

**Song of Solomon 4: 7 and 8 – “A View from the Top”, Sermon # 37 in the series – “I am my Beloved’s”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2011, in the Afternoon Worship Service.**

You, dear believer, are spiritually married to Jesus Christ. You are espoused to Him through having believed in the gospel, and having received Him as your Savior; you also have taken Him to be your Lord. You are all fair, spiritually, in His sight because you are now clothed in the righteousness of His own finished work of redemption. There is no spot in you; God has justified you through Christ’s blood and righteousness, and now your sins have all been forgiven for His name’s sake. And so, He has not only given you spiritually the garments of salvation; but He has also purchased the gift of God’s giving you a New Heart and the Holy Spirit to reside with you forever, whereby you now have fellowship with Him day by day. You are now in spiritual union with Him, and you have sweet communion and fellowship with Him, because this is what He has called you to. But there are some times in the life of a Christian; very special times they are; when Christ seems to draw very near to your soul and whispers to your heart, “Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon.” “Look from the top of Amana, from the top of Senir and Hermon, from the lion’s dens, and from the mountains of the leopards.” It is this look from the top that we want to speak of this afternoon. Christ would give to each of His people “a look from the top of these mountains”, if you will come with Him. He would have you to see the bigger picture of what He is doing now, and what He will do for you in the future. So this afternoon I would like to have you think about the 3 invitations which Christ makes to His Bride, the Church, here in these verses. First – The invitation to come with Him from Lebanon. Second – To look from the tops of Amana and the other mountains. And thirdly – To look from the lion’s dens and leopard’s mountains.

**1<sup>st</sup> of all – Christ invites us to come with Him from Lebanon.**

“Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon.” Lebanon was the area where Solomon obtained his cedar trees from, to make the temple. It was also a mountain which was located south of Syria and north of Canaan. John Brown in his dictionary says that “Lebanon is an area of about 300 miles in circumference, and consists of two large mountains; Lebanon or Libanus, and Anti-Libanus.” He then quotes one author as saying that there is a long valley between these two mountain ranges. And he goes on to write, “In Lebanon, it is said, four mountains do, as it were, rise one above another ; the first has a fruitful soil, excellent for vines: the second is barren: the third enjoys an almost perpetual spring: the fourth is often, but not always covered with snow.” “This mountain is thought to be higher than the Pyrenees between France and Spain, or the Alps between the east of France and Italy.” “The vines in the lower parts of it, and the cedars on the top of it, which were anciently very numerous, but now reduced to a few, rendered it extremely beautiful and fragrant.” “But the vast numbers of lions,

leopards, and other wild beasts, rendered it dangerous to walk on, Hosea. 14: 5.” I would conclude from this that the “Lebanon” of our text is a spiritual word picture for the kingdom of Christ. It is the “mountain” spoken of in Isaiah Chapter 2 and also in Micah Chapter 4. Here is what it says in Micah 4: 1 – “Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it.” “Many nations shall come and say, “Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.” This Lebanon, in other words, is a picture of what grows out of Christ’s life, and His finished work on the cross, and the various responses of people to that work. Some are planted on and in Christ’s mountain as cedars and vines, and others are ranging over it as dangerous beasts.

Lebanon is a mountain composed of a number of mountains. The kingdoms of this world are becoming the kingdoms of our God and of our Christ. Solomon’s couch, the palanquin of Song of Solomon 3, verse 9, was made of “the wood of Lebanon”. The wood of Lebanon is a picture of the wood of Christ’s cross. The Palanquin is the picture of the covenant of grace which conveys the believer in spiritual rest and safety; through this fallen world all the way to heaven and into the immediate presence of their Lord. The cedar trees and vines are metaphors which are used in other parts of the Bible for believers. If you look at verse 15 of Chapter 4 of Song of Solomon you read that the Church, Christ’s garden is described as “a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.” All these are the fruits of the Holy Spirit’s work in the life of believers. In Psalm 92, verse 12, it says, “The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree, he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.” “Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.” This is an amazing excursion; that Christ is inviting His Bride to travel with Him and behold the marvelous beauty and power of His grace; she being His spouse. It is an invitation for her to come and behold the greatness and the future glory of His kingdom; the kingdom which she will share with Him. He is inviting her to share this wonderful experience of being able to see; that in having Him as her husband, that she has all things. Christ is inviting His Bride to come with Him “from Lebanon”; from the place where she was at that time in her relationship with Christ; to behold the greater things that He would yet do for her by His mighty grace. In her experience she will be changed and transformed from one degree of glory to another, even as by the Lord, the Spirit. In her thinking about her future experience as a believer; here upon the earth; she will be led by her Husband-Shepherd-King, up from the high mountain of Lebanon to behold a whole range of mountains of spiritual experience. She will see some mountains which are barren, some that are fruitful, and some that are snow covered. Every spiritual experience will have its place, in the way that He order it for her, and He will by this means build her into the person who He would have her to be. This is what He does with every believer, and with His Church as a whole. Will you respond to His invitation today? Will you come and behold the greatness of the Kingdom of God into which Christ has

brought you, and take a look from the top, and see that this mountain will become a great mountain and fill the whole earth? This mountain in the kingdom of Christ. It is growing ever greater as the Lord adds to it those who are being saved. Christ has a great purpose; to draw you closer to Himself through all the experiences that He will lead you through.

Lebanon was a part of the promised land. I want to give you a reference, here, which might help you to understand what you should know about entering Lebanon, the kingdom of God, and then in our 2<sup>nd</sup> point, I will talk about what Christ would have you to see and to do “looking” from these other mountains which are mentioned. Turn to Deuteronomy chapter 3, verse 21. Moses has led the children of Israel through the wilderness for 40 years, and they are on the verge of entering the Promised Land. He says to the children of Israel, “And I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, ‘Your eyes have seen all that the Lord your God has done to these two kings; so will the Lord do to all the kingdoms through which you pass.’” “You must not fear them, for the Lord your God Himself fights for you.” “Then I pleaded with the Lord at that time, saying: ‘O Lord God, You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your mighty hand, for what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do anything like Your works and Your mighty deeds?’” “I pray, let me cross over and see the good land beyond the Jordan, those pleasant mountains, and Lebanon.” “But the Lord was angry with me on your account, and would not listen to me.” “So the Lord said to me: ‘Enough of that!’” “Speak no more to Me of this matter.” “Go up to the top of Pisgah, and lift your eyes toward the west, the north, the south, and the east; behold it with your eyes, for you shall not cross over this Jordan.” “But command Joshua, and encourage him and strengthen him; for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which you will see.” Now why would the Lord not let Moses go over into the Promised Land (Lebanon; the type of the New Testament kingdom of God) with the people. Why could he not lead them into it; and only Joshua could do it? It was because God intended that Moses would be the most eminent type of the Law in all the Bible. “The Law was given (came) through Moses.” “Grace and truth came through our Lord Jesus Christ.” This shows us that the Law cannot bring us salvation. It commands us; and it has a right to command us, because God’s authority is behind the commands. But it cannot do what Joshua (Jeshua-Jesus) did for us; which was to “fight on our behalf”. Moses can only look on, and look over at the Promised Land (into Lebanon) and see the beauty and glory of all that inheritance which Joshua led the children of Israel into. It is not as if Moses was not saved. The greater Joshua; our Lord Jesus Christ would lead him into the Promised Land of salvation. But he was only saved by looking by faith at what Christ would do for him. He was looking at Lebanon. While he led the people in their wilderness wanderings, he would strike the rock twice, rather than speaking to it, as God had commanded him to do. (Numbers 20: 11) And he became angry with the people over their former disobediences, and called them “rebels” and said to them, “Must we bring water for you out of this rock?” But he did not have the power of a righteous life; to “hallow

the Lord before the eyes of the children of Israel” at just one point in his life; and this kept him out of going into the Promised Land. But let us understand today that the Lord Jesus (our greater Joshua) did have the power of a righteous indestructible life, and thus He could, and He can lead us into the Promised Land of the kingdom of God. Hebrews 7: 16 – “Christ came not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless (indestructible – NAS) life.” This is why the Lord Jesus can say to His Bride, here, “Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon.” “Come with Me,” He is saying, “from Lebanon (on the basis of your relationship of faith in Me) to see the greater things that I will do for you.”

**Then 2<sup>nd</sup> – Christ would have His spouse look from the tops of Amana and the other mountains.**

“Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon.” “Look from the top of Amana, from the top of Senir and Hermon....” This is the only place in the Bible where the name, “Amana”, is used. So we must attempt to discover its significance to our present study. If you are still in the book of Deuteronomy, look back at Chapter 3, verse 8 and you will see that Senir and Hermon were the same mountain or range of mountains. “And at that time we took the land from the hand of the two kings of the Amorites who were on this side of the Jordan, from the River Arnon to Mount Hermon (the Sidonians call Hermon Sirion, and the Amorites call it Senir), all the cities of the plain, all Gilead, and all Bashan, as far as Salcah and Edrie, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan....” John Gill says of Amana – “Amana was a mountain which divided Cilicia from Syrian; from whence perhaps the river at the foot of it took its name, which in 2 Kings 5, verse 12 is call Abana, but in the margin it is read, Amana; and so the Targum here expounds it of the people which dwelt by the river Amana: R. Solomon Jarchi would have it to be a mountain in the northern border of Israel, and that it is the same with Mt. Hor; and indeed, in every place where mention is made of Mt. Hor, the Targum of Jonathan always renders it Taurus Umanus; for Amanus, according to Ptolemy, was a part of Mt. Taurus; it is joined with Libanus Josephus, and was a part of it, where the snow lay all the summer....”

Now what can we say of this? I think that we can conclude that these mountains which are mentioned here all belong to the same range, and unlike Lebanon, represent the kingdoms and nations that refuse to serve God; represented here in this chapter by Og, king of Bashan. And even as God helped Israel to defeat him and his kingdom and to take possession of his land as theirs; even so our Lord Jesus Christ is saying to His spouse, the Church, that He has defeated all of her enemies at the cross, and would because of this, have her whole-hearted affection to be placed upon Himself, and not upon anything that this world has to offer. “Look from the top of Amana, from the top of Senir, and Hermon....” I have overcome them for you,” Christ is saying to His Israel; and now I would have you to walk through this life with me, and overcome them yourself. Look from the top of Amana and these other mountains of prey. “God is more glorious and excellent than all the mountains of prey,” as it says in Psalm 76, verse 4. This is what the Lord Jesus Christ would

have you to see, in terms of His having overcome the world for you, O dear believer. When Jesus was crucified, you were crucified with Him. It is no longer you who live; but Christ lives in you; and the life that you live, you live by faith in the Son of God, who loved you and gave Himself for you.” (Galatians 2: 20) “But God forbid that you should boast except in the cross of your Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to you, and you to the world.”

The problem is; for every Christian in a world like ours; that we tend to compare Christ and spiritual things with the world. And spiritual things can sometimes be left behind; and more of our attention and affection is placed upon being conformed to the thoughts, goals, and dreams of earthly worldly people around us. The world seems to have great and high mountains of things to occupy your mind and heart and take you away from Christ. Christ says, “Come away with me”, from the highest of these earthly mountains. It says in Colossians 3: 1 – “If you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.” And Romans Chapter 12: 2 – “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” Will you be conformed to this world, or will you love Christ more? If you will come away with Christ and look down from the tops of these mountains, you will see that this is why Christ had to face the temptations of Satan in the wilderness, and why He had to die for you. Do not disappoint His expectations. Come away and look down on the world. Don’t let your heart be defiled by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life. If you do; the love of the Father is not in you. Come away and see; that true religion and undefiled, is to visit widows and orphans in their distress and to keep oneself unstained from the world. (James 1: 27)

**And then finally – Christ invites His spouse to look from the lion’s dens and leopard’s mountains.**

“Look from the top of Amana, from the top of Senir and Hermon, from the lion’s dens, from the mountains of the leopards.” We have seen how these mountains are mountains representing worldly kingdoms and those who oppose the kingdom of Christ. Sihon, king of the Amorites would not let Israel pass through their territory, and Og king of Bashan went out to do battle with Israel when they came to his land. Why? Because they were full of worldly and selfish concerns, and thought that Israel would ruin all that they lived for. So it is with the enemies of the gospel and Christ’s Church in every age. What do the lions and the leopards represent? These wild beasts are a picture of those who persecute true believers, even though dwelling in the inheritance of the Lord; even as many false believers and persecutors have dwelt in the past within the parameters of Christ’s kingdom. They represent the wicked men who oppose Christ or his people coming into what they think is their territory; the world. In the world you will have tribulation. And “all who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” (2 Timothy 3: 12) But the mission of the Christian is to take the gospel to every creature. And the continual goal of the Christian is to be seeking first His kingdom and His righteousness. The Christian would see sinners

saved and changed to do God's will as it is found in the Bible. When we preach this; we will receive opposition from sinful men, who will act more like beasts towards us, rather than like men. At one point in his life, David said, "My soul is among lions; I lie among the sons of men who are set on fire, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword." And Jeremiah said of sinners in Chapter 13, verse 23, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots?" "Then may you also do good who are accustomed to do evil." Lions have their dens, and leopards their mountains. They like to pursue their sins of having other things that are more important than Christ and His Word and His people. But the Christian is to look away from them to the kingdom of Christ; to the cause of truth and righteousness. The Christian is to be more taken up with Christ and His commandments than all the expectations of worldly men. Are you one spirit with Christ? Then live in such a way that you know that He is yours and you are His. Live in a way that other people also know that you belong to Him. When Christ has called you to come away with Him; see to it that you do not refuse Him who speaks from heaven. For He is the lover of your soul, and has proved His love at the cross; and proves it every day in His intercession for you. If He has done all this for you; then be faithful to the Husband of your soul.