christ as our Redeemer, as the Lover of our souls, as our heavenly Bridegroom, than we begin to think of others less privileged, and our hearts cry out with longing, *“What about my little sister? What about my brother? What about those who are still in their sins and still in their deep deep need, who do not know, do not understand this incomprehensible love of Thine which means so much to me?”*

And it is the Holy Spirit Himself who puts that yearning into our hearts that leads us to manifest an interest in the souls of others. In other words, every real Christian feels within him something that impels him to missionary service.

Are you saved yourself? Then have you been to the Lord about that little sister, or about that neglected brother? Perhaps it is a little sister or a brother you have never seen, and maybe, strange to say, of an altogether different color from yours! Perhaps that little sister of yours is away yonder, a child-widow in India, perhaps a down-trodden native woman in Central Africa, or a degraded Indian in the wilds of South America, but yet your little sister; for we read, **“God hath made of one blood all nations that be upon the face of the earth.”**

And while you may say, “But she is so sinful, so undeserving,” you must remember that you too were sinful and undeserving and the grace that is lavished upon you came from His heart of love. He delights to give to the undeserving, and the very need of that little sister of yours is the reason why you should be going to the Lord about her.

The bride here is really praying about her sister.

Do you often go to the blessed Lord in prayer for that little sister of yours? Perhaps it is a brother. My brother, you who rejoice in Christ Jesus, do you think very often of that poor, ignorant, under-privileged, degraded, sinful brother of yours, living perhaps in heathen darkness today, or dwelling in the slums of one of our great cities, or, it may be, enjoying all that this life has to offer and yet not knowing Christ? Have you been to Him about that degraded one? Somebody has said, “A selfish Christian is a contradiction in terms,” and yet we do hear people talking about selfish Christians.

Christianity is the manifestation in the life of the love of Christ and that same love which was lavished upon you He would now have you lavish upon others in their need. What wonderful pictures we have along this line!

In the beginning of John's Gospel we read how the Lord revealed Himself to one and another, and everyone who got that divine revelation went after someone else. Each said, "***I have a brother, a friend, a dear one in need, and I must go to that one and tell the story of Jesus; tell him that we have found Him.***"

The privileges, the blessings that God has given to us in Christ are not given to us for ourselves alone. We may say in connection with them all: You must either use them or lose them. "What," you say, "are you telling us that we may lose our souls after having been truly converted?" That is not a blessing. Your soul is you. Of course you cannot lose that if it is saved. I recognize the fact that having life eternal, you shall never perish, but I am talking about the blessings that the Lord lavishes upon you from day to day. They are in order that you may share them with others. To what extent do you enter into that?

I would have you think of three things.

First, to what extent do you use your time for the blessing of other people?

When I find Christians who need so much physical recreation and have so little time to seek to win souls, I do not quite understand it. I was speaking with a young man some months ago, and I said, "Do you do anything to win others for Christ?" He said, "I would like to, but it doesn't seem to be my gift. I work hard all day, and when Saturday comes I have to go off and get some physical exercise." I think his great invigorating exercise was throwing horse-shoes at a little stick.

I said, "Did it ever strike you that you could get wonderful exercise by taking a bundle of tracts and going out on a country road and visiting the homes along the way, telling people about their souls? Walking is wonderful exercise."

"But," he said, "you see, I am thinking of serious things all week, and I cannot be serious on Saturday afternoon."

Time is given us to use in view of eternity. I quite recognize that we need a certain amount of physical exercise or we would go to pieces, but you will find you can get on beautifully if you give more of your time to God.

I was saved forty-one years ago, and I can honestly say my best times ever since have been those in which I have spent my days trying to help other people to a knowledge of Christ, and it is the greatest exercise in the world.

I was visiting a preacher some time ago, and he asked, "What do you do for physical exercise?"

I replied, "I preach."

“But I mean when you want to get a rest,” he said.

“I preach some more and that rests me,” I answered; “the more you do in the work of the Lord, the better you feel.”

“Brother,” he said, “you will have a nervous breakdown if you are not careful.”

“But I am trying to be careful,” I said. It isn’t the Lord’s work that gives people nervous breakdowns, it is getting into debt, getting mixed up in questionable things, and then you get worried and upset. Just keep at solid service for the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will not have a nervous breakdown. Paul was at it for thirty years. They tried to kill him again and again; he was half-drowned several times, and was thrown to wild beasts, but the old man, when about seventy years of age, had much more vigor than a lot of worldly preachers that I meet, who have to go on a prolonged vacation every once in a while. Your time belongs to the Lord Jesus, and He gives it to you in order that you may use it to bless and help other folk. **“Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others”** (Philippians 2: 4).

Some time ago, I knew a dear man, one of the greatest men for physical exercise I ever saw. He worked hard on the street railroad. I would see him down on his knees, a great big covering over his eyes to shield them from the brilliant light, as he welded the steel rails. By Saturday noon, he was just worn out, and he would get a bundle of books and off he would go for exercise, over the hills and far away, hunting up poor needy souls, maybe in the County Hospital, possibly in the jails, and to poor families. Sometimes he would hear of somebody lying sick and poor and miserable, and he would go to see that one. And you know he had a remarkable way of preaching the Gospel. He would often lay down a five-dollar bill at the side of the bed, if he found out that they had no money to pay the bills. On Sunday he would say, “My! I was worn out yesterday, but I had a wonderful time Saturday afternoon, and I am all rested up.” He was living for others.

“Live for others while on earth you live,  
Give for others what you have to give,”

and then you will find the secret of a really happy Christian life. Your time is to be spent in the service of Christ for the blessing of others, for the blessing of the little sister, of that poor brother.

And then there is something else. He has entrusted you with your talents.

“Oh, but,” you say, “I haven’t any.”

Oh, yes; you have. You would not like it if others said you had none. But who are you using them for? For Christ, for the blessing of that brother, of that sister in need? It is the investment that you make of your talents here for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ that is going to bring you a reward at His judgment seat. You remember what He said, **“Unto every one that hath shall be given . . . but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.”**

You are to use the talents God has given you for Jesus' sake.

- Is it the ability to speak? Use it for winning souls to Christ.
- Is it that you know how to be a kindly sympathetic friend? Then surely you have a wonderful sphere for service.
- Is it looking up the shut-ins, the sick and needy, and giving them a tender loving word?

You would bless and help so many you never think of now, if you would only begin to use those talents for Him. It is not all the work of the man on the platform. I never see souls coming to Christ in a meeting but I wonder what started them.

Years ago, when I was young and ignorant, I would go home to my wife and say, "I won six souls tonight," and she would look at me and say, "Are you sure you did it?"

I would say, "No," of course, "but the Lord used me."

But you know it really began away back of that.

Perhaps it was a dear Sunday school teacher who had been sowing the seed in the heart of that young man or woman. It was lying there dormant for days, months, or years, and as the Word of God came anew, something was said that just caused it to fructify and burst into life, and that boy or girl came to Jesus.

Perhaps it was the lesson the mother taught as the child knelt at her knee long ago.

Perhaps it was the father's word dropped into the heart.

There is seldom a soul who comes to Christ but there were a lot of folk who had to do with it. It is not just the preacher and the preached message. God give us to use our talents for Christ. Paul planted, Apollos watered, "**but God gave the increase.**"

*Then there is my privilege not only to use my time and my talents but my money, to help and bless that little sister, that neglected brother.*

What a wonderful thing consecrated money is! There never would have been a dollar bill, a piece of silver money, a gold, copper or nickel coin in the world, if it had not been for sin. That is why Jesus calls it the mammon of unrighteousness. Every coin in your pocket is a witness that sin has come into the world.

If men and women had remained as they were when God created them, there would have been no money. People would not have sought to build up fortunes, and buy and sell things. We would still be living in a glorious state on this earth, and we would not have had to go out and earn our bread by the sweat of our brow.

And now Jesus says,

**“Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations”** (Luke 16:9).

Since the money is here, and we cannot get along without it, do not live for it; do not let it get a hold on you (“**The love of money is the root of all evil**”), but use it now in reference to the everlasting habitations; use it to meet, of course, your own needs and those of your family, but then use it as God enables you, to bless and help others in their deep spiritual need and in their temporal need too.

Then, by-and-by, when at last you reach the glorious habitation, you will see a throng running down the golden street to meet you, and they will say, “Welcome,” and you will ask in amazement, “Who can these be?”

And one will answer, “We are so glad to welcome you here, for it was your dollar that paid for that Testament that brought me the message of Christ.”

Another, “You met my need when in such distress I thought nobody cared for me, and then you gave me the money for a good dinner, and I could not help but think of the God of all grace who had put it in your heart to do that for me”; and another, “I came to Jesus because of the kind deed you did for me.”

Then we will feel it was worthwhile that we spent and were spent for others. **“What shall be done for our little sister?”** Let us share with her the good things we have.

The king says, **“If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver.”**

A wall speaks of *security*. If she has already entered into the blessings of Christ, we will build upon her a silver palace. We will add to that which is already hers. We will try to help and lead her on and build her up in the things which be in Christ.

**“If she be a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar.”**

A door speaks of *responsibility, or opportunity for service*.

**“A great door,”** says the apostle, **“and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries”** (I Corinthians 16:9).

**“Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name”** (Revelation 3:8).

But what use is a door if it has no side-posts to swing from? **“If she be a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar.”**

If she wants an opportunity for service, we will help to make it possible, and we will assist her in whatever is required, that she may work the better for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then as the chapter closes and the little book closes, the bride, her heart content to think she has come into blessing and that her little sister too has come into blessing, goes over the past, and talks about the vineyard days, the love that has been shown and the bliss now hers, and then she turns to her beloved one and says, **“Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.”** **“Till the day break and the shadows flee away.”**

The consummation of all bliss will be when we are at home forever with Him. Till then, let us seek to spend and be spent for His glory.

You have heard of the missionary offering that was being taken, and as the box was handed to a very wealthy man, he brushed it to one side and said, “I do not believe in missions.” “Then,” said the usher, “take something out; this is for the heathen.”

How can you be a real Christian and not be concerned about those who are less privileged than you are? God stir our hearts to think of the millions still in their great, great need. If we can do nothing else for them, we can bring their case to Him; we can be prayer-helpers; we can intercede on their behalf.

The wonderful thing is that when you begin to pray, the rest follows. Men who pray devise ways and means for giving. A lady said to me one time, “You know my husband is unsaved, and he never lets me have any money. He says he wouldn’t for the world give me a dime to put in the missionary offering. But I started praying about missions, and as I prayed, there came such a burden on my heart to do something. I had two or three chickens that I had bought with a little money I received from doing some sewing for a neighbor. It was all mine, and I said, ‘I am going to devote one chicken to the Lord, and every egg that this chicken lays will belong to Him.’ It has been wonderful to me to see that the other chickens lay every once in a while, but my husband growls and says, ‘That missionary chicken of yours lays nearly two eggs a day.’ Of course that is an exaggeration, but every little while I have another dozen eggs, and I take them to the corner store and get my money, and that goes for missions.”

I believe that the Lord will take that money and do with it what He did with the five loaves and two fishes: multiply, and multiply, and multiply them. Maybe one way in which He will multiply it will be to start some of you giving, and then, you see, the Lord will turn to this lady and say, “You are the woman that had that chicken the preacher told about. I am going to give you a part of the reward, for these folk just copied from you!”

Let us seek by grace to make every day count for the blessing of others. Loving Him truly we cannot be selfish or indifferent to the needs of those for whom He died, **“until the day break and the shadows flee away.”**

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