

Lessons from the Song

Part I

Sunday, Dec. 11, 2011

This past August looked at the Song of Songs. There, we realized that the Song of Songs (The Song of Solomon) is the most beautiful song which King Solomon wrote. Out of the 1,005 songs which he penned, the Holy Spirit deemed *this* song as *the* Song of Songs.

The song is a depiction of the king pursuing a *Gentile* woman, who evidently had proselytized into the Jewish faith. At the time the song was written, Solomon already had 60 wives and 80 concubines. But of all these women (140 at that point — even many more thereafter) the king specifically pursued *this* one. She was the fairest among the maidens.

Most people today would see this particular book of the Bible as the book through which God sanctions marital love. They would see this book as being (in a sense) the erotic love that a husband and wife can enjoy together. And in some sense, perhaps the book can be *applied* to the marriage relationship. But in looking at the book in this way, we would only be seeing the book in the most shallow of spiritual possibilities. The Holy Spirit intends, not only this book of the Bible, but also the whole of it, to have far deeper meaning than simple application for the here and now.

Because of the way God has structured His Word — throughout the whole of it, in order to understand what the Holy Spirit intends in this book, we would have to see it in a *typical* sense, a *typological* sense. We would have to see typology, even within the Song which Solomon wrote about one specific woman, whom He loved above all the others. Yes, the Song of Songs has meaning far beyond the love between a husband and wife. The Song is intended to reveal the love *and pursuit* of the King of kings toward the one He desires to be His Bride, His Wife, His Queen.

We'll remember that in the Song of Songs (or the Song of Solomon), the king typifies — is a picture of — Jesus Christ in His pursuit of His wife. The Gentile woman, whom the king pursues in the story typifies — is a picture of — the bride of Christ, the one who would ask him to

- *kiss* her, to
- *draw* her and to
- *tell* her where he shepherds his flock.

This is the one to whom He would reveal himself, the one who would become His queen.

And the group referred to as the Daughters of Jerusalem typify — is a picture of — Christians making up the Body of Christ, ones who actually end up being in the periphery of this pursuit. (How can we know that such a specific group called “the Daughters of Jerusalem” would be referring to the Church and not to Israel? It is because of the other

types we see in the book. If all points to Jesus and His bride, then the people in the periphery would not have to do with Israel, but rather with the Church.

Though King Solomon is specifically named within the book, we know he represents a type (a picture) of Jesus Christ. And though the woman is referred to a Shulamite (a Gentile), we know that in the type she would refer to the Gentile Bride of Christ. And so, we can also know the group called the Daughters of Jerusalem in the book, would be a type of (a picture of) the larger group from which the Bride is chosen— the Church.

At the very opening of the book she asks: **Song 1:2 “May he kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! ...** She asks him to kiss her with the kisses of his mouth. The English word translated *kiss* here in the Hebrew language has the idea of *fastening up*; a *mode of attachment*. A *kiss* in Scripture has a much deeper meaning than simply a physical attraction to, or attachment with. A kiss often symbolized two individuals entering into a contractual agreement, even a covenant relationship. It often represented a close family tie, depicting a deep commitment (or at least what should be a deep commitment), deep emotion, emotion at a much deeper level than a casual relationship. And this is what she is asking of the king. (It might be good to note here, that it is she who is doing the asking!) The fact that King Solomon opened his song of songs with the bride asking him of these things, denotes his obvious pleasure that she is the one asking. “Kiss me with the kisses of your mouth...”

And this is followed by her request of him, to draw her to himself, to bring her along with him. And then in vs. 4: **Song 1:4 “Draw me after you and let us run together! The king has brought me into his chambers”...**

The KJV says:

Song 1:4 Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers...

This request *to draw her* is based upon *his having brought her into his chamber*. He brought her into his inner sanctuary, a private place. She is the one who *asks*, and he is the one who *acts*! She wants him to draw her to himself, so that she can run with others who run after him. And the way that he allows this to take place is by his bringing her into an inner sanctuary, as He has brought others, as well.

And then in v. 7, she asks: **Song 1:7 “Tell me, O you whom my soul loves, Where do you pasture your flock, Where do you make it lie down at noon?**

Based upon her desire

- for him to kiss her, to allow their relationship to become deeper, more intimate
- to draw her... based upon his having brought her into his inner-most chambers, so as to abide with her

she asks him to “tell” her something — “Where do you pasture your flock? Where do you make it lie down at noon?”

The word *tell* means *to announce something, to expound, to plainly state* something boldly. What would she want him to announce, to plainly state?

- *Where* do you pasture your flock. (*Where* do you take others in your fold, who desire the same things I desire? Where are they, who also want you to tend to them in a more intimate way?) And even more specifically,
- Where do you make it (your flock) lie down at noon? She specifies a time-period here...”at noon”. The language here literally refers to the mid-day. (This is something to be noted as we come to another portion of their dialog, which we will cover in just a bit.)

She is asking him to tell her something plainly, so that she can be part of the flock, whom he specifically tends to. She knows there are others. She just wants the kind of intimacy that she knows she can have with him, as others do!

Again, we have to remember the type/antitype structure of Scripture. This is laying out for us a picture of what the King of kings desires his bride to do. He is showing us the way. *He desires us* to desire these things.

Do you remember when the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray? His answer was quite simple: **Luke 11:2 And He said to them, “When you pray, say: ‘Father, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. 3 Give us each day our daily bread. 4 And forgive us our sins, For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.’” 5 And He said to them, “Suppose one of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves; 6 for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; 7 and from inside he shall answer and say, ‘Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.’**

8 “I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him as much as he needs. 9 And I say to you, ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.

10 For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it shall be opened...”

This is how Jesus taught His disciples to pray! Oh, and just another little note about this before we move on...the verbs *ask*, *seek* and *knock* are written in the tense in the Greek language that could have been translated: ask, and keep on asking; and seek, and keep on seeking; and knock and keep on knocking. Of course these verbs would be laid out this way, for Jesus had just said taught that it was because of the one man’s persistence, that the other man would get out of bed and give him everything he wanted!

Finally we hear the king speak in answer to her query — Tell me where you pasture your flock and make it lay down at noon time. **Song 1: 8 “If you yourself do not know, most beautiful among women, Go forth on the trail of the flock, And pasture your young goats by the tents of the shepherds.** The king is answering her desire. He is telling her

where she needs to go and with whom she needs to spend her time. Notice the “trail of the flock”

In other words, follow those who have gone before you! Those with whom you would run, to become more intimate with the king. Remember what Jesus said to His disciples:

Mt 18:20 “For where two or three have gathered together in My name, there I am in their midst.”

But the king does not stop there. In chapter two, he reveals more and more about himself. He says: **Song 2:1 I am the rose of Sharon, The lily of the valleys.”**

Remember the “I AM”s that Jesus spoke? Understanding His “I AM” statements helps us to know Him better...

He is the bread of life, the bread which comes down from heaven.

He is the light of the world.

He is the Door of the sheep, the Good Shepherd Who knows His own.

He is the Resurrection and the Life.

He is the Way, the truth and the Life.

He is the True Vine.

And finally in answer to Pilate’s question, He is the King!

Jesus is the fulfillment of all that Solomon revealed about himself to the Shulamite woman, and more. Solomon told her that he was the rose of Sharon, a figure of speech pointing to something beyond Solomon. (Sharon is a plain and it is one of the largest valley-plains in all of Palestine. Back at the time of Solomon, it was considered a wild, fertile plain that had many beautiful flowers in it. Sharon was supposed to have been known for its beauty and majesty back in those days.)

When you think of a rose, what color do you think of? RED! It may well be that this rose of which Solomon spoke was red. In typology God is revealing something about His Son. Jesus is the Rose of Sharon, the One clothed with the color of redemption. And not only is He the Rose of Sharon, but also He is the Lily of the Valleys (plural, not singular). We know the lily speaks of resurrection. God is revealing His Son as our Redeemer and our Provider of LIFE. He is everything we need for life and godliness. And is the very resurrection, without which we would have no life in the coming age. He is the Resurrection and the Life.

Besides these flowers representing two different aspects of Christ’s work on our behalf, the figurative language here can show us something else about Jesus. Both flowers certainly appeal to the senses. Think of the fragrance of a red rose. The touch of it; the beauty of a rose. Then think of a pure white lily. The fragrance of a lily; the touch it. Its beauty! All of this appeals to our physical senses:

- Sight
- Touch

- Smell, all of which affects our emotions.

The king knew that! There is reason for his wanting to appeal to her senses at this point, so early on in their relationship. He wanted to draw her to himself! (Isn't that what she asked for?) He wanted to be wholly desirable to her. So after he reveals himself in such a way so as to appeal to her senses, she states what might appear to be a rather self-centered love for him. She says:

Song 2:3 “Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest, So is my beloved among the young men. In his shade I took great delight and sat down, And his fruit was sweet to my taste. 4 He has brought me to his banquet hall, And his banner over me is love. 5 Sustain me with raisin cakes, Refresh me with apples, Because I am lovesick. 6 Let his left hand be under my head And his right hand embrace me.”

She knows that he is different! She knows that he offers her comfort and delight. That he will sustain her, and refresh her. She knows that he will support her with his left hand and embrace her with his right hand. She is beginning to KNOW him. He was drawing her to himself, making sure that she knew him to be wholly desirable.

Even though it is apparent that her love for him is rather self-centered at this point in their relationship, he is not put off by that. Haven't we all been there before? Loving Jesus and seeking Him for what He can provide for us — that is to be expected at this point in the relationship. In fact, the king loves the woman all the more, since she knows him to be her provider, and she so enjoys his provisions. *He knows* that this is simply all a part of the process of *his bringing her along*.

And due to this type of deepening relationship, through the way that he has revealed himself to her, the way he has drawn her, she comes into some level of maturity in knowing him better. Then at some point in the story, it becomes apparent that he has taken leave of her for a time. But as a result of the level of maturity, she fully expects him to come back to her. We see her saying this: **Song 2:8 “Listen! My beloved! Behold, he is coming, Climbing on the mountains, Leaping on the hills!**

They surely are separated at this point. She doesn't see him, but she listens for him. He is out of her sight, but she is awaiting his return. Can we see ourselves here? Separated from the presence of the One we love, the One we long for, but knowing that He is coming back. Aren't we waiting for Him?

Meanwhile— she knows what is expected of her, just as we do. We have learned that we have work to do, while we await His return. And we see it reflected in the text exactly at this point. She says:

Song 2:10 “My beloved responded and said to me, ‘Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, And come along. 11 For behold, the winter is past, The rain is over and gone. 12 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. 13 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!”

Yes, he tells her what she is to do during the time of His absence. She is to work on his behalf! To bear fruit. **Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, And come along!** It is time for fruitbearing.

And in all of this scenario, he speaks gently to her, intimately...in a way, that perhaps only she can hear. So personal. So endearing! **Song 2:14 “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.”**

He knows that she is in the cleft of the rocks — he put her there. In answer to her making specific requests of him (kiss me, draw me, tell me) *he* has put her there! This is the place where God will reveal His glory! We can know that because the first place Scripture mentions the “cleft of the rock” is in Exodus. Moses had asked God to show him His glory. God complied with his request, only after He put Moses in a specific place. Let’s read it in **Exodus 33:21 Then the LORD said, “Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand there on the rock; 22 and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by.”** It was here that Moses was protected from seeing His face, because had he seen the face of God, he would have died. So God protected him there, in the cleft of the rock.

And here is where she is...in the cleft of the rock, in *the secret place of the steep pathway*, where he desires to see her form; he desires to hear her voice. What is this path? And to where does it lead?

Proverbs 15:24 The path of life leads upward for the wise, That he may keep away from Sheol below.

Proverbs 4:18 But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, That shines brighter and brighter until the full day.

You see, this is the path that leads to more and more understanding. It is a secret path, a steep path, a path that leads to an understanding of God’s glory! And the king has put her there. He has shown her the path that leads to glory, in answer to her initial request, and as a result of her growing love for him. So this is a result of her growing love for Him.

16 “My beloved is mine, and I am his; He pastures his flock among the lilies. 17 Until the cool of the day when the shadows flee away, Turn, my beloved, and be like a gazelle Or a young stag on the mountains of Bether.”

She has come to the place where she longs for him to return. And she wants him to hurry, like a gazelle. But she remembers where He pastures his flock (among the lilies), *until* evening comes...the cool of the day, even when shadows flee away...the night has

come. He pastures his flock there *until*... Here again, we have a reference to time. “Until the cool of the day when the shadows flee away...” Previously she had asked him where he pastures his flock and where he causes it to lie down *at noon*. Now she knows that he will do that until the cool of the day when the shadows flee away.

When does it get cool? When are there no more shadows? Of course it would be night! What is the picture that we are to grasp here? What happens at midnight? Hold that thought for a moment.

Look at the verse again. She knows that he pastures his flock among the lilies until the cool of the day when the shadows flee away, then she says, “**Turn, my beloved, and be like a gazelle Or a young stag on the mountains of Bether.**” Oh my! This is fraught with meaning.

Turn...as in *turn around*...Return...She is asking him to return to her, “And be like” -- she knows he will resemble something...

In the English language we see she says that she expects him to come to her, like a gazelle (a sure footed animal) but the word in the Hebrew means to *come in the sense of prominence, splendor*. Perhaps the translators translated the word as a gazelle, due to the beauty of a gazelle, its gracefulness and surety. But the original word here comes from a root word that means to *amass, specifically to array an army against, to fight well*.

And then she says “or like a young stag on the mountains”... But in the Hebrew, the word indicates a dusty color...like that of a young fawn...but this word comes from a Hebrew word either to be gray or perhaps rather to pulverize; as into dust:--cast (dust). Can you get a picture of the figure of speech she is using here. She knows how he is going to come! It will be in power and splendor and majesty. And then she desires him to do this on the mountain of Bether.

Bether was a craggy place in Palestine. The word comes from the Hebrew word that means a section, a part or a piece, which comes from the Hebrew word that means to chop up, to divide.

Of course this speaks of the return of Jesus, when He comes in strength and surety of foot. He pastures His flock among the lilies (that which speaks of resurrection power and resurrection life) UNTIL the evening, even the night...

Can you see that this would point to the JSOC, when Christ comes for His bride and He comes in Glory, with His angels to gather the body of Christ to Him, and at that time, He will separate the faithful from the unfaithful, where He separates the wheat grains from the chaff? He will divide, faithful and unfaithful. And all this is just prior to His setting up His kingdom. You see she had come to a place of deep knowledge of the king.

Let’s just pause here for a moment and take stock of our own lives. Can we, for a moment, take stock of where we are individually?

- Is your life busy?
- Is there anyone here, whose life is not busy?
- In fact, would you be able to say that you are busier in your life now, than you ever have been before?

I am afraid we may be in some sort of danger here...the very danger toward which the woman comes to in the very next chapter. And this is not surprising to the king. He knows that she will find herself there. Just as Jesus knows that we may find ourselves there.

Remember the ten virgins — five were foolish and five were wise. But even the five who were wise found themselves to be sleepy, as they awaited the return of the bridegroom. And so we see the woman here in the Song, slipping into this dangerous place:

Song of Solomon 3

1 “On my bed night after night I sought him Whom my soul loves; I sought him but did not find him.

2 ‘I must arise now and go about the city; In the streets and in the squares I must seek him whom my soul loves.’

I sought him but did not find him.

3 “The watchmen who make the rounds in the city found me, And I said, ‘Have you seen him whom my soul loves?’

4 “Scarcely had I left them When I found him whom my soul loves; I held on to him and would not let him go, Until I had brought him to my mother’s house, And into the room of her who conceived me.”

Sad to say, though not surprising, she takes a premature rest. We must understand something about *rest*. There is a rest that is given and there is a rest taken.

Matthew 11:28 (Jesus speaking) **Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and YOU SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”**

Jesus quotes here from an interesting place in the OT. It is particularly interesting in the light of our study today.

Jeremiah 6:16 **Thus says the LORD, “Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths, Where the good way is, and walk in it; And you shall find rest for your souls.”**

You see, the rest *that is given by the Lord Jesus* is a rest as a result of labor, a result of walking on the narrow path, the ancient path laid out for us as early as the Books of Moses. And our choice is to walk those paths or not. Walk those paths, and find the rest given by our King, or not. The rest that is taken, but not given is a fleshly rest, a carnal

rest. Look at the remainder of that very passage. This is what Israel said: **But they said, 'We will not walk in it.'**

Look at what the Shulamite woman did: She sought for him *night after night* on her bed! She had stopped seeking him the way she once had. Evidently she had forgotten where he had told her he could be found. Because instead of going on the trail of the flock where the tents of the shepherds were, she arose from her bed and went out into the city; went onto the broad path. In fact that is how the KJ translation has it:

KJV Song 3:2 I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.

What happened to “narrow is the path that leads to life? She was going onto the broad way that leads to death.” She has taken her rest; she was not given this rest! And to further trouble herself, as she went this way, the watchmen of the city found her, and she asked them, ‘Have you seen him whom my soul loves?’ Did you notice they didn’t even answer her. There was no word from them.

Jeremiah had a word from the Lord about the watchmen in the same text as what we just looked at.

Jeremiah 6:16 Thus says the LORD, “Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths, Where the good way is, and walk in it; And you shall find rest for your souls. But they said, ‘We will not walk in it.’ 17 And I set watchmen over you, saying, ‘Listen to the sound of the trumpet!’ But they said, ‘We will not listen.’”

In the Book of Jeremiah, not only were the people not seeking the ancient paths were rest is *given*, but neither were the watchmen!

Jesus promises to give rest to those who labor, not to those who seek him on their bed! The woman is no longer seeking the king as she did at first. Remember her question from chapter one? Tell me where you feed your flock. And he told her. But now, she looks for him in a place where he had not directed. This is a very real danger for a mature believer.

This would be disturbing if we were to stop our study at this point this morning, wouldn’t it be? So we shall not stop here! We’ll stop soon, but not here. We must notice one thing about the woman, even in her carnal state. Notice her words: **On my bed night after night I sought him Whom my soul loves...I must arise now and go...** At first, she didn’t go to the right place, did she? But because of the way the king had answered her heart-felt queries early on; because of the way he had revealed himself to her, as her redeemer and provider, her soul loved him! And she knew she wanted to find him again. So as true as the king is to the one he loves, as soon as she left the watchmen, he allowed himself to be found by her.

Song 3:4 It was but a little that I passed from them (the watchmen), but I found him whom my soul loves: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.

This is what she did, once she found him. She held onto him and would not let him go...until she brought him into the mother's house. And to bring this message to a close, I want us to see what the king did for her following this scenario. He tells her how he sees her. And oh! How very sweet it is. After she repents from her carnal rest, He says to her:

Song 4:1 “How beautiful you are, my darling, How beautiful you are! Your eyes are like doves behind your veil; Your hair is like a flock of goats That have descended from Mount Gilead. 2 Your teeth are like a flock of newly shorn ewes Which have come up from their washing, All of which bear twins, And not one among them has lost her young. 3 Your lips are like a scarlet thread, And your mouth is lovely. Your temples are like a slice of a pomegranate Behind your veil. 4 Your neck is like the tower of David Built with rows of stones, On which are hung a thousand shields, All the round shields of the mighty men. 5 Your two breasts are like two fawns, Twins of a gazelle, Which feed among the lilies.

6 Until the cool of the day When the shadows flee away, I will go my way to the mountain of myrrh And to the hill of frankincense. 7 You are altogether beautiful, my darling, And there is no blemish in you.

Your eyes are like doves behind your veil— Dove's eyes...means this woman has the truth revealed to her. The eyes of her understanding has been opened. She sees something that is special. He is the king. He is coming back to rule and reign. Her eyes have been opened to the spiritual truth.

Your hair is like a flock of goats That have descended from Mount Gilead — a woman's hair is to her glory, a symbol of the woman's submission to the man. He knows that she is submitted to him.

Your teeth are like a flock of newly shorn ewes Which have come up from their washing — Why did he mention her teeth? They are healthy, able to chew meat. Reference to the Lord's bride and her ability to understand the meat of God's word. But not using teeth in this way, there will be weeping and grinding of teeth. The teeth are useful to bearing fruit.

Your lips are like a scarlet thread — Lips are like a thread of scarlet. The harlot, Rahab, was to be saved for putting out a thread of scarlet. This woman's lips were like the thread of scarlet. Faith to believe that when the Gentile world powers crumbled, she would be saved.

Your temples are like a slice of a pomegranate Behind your veil — temples like a piece of pomegranate. Inside pomegranates are white seeds, pure and clean...her motives, her thoughts are clean...she was clean. She is virtuous, able to delve into the spiritual issues.

Your neck is like the tower of David Built with rows of stones — In the Book of Joshua, chapter 2, the king would war against another king and in victory, the king would put his foot on the other kings neck. Your neck is never bowed, never conquered. It is as true as the tower of David; never conquered.

Your two breasts are like two fawns, Twins of a gazelle, Which feed among the lilies — a woman who is pregnant and is about to nurture a baby, will feed on strong food so that she can nourish her baby well. See what the king is saying here. The king wants her to take of the strong meat, so that when babes come along, she can nourish them with the milk of the word so that they can grow in respect to their salvation.

Then he does something very sweet for her. He reminds her that **HE IS COMING AGAIN**. He repeats words that she stated of him before she took her carnal rest:

Song 4:6 “Until the cool of the day When the shadows flee away, I will go my way to the mountain of myrrh And to the hill of frankincense.

The mountain of myrrh — is an aloe used in burial rites.

The hill of frankincense — a place where prayer would be heard and remembered.

He is reminding her that there is time coming, when he will return, but it is a specific time...at the cool of the day, when the shadows flee away...but until then he will go his way to the mountain of myrrh, to the hill of frankincense.

Then he says again:

7 “You are altogether beautiful, my darling, And there is no blemish in you.

We know the Lord works in each of us so as to present us without spot or blemish. Oh there is so much more to be said about this wonderful book in the Bible, this book which has been largely ignored and/or misunderstood over the centuries! But we'll have to wait...