

Selected readings from Morning and Evening: Daily Readings, By
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Reading 153

“My beloved.” Song of Solomon 2:8

This was a golden name which the ancient Church in her most joyous moments gave to the Anointed of the Lord. When the time of the singing of birds was come, and the voice of the turtle was heard in her land, *her* love-note was sweeter than either, as she sang, “*My beloved* is mine and I am his: he feeds among the lilies.” Ever in her song of songs does she call him by that delightful name, “My beloved!” Even in the long winter, when idolatry had withered the garden of the Lord, her prophets found space to lay aside the burden of the Lord for a little season, and to say, as Esaias did, “Now will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard.” Though the saints had never seen his face, though as yet he was not made flesh, nor had dwelt among us, nor had man beheld his glory, yet he was the consolation of Israel, the hope and joy of all the chosen, the “beloved” of all those who were upright before the Most High.

We, in the summer days of the Church also want to speak of Christ as the best beloved of our soul, and to feel that he is very precious, the “chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely.” So true is it that the Church loves Jesus, and claims him as her beloved, that the apostle dares to defy the whole universe to separate her from the love of Christ, and declares that neither persecutions, distress, affliction, peril, or the sword have been able to do it; rather, he joyously boasts, “In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.” O that we knew more of you, the ever precious one!

“My sole possession is your love;
In earth beneath, or heaven above,
I have no other store;
And though with fervent claim I pray,
And intensely desire you day by day,
I ask you nothing more.”