

Leaning upon our beloved (Quality: Very good)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 23 June 1985

Preacher: Stehouwer, Jay K (1924 - 2019)

[0 : 0 0] With the Lord's help, I would like to direct your attention to some thoughts found in the Songs of Solomon, chapter 8, and the first part of the fifth verse.

That's the Songs of Solomon, chapter 8, verse 5, where we read as follows, 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? I realize, and it is sad to say, that many read the Songs of Solomon and they find nothing in it.

I trust there are some who read the Psalms, the Songs of Solomon are offended by some of the expressions of which we read in it. But yet, friends, isn't it a mercy, there are some who read the Songs of Solomon and find their very desires, their very expressions brought out in the experience here of the bride.

Actually, the Songs of Solomon is a dialogue between, generally speaking, between two persons. It is the Church of God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

[1 : 3 0] And I believe there was one particular verse which rather struck me quite early in my soul's experience relating to the interpretation of the Songs of Solomon, and that is in the book of Titus.

Titus says, to the pure, all things are pure, and to the defiled, all things are defiled. Oh, sad case, isn't it, friends, when you read portions of the Scriptures with a defiled mind, and are offended with some of this expression.

That very reverse, friends, gave me some comfort, as I read in the Songs of Solomon, some of the desires of my soul.

And when I come across some portions of which I wasn't able to interpret, I could leave it aside, realizing that it is only my ignorance. But to the pure, all things are pure.

It gave me hope that I was one of those who, by God's grace, hath purified by his grace and by his mercy and by the work of faith and soul, and could look upon the portions of the Songs of Solomon, and longed that they might be mine, that I might be like that person of whom we read in the Songs of Solomon, and in the words of our text, who leans upon the Beloved.

[3 : 0 0] Now, in looking at the verse which lays before me, I would like to divide my thoughts into five parts. First of all, let us try to view what this wilderness is, because we read in the words of our text, this person cometh out of the wilderness.

Then also let us notice who is this person who comes up out of the wilderness, and who is this person who comes up out of the wilderness, and notice something of its posture, and notice how that she does lean upon the Beloved.

And so our fourth thought will be the posture of this person. And then lastly and fifthly, let us try to think something about the amazement of these Jerusalem daughters who make the statement, who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her being.

May the Lord help me to speak and help you to hear that we might have a profitable time in the house of God this morning. It is very important, and firstly, who is this Beloved, or what is this wilderness, because it is important that we do know this.

The wilderness, I might look at two particular thoughts. First of all, it speaks of this world. That is, this world under its curse.

[4 : 51] The world of sin. Secondly, it speaks of the heart of man. That is, man by nature, unregenerated, who is not born again.

who is yet being blinded by the God of this world. Now then, first, let us look upon this wilderness and seek, as God enables us, to compare it to this wilderness or to this world of which we live.

Friends, this world was a fair spot. It was a glorious place when it first came from the hands of its maker. There was no curse upon it.

It was fair to look upon. It was enjoyable to live in. And then we know the story. Man fell. Sin was brought into this world. And there was a curse upon this world as well as upon mankind.

time. Now I realize I only look back and I can remember I realize this expression no doubt was used in some comical way.

[6 : 05] But there's a truth to it. A person once said and no doubt we all have heard it that there is really nothing wrong with this world. It is the people who live in it.

Now there's a lot of truth in it. I realize even the earth is under its curse because of the thorns and because of its thistles. But in my meditation I could not help but think of that place which is called Lebanon.

There along the sea coast of the Mediterranean Sea. It was once a vacation spot of all the nations practically of the world. A place where one would go and view the beautiful sea.

And anything that I can roughly think of in the word of God about Lebanon is always good. We speak about the forest of Lebanon. The word of God speaks about the streams which flow from Lebanon.

And there is no question for friends at one time it was a beautiful spot. But what has man done to it? With all the war turmoil anger malice evil sin selfishness wretchedness they've destroyed to themselves destroyed their beauty they've destroyed the country and it's nothing but a havoc or almost I don't like to use the expression because it isn't really in hell on earth but it is something almost close to it.

[7 : 30] A place none of us would want to go. Oh friends what a curse this world is then what man hath brought. In other words friends as we look upon unto this world there is not anything of which is going to bring a soul unto God with all of its pleasures with all of its temptations with all of its sin it is a barren wilderness.

Into the wilderness we know there was no path there was no signpost which would guide any soul to Canaan and so friends there is nothing in this world with all of its pleasures and with all of its allurements which will bring you to God.

It is a deceiving world it is a deceitful world it will deceive your soul for time and for eternity. Oh may you see the emptiness of it.

We read of the wilderness that it was an evil wilderness and so this world is an evil world. Oh when I think of all of the sin and the corruption which turns young men and young women's hearts aside turn them at an early age to seek the things of time and sense there is not and there is nothing more than false guides false signposts which would lead you actually to hell though they may as it were thinking they are pointing a soul to heaven.

Again friends there is no path there is nothing in this world which will show you the savior. Oh I realize the gospel but I haven't come to that yet.

[9 : 07] So this wilderness is this of which mankind by nature calls beautiful pleasant pleasure happiness all of that which will deceive the soul for eternity and any religion which does not consist of the true experimental religion which directs your never dying soul to the only fountain to the only way which leads you to heaven is a religion which is formed and created into this wilderness of sin.

yes deceivers wild beasts and Satan goes around as a roaring lion to deceive many souls and turn to them from that narrow way of entering into glory.

But oh friends is there not is there any vast disconnection with this world and our heart by nature? there isn't this air.

Our heart is as glued to this world it is one part it's eardissolvable by nature that is. And so friends what is our heart?

The wilderness is that which brings forth thorns and briars it does not bring forth any fruit and so our heart by nature does not bring any fruit or any glory to God but is only filled of death it is filled with a curse it brings forth briars and thorns it brings nothing to the glory of God and so this world friend because of sin is under the curse and so our very heart because of our sin and because of our evil nature and the sight of God is under the curse this is the wilderness of which we read in the words of our text again the wilderness where lost souls are found wandering about seeking the things of time and sense and not seeking the narrow way which leadeth unto a life everlasting this is the wilderness of which we are brought in by our birth a wilderness which we love by our own choice a wilderness where we will live and die in except for God's grace but to the marvel and the amazement of which we actually see in the words of our text is we see then in our second point who is this person who in the words of our text is coming up from the wilderness this is something this is something friends of which is only by divine grace it is brought about by the quickening power of God it is the illumination of God's

[12 : 02] Holy Spirit within their own heart in other words friends by nature we don't leave this world do we oh to you who know something of your own heart how true it is but to this person whom we read coming up from the wilderness it is the Lord who hath come and quickened that soul into divine life they have been born again their understanding hath been enlightened they have been given light wisdom upon what they are in the wilderness they begin to see there is not a blade of grass of which now can satisfy their true living desire they see it as an empty something of which is full of sin they see the deceitfulness of sin the deceitfulness of their own heart because as I said friends you cannot separate our heart from this world they begin to recognize that they are nothing more than slaves to sin slaves to Satan and that the

God of this world hath blinded their eyes they recognize themselves as lost and undone souls without hope without God without Christ they have been brought there to the mouth of Sinai there they have heard the thundering of the law there they hear its ten commandments brought forth in all of its glory and all of its fullness there they recognize themselves as lost and undone without hope guilty of God's command and they are brought to realize too that by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified by the deeds of any flesh of their own or any works any confession or profession of their own will never make themselves right in the sight of God they go to the law trying to make themselves right they try to fulfill the law and only see that the past sins are still there before them and their complete failure to answer any demands of

God's holy law these are those whom we hope to notice a little later who come up oh I realize that when the first awakening there can be a small coming up and yet not really know what way or what track to take but then let us notice then in our third thought who is this person who in the words of our text is referred to as the beloved the beloved throughout the hold of the songs of psalm refers to him who is the Lord Jesus Christ yes this God man this person who was the eternal God from all eternity how did he ever come into this place of the wilderness oh friend what a mercy that there was such a covenant made in the councils of eternity with a great and a glorious triune God whom God the Father seen there even before man fell and before the creation of man he seen what sin would do he foreseen the fall he knew all that would transpire and therefore in his love and his mercy he chose individuals out of the mass of this wilderness of sin and inequity and he chose them to be ordained to eternal life who would according to the process of time be those who will come out of this wilderness and lean upon the beloved how can any soul lean upon deity now friends we cannot approach an absolute

God for any man cannot see God and live we cannot come nigh unto him in an absolute God but to this beloved was this person who was the eternal son of God who condescended who humbled himself and made himself of no reputation he came into this wilderness of sin and of death and of degradation and took upon him the form of those who were found in the wilderness yet without sin because he was not born as I mentioned recently friend of the seed of Adam no he wasn't born of the seed of Adam but he was born of the seed of the Holy Spirit truly he was found in the womb of a mother Mary who was ordained of God to be the mother of the

Lord Jesus Christ but it was not the seed of man there that seed was placed in her womb it grew it took on flesh it was a body prepared of God it was without sin it was holy but it was not without healing it was truly flesh and bone of our bone and yet was completely holy just and pure into the sight of God because there was no sin in the implantation neither was there any sin in its birth neither was there any sin in its growth because we read this as he grew and prospered as a little child he found favor with God and with man oh friend we can find favor with man and yet not find favor with God man may think very well of us man man might even go so far to look upon individual and say well I believe it is the most purest person the most upright person the most law abiding citizen and person

[18 : 26] I have ever seen in my life they could say that but they don't know the man's heart neither do they know his secret light and therefore God by God can never say that of any man by nature except the Lord Jesus Christ and by being born of a woman he immediately came under the law but having flesh and having growth God the nature together because it is indissolvable his humanity and his Godhead are one it flowed into one to show this when he seen a leprous soul he had compassion that showed his humanity he had compassion his heart went out he bled as it were in his own heart soul for the compassion and the good of that person but as

God he could touch the leprous soul heal him instantaneously and yet not be polluted and corrupted by the leprosy of that person because he touched a whole soul there's the nature of God and man as man he fulfilled every title and every demand of God's holy law and as God he could and you wouldn't want to divide the Godhead and the humanity of God Godhood when we look upon him as one born under the law and as taking union to the church of God because every part and every part of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the face of the earth was absolute vicarious in all of its nature because he had nothing to gain he had no glory to accomplish for him own self except to the glory of God in fulfilling the law and that he could see it would glorify

God here upon the face of this earth he is not an angel oh I was thinking even to this past week how we have to be careful the memory verse of our little children is pray that ye enter not into temptation I hope friends you will memorize that and I hope that God will give you grace to fulfill and to walk into that particular verse why is it so vital friend we read in the book of Jude of the angels which fell and they kept not their first estate now friend think of it this way if angels who were created holy and yet fell what about wretched man upon the face of the earth who was conceived and then sin and born in sin then what about us are we able to keep if angels in all of their purity were not able to keep themselves then friends we cannot keep ourselves if Adam in his innocency who was created by the hand of God and God in the days of his innocence said looked upon him and said it was very good if Adam then

I know he was born under the covenant of works and there was this liable to fall and he knew all about it he cannot deny it because God he was left without excuse he knew what he did immediately after he fell that he had eaten of the forbidden fruit but if man in his innocency in his created righteousness was not able to keep himself then friend are we able to keep ourselves all was sorry but we find here there was one sent of God and that glorious truth which is found in the third chapter of John in verse 16 is found in this beloved person for God so loved that he gained his only begotten son that excuse me for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever breaking down any barrier between

Jew and Gentile as it were opening the gospel door to all types to all individuals that whosoever believeth on him shall not perish in this wilderness of sin shall not perish under the curse and condemnation of God's holy law but shall have an eternal life a life not only in this world but in the world which is to come so this beloved person is that person who fulfilled the law he satisfied justice he died and shed his own blood and friends the marvelous he came into this world to seek and to save lost and undone sinners because by themselves they could not seek the way they could not know the way they could not find the way and there was no other way at least in the mind of God this was his planned ordained way this beloved oh he is beloved when we think of him in his compassion his love and his mercy oh when we think of the beloved who went there by the well of Samaria and there found and sought out that wretched fool lost undone vile woman whose reputation had been marred and scorned by all her own sin by her own father and had been rightly condemned in that respect by all those who were round about her this beloved who is approachable who is nigh who is said to be the redeemer who is said to be the near kinsman who is filled with all the glory the God has and yet who is that in every part holy and solely human as we are only without sin who can be touched with the feelings of our infirmity so we see here then the wilderness is this world it is our wretched heart we see a marvel in this person whom we find who have been quickened into the divine life who comes up up from the wilderness and we have noticed a little of the person who is the beloved now friend

[25 : 30] I hope you can immediately see now my fourth point the posture of this person who is now leaning upon the beloved glorious posture isn't it now what is this leaning what does this include it includes that of a guilty and a lost sinner coming on to Jesus him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out that's one of those persons who are now leaning upon the beloved it is one true also who knows what it is not in the full comfort of assurance yes that is their true but yet maybe not brought there who does believe into this beloved person they believe not at this point sometimes to the full comfort and consolation and assurance of which they want to come to but yet friends there is a believing and not coming to the full joy and the peace of it and believing this that I know if my poor soul shall ever be saved it'll have to be upon the ground of another it is a believing sometimes in the truths of the gospel because the gospel tells me and shows me a way of salvation which is found in

Jesus of whom the words of our text says it is the beloved it is this believing I want each and every one of you to come to the full assurance and comfort of believing I want you to come to the place of believing with joy and peace in your own soul and that the person of the Lord Jesus Christ who is in the words of our text is that person of whom you find to be your beloved and you can lean upon no other it is coming to this place all other ground is sinking sand but realizing that there is only one rock of which I must build upon it is coming there vile and full of sin I am but full of grace and truth thou art it is this nothing in my hand I bring simply cleave to the cross I claim it is like Jacob bless me in my own soul or else

I die it is like Mary who comes there at the feet of Jesus longing to hear the word of Christ longing to hear the Holy Spirit teaching and directing you knowing that in him and in him only by this leaning friend it denotes there is a nearness now friend as I said we cannot approach an absolute God but we can approach a God man now not man only because there is no man friends of whom we could rely and cast our soul I realize there are many deceitful many will say you are a Christian and tell you have something and what you might have experienced is the God but if you're going to lean upon what man has said and come short of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ you have not come out of this wilderness coming out of the wilderness may be coming out by a profession there may be a departing of the world there may be a cleansing of their life naturally speaking there may be a new change yes we can be changed from a tavern to a church and yet never really come out of the wilderness friend has got to come out of the wilderness of profession the wilderness of sin meaning wholly and solely upon the worth and the merit of the

Lord Jesus Christ as I said it shows a nearness further friends it shows a weakness it shows that well I believe we've all had maybe some crippled with us or know of some older person who could hardly as it were manage to carry themselves on their feet and they just lean their whole weight upon our arm or upon our person and we think oh can I hold up they just lean because there's no other way to lean oh friend have you ever come as a weak lost sinner know strength himself and have to lean upon Jesus something else it denotes it denotes fearfulness I fear this wilderness I fear my heart I fear the deceitfulness of Satan I fear the deceitfulness of man and I'm fearful but I'm not fearful if I can lean upon Christ

I realize it is a fear which is a filial fear which is brought up by love so this leaning friend is even that of which detects our love oh when Peter was asked lovest thou me more than these Peter as I said before the time friends Christ could come no longer he could come no lower to the case of Peter and therefore Peter said Lord thou knowest that I love thee also it denotes as a person who is unfit to travel oh if I can travel on my own friend I don't lean upon no one but it is one who fears I have lost the way and I know not the way it is the prayer which goes out unto the Lord and says Lord show me what is the way if I travel I'm going to turn out of the way

[31 : 41] I'm going to be a lost soul and one feels themselves to be lost it is then feeling themselves unfit to travel something else friends of which we find here it is one who finds there's difficulties in the way there's many obstacles the temptations of this world and all of its allurements they call me back I often think of pilgrim as he began to leave this wilderness which is referred to as the city of destruction his wife and his children bid him to come back they called unto him don't be so foolish don't leave this place don't be so foolish as to follow that narrow path where you don't know where it's going to leave but he put his fingers in his ear he didn't want to hear the alluring voice even of his own wife and his children and he says life life eternal life in other words friends he seen the difficulties and he leaned upon the beloved it is one who knows there is only rest to be found in

Jesus oh what a rest is Christ to me is that where you long to rest it is one who sees there is no satisfaction found in this world but I see a satisfaction in Christ I see a pleasure it is one who sees that I must have wisdom and looks to the Lord that he might be given wisdom it is one who looks upon himself and sees himself vile and full of sin but he leans upon the glorious righteousness of Jesus that's a good thought isn't it I ask you are you coming out of the wilderness are you leaning upon his righteousness with a sense that I have no righteousness of my own I'm striped and naked the law hath made me bare hath taken away all hope which is found in self further it is one who leans upon his precious blood do you take comfort some time in that precious verse the blood of

Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin by the blood of Christ it made peace with God by the blood of Christ we draw nigh unto God by the blood of Christ one is justified in the sight of God oh without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin do you lean upon him then because of his righteousness because of his blood do you lean upon him that he might show you pardon do you realize you've got to have the pardon of sin do you lean upon him and all of his offices to teach you do you lean upon him as your great high priest who must bear your name and present your cause plead my cause do you lean upon him as the king to rule and reign in your heart subdue the monstrous host of sin bring you under control subdue you and bring you in subjection to his holy and blessed will do you lean upon him because of the gospel which is free which is open all to all sinners which is blessed the glorious gospel do you lean upon him in your times of trouble when troubles surround you do you come to him and lean upon him and then do you lean upon him in the times of temptation when sin seems to become so alive and when all of the temptations of the lust of the eye the lust of the flesh and the pride of life seem to boil up within you do you lean upon him to subdue it and to bring it under control do you lean upon him when

Satan comes with his false accusations and tries to tell you there is no God that salvation is not that hard way of which sometimes is described from the pulpit now salvation is hard but yet it is not because the Lord makes it easy but we make it hard by our own unbelief and by our own sins and by our own departing there is where the hardness is and not on the part of God but do you lean upon him do you lean upon him in the times of troubles when do they come upon you do you lean upon him in the times of sickness do you lean upon him sometimes when you think of death and eternity and sin and your shortcomings do you lean upon him when you find you have departed and you have slipped and you have back fallen and you have now been as it were estranged from God oh friends these are those who lean upon him now let us try to notice some of the amazement here of these individuals these daughters of

Jerusalem who said who is this yes they are filled with amazement it is the wonders of God's grace the wonders of God's love grace on the part of God that he should look upon such wretched sinners and grace that such wretched sinners should be coming out of this wilderness of sin and condemnation and believing on Jesus maybe it might be wise to look at a few individuals before I look at some individuals friends who came out of this wilderness leaning upon the beloved I want to tell you one person friend who didn't come out of the wilderness and that was Ishmael if you read the history of Ishmael you remember that his mother took him into the wilderness she intended to go down to Egypt but you remember the story she never got there and then we read and Ishmael dwelt into the wilderness

[38 : 18] Ishmael was one who depended upon his goal now the land where Esau actually dwelt in a measure was a wilderness too it was mountainous and he depended much upon his goal for Jacob says thou shalt live by thy goal or by thy sword and so Ishmael is in Esau they dwelt in the wilderness they made it their habitation but Jacob couldn't dwell in the wilderness because he was to live by faith and faith is that friends which always points to the object which is the Lord Jesus Christ Rahab was one of those she was in the city of destruction she was under the curse but she heard about the God of Israel and she received the spies by faith she confessed their guilt their destruction and she asked for mercy and truly can be said of the daughters of

Jerusalem as they looked upon the great change which took place in the life there of Rahab and every time you read of Rahab I believe I'm correct in this every time you read of Rahab you read of her as the harlot she never lost that to show the wonders of grace not to show what a sinner she was then yet but the wonders of grace Rahab the harlot now there might be exceptions to that and I would like to be drawn attention to it and I ought to have looked it up but we read again and again but friend what was it who is this ah it is Rahab the harlot who hath come out of the wilderness leaning upon her beloved and it can be said also of Ruth thy God entice me and treat me not to leave thee nor to leave from following after thee she had to leave the wilderness she seemed to the land of robe as under the curse and she leaned upon the beloved and she came up out of the wilderness and she came into the land of

Israel and so we could go on Moses is another one he looked upon all the joys and the glitter and the gold of Egypt and he says he would rather suffer with the affliction of the children of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for the season oh that was grace a miracle of grace because no man by nature would have chosen to have left the throne there which was no doubt promised to him there in the land of Egypt but he looked upon the poor and the afflicted people I would rather be amongst them to enjoy the pleasures of sin for the season and Moses came up out of the wilderness leaning upon the beloved and what can it be said who is this who cometh out of the wilderness and so I read the legion of devils and they came out of the city and they beheld him there sitting at the feet of

Jesus clothed and in his right mind who is this the blind man who was born blind who is this is he one who sat at the gate and begged it was but he came out of the wilderness leaning upon his beloved it was the blind Bartimaeus who said Jesus thou son of David have mercy upon me it was the publican who came out of the wilderness of the money changers leaning upon the beloved upon his mercy his grace and there come to the temple smiting upon his breast and asking for mercy oh I wonder how many we could find in the word of God who are examples types and figures of Paul because I read him you remembered in the epistle there of of of Galatians which we read in your hearing this morning I love that this is why

I read this because it came to me in my meditation but they heard only that he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed and they glorified God in me they seen him leaning upon the beloved look at the woman who was a sinner all knew her sins all despised her all as it were found her repugnant and friends by nature rightly we would but we find she came with true repentance of her sin she could do nothing else the nature of living faith in her soul like a magnet drew her to the feet of Jesus and there she confessed with weeping eyes wiping the feet and anointing them with her tears and giving praise unto him oh what could it be said of the church of God upon the face of the earth because the daughters of Jerusalem is a type and a figure to the church of

[43 : 45] God who is this that that cometh up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved well we could go on speak about these in many ways and many descriptions but let us try and analyze a few of these things for ourselves first of all have you been brought to see something of the wilderness of this world that you are lost and undone is there something within your own heart with its struggleings and with all of its fightings within have sought to come out have you found that by your own strength and by your own power that you could not come out you couldn't break your powers but you cast yourselves upon the beloved upon the mercies you seen him as needed and therefore in that fourth point you did lean upon him you leaned upon him for your only hope for time and for eternity and can it be said of yourself at times wondering over the marvels of grace of

God and can it really be said of others who took note of you that you have been with Jesus they see you now sitting at the feet of Jesus clothed and in a right mind hearing the words of the mean and coming to that you might hear of Christ well friends there I'm going to leave it for the words of our text who is this that cometh up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved may the Lord bless it for his name sake Amen shall we then conclude our service by the singing of hymn number 13 hymn number 13 God's mercy is forever sure eternal is his name as long as life and speech endure my tongue this truth proclaim hymn number 13 of the earth season e r those country is is forever pure, eternal is His name.

And love is life and speak is good, my tongue is true proclaim.

I'm raising his hand against His mouth, and yet my God was good, His favor nothing could reveal, for I was born with my blood.

And precious love, and precious love of peace, and holy tears of tears, it takes upon the sin and clean, my heart and sin and clean.

[47 : 58] He raised me proud, the soul and the shame, when hell was mighty hurt.

My love is lost with burdens and laughs, while as I broke his heart.

I know thou hast led what will be An ever-changing breath When brethren, friends, that helpers bear On him alone depend May the grace of the Savior And the love of the Father And the communion of the Holy Ghost Rest upon all, now and forevermore Amen Praise God now for our service

For allorkmentlam