

Song of Solomon 7: 5; “Your Head Crowns You”, Sermon # 61 in the series – “I am My Beloved’s”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on October 1st, 2017, in the Afternoon Worship Service.

Let us understand that this book of the Bible was given to us by God to promote in every Christian’s life the development of their heart relationship with their Lord Jesus Christ. He is our Shepherd-King. He is our heavenly Bridegroom. And even though it is hard for us to imagine that Christ finds us spiritually attractive as individual believers, or as His Church, we need to understand that the reason that He finds us beautiful, as it is described for us in these verses, is because of His grace in our lives, and what that grace is causing us to become. We are new creatures in Christ. He has planted the seed of righteousness in our hearts in regeneration. And so, because of His faithfulness to supply us with grace, and our developing desires and resolutions to become holy, we actually do make progress over time. He sees us changing, and He looks to see whether we are growing up in Him; whether His precious and powerful grace is transforming us from one degree of glory to another by His Spirit. He is drawn to investigate the beauty which His grace is producing in our lives.

Here in verse 5, Christ compliments the beauty of the Church’s head and hair in ways that we want to discover the meaning of, before we partake of the Lord’s Supper in a few minutes. 1st of all – What does it mean when He says that the Church’s head crowns her like Mount Carmel? 2nd – What does it mean when He says that the Church’s hair is like purple? And then, when we gather around the table, we will think upon this question: What does it mean when He says that a king is held captive by her galleries or her tresses? I pray that our consideration of the meaning of these word pictures will make for a good preparation for our partaking of the Lord’s Supper.

1st – What does Christ mean when He says that the Church’s head crowns her like Mount Carmel?

In the King James Version it reads – “Thine head upon thee is like Carmel.” If we were to take this figure literally physically, it would cause us to think that the Church has a very big head, having a head like a mountain. However, we are not to take it literally and so we must try to discover what is the literal spiritual meaning of these words. I think that we should begin by looking at the way in which the apostle Paul uses the word head in his New Testament epistles. Turn with me over to Ephesians 1, and we will look at verses 15-23. “Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”

Now I want you to try to think about what Paul is praying for in these verses. Ever since he heard of their faith in Christ, and their love for all the saints, he had not ceased to give thanks for them, and to pray for them that God might give to them the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God and Christ. They were Christians, but they needed to have the Father open the eyes of their understanding, and enlighten their minds to certain important truths if they were to know God better and grow in holiness more. If the Father granted this answer to Paul’s prayer, then they would come to know what the hope of His calling was. The hope of His calling was their being able to realize the greatness and the glory of all that they had been called to, when they

became a Christian; where they were being taken from and where they were being led to. They were being taken from the pit of sin to heights of glory, both in their relationship with Christ at that time, and in terms of the place where He would bring them to – eternal glory. He is saying that there is a richness and an awesome greatness to the glory of God’s inheritance in the saints. This is what attracts Christ to His Church, when she has obtained this spirit of wisdom and understanding concerning what Christ would have her be, to do, and to become. He would have her to be holy, He would have her to do righteously, and He would have her to walk humbly with Him, her God.

The head of the Church crowns them like Mt. Carmel. She has a holy work to do which she must think about if she would show her love to her Lord. And that is, she must submit to Him and be subject to Him in everything. For Christ is your spiritual husband, dear believer. And the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church as it says in Ephesians 5: 23. Christ would sanctify you and cleanse you with the washing of the water by the word, that He might present you to Himself, a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but they you should be holy and without blemish. All of us as Christians are to understand that there is something very great and glorious about the Church, the people whom God will inherit as they are saved by His glorious grace. For they are growing up into Christ their head, and when they die, they will enter eternal glory and become an everlasting joy and delight to the Triune God. But together even now, upon the earth, they are a great kingdom, having great glory in the sight of their strong Redeemer. Remember, dear Christians, the Stone that struck the image of false worship in Babylon of old, in the New Testament times becomes a great mountain and fills the whole earth. When Christ looks at the head of His Church, He knows what He will make her into, by His grace, and it stirs and moves His holy heart.

Furthermore, Paul prays that each of the saints would know what is the exceeding greatness of the Father’s power which is being exercised toward us who believe. It is the same great and mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places. This is where our heavenly Bridegroom is. He is seated at the Father’s right hand, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. God the Father has given Christ to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. Let us thank the Lord as we partake of the Supper today that it is so; that there is a fullness of spiritual blessing in Christ as our Head which is given to us by the Father’s showing us continual favor because of Him, and His communicating grace to our spirits day by day; grace which enables us to see what a great and important thing it is to be a Christian. Your mission is to glorify God, and in the process, to enjoy Him forever, just as a wife does her husband. This is pleasing to Him; this excites His heart.

To be a Christian is to be a partaker of the fullness of Christ’s grace and to know His love which surpasses understanding. And it is the hope of every tenderhearted Christian to become everything that their Lord knows that they can become by His grace. The crowning grace, which is connected to faith in the body of Christ is hope. It is hope which crowns the head of the Church, and every individual believer. Listen to James Durham on this. He says – “Hope is a grace, which hath its rise from faith, and is supported by the neck; though hope be somewhat above faith, yet doth faith sustain it, and give it a being; the believer hopes, because he believes.” And 2nd – It has much influence on all spiritual duties, and especially on our consolation, and is useful in the spiritual war, as being an essential piece of the believer’s spiritual armor, and is therefore called the “Helmet” or head-piece “of salvation”. 1st Thessalonians 5: 8 – “But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.” In this sense the believer’s head “crowns him”; it is attractive to Christ because He sees that all of her hope is in Him.

Listen to Psalm 71: 5 – “For You are my hope, O Lord God; You are my trust from my youth.” By You I have been upheld from my birth; You are He who took me out of my mother’s womb.”

“My praise shall be continually of You.” Certainly this is something that Christians of all ages should glory in; the fact that they have been upheld by God from birth, and if they have become a Christian in their youth, they have reason to glory. Why? Because if you live to be an older person, you will have more time to glorify God, and more time to get to know Him and to enjoy Him. Truly, the temptations of the world are hard to overcome. All that glitters is not lasting gold. All that pleases and enervates you is not profitable. But if you will have your faith and hope fixed upon developing your relationship with Christ, it will become clear that a pure devotion to Christ is most profitable to both you and to God. In 1st Timothy 6: 9 Paul says: Do not desire to be rich lest you fall into many foolish and harmful desires which drown men in destruction and perdition. But you, O man of God and woman of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and gentleness. And in your pursuit of these things remember what it say in Psalm 71: 14 – “But I will hope continually and I will praise You yet more and more. My mouth shall tell of Your righteousness and Your salvation all the day, for I do not know their limits.” When you think in this way, dear Christian, and act this way, your head crowns you.

Now 2nd - What does it mean when Christ says that the Church’s hair is like purple?

“Your head crowns you as Mt. Carmel, and the hair of your head is like purple.” The New American Standard says – “the flowing locks of your head are like purple threads.” I have previously spoken to you about the hair of the Church as described by Christ, back in chapter 4, verse 1. The focus there was upon the Bride’s hair as being like a flock of goats descending from Mt. Gilead. I said to you then, and I will repeat it for you, now, The hair of a woman is that which sets off her beauty. It is something which our Lord finds attractive in His Bride. Mount Gilead is the mountain where Jacob went when he and his wives fled from Laban, going back to the land of promise in Genesis 31. It was on that mountain that Jacob said to Laban, in verse 44, “Now therefore, come, let us make a covenant, you and I and let it be a witness between you and me.” “So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar.” And in verse 49 he said, “May the Lord watch between you and me when we are absent one from another.” The meaning for us here today, in relation to Song of Solomon, is that Jesus Christ has said the same thing to us in His love language, until we see Him face to face. “This cup is the New Covenant in My blood.” “This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” “For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.”

This is why the color of the Bride’s hair is like purple here in the verse that we are studying today. It represents the fact that every time Christ’s Church, His Bride, looks at herself in the mirror of God’s word, she ought to think of what she can do to show forth Christ’s death in her life. Some women in our day have taken to coloring their hair purple to draw attention to themselves in a radical way. Their hair is not naturally that color, but they have deliberately taken the time and the effort to color it purple to make a statement. They are saying, “I am a free spirited woman, a free-thinker, I do not conform to the standards of what a conservative public would want me to conform to; I am my own person, and I have my own values of what is beautiful, acceptable, and right.

But, you see, this is just the opposite of what the purple color of our text is telling us about the Bride of the Christ; what she is trying to show forth. The Bride of Christ colors her hair purple because she wants to show forth the fact, to everyone, that she belongs to Christ. Christ is her husband and she the vows that she has made to Him; to take Him for better or for worse, in riches or in poverty, in sickness or in health. She remembers the blood of the covenant, and she colors her hair in this way to show forth her remembrance of that New Covenant. In just a few moments we will come down front and partake of the Lord’s Supper. We are coming to remember His death, and particularly the shedding of His precious blood for our sins. Let the Lord’s Supper and the promises of God given to you, His believing people, be unto you a witness between you and Him that you will be faithful to love Him and do Him good by obeying His word; just as you know that He has promised that He will love you and do you good all your days, and bring you to heaven

someday. Set up the memorial of this in your hearts. Everyone who will partake today is spiritually saying that they have colored their hair purple; they remember what Christ has done for them by His obedience, and His sufferings, and His death. And by His resurrection power, He has given them life, and they know the reality of that New Life in their life, and they are saying that they will do their best to put sin to death, and live a life glorifying to God because of what Christ has done for them. Come down front and I will speak to you about Christ's being held captive in the galleries; by the tresses of the Bride.

3rd - What does it mean when Christ says that a king is held captive by her galleries or her tresses?

The Lord Jesus is the King who is being spoken of here. I like what John Gill says concerning this verse. He says – “By the galleries, in which this great king is held, we are to understand the ordinances of the gospel: the same word, which is here rendered galleries, is, in chapter 1, verse 17 translated rafters; which are of much use for the strength and support of buildings: as the ordinances are for the strengthening of weak hands, and confirming of feeble knees: the word is also by some, here rendered canals, as it is gutters, in Genesis 30: 38, 41.” “And troughs to water cattle in Exodus 2:16 which also is applicable to the ordinances of the gospel through which, as through so many canals, conduit-pipes or gutters, is conveyed to souls the grace of the Spirit, which is in scripture, frequently compared to water: but we render the word galleries.” “In the eastern countries, galleries ran along by the sides of great houses, and were a common passage to the rooms in them; and which will well suit with the ordinances, which are those galleries where Christ and believers walk and converse together; where He discovers the secrets of his love, and leads them into a farther acquaintance with his covenant grace; from whence they have delightful views of His precious Person; who having been some time absent from them, they now from hence behold Him coming towards them, ‘leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills;’ here they are oftentimes indulged with Pisgah views; and not only see the King in His beauty, but also beheld the good land which is very far off.” (end of quote)

I would say that the Lord's Supper is one of these galleries, these tresses, which are being spoken of here. Here, in partaking of this Supper, we spiritually perceive our Lord's commitment to His Church; His deep and abiding love for her. Christ so loved the Church that He gave Himself for her. This love took Him to the cross in His obedience on your behalf. The sacrifice of the Lamb of God was bound with cords to the altar, and there the King of glory was held in Your tresses; He thought of You, of purchasing you by His death. He thought of the joy that it would bring Him to see you as He sees you here today, sitting at His table, remembering His love. And knowing your thankfulness and your love for Him, He is more than satisfied to be here, and to impart a special sense of Himself and His presence to you at this hour; to strengthen your faith, hope, and love for Him. He ever lives to make intercession for you, and so it is His joy to faithfully communicate His grace to you, not only today, but every day of your life into the future, until your salvation will be complete, and you will see Him face to face. Dear believer, remember that Christ Himself is here present spiritually, and He is, as it were, held by the cords of your love and the expression of Your thanksgiving to Him. Let this truth ignite your hearts to hope in Him continually and to praise Him still more and more for all that He has done for us.