

# CHAPTER 5

## INTRODUCTION TO SONG OF SOLOMON 5

This chapter begins with Christ's answer to the church's request; in which he informs her, that he was come into his garden, as she desired, and gives an account of what he had done there; and kindly invites his dear friends to feast with him there, (<sup><2181></sup>Song of Solomon 5:1); Then she relates her case and circumstances, which followed upon this, her sleepy frame, and ungrateful carriage to her beloved; which he resenting, withdrew from her, and this gave her sensible pain, (<sup><2182></sup>Song of Solomon 5:2-6); what treatment she met with from the watchmen; her charge to the daughters of Jerusalem; and the questions they asked about her beloved, (<sup><2183></sup>Song of Solomon 5:7-9); which put her upon giving a large description of him, by each of his parts, head, hair, etc. (<sup><2150></sup>Song of Solomon 5:10-15); And the chapter is concluded with a general commendation of him and his loveliness, and a claim of interest in (<sup><2156></sup>Song of Solomon 5:16).

**Ver. 1.** *I am come into my garden, my sister, [my] spouse*, etc.] This verse should rather have concluded the preceding chapter, being Christ's answer to the church's request, which was speedily and exactly granted as she desired; which shows it was according to the will of Christ, and of which he informs her; for sometimes he is present, when it is not known he is: of the titles used, (see <sup><2148></sup>Song of Solomon 4:8,9); and of Christ's coming into his garden, (<sup><2146></sup>Song of Solomon 4:16). What he did, when come into it, follows:

*I have gathered my myrrh with my spice*: to make an ointment of, and anoint his guests with, after invited, as was usual in those times and countries, (<sup><1738></sup>Luke 7:38,46 <sup><1143></sup>Mark 14:3); "oil of myrrh" is mentioned, (<sup><1712></sup>Esther 2:12); These may designs, either the sufferings of Christ; which, though like myrrh, bitter to him, are like spice, of a sweet smelling savour, to God and to the saints; the fruits of which, in the salvation of his people, are delightful to himself, and which he is now reaping with pleasure: or the graces of his Spirit in exercise in them, in which Christ delights; (see <sup><2143></sup>Song of Solomon 4:13,14); and testifies by his presence; and having got

in his harvest, or vintage, as the word<sup>f306</sup> used signifies, he makes a feast for himself and friends, as was the custom of former times, and now is;

*I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey*: bread with honey, as the Septuagint version, dipped in honey, or honey put upon it; see (<sup><363></sup>Ezekiel 16:13); or the sugar cane with the sugar, as Jarchi, approved by Gussetius<sup>f307</sup>: the meaning may be, he plucked up a sugar cane and ate the sugar out of it, which is called by Arrianus, *μελι κάλαμινον*, as Cocceius observes; or rather a piece of an honeycomb, full of honey, just taken out of the hive, had in great esteem with the Jews; see (<sup><24></sup>Luke 24:42); the word for “honeycomb” properly signifies wood honey, of which there was plenty in Judea, (<sup><45></sup>1 Samuel 14:25); though this was in a garden, where they might have their hives, as we have. By which may be meant the Gospel and its doctrines, sweeter than the honey and the honeycomb; and, being faith fully dispensed, is pleasing to Christ;

*I have drunk my wine with my milk*; a mixture of wine and milk was used by the ancients<sup>f308</sup>; and which, Clemens Alexandria says<sup>f309</sup>, is a very profitable and healthful mixture: by which also may be intended the doctrines of the Gospel, comparable to wine and milk; to the one, for its reviving and cheering quality; to the other, for its nourishing and strengthening nature; (see <sup><51></sup>Isaiah 55:1); and (see Gill on “<sup><41></sup>Song of Solomon 4:11”), and (see Gill on “<sup><7></sup>Song of Solomon 7:9”). Here is feast, a variety of sweet, savoury, wholesome food and drink; and all Christ’s own, “my” myrrh, “my” spice, etc. as both doctrines and graces be: with which Christ feasts himself, and invites his friends to eat and drink with him:

*eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved*; the individuals, of which the church consists, are the “friends” who are reconciled to God by the death of Christ, and to himself by his Spirit and grace; and whom he treats as such, by visiting them, and disclosing the secrets of his heart to them, (<sup><54></sup>John 15:14,15); and “beloved”, beloved of God, and by Christ and by the saints there is a mutual friendship and love between Christ and his people: and these he invites to eat of the provisions of his house, of all the fruits of his garden, to which they are welcome; and of his love and grace, and all the blessings of it, which exceed the choicest wine; and of which they may drink freely, and without danger; “yea, be inebriated with loves”<sup>f310</sup>, as the words may be rendered; (see <sup><58></sup>Ephesians 5:18). With the eastern people, it was usual to bid their guests welcome, and solicit

them to feed on the provisions before them; as it is with the Chinese now, the master of the house takes care to go about, and encourage them to eat and drink<sup>f311</sup>.

**Ver. 2.** *I sleep, but my heart waketh*, etc.] Like persons that are half awake, half asleep, whom Cicero<sup>f312</sup> calls “semisomni”. Christ and the church having feasted together at his invitation, she soon after fell asleep, as the disciples did after a repast with their Lord; yet not so fast asleep but that she was sensible of it; for this was not the dead sleep of sin, in which unconverted men are, and are insensible of; nor a judicial slumber some are given up unto, and perceive it not, yet a frame of spirit unbecoming saints, and displeasing to Christ; though consistent with grace, which at such a time is not, or very little, in exercise; they are slothful in duty, and backward to it; the phrase is sometimes used to describe a sluggish, slothful man<sup>f313</sup>; they are indifferent and lukewarm about divine things, content themselves with the bare externals of religion, without the lively exercise of grace, and without fervency and spirituality in them, and seem willing to continue so; (see Gill on “~~4256~~ Matthew 25:6”); but the church here was not so overcome with sleep but her “heart was awake”. Jarchi, and some ancient Jewish writers<sup>f314</sup>, interpret this and the former clause of different persons; the former, “I sleep”, of the bride; this, “my heart waketh”, of the bridegroom; and then the sense is, though I am in a sleepy frame, he who is “my heart”, a phrase used by lovers<sup>f315</sup>, my soul, my life, my all, he never slumbers nor sleeps, he watches over me night and day, lest any hurt me; but both clauses are rather to be understood of the same person differently considered, as having two principles of grace and corruption, as the church has, which are represented as two persons; (see ~~4378~~ Romans 7:18,20 ~~4002~~ Ephesians 4:22,24 ~~4557~~ Galatians 5:17); as the carnal part in her prevailed, she was the “sleeping I”; as the new man, or principle of grace appeared, her “heart [was] awake”; for, notwithstanding her sleepy frame, she had some thoughts of Christ, and stirring of affection to him; Some convictions of her sin, and some desires of being in her duty perhaps, though overpowered by the fleshly part; the spirit was willing, but the flesh weak. Christ’s response to his church in this case follows, and is observed by her; he spoke to her so loud, that though sleepy she heard him, and owns it,

*[it is] the voice of my beloved*: in the ministration of the Gospel, which is to be distinguished from the voice of a stranger, even when dull and sleepy under hearing it, and little affected with it. Christ was the church’s beloved

still, had an affection for him, though not thoroughly awakened by his voice, but sleeps on still; this method failing, he takes another, or repeats the same with an additional circumstance,

*that knocketh*, saying, “open to me”: which is to be understood not so much of his knocking by the ministry of the word to awaken her out of sleep, but in a providential way, by taking in his hand the rod of affliction, or scourge of persecution, and lashing therewith in order to bring her out of her carnal security; (see <sup><1133></sup>Revelation 3:20); and he not only knocked but called,

[*saying*], *open to me*, open the door unto me, and let me in; so lovers are represented as at the door or gate to get admittance, and know not which to call most hard and cruel, the door or their lover<sup>f316</sup>: there is an emphasis on the word “me”; me, thy Lord, thy head, thy husband, thy friend, that loves thee so dearly; to whom her heart was shut, her affections contracted, her desires towards him languid; wherefore he importunes her to “open” to him, which denotes an enlarging of her affections to him, an exercise of grace on him, an expression of the desires of her soul unto him; which yet could not be done without efficacious grace exerted, as in (<sup><2184></sup>Song of Solomon 5:4); but, the more to win upon her, he gives her good words, and the most endearing titles, expressive of love and relation,

*my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled*, which are all made use of before, excepting the last; (see <sup><2109></sup>Song of Solomon 1:9,14 <sup><2109></sup>Song of Solomon 4:9); that is, “my undefiled”, which she was, not as a descendant of Adam, nor as in herself, but as washed in the blood of Christ, justified by his righteousness, and sanctified by his Spirit; and as having been enabled by divine grace to preserve her chastity, and keep the “bed undefiled”, (<sup><5834></sup>Hebrews 13:4); not guilty of spiritual adultery among all her infirmities, even idolatry and superstition; (see <sup><6144></sup>Revelation 14:4); or “my perfect one”<sup>f317</sup>; not in a legal, but in an evangelical sense, being completely redeemed, perfectly justified, fully pardoned, and sanctified in every part, though not to the highest degree; and perfect in Christ, though not in herself: other arguments follow to engage her attention to his request;

*for head is filled with dew, [and] my locks with the drops of the night*; through standing so long at the door, in the night season, waiting to be let in; so lovers represent their case in such circumstances, as dealt very hardly with<sup>f318</sup>: by which may be meant the sufferings of Christ, either in the persons of his ministers, who are exposed to the rage and reproach of men

for ministering in his name to the church; or which he endured in his own person, in his estate of humiliation; and particularly in the night he was betrayed, and during the time of darkness he hung upon the cross, when he bore the sins of his people, and his Father's wrath; compared to "dew", and "drops of the night", because of the multitude of them he endured in soul and body, and because so uncomfortable to human nature; though as dew is useful and fructifying to the earth, so were these the means of many fruits and blessings of grace, and of bringing many souls to glory; now though these arguments were expressed in the most strong, moving, and melting language, yet were ineffectual.

**Ver. 3.** *I have put off my coat*, etc.] In order to lie down on her bed at night, and take her ease; meaning her conversation garments, which she had not been careful of to keep, but had betook herself to carnal ease and rest, and was off her watch and guard, (<sup>1003</sup>Nehemiah 4:23 <sup>1005</sup>Revelation 16:15); and being at ease, and free from trouble, affliction, and persecution, was unwilling to arise and go with her beloved, lest she should meet with the same trials and sufferings as before, for the sake of him and his Gospel; which may be greatly the sense of her next words;

*how shall I put it on?* which suggests an apprehension of difficulty in doing it, it being easier to drop the performance of duty than to take it up again; and shows slothfulness and sluggishness, being loath and not knowing how to bring herself to it; and an aversion of the carnal and fleshly part unto it; yea, as if she thought it was unreasonable in Christ to desire it of her, when it was but her reasonable service; or as if she imagined it was dangerous, and would be detrimental to her rest, and prejudicial to her health;

*I have washed my feet*; as persons used to do when come off of a journey, and about to go to bed<sup>f319</sup>, being weary; as she was of spiritual exercises, and of the observance of ordinances and duties, and so betook herself to carnal ease, and from which being called argues,

*how shall I defile them?* by rising out of bed, and treading on the floor, and going to the door to let her beloved in; as if hearkening to the voice of Christ, obeying his commands, and taking every proper step to enjoy communion with him, would be a defiling her; whereas it was the reverse of these that did it: from the whole it appears, that not only these excuses were idle and frivolous, but sinful; she slighted the means Christ made use of to awaken her, by calling and knocking; she sinned against light and knowledge, sleeping on, when she knew it was the voice of her beloved;

she acted a disingenuous part in inviting Christ into his garden, and then presently fell asleep; and then endeavoured to shift the blame from herself, as if she was no ways culpable, but what was desired was either difficult, or unreasonable, or unlawful; she appears guilty of great ingratitude, and discovers the height of folly in preferring her present ease to the company of Christ.

**Ver. 4.** *My beloved put in his hand by the hole [of the door]*, etc.] To remove the bolt or bar which kept him from entering in. By the “door” is meant the door of her heart, which was in a great measure shut against Christ, through the prevalence of corruption; and the “hole” in it shows that it was not entirely shut up, there was a little love broke out from her to him; a little light broke in from him upon her; but her heart was much narrowed and straitened, her grace low in exercise, yet there were some faith, some love, etc. wherefore Christ takes the advantage of the little hole or crevice there was, and “put in his hand”; which is to be understood of powerful and efficacious grace, and the exertion of it on her; which is as necessary to awake a drowsy saint, and reclaim a backsliding professor, and to quicken to the exercise of grace, and performance of duty, as to the conversion of a sinner, (<sup>4112</sup>Acts 11:22); and this is a proof of the greatness of Christ’s love to his church; that notwithstanding her rude carriage to him, he does not utterly forsake her, but left something behind that wrought upon her; as well as of his mighty power, in that what calls, knocks, raps, good words, and melting language, could not do, his hand did at once;

*and my bowels were moved for him*; the passions of her soul; her grief and sorrow for sin, in using him in so ill a manner; her shame for being guilty of such ingratitude; her fear lest he should utterly depart from her; her love, which had been chill and cold, now began to kindle and appear in flames; her heart, and the desires of it, were in motion towards him; and a hearty concern appeared that he should be used so unfriendly by her; that his company and communion with him should be slighted, who had so greatly loved her, and endured so much for her; other effects follow.

**Ver. 5.** *I rose up to open to my beloved*, etc.] As soon as touched by the hand of mighty grace, she not only resolved to rise, but actually rose, and that directly, not being easy to lie any longer on her bed of carnal security; being now made heartily and thoroughly willing to let in her beloved, who

she supposed was still at the door; but in that she was mistaken; however she met with a rich experience of his grace and goodness;

*and my hands dropped [with] myrrh, and my fingers [with] sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock;* when she put her hand upon it to draw it back, and let her beloved in; the myrrh, which he had gathered, (<sup>f320</sup> Song of Solomon 5:1), and left there when he put in his hand at the hole of the door: the allusion seems to be to lovers shut out, who used to cover the threshold of the door with flowers, and anoint the door posts with sweet smelling ointment<sup>f320</sup>: as by the “door” is meant the heart of the church, so by the “lock”, which fastened and kept it shut, unbelief may be designed; and by the “handles” of it lukewarmness and sluggishness, which strengthen unbelief, and keep the heart closer shut against Christ; and by her “hands” and “fingers”, faith in exercise, attended with the fruits of it, attempting to draw back the lock of unbelief; which while the church was trying to do, she met with some fresh experience of the grace of Christ: her “hands [and] fingers dropped with sweet smelling myrrh, passing” or “current”<sup>f321</sup>; such as weeps and drops from the tree of itself, and, being liquid, runs upon and overflows the hands and fingers; and being excellent and valuable, is passing or current as money; and the odour of it diffusive, it passes afar off: now this is either to be understood of myrrh brought by the church, a pot of ointment of it to anoint her beloved with, who had been long waiting at her door in the night season, to refresh him with it; and this pot being broke unawares, or designedly, or being in a panic her hands shook, the myrrh run over her hands and fingers as she was drawing back the lock; which may denote that her grace was now in exercise and on the flow, in great abundance; which put her on her duty, and which became odorous and acceptable to Christ: or it may signify myrrh brought and left there by Christ; and may express the abundance of grace from him, communicated by him, to draw and allure her to him, to supple and soften her hard heart, to take off the stiffness of her will, and the rustiness of her affections, and make the lock of unbelief draw back easier, and so open a way for himself into her heart; and to excite grace in her, her faith and love, and cause her to come forth in exercise on him: and her hands and fingers “dropping” herewith shows that all the grace a believer has is from Christ, from whom, in the way of his duty, he receives a large measure of it: while the church was on her bed of sloth there was no flow of sweet smelling myrrh; but, now she is up and doing her duty, her hands and fingers are overflowed with it.

**Ver. 6.** *I opened to my beloved*, etc.] Which was what he desired, and was done in virtue of his putting in his hand by the hole of the door; or by the exertion of his efficacious grace, working in her both to will and to do, without which it would not have been done; namely, her heart dilated, the desires and affections of her soul enlarged towards Christ, and every grace drawn forth and exercised on him; and though the heart of a believer is sometimes shut to Christ, yet when it is opened, it is only patent to him; the church thought Christ was still at the door, and might be the more confirmed in it by what she found on the handles of the lock; but lo her mistake,

*but my beloved had withdrawn himself, [and] was gone*: a sad disappointment this! she expected to have seen him, and been received in his arms and embraced in his bosom; but instead of that, he was gone out of sight and hearing: this withdrawing was to chastise her for her former carriage, and to show her more the evil of her sin, and his resentment of it; to try the truth and strength of her grace to inflame her love the more, and sharpen her desires after his presence, to prize it more when she had it, and be careful not to lose it: her using two words of the same import, “he turned himself”<sup>f322</sup>, and was gone, signifies that he was really gone, and not in her imagination only; and that he was gone suddenly, at an unawares, and, as she might fear, would never return; and these words being without a copulative, “had withdrawn himself, he was gone”, show her haste in speaking, the confusion she was in, the strength of her passion, the greatness of her disappointment and sorrow; it is as if she was represented wringing her hands and crying, He is gone, he is gone, he is gone;

*my soul failed when he spake*; or “went out”<sup>f323</sup>; not out of her body, but she fell into a swoon, and was as one dead; for a while; and this was “at” or “through his word”<sup>f324</sup>, as it may be rendered; through what he said when he turned about and departed, expressing his resentment at her behavior; or rather at the remembrance of his kind and tender language he used when he first called her to arise, “saying, open to me, my sister, my spouse”, etc. (<sup>21RD</sup>Song of Solomon 5:2); and when she called to mind how sadly she had slighted and neglected him, it cut her to the heart, and threw her into this fainting fit;

*I sought him, but I could not find him*; in the public ordinances of his house; (see Gill on <sup>21RD</sup>Song of Solomon 3:2”);

*I called him, but he gave me no answer*; called him by his name as she went along the streets and broad ways of the city, where she supposed he might be; praying aloud, and most earnestly and fervently, that he would return to her; but had no answer, at least not immediately, and thus he treated her in the same manner she had treated him; he had called to her and she disregarded him, and now she calls to him, and he takes no notice of her; but this was not in a way of vindictive wrath and punishment, as in (<sup>2102b</sup>Proverbs 1:24,28); but of chastisement and correction.

**Ver. 7.** *The watchmen that went about the city, found me*, etc.] Of the city and the watchmen in it, and of their finding the church, (see Gill on <sup>2180</sup>Song of Solomon 3:2-3”);

*they smote me, they wounded me*; taking her for a night walker, they gave her ill words and hard blows this was not very becoming watchmen to use those of the city in this manner; for, as Plato<sup>f325</sup> says, keepers of cities should be mild and gentle towards their own, but to enemies rough and severe: if these were true ministers of Christ, this they did by reproaching her for and upbraiding her with her lukewarmness and unkindness to Christ, sharply reproving her for them; and, instead of comforting her with the doctrines of grace, cut and wounded her with the terrors of the law; or else hearing some sweet discourses from them concerning the person and grace of Christ, her heart was smitten and wounded therewith; and hence she charges the daughters of Jerusalem, in (<sup>2188</sup>Song of Solomon 5:8), that if they found her beloved, that they would tell him, that she was “sick of” or “wounded with love”: but as they rather appear to be false teachers, since the church would have shunned them, nor did she make any application to them, nor any inquiry of them about her beloved, and met with cruel and unkind usage from them, they may be said to smite and wounded her by their false doctrines and scandalous lives, by the divisions they made, and by the censures and reproaches they cast upon her, the odious names they gave her, and by stirring up the civil magistrates against her; all which agree with antichristian ministers;

*the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me*; there were two sorts of watchmen in a city, one that went about to see that all was right and safe within; and others placed on the walls of it, who kept their stand, and whose business it was to give notice of an enemy approaching, and to defend the city from outward attacks upon it; and such are the ministers of the word, (<sup>2316</sup>Isaiah 62:6); but here false teachers are meant as before, as

appears from their abuse of the church, taking away her veil from her, such as women wore for ornament, or as a sign of modesty or as a token of subjection to their husbands, (<sup>2023</sup>Isaiah 3:23) (<sup>0246</sup>Genesis 24:65 <sup>4106</sup>1 Corinthians 11:6-10); and may here design either their falsely accusing her good conduct, which was her outward covering; or their attempt to take away from her the doctrine of Christ's imputed righteousness, which is her covering, the wedding garment, the nuptial robe, as Gregory Nyssene<sup>f326</sup> calls the veil here: and such a veil was given by the bridegroom with the Romans, and was called "flammeum", from its being of a flame colour<sup>f327</sup>, either yellow or red, expressive of the blushing modesty of the newly married bride<sup>f328</sup>; and the like custom might obtain with the Jews.

**Ver. 8.** *I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem*, etc.] Young converts, as before observed; who, upon the hideous outcry the church made in the streets, came to her to know what was the matter, whom she addressed as after related; this shows the humility and condescension of the church, in desiring the assistance of weaker saints in her present case, and her earnestness and resolution to make use of all ways and means she could to find her beloved; and it becomes saints to be assisting to one another; and conversation with one another, even with weak believers, is often useful. And these the church "adjures", or "causes to swear"<sup>f329</sup>; charged them on oath, as they would answer it to God; which shows the strength of her love, her sincerity, and seriousness in her inquiry after him:

*if ye find my beloved*; who had but little knowledge of him, and communion with him, since at present he was yet to be found by them; and it was possible, notwithstanding, that they might find him before she did, as Christ showed himself to Mary Magdalene, before he did to the disciples. The charge she gave them is,

*that ye tell him that I [am] sick of love*; or, "what shall ye", or "should ye tell him?"<sup>f330</sup> not her blows and wounds, the injuries and affronts she had received from the watchmen and keepers of the wall; nor many things, only this one thing, which was most on her heart, uppermost in her mind, and under which she must die, if not relieved, "tell him that I [am] sick of love"; and that for him, through his absence, and her eager longing after him, and the discoveries of his love to her; and which, though not incurable, nor a sickness unto death, for Christ suffers none to die through love to him, yet is a very painful one; and is to be known by a soul's panting after Christ, and its prodigious jealousy of his love, and by its

carefulness, diligence, and industry, to enjoy the manifestations of it. Of this love sickness, (see Gill on “<sup>2108</sup>Song of Solomon 2:5”).

**Ver. 9.** *What is thy beloved more than [another] beloved, O thou fairest among women?* etc.] The same title Christ gives her, (<sup>2108</sup>Song of Solomon 1:8); and from whom these daughters seem to have taken it; and, in giving it to her, might be assured they were right, since he, who knew her perfectly well, so calls her; in what sense she was so fair, (see Gill on “<sup>2108</sup>Song of Solomon 1:8”): and this they used, to show their esteem of her, and that they were willing to do all the service they could for her; and what made them so attentive to her charge, and so desirous of knowing her beloved; since they concluded he must be some extraordinary person that one so fair and beautiful as she was should make the object of her love and choice: for this question they put, not in a scornful and disdainful way; nor to shift off any trouble from themselves, through the charge she gave them; nor as altogether ignorant of her beloved, for some knowledge they had, though but small; but as desirous of knowing more of him, and of hearing his excellencies set forth, and especially those which distinguished him from the beloveds of all others: with some, the world, its riches and grandeur, are their beloved; with others, the sinful lusts and pleasures of this life; with others, the praises and applause of men; and with others near and dear relations; and, with all, self: but with a true believer in Christ, he is preferable to them all; to riches, pleasures, honours; to all creatures, and creature enjoyments; and self, in every sense of it, is parted with for him; he is fairer, wiser, and richer, than all others. And this question is repeated by the daughters,

*what [is] thy beloved more than [another] beloved?* to show their surprise at the charge given them; the suspicion they had of peculiar excellencies in her beloved; and to declare their seriousness and earnestness to know more of Christ; and their importunity to have a speedy answer; and the rather for what follows:

*that thou dost so charge us?* so awfully and solemnly, so seriously and strictly, with so much warmth and vehemence.

**Ver. 10.** *My beloved [is] white and ruddy,* etc.] This, and the following verses, contain the church’s answer to the question of the daughters; she first gives a general description of her beloved, and then descends to particulars: the description of him in general is, that he is “white and ruddy”; having the whiteness of the lily, and the redness of the rose,

(~~2111~~ Song of Solomon 2:1); which make a perfect beauty. Some understand this of the two natures in Christ, divine and human; with respect to his divine nature, “white”, expressive of his simplicity, purity and holiness; which colour, Cicero says <sup>f331</sup>, is chiefly becoming God, it being simple, and having no mixture and composition in it: with respect to his human nature, “red”, being a partaker of the same flesh and blood with his people. Others, only of the human nature; “white” denoting the purity and holiness of it, being without either original or actual sin; “red”, or “ruddy”, his bloody sufferings in it for the sins of his people. But it may denote, in general, his fairness, beauty, and glory; being, as a divine Person, the brightness of his Father’s glory; as man; fairer than the children of men; as the Mediator, full of grace and truth; and in all his offices, as Prophet, Priest, and King, and in all the relations he stands in to his, as Father, Husband, Brother, and Friend, he appears most lovely and amiable;

*the chiefest among ten thousand*; whether angels or men; he is the Creator of angels, the object of their worship; and has a more excellent name and nature than they, to whom they are subject, and are ministering spirits; he is superior to men, good and bad, high and low; Lord of all, King of kings, and Head of saints, and has the pre-eminence over all creatures. The Septuagint version is, “chosen out of” or “from ten thousand”; Christ, as man, is chosen of God, from among the myriads of the individuals of human nature, to union with the divine Word, or Son of God; (see ~~4909~~ Psalm 89:19); as God-man and Mediator, to be the alone Saviour and Redeemer of his people; to be the Head of the body, the church; and to be the Judge of quick and dead; and he is chosen by sensible sinners to be the object of their love; to be their only Saviour; and to be their Ruler and Governor, whose laws, commands, and ordinances, they choose to obey; (see ~~4974~~ Psalm 73:24); The words may be rendered, “the standard bearer”, or “one standardised by” or “over ten thousand”<sup>f332</sup>; the church is militant, and has many enemies; in the name of the Lord, she sets up her banners against them, and the banner over her is the “love” of Christ, (~~2114~~ Song of Solomon 2:4); and he is the standard bearer, who has a multitude of angels and saints under his standard; and how stately and majestic does he look, and what a noble sight is it to see him bearing the standard before such a company! (~~6109~~ Revelation 7:9). Or the sense is, Christ is a more excellent standard bearer than all others<sup>f333</sup>; there may be ten thousand persons that carry a flag, but none to be compared with him, for comeliness, strength, and courage: or he is lifted up, as a standard, above others, angels and

men; as he was upon the cross, and now, in the ministry of the word, that souls may gather unto him, and enlist themselves in his service; (see <sup><3110></sup>Isaiah 11:10).

**Ver. 11.** *His head [is as] the most fine gold*, etc.] Here the church enters into a particular description and commendation of her beloved, which continues to the end of the chapter; and she begins with his “head”, which she compares to the most fine gold. Some think that some ornament of the head is meant, as a diadem or crown of gold; or else the hair of the head, which, though afterwards said to be black, yet being powdered with gold dust, looked of the colour of gold, especially in the rays of the sun upon it; as did the hair of Solomon’s youths that attended him, being thus decorated, as Josephus<sup>f334</sup> relates; and which custom of powdering the hair with gold dust was used by some of the Roman emperors<sup>f335</sup>. The gold here is called “gold of Phaz”, or “Uphaz”, as in (<sup><2705></sup>Daniel 10:5). “Fez”, with the Arabs, signifies gold; the city of Fez had its name from hence; in a place where it was built, a quantity of gold was found in it, which gave it its name<sup>f336</sup>: according to Schultens<sup>f337</sup>, gold is called “phaz”, from its leaping as it were out of the clods of the earth, and shining forth and glistening after a shower of rain falling on the earth, where there is a mine of it, by which means it is discovered; and of such gold, as the finest and purest, Diodorus Siculus<sup>f338</sup> speaks, as found in Arabia; and which, from the purity of it, was called “apyron”, because it needed no purifying by fire: and this being the best and finest, is used to express the superlative excellence of Christ; for it may be rendered, “the gold of gold”<sup>f339</sup>, there is none like it. By Christ’s “head” some understand the Father of Christ, said to be the Head of Christ, (<sup><4103></sup>1 Corinthians 11:3) not as Christ is a divine Person, but as man and Mediator; who, as such, was subject to his Father, supported and upheld by him; and who, for his excellent glory, is compared to the most fine gold, there being no glory like his. Or else the divine nature in Christ may be meant, which is the head, the chief and principal nature in him; which puts a glory on him, and an efficacy in all he did and suffered; and which is like pure, fine, shining gold, in which all the perfections of deity shine resplendently. Or rather the headship of Christ over his church is meant; as Nebuchadnezzar’s monarchy is represented by a head of gold, (<sup><2702></sup>Daniel 2:32,37,38); so Christ’s, because his kingdom is great and glorious, pure and spiritual, solid and substantial, lasting and durable, yea, everlasting;

*his locks [are] bushy, [and] black as a raven*; which figures are used to set forth the beauty and comeliness of Christ: thick, bushy, well set hair, or “pendulous”<sup>f340</sup>, as some render the word, hanging down upon the forehead and cheeks in a beautiful manner, makes very comely; and black hair was reckoned comely<sup>f341</sup>; and the blackness of a raven is accounted a very fine black: and naturalists<sup>f342</sup> say, that the eggs, brains, and blood of ravens, have been used to make the hair black. By these “bushy [and] black locks” of Christ some understand the thoughts and purposes of God, the Head of Christ; which, like hair, and like black bushy hair, are intricate, dark, and obscure, unsearchable and incomprehensible; and yet, so far as known, are beautiful and delightful; especially as they appear in the scheme of salvation, drawn in the eternal mind: or rather, as by others, believers in Christ are meant, for their numbers, dependence on Christ, and nourishment from him; (see Gill on “~~2001~~ Song of Solomon 4:1”); and, being like “locks” of hair beautifully set, as when congregated and united together in Gospel order, are an ornament to Christ the Head, and afford a delightful sight to spectators, (~~5005~~ Colossians 2:5); and these being like “crisped” or “curled” hair<sup>f343</sup>, as some render the word, may denote the hardiness and strength of believers, to perform duty, withstand enemies, and endure hardness, as good soldiers of Christ; curled hair being the hardest and strongest<sup>f344</sup>. But it seems best to understand by them the administrations of Christ’s kingly office; which are executed with the utmost prudence, vigour, and strength; for curled hair is a sign of a dry brain<sup>f345</sup>, which produces acuteness and sharpness of wit, as well as of vigour, strength, and courage; and which, how dark and obscure they may seem to be, and to carry in them severity to enemies; yet being managed with wisdom, as before observed, and also according to the rules of justice and equity, look very beautiful when made manifest, and are admired by the saints, (~~6005~~ Revelation 15:3,4).

**Ver. 12.** *His eyes [are] as [the eyes] of doves*, etc.] the church’s eyes are said to be, (~~2005~~ Song of Solomon 1:15 ~~2000~~ Song of Solomon 4:1); which are her ministers, endowed with dove like gifts in measure, as Christ is without measure, in fulness; but these are Christ’s eyes, which may signify his omniscience, who has seven eyes, (~~3000~~ Zechariah 3:9 ~~3000~~ Zechariah 4:10); especially as that has respect unto and is concerned with his people in a way of grace and mercy, and so must look very beautiful in their view: his eyes are like “doves’ eyes”; not fierce and furious, but loving and lovely;

looking upon his people, under all their trials and afflictions, with sympathy and concern, to deliver them out of them: and like the eyes of doves

*by rivers of waters*: Sanctius thinks the allusion is to the humours in which the eye is enclosed, and, as it were, swims in; hence the eyes are called “natantia lumina”, by Virgil<sup>f346</sup>; but it denotes eyes like those of doves, quick and lively, as clean as milk white doves, as if they had been “washed in milk”; clear and perspicuous, sharp sighted, and behold all persons and things, in all places, and at once; and as doves look only to their mates, so Christ’s eyes of love are only on his church; he looks to none but her with his eye of special and peculiar love. Moreover, his eyes are like the eyes of doves “by the rivers of waters”; which denotes the fixedness and constancy of them: doves, by the river side, keep their eyes fixed on the purling streams, and in drinking, as Pliny<sup>f347</sup> observes, do not erect their necks, and lift up their heads, but, keeping their eyes upon the water, drink a large draught, in the manner the beasts do; and they delight in clean water, of which they drink, and with which they wash<sup>f348</sup>: Christ, being greatly delighted with his people, has fixed his eyes on them, and he never withdraws them from them; for these waters may point at the object of Christ’s love, even Gospel churches, consisting of such as are justified and sanctified by his grace, compared to “clean water”; among whom the doctrines of the Gospel are powerfully preached, the ordinances purely administered, the waters of the sanctuary flow, by which souls are delighted and refreshed; and to these Christ looks, (~~236D~~ Isaiah 66:2); and his eyes being like doves’ eyes,

*washed with milk*, may denote the purity of them, being purer eyes than to behold iniquity; and the meekness and mildness of them, not red and wrathful, but full of mercy, pity, and compassion, as if they had been washed with milk. And they are said to be,

*fitly set*; or “sitting in fulness”<sup>f349</sup>; such as exactly fill up their holes; are set neither too, high nor too low; neither sunk in too much, nor stand out too far; but are like precious stones, in an enclosure of gold or silver, to which the allusion is; as diamonds set in a ring; or as the precious stones in the high priest’s breast plate, which exactly filled the cavities made for them, and hence are called “stones of fulness”, (~~1237~~ Exodus 25:7 ~~1237~~ Exodus 28:17,20); or, “set by fulness”<sup>f350</sup>; that is, by full channels of water, where doves delight to be; and may denote the fulness of grace, and the flows of it, by which Christ sits and dwells, and leads his people to, (~~617~~ Revelation

7:17); or, “setting upon fulness”<sup>f351</sup>; on the world, and the fulness of it, which is his, and he gives as much of it to his people as he think fit; and on the vast numbers of persons and things in it, and the vast variety of actions done therein; which shows the extensiveness of his omniscience: and on the “fulness” of time, fixed by him and his Father, for his coming into the world, to do the great work of redemption in it; and which, before it came, he was looking, waiting, and watching, and as it were longing till it came: and on his “fulness”, the church, which is the fulness of him that filleth all in all, until he has gathered them all in, and filled them with all the gifts and graces of the Spirit, designed for them: and on the “fulness” of the Gentiles, until they are all brought in: and on his own “fulness”; both personal, “the fulness of the Godhead”, which he had his eyes upon, when he undertook the work of redemption, and which supported him in it, and carried him through it; and upon his dispensatory “fulness”, or fulness of grace, as Mediator, to supply the wants of his people, under all their straits and difficulties, temptations and afflictions: all which must make him exceeding lovely in the eyes of his people.

**Ver. 13.** *His cheeks [are] as a bed of spices, [as] sweet flowers,* etc.] Which may intend the presence of Christ with his people in his word and ordinances; often called his “face”, which he shows, and they seek after, than which nothing is more desirable; walking in the light of his countenance is preferable to walking among spicy beds, where fragrant plants and odoriferous flowers grow: or the cheeks, being the seat of modesty and blushing, may denote the great humility of Christ, seen in his assumption of our nature, throughout the whole course of his life, and especially at his death, and which renders him very delightful to his people; how lovely does the meek and lowly Jesus look! how beautiful are those blushing cheeks of his, who, being equal with God, took upon him the form of a servant! The cheeks may intend not bare cheeks, but with the hair growing upon them, the hair of the beard; which puts forth itself, and grows upon the cheeks or “jaws”<sup>f352</sup>, as it may be rendered, which makes a man look graceful and majestic; so Aben Ezra interprets the word of the beard, and so many Christian<sup>f353</sup> interpreters, which puts out like aromatic plants on spicy beds. This was literally true of Christ, who was a grown man when he suffered, and gave his cheeks to the smiters, and who plucked off the hair of his beard: and in a mystical sense it may intend either believers in Christ, who are the hair of his cheeks, as well as of his head; and who, like spicy beds and fragrant flowers, are odoriferous to

Christ and to one another; or “[as] towers of perfumes”<sup>f354</sup> as some, which ascend upwards in the exercise of faith, hope, and love: or rather the graces of the Spirit in Christ, as man and Mediator; which, like the hair of the beard, are in Christ, in great numbers, without measure, and make him very lovely and graceful; and are like beds of spices and sweet flowers, for the variety and sweet smelling savour of them. Though it seems, best of all, to be expressive of the manliness, courage, prudence, gravity, and majesty of Christ; of which the beard, thick set and well grown, is an indication; all which appeared in the whole conduct and deportment of Christ among men; in his ministry, in his life and conversation, at his apprehension, arraignment, condemnation, sufferings, and death. The cheeks rising, and being a little elevated, are fitly described by beds in a garden, by “towers of perfumes”, or fragrant flowers and fruit trees, reared up in the form of towers, or pyramids; or by a dish of fruit preserves, placed in such a figure: and the hair of the cheeks, or beard, are aptly represented by spices, rising up from a bed of them; and all denote the beauty, savour, and majesty of Christ. Or, as the Vulgate Latin version, “as beds of spices set by confectioners”; not as aromatic plants, set in rows by the gardener; but the spices themselves, set in rows by the confectioner in vessels<sup>f355</sup>, placed in his shop in rows to be sold; which being of various colours, especially white and red, the cheeks, for colour and eminence, are compared unto them;

*his lips [like] lilies dropping sweet smelling myrrh*; by which are meant the words of Christ, which drop from his lips; which are like lilies, for their purity, thinness, and beautiful colour: the words of Christ are pure words, free from all pollution, deceit, and human mixtures; nor are his lips big with his own praises, but with expressions of regard for his Father’s glory; and are very pleasant, gracious, and graceful. But then the comparison is not between them and white lilies, for not white, but red lips, are accounted the most beautiful; (see <sup>204B</sup>Song of Solomon 4:3); wherefore rather red or purple lilies are respected, such as Pliny<sup>f356</sup>, and other writers<sup>f357</sup>, speak of; such as grew in Syria<sup>f358</sup>, a neighbouring country; and also in Egypt<sup>f359</sup> grew lilies like to roses. Some<sup>f360</sup> think the allusion is to crowns, made of red or purple lilies, wore at nuptial festivals, on which were poured oil of myrrh, and so dropped from them; but the phrase, “dropping sweet smelling myrrh”, is not in construction with “lilies”, but with “lips”: signifying, that the lips or words of Christ were like to lilies; not so much or not only for their thinness and colour, as for the sweet smell of them,

very odorous, grateful, and acceptable; as are the doctrines of peace, pardon, righteousness, life, and salvation, to sensible souls, delivered in the ministry of the word: the manner of which delivery of them is expressed by “dropping”; gradually, by little and little, as Christ’s church and people can bear them; seasonably, and at proper times, as their wants require constantly, as while Christ was here on earth, so now he is in heaven, by his ministers, in all ages, to the end of the world; and yet sweetly and gently refreshing, and making fruitful; (see <sup><651D></sup>Deuteronomy 32:2). Moreover, the kisses of Christ’s lips, or the manifestations of his love, may be taken into the sense of this clause; which together with the grateful matter and graceful manner of his words, render him very acceptable to his church; see (<sup><210D></sup>Song of Solomon 1:2); and such a sentiment is expressed, in much the same language, by others<sup>f361</sup>.

**Ver. 14.** *His hands [are as] gold rings, set with the beryl,* etc.] Beryl is with great propriety mentioned, because it was usual to wear it on the fingers<sup>f362</sup>. This was one of the precious stones in the breastplate of the high priest, a type of Christ, (<sup><128D></sup>Exodus 28:20); one of the pearl foundations of the New Jerusalem, (<sup><621D></sup>Revelation 21:20); the appearance of the wheels in Ezekiel’s vision was like it, (<sup><2116></sup>Ezekiel 1:16); the body of the glorious person, seen by Daniel, is said to be as that, (<sup><2706></sup>Daniel 10:6); so that it is no wonder the hands of Christ should be compared to gold rings set with it. The word “tarshish”, here rendered by “beryl”, is sometimes used for the “sea”; and naturalists<sup>f363</sup> tell us, that the best beryl is that which most resembles the colour of the sea; so all the three Targums, on (<sup><128D></sup>Exodus 28:20); call it *amy pwrk*, from its sea colour; and some versions have it here, “the sea coloured beryl”,<sup>f364</sup>. Some think the chrysolite is meant, so called from Tarshish, a city in the Indian sea, from whence it was brought, (<sup><1102></sup>1 Kings 10:22); which is a precious stone, of a golden colour. Others take it to be the “hyacinth”, or “jacinth”, which is of a violet or purple colour. Cocceius is of opinion that the “sardonyx” is intended, a composition of the “sardius” and “onyx” stones; and is of a white and ruddy colour, and much resembles the nail of a man’s hand; which it was usual to set in rings worn on the hand; and a hand adorned with a ring set with a sardonyx, Martial calls “sardonychata manus”,<sup>f365</sup>. Now Christ’s hands, which are the instruments of action, may be compared to “gold rings”, set with one or other of these stones; because of the variety of his works in nature, providence, and grace; and because of the preciousness and value of them; and because of their perfection and

completeness; the circular form being reckoned the most perfect: and never do the hands of Christ appear as thus described, and look more beautiful and lovely, than when he is beheld as grasping, holding, and retaining his people in his hands, out of which they never be plucked; and who are as so many gold rings, jewels, pearls, and precious stones, in his esteem; and as holding the bright stars, the ministers of the word, in there, who sparkle in their gifts and graces, like so many gems there: and particularly this may be expressive of the munificence and liberality of Christ, in the distribution of his gifts and graces to his people, so freely and generously, so largely and plenteously, and so wisely and faithfully, as he does; and a beautiful sight it is, to the eye of faith, to behold him with his hands full of grace, and a heart ready to distribute it;

*his belly [is as] bright ivory, overlaid [with] sapphires*: which most of the ancient interpreters understand of the human nature of Christ, described by one part of it, because of its frailty and weakness in itself; and is compared to bright ivory, partly because of its firmness and constancy in suffering, and partly because of its purity, holiness, and innocence; and is said to be “overlaid with sapphires”, because of its exaltation and glory at the right hand of God. The words may be rendered, “his bowels are as bright ivory”, etc.<sup>f366</sup>; as in (Song of Solomon 5:4); and may express the love, grace, mercy, pity, compassion of Christ to the sons of men; compared to “ivory”, or the elephant’s teeth, for the excellency of it, Christ’s love being better than life itself; and for the purity and sincerity of it, there being no hypocrisy in it; and for the firmness, constancy, and duration of it, it being from everlasting to everlasting, without any change or variation; and to an overlay or enamel of “sapphires”, for the riches, worth and value of it, it being preferable to all precious stones, or that can be desired. Some interpreters are of opinion, that not any part of the body, the belly or bowels, are here meant, but rather some covering of the same; for seems not so agreeable with the rules of decency, nor consistent with the spouse’s modesty, to describe her beloved by those parts to the daughters of Jerusalem; nor with the scope of the narration, which is to give distinguishing marks and characters, by which they might know him from another. Aben Ezra thinks the girdle is meant; which either may be his royal girdle, the girdle of righteousness and faithfulness; or his priestly girdle, said to be of gold; (see Isaiah 11:5 Revelation 1:13); or his prophetic girdle, the girdle of truth. The allusion may be to the embroidered coat of the high priest: in the holes and incisures of which, as

Jarchi says, were put jewels and precious stones: or rather to the ephod with the breastplate, in which were twelve precious stones, and among these the sapphire; and which may represent Christ, as the great High Priest, bearing all his elect upon his heart in heaven; having entered there, in their name, to take possession of it for them, until they are brought into the actual enjoyment of it.

**Ver. 15.** *His legs [are as] pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold,* etc.] The allusion may be to the “femoralia”, or garments on the thighs of the high priest when he ministered in holy things, who was a type of Christ; which were made of thee twined linen, and, as the Rabbins say<sup>f367</sup>, of thread six times doubled; and so must sit very full and stiff, and be like pillars of marble, for colour, firmness, and stiffness; and below which was the hem of the holy robe: and, round about that, were pomegranates and golden bells, and which may be alluded to in the next clause, “set upon sockets of fine gold”; or else the allusion may be to the custom<sup>f368</sup> of the eastern countries, where they sandals, bound about the feet with golden ribbons; or had their shoes adorned with gold and precious stones; or were made of gold, as were those which Demetrius wore: snow white feet, with golden knots, as Manilius<sup>f369</sup> expresses it, must look very beautiful; and marble legs or feet, as the poet<sup>f370</sup> calls them, with golden shoes, suggest the same idea. Now if a covering of the thighs is alluded to, this may respect the pure and spotless righteousness of Christ, and the glory and excellency of it; which covers the nakedness of saints; hides all their impurities, their sins, original and actual; and renders them acceptable in the sight of God: or the legs of Christ being thus compared may denote the strength and power of Christ, to bear up and support what has been or is laid upon him; as the whole universe, the earth, and all that is in it; the covenant of grace, its blessings and promises, which he is the basis and foundation of; the whole church, the persons of all the elect, whom he represented in eternity, and now in time; all their sins and transgressions, laid upon him and bore by him, in his body on the cross; the government of his people on his shoulder; their burdens, and them under all their trials, temptations, and afflictions; and as all the vessels, so all the glory of his Father’s house: and these may set forth also the power of Christ, in treading under and trampling upon all his and his people’s enemies, both when on the cross, and now in heaven, where he must reign until all enemies are put under his feet. Or legs, being the instruments of walking, may intend either his ways of love, grace, and mercy, in the covenant

before time, in favour of his people; and which, like marble pillars, are pure, firm, and constant, and like such, in golden sockets, glorious and excellent: or his walk and conversation, when incarnate and in his state of humiliation; which was always upright, even, and constant; and upon which were a beauty, glory, and lustre, answerable to the metaphors here used: or his walks in the churches, his golden candlesticks; among whom he delights to be, and to whom his presence is desirable, beautiful, and glorious: or his providential dispensations towards his people; which are straight, upright, and equal, holy and righteous, firm and sure; the basis of which are his eternal purposes and decrees;

*his countenance [is] as Lebanon*: his shape, form, personage, appearance, and mien; which was a goodly mountain on the north of Judea, high, pleasant, and set with fruitful and fragrant trees, and made a very delightful appearance; to which Christ may be compared for his height, being higher than the kings of the earth, than the angels of heaven, and than the heavens themselves; and for pleasantness, being more glorious and excellent than that or any other mountain; and for the fruitful and fragrant trees of righteousness that grow upon him, have their root in him, and their fruitfulness from him; and which diffuse a grateful odour, by their graces and good works, to Christ and his saints; and who himself more especially, like this mountain, emits a fragrant smell, in his person, grace, righteousness, and sacrifice, to all passers-by, and true believers in him. It is added,

*excellent as the cedars*; which grew on Lebanon; being the choicest, and preferable to all others: to which Christ may be compared, for tallness, stateliness, fragranciness, and durableness<sup>f371</sup>; especially the former, which is always thought to add gracefulness and majesty to men; (see Gill on “~~2000~~1 Samuel 9:2”).

**Ver. 16.** *His mouth [is] most sweet*, etc.] Or sweetness itself<sup>f372</sup>; yea, “sweetnesses”,<sup>f373</sup>; exceeding sweet. That is, the words of his month, the doctrines of the Gospel, the precious promises of it, the kind invitations given, and the comfortable things spoken in it; yea, the commands of Christ in his word are not grievous, but pleasant and delightful: or the kisses of his mouth may be meant, the sensible manifestations of his love, (~~2000~~Song of Solomon 1:2); Some think the voice of Christ is intended, and the sound of it<sup>f374</sup>, whether the word be translated “mouth”, “throat”, or “roof of the mouth”, as it may signify either; all which are instruments of the voice, and

nothing is more common with lovers than to admire each other's voice; (see <sup><2124></sup>Song of Solomon 2:14); and may be applied to the voice of the Gospel, which is sweet, delightful, charming, and alluring, being a voice of love, grace, and mercy, peace, pardon, life, and salvation. The word may be rendered "taste", as in (<sup><2123></sup>Song of Solomon 2:3); and which may be taken, either actively, for the distinguishing taste of Christ between things perverse and good, and between carnal and spiritual ones, and so for the provision of savoury food he makes for his people; or passively, of his being, in his person, offices, and grace, sweet to the taste of a believer. Some interpret it of the breath of his mouth; which being "most sweet", recommends him to the affections of his people; and may design the expressions of his love to them, and his intercession for them;

*yea, he [is] altogether lovely*; in his person, offices, people, word, and ordinances; his loveliness is perfect, nothing wanting in it; he is so to all, to his Father, angels, and saints: or, he is "all desires"<sup>f375</sup>; exceeding desirable, having all excellencies, perfections, and fulness in him; and being so in all his characters, offices, and relations, he stands in to his people; to whom he is all things<sup>f376</sup>, even all in all; they desire none but him. And now, by this description of him, the daughters of Jerusalem could not be at a loss to know who he was, and that he must be preferable to all other beloveds. And the church closes the account by claiming interest in him; her faith in him, and love to him, being increased, while she was speaking of him:

*this [is] my beloved*; whom she had often called so; and still was her beloved; for though she had suffered much for him, nothing could separate from her love to him: and she adds another endearing character,

*and this [is] my friend*: which appeared by his espousal of her; by his becoming a surety for her; by his assumption of her nature, and suffering in her room and stead; by paying her debts, and purchasing her person; by entering into heaven in her name, taking possession of it for her, and acting the part of an advocate on her account; by gracious visits to her, and familiar converse with her; by granting her large supplies of grace, and affording her help and relief in, all times of need; by giving good and wholesome counsel to her, and by disclosing the secrets of his heart unto her, (<sup><41515></sup>John 15:15); and he is such a friend that sticks closer than a brother; that loves at all times; is constant and faithful, and always to be confided in; he is a rich, powerful, everlasting, and unchangeable friend. All this the church says, in the strength of faith, with the greatest affection, in

the most exulting strains, and as glorying in him, and boasting of him: and now, as if she should say,

*O ye daughters of Jerusalem*, is not this enough to describe my beloved to you, to distinguish him from all others? can you blame me for my affection to him, making such a strict inquiry after him, and giving such a solemn charge to you concerning him? is it not enough to draw out your love unto him, and set you a seeking after him with me? And such an effect it had upon them, as appears from the following chapter.