



The Heart of a Dove

by Karen Holland

Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?

Isaiah 60:8 (KJV)

This verse caught my attention recently. Who might these doves be? Who are these doves that appear to fly to their windows when the glory of the Lord is rising and appearing on a group of people who stand before the nations? *They will call you the city of the LORD, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel.* (Isaiah 60:14) The Bride, the bride of Christ is compared to a dove in the Song of Solomon (Song of Solomon 2:14, 5:2, 6:9). Doves that fly to their windows, standing before the nations, the bride of Christ and Zion, this brings the first fruits for the Lamb to mind.

*THEN I looked, and behold, the Lamb stood on Mount Zion, and with Him 144,000 [men] who had His name and His Father's name inscribed on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven like the sound of great waters and like the rumbling of mighty thunder; the voice I heard [seemed like the music] of harpists accompanying themselves on their harps. And they sang a new song before the throne [of God] and before the four living creatures and before the elders [of the heavenly Sanhedrin]. No one could learn [to sing] that song except the 144,000 who had been ransomed (purchased, redeemed) from the earth. These are they who have not defiled themselves by relations with women, for they are [pure as] virgins. **These are they who follow the Lamb wherever He goes.** These are they who have been ransomed (purchased, redeemed) from among men as the firstfruits for God and the Lamb.*

Revelation 14:1-4

These doves are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. Doesn't this sound like the group of women who followed Jesus to care for His needs? Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses (Matthew 27:55-56). Mary Magdalene and this other Mary were also at Jesus' tomb (Matthew 28:1). They were the first to discover that Jesus had risen. They were also the first ones that Jesus appeared to after His resurrection.

*The angel said to the women, Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him. Now I have told you. So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. **Suddenly Jesus met them. Greetings, he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him.** Then Jesus said to them, Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.*

Matthew 28:5-10

The women were being obedient when they met the risen Christ. Before this they were in awe and filled with joy--because they encountered the angel & the empty tomb. The NKJV has the word rejoice instead of greetings. Look what the women do after the Lord says to rejoice! They fall at Jesus' feet and worship--they also grab on to Him--clasp Him.

This passage stresses how seeking after Jesus with one's whole heart, obedience, encountering the risen Christ, worship and joy are linked. These women were following Jesus wherever He went to care for His needs--even in His death. They were seeking Him and being obedient with their whole hearts. Look what the result was--an encounter with the risen Christ. Their reaction was to fall at Jesus' feet in worship and joy. John has a similar reaction when he encounters the living Lord.

*Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; and in the middle of the lampstands I saw one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength. **When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man And He placed His right hand on me,** saying, "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.*

Revelation 1:12-18

Is it a coincidence that John “the Beloved” is distinguished as “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (John 21:20); or that it was to his care that our Lord trusted His mother, in those last hours of anguish upon the cross (John 19:26-27)? John had the same heart as the group of women who followed Jesus to care for His needs, the heart of the dove, Christ's beloved. This heart of the dove is also revealed by Mary in this passage.

*Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. **Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.** But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages. He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it. "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me.*

John 12:1-7

In Mark's account, Jesus said ... *She has done a beautiful thing to me.* (Mark 14:6) If only we could anoint Him through our praise like that! Notice the intensity with which Mary anointed Jesus--the oil was more than a year's wages. This heart of a dove, this singleness of focus on Jesus is also revealed in the Song of Solomon, again the image of a dove is used.

How beautiful you are, my darling, How beautiful you are! Your eyes are like doves behind your veil...

Song of Solomon 4:1, 1:15

The bride has the eyes of a dove. When a dove fixes its gaze upon its mate, it is not distracted by any activities around it. It possesses a singleness of eye for its mate alone. The bride has eyes for Christ alone. This gives the bride a spiritual awareness and commitment which lifts her above the pulls of the earth. The bride is sensitive to the Lord's presence, and obedient to His desire and purpose. This comes from continually beholding the bridegroom. David knew this singleness of mind, this intense desire to behold the Lord. Like the group of women and John, he also had the heart of a dove.

One thing I have desired of the LORD, that will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His temple.

Psalms 27:4

The Lord's favor rests upon the bride, upon the one who seeks to behold His beauty. The bride can be easily led by Him, for she is close enough to see which way His eye is looking.

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye.

Psalm 32:8

This continued beholding of the bridegroom also results in the stripping away of the veil, revealing the Lord's glory. The bride is transformed in Christ's likeness with ever-increasing glory. The more the bride is transformed, the more she reflects the eyes of her lover, the eyes of the dove, and the heart of the dove. The gaze of the bride challenges anyone who sees it to also turn to the Lord, to behold Him and receive His Spirit.

But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is stripped off and taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And all of us, as with unveiled face, [because we] continued to behold [in the Word of God] as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:16-18

This idea fits with the “beautiful thing” Mary did, in anointing Jesus' feet with oil, not only was Jesus praised but the expensive perfume, the sweet scent filled the whole house.

How intense is your worship? How hard are you seeking His presence, to behold His beauty, to do His will? Do you worship with the heart of a dove? Is the fragrance strong enough to fill the whole house; the whole earth?

... the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

Habakkuk 2:14

Fall at His Feet

Karen Holland

The expensive perfume poured out
Poured out at Jesus' feet
Poured out from a broken vessel
An offering
A pleasing sacrifice
Let it rise
The fragrance so strong
Strong enough to fill the whole house
A sweet incense
Let it burn
Fall at His feet
The Risen and Exalted Christ
Clasp His feet

Feel the touch of His hand
His gracious right hand placed upon His dove

Arise my dove, my beautiful one
Come, reveal your face
Arise from the clefts of the Rock
Come let your voice be heard
For your voice is sweet
Your face so lovely
Shining, shining, for all to see, for all to hear.

Come, the Spirit and the Bride say
Come!

Feel the touch of His hand
His gracious right hand
As blossoms bloom and give forth their fragrance
To the song of His beloved dove so sweet
Come and drink
Come, fall at His feet.

Song of Solomon 2:10-14

*My beloved responded and said to me,
Arise, my darling, my beautiful one,
And come along.
For behold, the winter is past,
The rain is over and gone.
The flowers have already appeared in the land;
The time has arrived for pruning the vines,
And the voice of the turtledove has been heard in our land.
The fig tree has ripened its figs,
And the vines in blossom have given forth their fragrance.
Arise, my darling, my beautiful one,
And come along!
O my dove, in the clefts of the rock,
In the secret place of the steep pathway,
Let me see your form,
Let me hear your voice;
For your voice is sweet,
And your form is lovely.*

The Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.

Revelation 22:17

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Romans 12:1-2