

Sunday, August 14, 2011
The Song of Songs

All of us sitting here this morning have a good grasp on why God created man. We know that God created the first man and woman in His own image and likeness for the purpose of the man and the woman stepping into rulership over this earth. We are very familiar with this passage:

Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 And God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

We all know that the very purpose for the marriage relationship is one in the same as the purpose for man's creation. We also know God deemed it not good for the man to be alone. The man must have a wife in order to enter into his created purpose. We also know how God brought forth the woman. He caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and He opened up the man's side, and used a part of his body to build the woman.

All of this is explicitly stated within the first two chapters of the Bible. And of course, knowing and understanding the TYPE/ANTITYPE structure of Scripture allows us to understand that the implications of all of this goes far beyond the first man and first woman. Paul tells us in the Book of Romans that *Adam was a type of Him who was to come*. From this picture of the first man and woman, we know that the Bride will be taken from the Body of Christ. *This picture of Adam and Eve in the garden is the foundational type within the overall word picture of Christ and His Bride*. But, in order to understand the whole picture, more types must be added to this foundational type, and must be studied in conjunction with this foundation. So today, we are going to concentrate on the Word picture of *Christ and His Bride*. It really depicts a beautiful and passionate love story within the pages of Scripture. In fact, Scripture depicts the most beautiful, the most passionate, the most pure love story of all time, even as seen from God's perspective.

The Father is intricately involved in finding and procuring a bride for His Son. We can see that in the type of Abraham sending his oldest and most trusted servant to find a wife for Isaac. The story depicted in Genesis chapter twenty-four, gives much detail as to *how* and *where* the bride for Isaac was found. From these facts we can know that the Bride for God the Father's Son will be taken from the family of God, and that she will be found at the well of life!

Then there is the Book of Ruth. So interested is the Father in these things, that this book was immortalized within the pages of Scripture for the sole purpose that we as individuals within the family of God can know and understand exactly what it takes to become the Wife of the Son. From this book, we can see that the Bride will be taken from among the Gentiles, and that each of us who desires to be part of the wife of Christ:

- Must decide to go on the journey from one land to another as Ruth did; and not turn back as Orpah did.
- Must work in Boaz' field, and not turn to any other field, but stay with *his* maidens, gleaning wheat in *his* field.
- Must follow the instructions as given to Ruth by Naomi -- to wash herself, to anoint herself and put her best clothes on in order to meet Boaz at his threshing floor (the type depicting our preparing ourselves to meet Jesus Christ as His threshing floor, the JSOC).
- Then we learned in the Book of Ruth that when at the threshing floor, she was to uncover and lie down at his feet. This action would signal to him that she was making the bold request of him -- to redeem her lost inheritance (lost through the death of her husband). Then, she was to make the verbal request to cover her over with his skirt, which according to the OT would indicate she was asking him to marry her. Again the type depicting what we might do in the antitype: after making the necessary preparations, we might make the bold request of Jesus to redeem our inheritance

(which was lost through the death Adam in the Garden 6,000 years ago) and in doing so, ask Him to take us as His Bride.

Can you even imagine the moment?

We might notice from the text in the Book of Ruth, Boaz was *thrilled* to do these things for Ruth (if I can say it like that!) and *thrilled* that she had remained faithful in his field. Naomi told her that Boaz would not rest until he had accomplished all that she had requested. The same is true in the antitype. Once the Bride has been identified at the Judgment Seat, Christ will not rest *until all will have been accomplished* with respect to the redemption of the inheritance, so that His Bride will finally become His Wife. Because remember, “It is not good that the man should be alone”! A wife, suitable to Him, must be found and built! So that both, together as One, might step into the purpose for which man was created – that to rule in the coming kingdom with Christ as the King of kings. The Book of Ruth is a beautifully detailed picture of the work one is to do in Christ’s field, and all things attendant to that.

These are all good and necessary things that we need to understand in order to grasp the overall picture of what it takes to become the Bride of Christ. But there is another facet in this OT Word picture that we may have overlooked. It is the facet of Christ’s *passionate love* for the very Bride He is pursuing, and how He literally *works a plan to woo her*. Yes! He woos her! The detail we can glean in all of this is really very sweet. It’s very pure. Very patient. And *very* passionate. These details can be found in the OT book named THE SONG OF SOLOMON or THE SONG OF SONGS.

In just a cursory reading of this eight-chapter book, one might think they are reading a bit of a Shakespearean play. Even though Shakespeare is written in English, it is somewhat difficult to understand exactly what is being said. The sentence formations and the words used are not formulated in the way we are used to speaking. But once you get past the formality and order of words, you can begin to grasp the picture. The same is true for the Song of Solomon. This Biblical book contains two single individuals – the king and the Shulammitte woman, as well as a group of individuals -- the Daughters of Jerusalem. The book depicts the pursuit on the part of the king, of a woman, who in the historical account may well have been Naamah the Ammonitess, the mother of Rehoboam.

This book is one of the many songs that Solomon wrote:

1 Kings 4:29 Now God gave Solomon wisdom and very great discernment and breadth of mind, like the sand that is on the seashore. 30 And Solomon’s wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the sons of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt. 31 For he was wiser than all men... and his fame was known in all the surrounding nations. 32 He also spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005. ..

According to this passage Solomon penned 3000 proverbs and 1,005 songs. That is interesting – it was not 1,006 songs, nor 1,004 songs! But one thousand *and five* songs. And, as deemed by God, of all the songs that he wrote -- *this* is THE SONG OF SONGS! Let’s not miss that fact. God the Holy Spirit deemed this, above the other 1,004 songs, to be the most important song! Why?

This song depicts the passionate love of Solomon toward *one* woman. The Scripture reveals that in the end, Solomon had 300 wives and 700 concubines, though one of the commentaries said that at the time this song was penned, he only had 60 wives and 80 concubines. These facts might cause us to wonder that Solomon’s heart was fickle, perhaps even divided. So why would we give credence to a song that *depicts his passionate love for one woman among so many*? Yet perhaps that is even the reason that God chose a book like this to be written by a man like that! Perhaps God wants us to understand and realize that of all the individuals within the Church, God the Son is pursuing you -- you out of so many! Can we grasp that fact today? I think that perhaps we should!

Therefore, we can know that God deemed this song out of the 1,005 songs as the one to depict the passionate love and pursuit of the Son for His soon-to-be-identified Bride. We can know that God literally inspired Solomon to pen this song above all other songs!

This book allows a glimpse into the path that the Bride is on, in His pursuit of her.

As we will see, initially her love for him is rather self-centered. Initially, she seems to love him for the benefit he affords her; for the comfort that he gives to her. Yet she actively seeks him, asking him to draw her after him. As in the Book of Ruth, we can see his excitement in answering her quest. He singles her out above all the other women; he considers her the most beautiful of all women. His desire for her comes into clearer and clearer focus as we read through the pages of this book.

We will witness her apparent growth in her love for him; her maturity will become clear. We will also see his scheme of wooing her. Yes, he works it so that she increasingly desires him above all else. And that through his method of wooing!

An interesting component of this word picture is the group called “The Daughters of Jerusalem”. Curiously, the king will not allow this group to influence his beloved. In protection of her, he holds them at bay from her. This begs the question “why?”

By the end of the song, the answer to the question ‘why?’ becomes evident. We will see that the king will have so orchestrated his drawing her to himself (in answer to her specific request) that she will not be negatively influenced by the group! In the end, her desire for him will be something that this group will not like. They will seek to flatter her, and to keep her from him; and when they have not succeeded, they will be critical of her. But at that point, it will not matter, because their influence on her was withheld by the one who pursues her. It’s really such an interesting picture.

Today we will read large portions of this song. And while going through it, let’s remember that God allowed this song -- of all of Solomon’s songs -- to be included in the canon of Scripture for the purpose of giving us an understanding of Christ’s passionate love and pursuit of His bride. It is a holy passion, a godly passion. Parts of this song may make us feel a bit uncomfortable. Perhaps this is due to a corrupt worldly view of the *true passion of godly love*. This book allows us to glimpse into the deepest level of this godly passion. What a beautiful thing to realize. So let’s begin:

Song 1 1 The Song of Songs, which is Solomon’s.

The bride speaks:

Song 1:2 “May he kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! For your love is better than wine. 3 Your oils have a pleasing fragrance, Your name is like purified oil; Therefore the maidens love you. 4 Draw me after you and let us run together! The king has brought me into his chambers.”

Notice her specific request. “Draw me...” “Let us run together...” But her requests are only based upon the fact that the king had brought her into his house.

Right here we are introduced that group of people called “the Daughters of Jerusalem”. If the king represents Jesus Christ the King of kings, and if the woman, whom the king pursues, represents the bride of Christ, the Daughters of Jerusalem may well represent the Church of Christ. And if that is true, then we can begin to understand some of the pitfalls that the bride of Christ may encounter along the way of His pursuit. Pay attention to what the Daughters say throughout the song. Initially, their words seem innocuous enough. But we’ll see what their words come to in the end.

They are introduced here: **“We will rejoice in you and be glad; We will extol your love more than wine. Rightly do they love you.”**

Then the bride responds: **5 “I am black but lovely, O daughters of Jerusalem, Like the tents of Kedar, Like the curtains of Solomon. 6 Do not stare at me because I am swarthy, For the sun has burned me. My mother’s sons were angry with me; They made me caretaker of the vineyards, But I have not taken care of my own vineyard.**

She is dark-skinned, but beautiful, perhaps a foreigner among the Jewish woman. The women from this part of the world are noted for they dark-skinned beauty. Though she recognizes this fact, she also realizes that she is dark partly due to the sun having burned her skin as she worked in other people’s vineyards, all the while not working in her own vineyard. What would you think that the picture of a vineyard should

bring to mind? Of course we should think of the fruit born in a vineyard! The very end of our work! Bearing fruit for our king.

Now she addresses the king with a very specific request:

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? For why should I be like one who veils herself beside the flocks of your companions?”

She has not only asked the king to draw her after himself, to allow her to run with him, now she asks where he pastures his flock. She desires to get to know him more intimately, in a similar way to the others within his flock. Then she asks the specific question: *Why should I veil myself, along with the others of his companions?* Perhaps this should bring to mind the picture of Isaac’s wife-to-be veiling herself upon meeting him, just prior to becoming his wife, having been led by Abraham’s eldest servant from one land to another. She covered herself. Or perhaps it should remind us that Naomi instructed Ruth to put her best raiment on. Or bring us to remember that it will be given to the Bride of Christ to cloth herself in fine linen, just prior to becoming His wife. *Why should I be like one who veils herself beside the others?*, she asks.

Finally we hear the king speak in answer to her query:

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. 9 To me, my darling, you are like My mare among the chariots of Pharaoh.

His instructions to her: Follow the trails that others have taken, and stick close to the shepherds. We must remember that these are very picturesque words, figurative language. But figurative language in Scripture always points to something literal. A figure is used for describing something particular! Here the king states his view of this woman. She is singled out from among all the other women. She is most beautiful, and he depicts her beauty in figures of speech. His own mare, among the chariots of Pharaoh. The army of Pharaoh was deemed the most powerful in the world at least during Moses’ day. He had more confidence in her strength, than all the army of Pharaoh.

Now the Daughters of Jerusalem are happy enough to help her look more beautiful before the king. At least *at this point*, they are happy to do that. The Daughters:

Song 1:11 “We will make for you ornaments of gold With beads of silver.”

Jumping to vs. 15 of this first chapter, the king says:

Song 1:15 “How beautiful you are, my darling, How beautiful you are! Your eyes are like doves.”

A dove is a symbol of peace, and in Scripture, a symbol of the Holy Spirit. Doves were the only birds that could be offered in sacrifice, as they were the only birds deemed as clean, according to the law of Moses. One commentary noted that doves are single-focused, in that they do not have peripheral vision. They only see what they are looking at. The Bride answers:

Song 1:16 “How handsome you are, my beloved, And so pleasant! Indeed, our couch is luxuriant! 17 The beams of our houses are cedars, Our rafters, cypresses.

Song 2:1 I am the rose of Sharon, The lily of the valleys.”

He more specifically tells her how he sees her:

Song 2:2 “Like a lily among the thorns, So is my darling among the maidens.”

She responds:

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.”

We see her love for him growing, though seemingly a bit self-focused at this point. She sees him as a source of comfort and provision for her. His shade was a great delight to her, his fruit was sweet to her taste. He sustained her with raisin cakes, and refreshed her with apples. She was “lovesick”, weak from her love for him, from her delight in his provisions.

In the midst of all of this, the king charges the Daughters of Jerusalem”

7 “I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, By the gazelles or by the hinds of the field, That you will not arouse or awaken my love, Until she pleases.”

The king charges the daughters not to arouse or awaken the one he loves, until she is ready. This figurative language is interesting. He is adjuring them by the gazelles or hinds of the field. These animals are very careful for themselves in the fields. If you startle them, they will dart away faster than you imagine. Gazelles are very light on their feet and extremely fast. He doesn’t want them to scare her off. Then she speaks of him:

8 “Listen! My beloved! Behold, he is coming, Climbing on the mountains, Leaping on the hills! 9 My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Behold, he is standing behind our wall, He is looking through the windows, He is peering through the lattice. 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!’”

There is quite a lot to be noticed here. She is aware of his coming to her, and it excites her. He reveals himself to her in small ways, so as to increase her desire for him. It is one way he is wooing her. He reveals himself, yet remains a bit elusive, so her desire and perhaps curiosity for him will increase. Then He asks her to come into ministry with Him. He tells her that *winter is past* (a time of rest with no fruit bearing). The rain is over and gone (that which is necessary for fruit to appear is complete). The flower (which is a prelude to fruit) is present, and now is the time for pruning, which implies work in order to bear more fruit. He opens and closes the entire monologue by stating his feelings for her: *Arise, my darling, my beautiful one. And come along.*

Then he says to her:

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 desires one-on-one intimacy with her, apart from others. He wants to meet her in a place wherein *he would be her refuge*, in a secret place on a steep pathway, a place where others will not dare to step, a place where she would dare go with him, alone. He does this for her because he loves her so. He loves her voice, her form, she is absolutely beautiful to him. So unique is his love for her. (Again, let’s remember that this love story reflects the passionate love that Christ feels for His bride-to-be!)

Then, almost as if jealous, the Daughters of Jerusalem say:

15 “Catch the foxes for us, The little foxes that are ruining the vineyards, While our vineyards are in blossom.”

They, too, have fruit that needs tending, too. They, too, don’t want their vineyards to be ruined. But these two seem so enraptured with each other that they hardly take notice of anyone else. She says:

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 wants him to come to her. And to hurry, like a gazelle. She continues:

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.

And this is what she thinks to herself:

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.”

The watchmen of the city are the ones who were to help and protect. It is interesting to note that it was only *after she left them*, that she found him. He really does want her to find him when she is ready, when she has “the want to”. He will not allow others to do it for her. It is even at this point in the text where he addresses the Daughters of Jerusalem *again*, saying exactly the same thing as he had said before:

5 “I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, By the gazelles or by the hinds of the field, That you will not arouse or awaken my love, Until she pleases.”

He doesn’t want her to be scared off, so that she would dart away. He is very willing to patiently await her coming into her own desire for him.

The Daughters respond:

6 “What is this coming up from the wilderness Like columns of smoke, Perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, With all scented powders of the merchant? 7 Behold, it is the traveling couch of Solomon; Sixty mighty men around it, Of the mighty men of Israel. 8 All of them are wielders of the sword, Expert in war; Each man has his sword at his side, Guarding against the terrors of the night. 9 King Solomon has made for himself a sedan chair From the timber of Lebanon. 10 He made its posts of silver, Its back of gold And its seat of purple fabric, With its interior lovingly fitted out By the daughters of Jerusalem. 11 Go forth, O daughters of Zion, And gaze on King Solomon with the crown With which his mother has crowned him On the day of his wedding, And on the day of his gladness of heart.”

The daughters will be witnesses on that day when the king will take his bride. They will see and understand that he will wear a crown on his head on that day. They will have even done some work toward that day, according to v. 10. But they will only gaze at him on that day when he takes a wife. This next portion of the book is the king addressing his love for his bride-to-be:

Song of Solomon 4

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

So she has a veil now. He loves her and again tells of her beauty, likening her physical features to pleasures within nature. Then after verbally reveling in her beauty, he says:

9 You have made my heart beat faster, my sister, my bride; You have made my heart beat faster with a single glance of your eyes, With a single strand of your necklace. 10 How beautiful is your love, my sister, my bride! How much better is your love than wine, And the fragrance of your oils Than all kinds of spices! 11 Your lips, my bride, drip honey; Honey and milk are under your tongue, And the fragrance of your garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon.

There is so much figurative language here, figures of speech depicting his ardent love and pleasure, even passion for this wife-to-be. He calls her his “sister”, his “bride”. This speaks to the purity of his love. No impropriety here, but a passionate, godly love for her.

12 A garden locked is my sister, my bride, A rock garden locked, a spring sealed up. 13 Your shoots are an orchard of pomegranates With choice fruits, henna with nard plants, 14 Nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, With all the trees of frankincense, Myrrh and aloes, along with all the finest spices. 15 You are a garden spring, A well of fresh water, And streams flowing from Lebanon.”

Herein He refers to her as a garden, a piece of fertile ground wherein fruit is produced; even the choicest of fruits. Also, myrrh is often mentioned in these passages, along with other aloes. Of course, we would have to see the myrrh in connection to a love for which one would die. We’ll see this coming to full circle towards the end of the song, that love is stronger than death.

Here she is likened to a “garden locked,” a “spring sealed”. Yet a spring, a well of fresh water springing up from deep within ground, flowing outward. In each of us, there is a work done by the Holy Spirit that must be done apart from anyone else, save the One Who loves our soul. But this work done inwardly, apart from anyone’s notice or help, produces fruit that will benefit others, as we see this process go forward throughout the remainder of the song. Even now the Bride has grasped the desire for others to benefit from their love.

The Bride responds:

16 “Awake, O north wind, And come, wind of the south; Make my garden breathe out fragrance, Let its spices be wafted abroad. May my beloved come into his garden And eat its choice fruits!”

She sees that she has grown, and does not exhibit false humility in owning the growth that she has achieved through the love of her Love. She also knows that although this is her garden, the fruit thereof belongs to her beloved. Now we can see the king enjoying what he is able to gather from her garden. He has enjoyed it and now desires others to enjoy it as well. He says:

Song of Solomon 5

1 “I have come into my garden, my sister, my bride; I have gathered my myrrh along with my balsam. I have eaten my honeycomb and my honey; I have drunk my wine and my milk. Eat, friends; Drink and imbibe deeply, O lovers.”

Sweet, isn’t it, but now there seems a sudden change. Watch this transpire. The Bride speaks:

Song of Solomon 5

2 “I was asleep, but my heart was awake. A voice! My beloved was knocking:

‘Open to me, my sister, my darling, My dove, my perfect one! For my head is drenched with dew, My locks with the damp of the night.’

3 I have taken off my dress, How can I put it on again? I have washed my feet, How can I dirty them again? 4 My beloved extended his hand through the opening, And my feelings were aroused for him. 5 I arose to open to my beloved; And my hands dripped with myrrh, And my fingers with liquid myrrh, On the handles of the bolt.

She stumbles in her own self-focused comfort. The king responds lovingly, not in bitter reproach. And what takes place thereafter is a very sweet picture of his continuing to woo her. Remember this is *the process* of bringing her to be his wife.

He had called her to fellowship with him, to . He was knocking for her to open to him, even in a time of inconvenience! She was asleep. She had taken off her dress. Implicitly, she had taken her sandals off and had washed her feet. It was too much trouble to accommodate him. Again, there can be no impropriety here. This is pure and godly, a king asking his wife-to-be to inconvenience herself for him! And, in consideration of the inconvenience, she hesitated. This somewhat reminds me of what Jesus says in **Revelation 3:20 ‘Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me.** And in response to opening the door and dining with Him, the outcome will be: **21 ‘He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.**

Augh! The spirit is willing (“my heart was awake”), but the flesh is weak (“I was asleep.”) Finally, she comes to her senses, but watch how he teaches her, how he draws her (actually in answer to her initial request):

Song of Solomon 5:6 I opened to my beloved, But my beloved had turned away and had gone! My heart went out to him as he spoke. I searched for him, but I did not find him; I called him, but he did not answer me. 7 The watchmen who make the rounds in the city found me, They struck me and wounded me; The guardsmen of the walls took away my shawl from me. 8 I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, If you find my beloved, As to what you will tell him: For I am lovesick.”

She changes her mind, but her beloved had gone. She did not despair in her sin! That is an important thing to note. Instead of wallowing in her failure, she gathered herself up for another search for him. She went

to the watchmen again. (Remember the first time?) Now they not only don't help her, but they mistreat her. They do not like her passion for him, and they struck her and wounded her, and the guardsmen of the walls (those who are supposed to be protecting her from the enemies), become the very thing they should be protecting her from, as they took away her shawl. (The KJV calls it a "mantle".) This could be a display of disgust for her "fanaticism" and revealing her to be immodest (without the shawl). Or it could be significant even beyond that. Wasn't it Elijah's mantle that fell to the ground before Elisha when Elijah was taken up in a firey chariot? The mantle represented Elijah's ministry being passed to Elisha in his reception of the mantle. Here in the song, the watchmen take away her mantle.

Then she comes to the Daughters of Jerusalem in her search for him:

Song of Solomon 5:8 I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, If you find my beloved, As to what you will tell him: For I am lovesick."

She is sick about what has happened. She referred to herself as "lovesick" in 2:5, but that was in a rather self-centered, self-focused state, when she was imbibing in his presence and his provisional blessings. Now the excess of pain is due to His *absence*. She seems desperate in her search, desperate to re-establish relationship with her beloved. Now this invokes a response in the Daughters that is interesting, albeit short-lived. They asked:

Song 5:9 "What kind of beloved is your beloved, O most beautiful among women? What kind of beloved is your beloved, That thus you adjure us?"

Their curiosity seems to be peaked as they become aware of her desperate search. In answer to their question, she describes her passionate love for him:

Song 5:10 "My beloved is dazzling and ruddy, Outstanding among ten thousand. 11 His head is like gold, pure gold; His locks are like clusters of dates, And black as a raven. 12 His eyes are like doves, Beside streams of water, Bathed in milk, And reposed in their setting. 13 His cheeks are like a bed of balsam, Banks of sweet-scented herbs; His lips are lilies, Dripping with liquid myrrh. 14 His hands are rods of gold Set with beryl; His abdomen is carved ivory Inlaid with sapphires. 15 His legs are pillars of alabaster Set on pedestals of pure gold; His appearance is like Lebanon, Choice as the cedars. 16 His mouth is full of sweetness. And he is wholly desirable. This is my beloved and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem."

This apt (but figurative) description furthers their interest in finding him themselves.

Song 6:1 "Where has your beloved gone, O most beautiful among women? Where has your beloved turned, That we may seek him with you?"

When one seeks Jesus to this degree, it is not unusual for people to become interested in Jesus, the Coming One, seeing this type of passion for Him. But someone else's passion does not give "the want to" to another. We will see whether or not their desire comes to fruition in the end.

In answer to their question of where they might find him, the bride seems to remember the answer he gave her early on! She says:

Song of Solomon 6:2 "My beloved has gone down to his garden, To the beds of balsam, To pasture his flock in the gardens And gather lilies. 3 I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine, He who pastures his flock among the lilies."

In speaking to others as to his character, she regains her own assurance! She remembers his words! And by implication this in itself could be an invitation for them to come with her. (Though, we'll see in a moment that they do not.) But here, it is as if she remembers what he initially told her in how to find him, when she asked early on. Of course! That would be the place! And so, she goes to him, and when he sees her, he extols his love for her once again. So forgiving and loving is he toward her, yet her previous hesitation is not without ramifications:

Song 6:4 "You are as beautiful as Tirzah, my darling, As lovely as Jerusalem, As awesome as an army with banners. 5 Turn your eyes away from me, For they have confused me; Your hair is like a flock of goats That have descended from Gilead. 6 Your teeth are like a flock of ewes Which have come up from their washing, All of which bear twins, And not one among them has lost her young. 7

Your temples are like a slice of a pomegranate Behind your veil. 8 There are sixty queens and eighty concubines, And maidens without number; 9 But my dove, my perfect one, is unique: She is her mother's only daughter; She is the pure child of the one who bore her. The maidens saw her and called her blessed, The queens and the concubines also, and they praised her, saying, 10 'Who is this that grows like the dawn, As beautiful as the full moon, As pure as the sun, As awesome as an army with banners?' 11 I went down to the orchard of nut trees To see the blossoms of the valley, To see whether the vine had budded Or the pomegranates had bloomed. 12 Before I was aware, my soul set me Over the chariots of my noble people."

Now we see that the Daughters were not so interested in the answers to their questions, as they were with the woman's passion in giving them the answer. This is an interesting turn on their part:

Song 6:13 "Come back, come back, O Shulammitte; Come back, come back, that we may gaze at you!"

This is the only verse in the Scriptures that this word is used: Shulammitte, and it is used two times. I read in one commentary that the word Shulammitte is a feminine form of Solomon, meaning prince of peace, or as this case, princess of peace. It is interesting that we are called Christians, after the name of Christ. He is the anointed One, we are anointed as we stay in union with Him.

Anyway, the daughters seem intrigued *by her* rather than *by him*. And they want to keep her with them, for their benefit! And as we will see, when they do not get their way, they will sulk at her...

Meanwhile, the king protects her from their flattery, and will not allow them to influence her even in their flattery. He responds for her:

"Why should you gaze at the Shulammitte, As at the dance of the two companies?"

Then immediately he turns his attention to her, who evidently in remembering where to find him went to that place and found him again. And he praises her, that she has her sandals on!

Song of Solomon 7: 1 How beautiful are your feet in sandals, O prince's daughter!

This would be nothing less than her being ready to lay aside her own conveniences, and finally go with him into ministry, into the city in order to bare fruit, which we will see in a minute. We will remember the time when she wouldn't get out of bed because she had already taken off her dress and her sandals? Now she is ready to go there with him. He notices that and commends her for it. Then he goes into another figurative monologue of how beautiful her form is and how much he loves her. He ends with this:

Song 7:5... And the flowing locks of your head are like purple threads; The king is captivated by your tresses. 6 How beautiful and how delightful you are, My love, with all your charms!...

With this, the bride commits her unselfish love for him. She has learned from her failures:

Song 7:10 "I am my beloved's, And his desire is for me. 11 Come, my beloved, let us go out into the country, Let us spend the night in the villages. 12 Let us rise early and go to the vineyards; Let us see whether the vine has budded And its blossoms have opened, And whether the pomegranates have bloomed. There I will give you my love. 13 The mandrakes have given forth fragrance; And over our doors are all choice fruits, Both new and old, Which I have saved up for you, my beloved...."

The king speaks to the daughters of Jerusalem again about their influence on her. He still does not allow it:

Song 8:4 "I want you to swear, O daughters of Jerusalem, Do not arouse or awaken my love, Until she pleases."

Then the daughters begin to notice her *total commitment*:

Song 8:5 "Who is this coming up from the wilderness, Leaning on her beloved?"

Then the king says:

“Beneath the apple tree I awakened you; There your mother was in labor with you, There she was in labor and gave you birth. 6 Put me like a seal over your heart, Like a seal on your arm. For love is as strong as death, Jealousy is as severe as Sheol; Its flashes are flashes of fire, The very flame of the LORD. 7 Many waters cannot quench love, Nor will rivers overflow it; If a man were to give all the riches of his house for love, It would be utterly despised.”

Remember the instances of myrrh being spoken of. Here we see that it is explicitly stated that this love is stronger than death. This would have to be true on both sides. And with that the daughters reveal just how much they despise this type of love in their obvious criticism of her:

Song 8:8 “We have a little sister, And she has no breasts; What shall we do for our sister On the day when she is spoken for? 9 If she is a wall, We shall build on her a battlement of silver; But if she is a door, We shall barricade her with planks of cedar.”

The bride responds to the daughters’ criticism. She knows how much she has grown and will not listen to the jealous accusation of the opposite:

Song 8:10 “I was a wall, and my breasts were like towers; Then I became in his eyes as one who finds peace. 11 Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon; He entrusted the vineyard to caretakers; Each one was to bring a thousand shekels of silver for its fruit. 12 My very own vineyard is at my disposal; The thousand shekels are for you, Solomon, And two hundred are for those who take care of its fruit.”

The king to his bride:

Song 8:13 “O you who sit in the gardens, My companions are listening for your voice--Let me hear it!”

And her closing response:

14 “Hurry, my beloved, And be like a gazelle or a young stag On the mountains of spices.”

And there we have the end to the song of all songs! The Bride awaits his return.

We see within the pages of this wonderful book the telling of a forever love story. The love of a King for His soon-to-be wife. He draws her, and woos her in such a way that is unmatched by any love ever seen on the face of the earth. His love for her is passionate and pure. It is stronger than death. And its very nature evokes a strong jealousy in those who unwittingly choose not to partake. But for those who will ask and seek, they shall find. They shall be wooed and shaped and prodded until they stand before their Husband-to-be, and hear the Words: “Well done...enter into the Joy of the Lord.”

We’ll end today with this passage. The Holy Spirit says through the pen of Paul:

II Corinthians 11:2 For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin. 3 But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

Even so, Come, Lord Jesus, come!