

TO THE BRIDE, KINGDOM, STATE,

AND

CHURCH OF THE LORD, GRACE AND PEACE.

Thus spake the Bridegroom, Christ Jesus, through Solomon to his bride, the church, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away, for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away," Cant. 2: 10—13.

Chosen, true children, you, who with me, are called to the like grace, inheritance and kingdom, and are named after the Lord's

name, hear the voice of Christ; your king; hear the voice of your bridegroom, ah, thou bride of God, thou friend of the Lord, arise, and adorn thyself to honor thy king and bridegroom. Though thou art pure, purify thyself yet more: though thou art holy, hallow thyself yet more, and though thou art right, rectify thyself yet more; adorn thyself with the white silken robe of righteousness; hang about thy neck the golden chain of all piety; gird thyself with the fair girdle of brotherly love; put on the wedding ring of true faith; gird thyself with precious fair gold of the divine word. Adorn thyself

with the pearls of all modesty; wash thyself with the clear waters of grace, and anoint thyself with the oil of the Holy Ghost. Wash thy feet in the clear, limped river of Almighty God; let your whole body be pure and clear, for thy friend hates all wrinkles and spots; so will he have pleasure in thy beauty and will praise thee and say, "How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! How much better is thy love than wine, and the smell of thine ointments, than all spices. Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honey-comb; honey and milk are under thy tongue," Cant. 4: 10, 11.

Rejoice, O thou bride of the Lord! for your beloved is fairer than all the children of men, "The chiefest among ten thousand, his head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy and as black as a raven. His eyes are as the eyes of doves, by the rivers of waters, washed with milk and fitly set. His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers; his lips, like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh. His hands are as gold rings set with the beryl: his belly is as bright ivory, overlaid with sapphires. His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold. His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars: his mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely," Cant. 5: 10—16. Cry out and say, "Hearken, O daughter, and consider and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house, so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty," Ps. 45: 10, 11.

Draw near, O thou queen, O thou well-prepared and fairest of all woman; bow thy neck with Esther, under his powerful sceptre; hear his word and fear his judgment; acknowledge his great love, for he has greatly humbled himself towards us. "Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother a Hittite, and as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born, thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all," Ezek. 16: 3, 4. Thou wast polluted in thy blood, behold so despised were your souls, as the prophet lamented. But he has pitied thee, promised thee life, nourished thee and clothed thy shame, purified thee from thy uncleanness,

wiped off thy blood, anointed thee with balsam, clothed thee with spiritual clothes; he has adorned thee with bracelets, ear-rings, and a beautiful crown, and has taken thee for his bride, and made an everlasting covenant with thee; he has fed thee with oil, honey and wheaten bread; he has led thee to the chamber of his love, and kissed thee with the mouth of his peace.

How lovely and gracious a bridegroom and king is he, who has chosen his miserable, impure, unesteemed, yea, unchaste servant, to such an exalted station, and has called her to be such a glorious queen, and has spared no labor, pains nor costs, till he has made her the fairest, purest, most worthy and precious among women.

Arise, make haste, adorn and dress yourselves, extol and praise him who has created you, and called you to such a high honor through the word of his grace.

The winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land; there is nothing more which can harm or hinder, for hell, sin, the devil, death, the world, flesh, fire and sword, are already overcome by all the children of God, through Christ! All they know is Christ Jesus, their seeking is the pure apostolic doctrine and the pious, unblamable life, which is from God.

Praise be to the Most High, who has silenced the falsehoods, for the truth sounds in every street. Anti-christ sinks to shame, and Christ rises to higher honor, yea, the unfruitful, cold winter has disappeared, and the fruitful pleasant spring has come, the lovely fair flowers shoot forth and vegetate, in every place; the voice of the turtle dove is heard. The wholesome, holy word, the word of repentance, the word of grace and eternal peace, is testified with word, writings, life and death, in many countries.

"The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape, give a good smell; arise, my love, my fair one, and come away," Cant. 2: 13. Faith assumes verdure, love blooms, the sun softens, and the truth is published and testified to, which remained fruitless for so many years; although you must, for a short time, bear the heat of the sun, yet you so well

know that the kingdom of glory, in eternal joy, is promised and prepared for you.

Rejoice and watch; thou art black but comely, thou art as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon. "Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out," Cant. 4: 16. Fear not, little flock, for it is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom, not the perishing kingdom of Assyria, Media, Macedonia, nor of Rome, but the kingdom of the saints, the kingdom of the great King, the kingdom of David, the kingdom of grace and eternal peace, which shall never more perish, but shall abide and stand forever, therefore, hear him and be obedient, that you be not thrust out with the haughty, disobedient Vashti, but with the pious Esther, live in endless glory, before the true Ahasuerus, Christ, and abide with him forever.

Arise, thou daughter of Zion, and observe what is promised thee. O Jerusalem, although thou, as a comfortless one, sittest for a while, and must bear all manner of storms and hail, but your helper will arrive in time, who brings forth thy righteousness as the morning, and is thy shelter from the wind and storm. For He who loved thee has said, "Behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires, and I will make thy windows of agates and thy gates of carbuncles and all thy borders of pleasant stones, and all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children. In righteousness shalt thou be established; thou shalt be far from oppression," Isa. 54: 11—14.

Behold, thy wall stands firmly upon twelve foundations, thy gates are of pearls, the city is of pure gold, the river of living waters, proceeding from the throne of God and the lamb, is in the midst of your way, and the tree of life is on either side, and its leaves serve to heal the nation. Happy and holy is he who has part in this city.

Therefore, so purify yourselves, you who seek the Lord, circumcise the foreskin of your hearts, for the holy city may be inhabited by no uncircumcised person, the golden streets are trodden by no unclean

feet; the unclean, drink not of the pure waters; the fruit of life shall never be eaten by any of the ungodly, "For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie," Rev. 22: 15.

Be ye all minded like Christ Jesus. Be earnest to hold the union of the Spirit through the covenant of peace; ye are all one temple, house, city, mountain, body and church in Christ Jesus.

Place your candle upon a candlestick, build your city upon a high mountain; live unblamably, behave in all things consistent with Christianity, fear God in all your ways, praise him in all your works; for great is the grace which has appeared. Prove yourselves in all things, as those who are born of God; shun all false doctrine; repay not evil with evil, but return the evil with good; pray without ceasing; in patience possess your souls; judge all your thoughts, words, and lives, after the thoughts, words, and life of Christ, so shall you in eternity never more be deceived.

Walk worthily after the calling whereby ye are called. Let the tyrannical, blaspheming, upbraiding, and furious, hate the Lord and his word, they persecute you not, but Christ Jesus, to whom they are inimical, they will be judged in their time, and, if they do not repent, will be repaid again in their own bosoms.

Strive and wrestle valiantly, in order that the crown be not taken from you. Fly to the mountain of the covert of Christ Jesus. Gird yourselves with the weapons of righteousness, declare God's word with freedom, neither shrink nor give way. God is your conductor; be faithful unto death, so shall you inherit the crown of life.

Whosoever overcomes, will be clothed with white clothing, and his name shall not be erased from the book of life. Although we appear to the unwise, to die and depart from the right way, our souls are, nevertheless, in hope and peace, Wis. 3: 2.

"It is a faithful saying," says Paul, "for if we be dead with him (Christ), we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he will also deny us," 2 Tim. 2: 11, 12. There-

fore, fear your God from the heart, watch and pray and commend to him your affairs, as Jeremiah did. He has chosen you to be his loving bride, children, and members; called you to the kingdom of his grace, and the inheritance of his glory, and has bought

you with the immaculate blood of Christ Jesus.

Peace be with you, the Spirit, power and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, be with all my fellow laborers, believers, brethren and sisters, till eternal life, Amen.

CONCLUSION OF THIS BOOK.

Behold, dear sirs, friends and brethren, here we have briefly pointed out and declared upon what foundation and Scriptures we are built, what we seek and have in view, and how we rebuke, with the word of the Lord, all abominable sects and ungodliness of the whole world, both with the greatest and the smallest, without any respect of persons, and we point out to every one, the wholesome, pure truth. The god-fearing may read and judge. But this I have not done in order that the cross of Christ may be avoided, in no wise, for I know and am persuaded, that the lamb with the wolf, the dove with the kite, and Christ with Belial, can never be at peace, the truth must be hated; and were it so, that Christ himself should speak from heaven, still would neither Scripture nor godliness, neither Christ nor apostle, neither prophet nor saints, neither lives nor property, be regarded by men. All those, who rebuke, in pure, upright zeal, the haughty, avaricious, proud, idolatrous, bloodthirsty world, and who seek their happiness and eternal welfare, with all the heart, must suffer and be oppressed.

You must (said Christ), be hated of all men for my name's sake. Through much tribulation you must enter into the kingdom of God. Christ himself so suffered and then entered into his glory.

Therefore, I have done this, that the precious, pure truth, might be revealed; that here and there some might be won; the right way pointed out to the blind; the hungry fed with the word of God; the erring directed to Christ, the shepherd; the ignorant taught; the kingdom of God extended; and his holy name magnified and praised,

this, together with our innocence, shall be a witness on the day of judgment to all bloodthirsty tyrants, and all deceivers, false prophets, and all hardened and impenitent, that to them the truth had been testified. But will ye not hear, then be your sins upon you; I have declared unto you according to my small gifts, God's Spirit, word, foundation, ordinance and will, and have pointed out to you righteousness. Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear, and whoever has understanding, let him understand.

I testify my Savior openly; I acknowledge him, and dissemble not. If you repent not and be not born of God, in your spirit, belief, life and worship, and become not one with Christ, then is the sentence of your condemnation on your poor souls already finished and prepared.

All, who teach you otherwise than we have here taught and testified to you, from the Scriptures, deceive you. This is the narrow way through which we all must walk, and must enter the strait gate, if we would be happy. Here is excepted, neither emperor nor king, duke nor count, knight nor nobleman, doctor nor licentiate, rich nor poor, man nor woman. Whoever boasts that he is a christian, the same must walk as Christ walked. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God," 2 John 1: 9. "He that committeth sin is of the devil," 1 John 3: 8. Here neither baptism, Lord's Supper, confession, nor absolution will avail anything. These and other Scriptures stand immoveable, and judge all those who live out of the Spirit and word of Christ, and

whose thoughts are upon earthly and carnal things; they shall never be overthrown, perverted nor weakened, by angel or devil.

Will you say, with refractory Israel, we will not hear the word which you have preached to us in the name of the Lord? but we will do as our forefathers, our kings and princes have done from former years till the present time. So I answer with holy Jeremiah and say, Although you have pleasure in lies, and do such abominations, so hath the Lord taken your wickedness to heart, and has sent you one hard punishment after another, as hunger, pestilence, storms, grief, misery and the consuming, devouring sword, that your land is turned to a waste, to amazement and a curse, as one evidently may see in many places, because you perform strange worship; despise the Lord, your God; cast his word aside; shed innocent blood; walk according to your wantonness; sin against God, and walk not according to his law, ordinance and commands, as the mouth of the Lord has commanded you.

Again, as the unprofitable and rebellious world are warned and rebuked against their will, the prophets, and the true servants of

God, are judged and destroyed by the princes and magistracy, as seditious mutinists, and are persecuted by the priests and common people as deceivers and heretics. Therefore, we have made up our minds to both teach and suffer, expecting that we will fare no better in this matter than they did, but we say with Ezekiel, That when this shall come to pass, then shall you find that the undissembled, pure word of the Lord, had been taught to you.

The merciful, gracious father, through his loving Son, Christ Jesus, our Lord, grant to you all, the gift and grace of his Holy Spirit, that you may hear and read these our christian labors and service of true love, with such hearts, that you may strive for, confess, believe, and follow after the genuine truth, with all your soul, and be eternally saved, Amen.

Dear, worthy lords, grant to your poor servants, that we may fear the Lord from the heart, and preach the word of God, and do right. This we pray you for Jesus' sake. O Lord! Father of all grace, open the eyes of the blind, that they may see thy way, word, truth and will, and walk therein with faithful hearts, Amen.

MENNO SIMON.

