

Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved (Quality: Good)

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Date: 24 March 1997

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[0 : 00] As the Lord may be pleased to help me this afternoon, I direct you to a word in the Solomon's Song, chapter 7, and reading verse 8.

Sorry, verse 5. The Song of Solomon, chapter 7, and the first sentence in verse 5. Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?

Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? The fifth verse of chapter 8 in the Song of Solomon. The text is in the form of a question.

What a mercy if we help to answer that question, as it were, according to the Scriptures. Who is this? Surely there's no less than the Church of God here below, coming up from the wilderness.

And the beloved in the text is the Church's living head. Song of Solomon, his outstanding book, needs grace to understand.

[1 : 19] It needs the Holy Spirit's gracious aid. We look at setting forth, we have really that union which exists between the Lord Jesus Christ and his beloved Church. Both union and also communion.

And really this is set before us, this is a sentence in this text, in the fifth verse. And so we venture for a little while this afternoon to try and consider this word with you.

And in the light of what we tried to speak a little this morning with regard to burdened souls and casting their burdens upon the Lord. Really in this text of instance of this.

Here is one, being graciously sustained and supported. Let us try and consider the words as it is before us.

May the Lord help one to do so. And what a mercy, dear friends, if we can enter a little into the true meaning of this word. And to have some personal experience of what is set before us in this text.

[2 : 27] Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness? Well, the church is in the wilderness. There is the church here below which is indeed in the wilderness.

And if you and I have the great mercy to be a member of that church, then we should know what this is for this wilderness, for this world to be a wilderness to us. God's ancient people, you see, the Lord led them forth by his promise and delivered them from the Egyptian bondage.

He brought them into the wilderness and their journey to the promised land was through the wilderness. And this is typical of God's spiritual Israel. And here we have this one coming up from the wilderness.

She's no stranger to the wilderness. And this, she has to live in it, as it were. And yet, there's a coming up out of it. And I would notice that because surely the path of a true child of God will be an upward path, as it were.

In the scriptures, the way of death, the way to hell, the way of the wicked, is a downward path. And how solemn it is to consider that thousands are rushing, as it were, that downward path of destruction.

[3 : 55] Nothing but the grace of God can bring poor sinners out of that way of destruction by nature they're in. But here's one who's coming up.

It is an uphill journey. Let's notice that. Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness? Every true child of God, to a greater or lesser degree, will realise it is, as it were, an uphill journey.

It is not that which is pleasing to the flesh. Yet it is a way, a path, in the wilderness that leads to heaven, to the heavenly Canaan.

But it is an upward path. There are the difficulties in the way. There are the temptations. There are the burdens felt.

There will be a way when such have to realise their dependence upon another. What a lesson that is we have to learn, do we not, as we journey on in life's pathway.

[4 : 59] If you and I have the great mercy to be as this one coming up out of the wilderness, one lesson we have to learn, surely, is our dependence upon another.

How we do need to be delivered many self-dependence. You know, there's a tendency in us by nature to be independent, as it were. But how that has to be dealt with, and we have to realise, we have no help in self.

Yet have thought it well, as well as we all said in the hymn. So there is an upward journey. There is an upward journey from the wilderness.

Now, let us ask ourselves a question in the light of this. What is this world to us? I would not confuse this with the fact that nature is beautiful, as God has created it.

Although sin has marred God's fair creation, there are many blessings and benefits, which are enjoyed in this world. But we have to think of this in the light of the experience of God's dear people.

[6 : 08] Because as they view the world, and the way of the world, and the corruptions of the world, it will be to them as a wilderness. There is a great mercy, dear friends, if you and I are brought to realise this.

So that we are not left to settle down, as it were, in this wilderness world. But rather to be, as it were, pilgrims' journey through it.

And although it must inevitably be an uphill journey, yet you see, a journey that is made, as it were, through the grace of God.

Then we notice the text tells us about this one leaning, as it were. This reminds us of weakness. Reminds us of dependence, doesn't it? When a weak person feels to be weak, and to be able to make any progress, as it were, they need a helping hand.

They need one to lean on. And we have a biblical setting forth here, of the dear Lord Jesus Christ himself. That becomes us to try and exalt his precious and blessed name.

[7 : 30] And notice he is described here as her beloved. And we do well to ask ourselves the question, as to what the Lord Jesus Christ is to us.

Can we truly say, he is our beloved? Has there been naught in our hearts, a love to the Lord Jesus Christ?

Some might say, well, I do need that to be made plain to me. I hope. I'm not a total stranger to it. Yet perhaps you may feel sometimes, you cannot climb as high as this, to claim him as your beloved.

But think of this, dear friends. If this world is the wilderness to you, there will be other things. You will be weaned from it. And there will be other things that pertain to the worship of God, and the things that belong to the Lord Jesus Christ.

And even though you perhaps, you fear to venture, as it were, to presume with regard to your love to the Lord Jesus Christ, do love the things that he loves.

[8 : 41] Think of it like that. Do you love the people that he loves? Do you love his worship? Do you love his precious word?

Do you love his glorious gospel? Look at it like that. Do you love your gospel? Do you love your gold for God? Do you love your kindness, either your order. Know him, They know you love her. Do you love your promise, Do you love your pride, do you love your God, Do you love your promise, do you love your help, do you love your love,ry you love your love, the cause of God, the truth, the things that are dear to the Lord Jesus Christ, will be dear to you.

And then, a beautiful Moabitish widow. when Naomi had to return to Bethlehem and Ruth went with her there was something wrought in Ruth's heart which Orpah had not no doubt they both loved Naomi as a mother a mother-in-law they both wept but in Ruth's case there was something deeper than natural love there was something that drew her heart to Naomi and therefore to Naomi's God and Naomi's desires and the way in which she went so much so that she was given grace to cleave Naomi and to be steadfastly minded

I like that word in the book of Ruth concerning her you see there was something there some secret there brought in her heart by the grace of God she felt so union to Naomi who was a God-fearing widow she felt out drawn to her and nothing would stop her from cleaving to her although as far as she could see the prospect was not very bright yet she felt such a cleaving to Naomi and I like that word where it tells us she was steadfastly minded to go with her well now that flowed from love that was something deeper something stronger than just natural love Orpah had that but she had not that stronger that spiritual love that was wrought in the heart of Ruth Ruth so that while the Orpah went back to her people and to her gods Ruth expressed that earnest desire that she might go with Naomi that Naomi's God might be her God well now that was love and that love was wrought in her heart by the Lord himself by his spirit and we need to consider that and the source of that love in the epistle of John we have this word we love him because he first loved us now in the text the Lord Jesus Christ he describes her beloved and as I said just now no perhaps you may fear to presume in that yet it is a great mercy if your heart is drawn that way your heart is drawn that way yet drawn away from this wilderness world and drawn to the Lord Jesus Christ himself and those things that belong to him his word his word his worship his people because this is the same spirit you see well now we have then this this pilgrim as it were coming up from the wilderness she cannot settle down in the wilderness she's on a journey and that journey is an upward journey it is a heaven bound journey really but now she's weak in herself and being weak she has to depend upon another so our text reminds us that as she comes up from the wilderness she comes up as it were being supported and strengthened and sustained and I'd like to consider this because notice that as we try to think of this morning in with regard to a poor sinner casting his burden upon the Lord there is that sustaining grace now that bit was set before us really here it was as she leaned upon her beloved that she experienced that sustaining grace it was that supported her it was that which enabled her still to press on still to continue and another of the difficulties an uphill journey as it were it was in a wilderness journey yet she was leaning upon another and you want to notice this too because there's nearness you see there's nearness and one blessing that true pilgrims in a right mind desire to experience is that nearness to the Lord and nearness to the Lord

Jesus Christ mourning over sin that separates but a desire for that nearness to him it's a great word isn't it where Moses speaks with regard to the tribes of Israel in his latter days and makes reference to Joseph and Benjamin rather to dwell between his shoulders it indicates nearness you see and here this one this weak one this one coming up out of the wilderness there is a close union a close union leaning upon her beloved it's a beautiful illustration really you see on the one hand we have weakness on the other hand we have omnipotence and that binded together as it were in love her beloved all through this wonderful song we have a setting forth of the love of the Lord

[15 : 22] Jesus Christ to his people and his people's love to him and that union which exists between the two typified in the bride and the bridegroom and there's a beauty to be seen the bride sees a beauty in the bridegroom and wonderful to tell the bridegroom sees a beauty in the bride but it is a comeness that flows from him no beauty in sinners as sinners but the Lord does he does beautify his dear people a great word in the Psalms isn't there he will beautify the meek with salvation what a great word that is which really indicates that comeliness that the Lord puts on his dear people that are comely through him you see by nature sinners everything that proceeds from sin is ugliness is deformity such was the sad ruin of the Adam fool when you think about who will the source of it is in the

Lord Jesus Christ and his dear people have an interest in that you see and they're made comely yes through his comeliness they're moored over their unworthiness and their sinfulness their guiltiness yet they're taught to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and here in this text we have the secret of trusting it's leaning this pilgrim she couldn't go on her own strength she was too weak the uphill journey was too steep as it were and yet she proceeds she comes up out of the wilderness she's not brought to us as it were but there's a continuing and the secret of it is this that she leans upon her beloved and just showed the condescending mercy and grace and love of the Lord Jesus Christ to his dear people as they journey on here below he helps them along there is indeed that sustaining

I like that word sustaining how this dear one must have felt support and you see the weaker she felt the harder she had to lean and we do need to come into that don't we see all the time we in any way whatever lean on strength well that's our folly that's our folly you see Peter loved his Lord he loved him sincerely there's a root of the matter in Peter's heart to the Lord Jesus Christ but he had lessons to learn and when he made that bold statement he never never laid the Lord Jesus Christ others might leave not Peter he didn't realise he was seeking standing his own strength he was not leaning upon his beloved the Lord Jesus Christ was beloved to him but he got to learn his dependence upon him and it was a solemn lesson for Peter to learn because he had to prove and left to himself how sadly he did fall even to deny his Lord and master whom he belonged to and whom he loved but you see he's inciteless to see him he had to learn he couldn't stand in his own strength and we have to learn that now we learn that lesson we can't stand in our own strength this one in the text was in a safe place she's leaning upon her beloved weak in herself but realized her dependence and in the dependence to lean and to lean hard yes lean all the weight as it were upon this other one this wondrous person the Lord

Jesus Christ and thus supported thus sustained as it were yes with strength given support given or I would try to speak well of this wondrous person her beloved speak with strength his arm is strong or how he's set forth in the scriptures and the secret of the blessing of the gospel is the gospel of Jesus Christ in all the sufficiency there is in him and the strength that is in him the wisdom that is in him and all that his dear people stand in need of as they journey on and journey up out of this wilderness there is a wondrous sufficiency and this bond that binds together the beloved and the loved one can never be severed no not all the failings that may be in the one that leans the bond can never be severed his union can never be broken

I refer once more just for a moment to dear Peter you know well he did sadly fall he was riddled in Satan's sieve and the poor man must have felt indeed very guilty when the Lord Jesus Christ turned and looked on him he was given deep repentance but there's one thing to be considered the Lord Jesus Christ made this known to Peter Simon Satan has desired to have you to sift the wheat but I prayed for thee that I faith thou not just think of that the Lord Jesus Christ prayed for Peter yes had an interest in the all availing intercessions of the Lord Jesus Christ that is a portion that belongs to all God's dear people to have an interest in his prayer read that beautiful chapter in the gospel according to John where the dear saviour prayed for his people prayed for his disciples he prayed for all his own dear people or to realise an interest in his all availing intercessions when perhaps sometimes you journey on coming out in the wilderness you try to pray and it's difficult you find it's difficult to try and pray sometimes you seem to be so prayerless yet all this never in any way whatever alters the fact that there's a union between poor sinners and the

[22 : 33] Lord Jesus Christ and that one upon whom she leans her beloved he's always the same yes his mercy is the same his strength is the same his wisdom is the same his compassion remains the same there's no failing in him without the dear Lord Jesus Christ as he I speak reverently lived here below indeed it was a wilderness to him wasn't it but you see he went on yes he never faltered one bit at any time whatever but he pursued that path doing his father's will yes and working out that salvation for all his dear people he flees not at all there was no going back he continued fierce temptations but he continued yes persecutions but he continued a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief but he continued but you see here's the secret of God's dear people the secret of their going on their continuing and what a mercy it is dear friends there's one you can lean on you see there was a humble wholehearted trust here this one in all her weakness and difficulty and trial and temptation and all that belonged to the wilderness didn't affect the wondrous person and character of the Lord

Jesus Christ himself he was so sufficient so suitable to her need and so near to her so that as she journeyed on she leaned on him she leaned on him there is a support you see that's the secret of continuing and what a great mercy it is to be found amongst those who do continue you know we have some very solemn words in the scripture don't we about those who did not continue we think of the record in the gospel of John again in that sixth chapter where we read how there were those who went back walked no more with the Lord Jesus Christ well what can we say about them they were disciples in name not disciples in deed but disciples in name there was no union between her between them and the

Lord Jesus Christ and this was sadly revealed when they were offended at his words when they turned their backs upon him they were not backsliders you see because God restores backsliders but they were apostates they turned their backs upon the Lord Jesus Christ and his precious word and it shows to us the mercy of being enabled by his grace to continue still to press on yes faint yet pursuing as it were so with this one in the text then how did you continue not your own strength well she considered the wilderness and all that it was to her and her own weakness well it's everything to discourage but the secret was this you see she leaned on the Lord Jesus Christ and the harder she leaned the more she she proved the strength and the ability and the mercy and the suitability of the

Lord Jesus Christ and all his omnipotence in his grace toward her she leaned upon her beloved and we can think of her when feeling perhaps very much her own weakness and weariness to realise this secret support and which would kindle as it were a fire in her heart a love to that one upon whom she leaned and dear friends oh my you and I know something of that blessing to feel our hearts drawn to the Lord Jesus Christ as our strength and stay our all sufficiency indeed our only hope of salvation there's a question in this song isn't there what is I beloved more than another beloved marriage and that was the answer you see they could speak speak of this one as the chief is among ten thousand and the altogether lovely and you see the more a poor pilgrim have to learn of his or her weakness and insufficiency it brings them to realise they are in deep need of the sufficiency of the

Lord Jesus Christ and as there's some blessing known of that and some of that mercy imparted as it were by his grace then it warms the heart it warms the heart you feel your heart drawn to him I know there are other times when we seem to be so cold to unmoved seem to make little headway as it were almost as a standstill perhaps sometimes wonder have you got any religion at all what a mercy it is when a little movement yes yes a desire toward him and you can be sure that this one in the text as she felt that support as she was enabled to continue well she realised that in the Lord Jesus Christ there's everything to satisfy her need complete satisfaction yes that her need should be supplied but you see he was here a little and there a little as she journeyed on and there's something about this leaning also surely teaches us this

[28 : 52] I think of it in the light of that text as thy days so shall thy strength be you see she she come up out of the wilderness day by day as it were and she leaned day by day and surely this is a secret of the mercy whereby poor sinners are unable to continue to yes as they lean on him and dear friends we do need to be helped in this you know there's such a tendency isn't there to lean on self as something base instead of trusting sovereign grace we're all guilty in that way but with great mercy you know to really be brought to fear our weakness and our dependence that we need the Lord Jesus Christ we need his supporting grace we need his sustaining mercy yeah we need all that he is as the saviour of sinners as a friend of sinners but to come into the experience and to know it is as you're brought to lean on him and therefore not to lean to our own understanding or the folly of this you see there are we may tend sometimes to lean on other things yes even perhaps to lean on frames and feelings and that is not the support is it there are other frames and feelings

God grants us a feeling religion but that's not the support is it the support the strength is in the Lord Jesus Christ there's no other source but blessed be God it is a wondrous source or the sufficiency there is in the Lord Jesus Christ this dear one journeyed up through the wilderness you see she was close to him and she was kept close to him and in this way she came up out of the wilderness yes she still proceeded as it were from day to day and so that word comes back into the mind again as thy days so shall thy strength be and those who lean on the Lord Jesus Christ will prove that there's strength communicated yes daily strength strength for each day you see as she leaned on the Lord Jesus

Christ her beloved it was from day to day she received strength sufficient she was graciously and wondrously supported and that is the way the Lord has designed for his dear people to walk in you see we may tend sometimes to think what a mercy it would be if we could start with a bit of strength in ourselves as it were may even perhaps seek strength for the morrow but that's not the promise as thy days so shall thy strength be and sometimes the heart may be sorely troubled as perhaps you consider the future and what the future may hold in store for you but sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof the trouble thereof all to be helped from day to day to look to the Lord Jesus Christ and in looking to lean upon him to realise that here is strength here is safety here is one who is wisdom itself and the others petition and they set before us in this chapter really indicates does it not some communion between this dear traveller and her beloved and we have it in the sixth verse seal upon thine arm for thy love is strong as death and again many waters cannot quench love neither can the floods drown it and sometimes you see in the communication between a poor sinner and the sinner's friend as love grows warm as it were there's a will be a concern here there's this word simply as seal upon thine heart the seal upon thine arm indicates that which shows as it were the union that exists between the one and the other the beloved and the pilgrim the seal where you read in the scripture about the seal of the spirit that which indicates an interest in the

Lord Jesus Christ himself a seal is very important isn't it for see she says set me as a seal upon thine heart and as a seal upon thine arm upon thine heart yes the fountain of love as it were and upon thine arm here is the strength here is the way in which the Lord is pleased to communicate his supporting grace there is the strength of his arm there is the love of his heart now I have to think of this you know in the light of those beautiful promises we have in the in the prophecy of Isaiah where the Lord condescends to his dear travelling people weak thou thyself the fear knots he gives surely a poor pilgrim who is able to lean upon the Lord Jesus Christ is something to allow the fears isn't it there are the fears we tend to be fearful hearted but there is that to allow those fears how the

Lord Jesus Christ how he comforted his disciples didn't he yes but they should not fear yes and the unknown future not to fear in spite of the persecution and all that made up the wilderness journey he comforted them with a sense of his promise and the promise of his presence and his Holy Spirit's aid fear not I've overcome the world and this wilderness world you see the Lord has overcome it for his dear people he's made a way whereby they can journey from this wilderness yes this waste holy wilderness as the word of God describes it and what sin has made it to be here's one who cannot settle down in the wilderness because it's cannot supply the need there's no food here there's no water here but in the Lord Jesus Christ there's everything there's food yes there is there is drink yes there is his good spirit there's everything the poor sinner needs as he journeys on from day to day in this wilderness journey and this one comes up out of the wilderness yes she's not there toward eternity no there's the end of the journey when God in his great mercy fulfilled his promise to his ancient people he brought them into the promised land didn't he true it's a wilderness journey and they had to traverse the wilderness for many years and many years on account of their sin and yet

[36 : 44] God was with them the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night there was supplies there was the manor yes there was the water that flowed from the rock all pointing you see to the fullness that dwells in the Lord Jesus Christ and this dear travelling one as she leans upon her beloved so she receives she finds refreshment she finds poor to strengthen yes water to quench as it were the wind of the gospel to cheer her heart as everything in the Lord Jesus Christ all what we need is that grace to lean hard upon him to be delivered from trusting himself he that trusts in his own heart is a fool the word of God says but trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not to thine understanding but lean on him oh here is wisdom yes here is grace here is the sufficiency here is wondrous righteousness yes and here is cleansing pardon it all centers in and flows through the Lord

Jesus Christ and it is as these pilgrims are helped to lean so they do continue yes they do not draw back the apostle had a great word didn't he as he wrote to the church in Judea the epistle to the Hebrews he said we're not of them who draw back into petition but they that believe to the saving of the soul and one aspect of believing is this leaning isn't it leaning upon him leaning upon the Lord Jesus Christ oh may the Lord grant us to know something of that place of attraction there is in the Lord Jesus Christ and all his wonders suitability and he is that saviour and a great one the one who comes down to his dear people as it were in the wilderness so they can lean upon him and that they can commune with him as it were pray their heart before him express their desires before him how compassionate the Lord

Jesus Christ was wasn't he when he was here upon earth sometimes thought of those needy cases poor blind man and when he cried out the Lord Jesus Christ stood still amazing word isn't it the Lord Jesus Christ journeyed at me from one place to another he was journeying on at that time and as the poor blind man called out Jesus stood still he took notice of the cry he stopped as it was to take notice it shows to us the pity and compassion the understanding that is in the Lord Jesus Christ now dear friends that is the saviour you and I need oh may we know what it is as we journey on to lean here and to know him as our beloved because she was brought safely on safely through the wilderness and like it was with God's ancient people they were brought safely yes through

Jordan and into the promised land oh may you and I know something of the beauties of the Lord Jesus Christ and to realise that all is in him and only hope is alone in him Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever amen we'll close by singing hymn number 92 the tune is Hampstead 340 hymn number 92 who is this fair one in distress that travels from this wilderness and pressed with sorrows and with sins on her beloved

Lord she leans hymn number 92 songs however how they love is waking in life is yours very great in power ■■■ The End

[42 : 16] The End The End The End

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The End O Lord be pleased and mercy to forgive anything spoken amiss and to bless thine own precious truth.

Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit abide with us both now and forever. Amen.

[47 : 38] The End