



SONG OF SOLOMON

Love, Marriage, and the Gospel
Wednesdays | 7PM | preaching series

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*my love is your love,
the fragrance*

song of solomon

SONG OF SOLOMON

Or, more literally titled: “Song of Songs”

INTRO NOTES:

Introductory Features on the Ultimate Song of Songs

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MacArthur, 1-vol-Bible commentary INTRO NOTES:

TITLE:

The LXX and Latin all follow the MT (Hebrew) with the title of the book (first two words in Hebrew): SONG OF SONGS

The superlative (Song of Songs)

Like Holy of Holies (Ex 26.33)

King of Kings (Rev 19.16)

>> indicates this is the BEST among SOLOMON’S 1,005 musical works (1 Kings 4.32)

The word translated “SONG” frequently refers to music that HONORS GOD (1 Chron 6.31-32; Ps 33.3; 40.3; 144.9)

AUTHOR:

SOLOMON reigned over Israel for 40 years (971-931 BC) - his name appears 7x in this book 1:1, 5; 3:7, 9, 11; 8:11, 12

In view of his writing skills and musical giftedness (1 Kings 4.32), and the authorial sense of 1:1, this was penned by SOLOMON the man. His name appears 7x in this book (1:1, 5; 3:7, 9, 11; 8:11, 12).

Cities are mentioned in the book ALL THROUGH Israel (from North to South)

IT is a UNIFIED piece of poetic, wisdom literature rather than a ‘series of compiled love poems without a common theme/author’

SETTING/BACKGROUND

2 people DOMINATE this true-life, dramatic, love song.

(1) SOLOMON - whose kingship is mentioned 5x (1:4, 12; 3:9, 11; 7:5) he is the **BELLOVED**.

(2) **SHULAMITE** - the maiden, the woman (6:13) remains obscure; most likely, she was a resident of a city of SHUNEM, 3 miles north of Jezreel in Northern Israel (lower galilee).

Some suggest she is Pharaoh's daughter (1 Kings 3.1) -- but there's no evidence for that.

This woman was Solomon's FIRST wife (Eccl 9.9) before he sinned by adding 699 other wives & 300 concubines (1 Kings 11.3)

There are other players in the story...

The 'daughters of Jerusalem' (1:4, 8, 11) -- they might be part of Solomon's household staff

SETTING...

The setting combines both RURAL and URBAN scenes.

Portions of the story take place in the hill country north of Jerusalem where the SHulamite lived (6:13) -- and where Solomon enjoyed prominence as a vinegrower and shepherd (Ecc 2.4-7) --

The city section includes the wedding and time afterward in Solomon's home in Jerusalem (3:7 - 7:13)

117 verses in the book

ALL the verses are recognized by Jews as part of their sacred writings

***The Jews read this book/song at Passover -- calling it "The Holy of HOLIES"**

> Surprisingly, God is NOT mentioned explicitly (but maybe in 8.6)

***The NT never directly quotes the SONG of SONGS**

PURPOSE:

This book exalts the purity of marital affection and romance.

It parallels and enhances other portions of Scripture which portray God's plan for marriage including the beauty and sanctity of sexual intimacy between husband and wife.

The song rightly stands alongside other Scripture passages dealing with such themes...

Gen 2.24

Psalm 45

Prov 5:15-23

1 Cor 7:1-5; 13:1-8

Eph 5:18-33

Col 3:18, 19

1 Pet 3:1-7

***Song of Songs is a treatise fleshing out Heb 13.4 - 'marriage is honorable among all and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge'**

INTERPRETATION:

Take it at face value and interpret it in its normal, poetic, literary sense --
Solomon is recounting...

1. His own days of courtship
2. The early days of his first marriage
3. The maturing of this royal couple through the good and bad days of life

Song of Songs builds on Gen 2.24 -- providing a spiritual music for a lifetime of marital harmony

No wonder God called marriage the most precious of human relations: "The Grace of Life" (1 Pet 3.7)

MACARTHUR'S OUTLINE:

INTRO (1:1)

1. The Courtship (*LEAVING*) (1:2-3:5)
2. The Wedding (*CLEAVING*) (3:6-5:1)
3. The Marriage (*WEAVING*) (5:2-8:14)

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Introductory Points Regarding this "Supreme Song"...

Some Features to Understand:

1. It's a **SONG** - a poem, figure of speech, erotic, full of language, pictures, --- it's not a sort of anthology of brief poems of love but a unified piece of Spirit-given poetry.
2. It's in the **BIBLE** -- this isn't scribbled on a wall of a NYC subway as dirty & filthy; it's inspired, authoritative, binding, relevant, needed, sufficient, for **ALL** of us, and it's part of the unfolding of God's plan of REDEMPTION.
3. It's about **LOVE** -- it's about human, marital love & its satisfying physical delights. It's relished *only* in the context of a heterosexual marriage, the Bible's ONLY authorized context for expressions of physical intimacy between a man and a woman.
4. It's to give **WISDOM** -- it's the *wisdom genre* of Scripture (capping off the poetic writings: Job, Pss, Prov, Eccl & Song of Songs). The refrain gives wisdom: Don't arouse/awaken love till it pleases (2:7; 3:5; 8:4)
5. It's about the **SON OF DAVID** -- it's about Solomon -- David's Son and yet there is another Son of David who came & who is the ultimate BRIDEGROOM (John 3:29; 2 Cor 11.2; Rev 19.6-9; 22:17)

Simple outline: True, God-like Marital Love

- 1) **Courtship** [*before marriage*] (1-3)
- 2) **Wedding** [*getting married*] (3-5)
- 3) **Maturing** [*during marriage*] (5-8)

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Wilkinson and Boa -- TALK THROUGH THE BIBLE
Overview of Song of Solomon

INTRO

It's a love song written by Solomon

Abounding in metaphors and oriental imagery

Historically it depicts the wooing and wedding of a shepherdess by King Solomon and the joys and heartaches of wedded love

Allegorically it pictures Israel as God's espoused Bride (See Hosea 2.19-20) -- and the church as the Bride of Christ.

As human life finds its highest fulfillment in the love of man and woman (in marriage), so spiritual life finds its highest fulfillment in the love of God for His people and Christ for His church

OUTLINES:

1. Beginning of love (1:1-5:1)
2. Broadening of love (5:2-8:14)

OR:

1. Falling in Love (1:1-3:5)
2. United in Love (3:6-5:1)
3. Struggling in Love (5:2-7:10)
4. Growing in Love (7:11-8:14)

OR:

1. COURTSHIP (1:1-3:5)
2. WEDDING (3:6-5:1)
3. PROBLEM (5:2-7:10)
4. PROGRESS (7:11-8:14)

SOLOMON wrote it...

Evidence of Solomon mentioned (1:1, 5; 3:7, 9, 11; 8:11-12)

He is the GROOM

Evidence of royal luxury and rich imported goods (3:6-11)

1 Kings 4:32-33 says that Solomon composed 1,005 songs and had intimate knowledge of the plant/animal world

> this greatest of his songs alludes to 21 species of plants & 15 species of animals.
It cites geographical locations in the NORTH & SOUTH (still united kingdom - early)
Because of the poetic imagery, Solomon uses 49 Hebrew words that occur NO WHERE
else in all Scripture

WHEN did he write it?

It may be that Solomon wrote it when he was only married to ONE woman -- and before he fell into gross immorality and idolatry (1 Kings 11:4)

The SONG refers to 15 geographic locations all through the region (from Lebanon, thru Israel, to Egypt)

Kedar (1:5)

Egypt (1:9)

En Gedi (1:14)

Sharon (2:1)

Jerusalem (2:7)

Lebanon (3:9)

Mt Gilead (4:1)

Amana (4:8)

Shenir (4:8)

Hermon (4:8)

Tirzah (6:4)

Heshbon (7:4)

Damascus (7:4)

Mt Carmel (7:5)

Baal Hamon (8:11)

Some interpretive methods / frameworks...

- 1. FICTIONAL** - some believe this is a fictional drama that portrays Solomon's courtship and marriage to a poor but beautiful girl from the country
- 2. ALLEGORICAL** - the primary purpose of the book is to illustrate God's truth of God's love for His people. Some think it was fictional but others see it as real. But regardless, these would say the primary purpose is typical -- to present Yahweh's love for his bride Israel and or Christ's love for His Church
- 3. HISTORICAL** -- the Song of Songs is a poetic record of Solomon's actual romance with a Shulamite woman. This view exalts the joys of love and marriage and teaches that physical beauty and sexuality in marriage should not be despised as **BASE** or **UNSPIRITUAL**

This song is a Positive endorsement by God of marital love in ALL its physical and emotional beauty.

This does NOT mean that there are no spiritual illustrations or applications!

It certainly illustrates GOD's love for His covenant people and it anticipates Christ's love for His bride the Church (178)

KEY VERSE - 7:10 - I am my beloved's and his desire is toward me.

The SONG illustrates the reality that

A husband & wife are to passionately love each other - Prov 5, Heb 13, 1 Cor 7

Israel is the Bride of Yhwh - Isa 54.5-6; Jer 2.2; Ezek 16;8-14; Hosea 2.16-20

Church is the Bride of Christ - 2 Cor 11.2; Eph 5.23-25; Rev 19.7-9; 21.9

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Constable notes on SONG

Another view is that "Shulammitte" is simply the feminine form of the name "Solomon." (Tremper Longman)

So Solomon could have written this book in his youth. Perhaps he wrote most of Proverbs in mid-life and Ecclesiastes in his old age. The contents of these three writings have suggested that order to many students.

"Among the books of the Bible, the Song of Solomon is one of the smallest, most difficult, yet one of the most popular with both Jews and Christians. Over the centuries hundreds of books and commentaries have been written and unnumbered sermons preached on these 117 verses." (G Lloyd Carr)

Though many see the book as **ALLEGORICAL**, Warren Wiersbe says:

"All things are possible to those who allegorize—and what they come up with is usually heretical."

***Ancient Jewish Interp**

Probably the Song of Solomon was a single love poem made up of several strophes (segments) that the writer designed to deal primarily with the subject of human love and marriage. This was the viewpoint of many ancient Jewish rabbis.

"The Song fills a necessary vacuum in the Scriptures because it endorses sex and celebrates it beyond all expectation. Although abuse is possible and to be avoided, sex is not inherently evil, nor is it limited to a procreative function. Instead, sex enables an experience of love whose intensity has no parallel in this cosmos and serves as a signpost to point to the greater love that lies beyond it." (Hess)

PURPOSE

God's primary purpose in inspiring this book of the Bible was to give us revelation concerning the way love between a man and a woman should look.

***"The Song of Songs hearkens back to God's prototypical design in the Garden of Eden of one man and one woman, in marriage, a relationship God designed to be mutually exclusive. This book, then, presents a most relevant and urgent message for today. (J Paul Tanner "Message of SONG of Songs" *Bib Sac*")

The love relationship between a man and a woman is an illustration of the love relationship within the Godhead and between God and Israel and between Christ and the church (cf. Hos. 3:1; Eph. 5:32).

Therefore part of the purpose of this book seems to be the revelation of those more basic love relationships for *application* by the reader (Constable)

Eugene Merrill:

"The purpose of the book . . . is to describe and extol human marital love. . . . The love that exists between them also portrays love at the higher and more perfect level, that between God and the objects of His grace.

**End times foreshadowing...*

"There is something proleptic and eschatological in human passion. We deal with symbols that image eternal realities here. Little wonder that this little book is in the canon." (Kinlaw)

Song in Megilloth

The Song of Solomon is the first of the five "Megilloth," which are the five scrolls read by the Jews at various feasts. They read the Song of Solomon at Passover as a historical allegory beginning with the Exodus and ending with the coming of Messiah.³⁸ The Jews also read Ruth at Pentecost, Ecclesiastes at the Feast of Tabernacles, Esther at the Feast of Purim, and Lamentations on the anniversary of the destruction of Jerusalem.

The Hebrew text of the Song is sound, but the book is very difficult to translate. Words that occur only in this book (*hapax legomena*) comprise 9.2 percent of its vocabulary, and 11.3 percent of the words are unique to this book

***CONTEMPORARY SIGNIFICANCE FOR "ME AND YOU"?**

I believe God gave it to us so we could understand the nature of love primarily. I think God wanted us to apply that understanding: both in our love for our spouses, and in our love for our Savior. In other words, I believe the purpose is "both . . . and," rather than "either . . . or." This is also the view of many contemporary evangelical scholars,

including Merrill, Hubbard, and Hess.

This book emphasizes the supremacy of love. *Human* life finds its highest fulfillment in the love of a man and a woman. *Spiritual* life finds its highest fulfillment in the love of a human being and God. Jesus Christ makes the fulfillment of love on both the human and the spiritual levels possible. He manifested God's love to humankind. Consequently, we can love Him, and we can love one another. Matthew 22:37-39 gives us the greatest commandment, namely: to love God wholeheartedly and our neighbors as ourselves. Thus, our love for God and our love for other human beings are both very important to God. 1 John 4:17 says, "We love, because He first loved us." This book helps us love, which we can do as believers because God has shed abroad His love in our hearts (Rom. 5:5).

The SONG reveals 4 things about LOVE>>>>

(1) FOUNDATION = It reveals the *foundation* of love. According to this book, the foundation of love is mutual satisfaction. The man and the woman in this book find perfect rest in each other. They satisfy one another in every way. Affection relates directly to this ability. We have affection for people who satisfy some need or desire in us. We have supreme affection for one who satisfies us ultimately. That supreme affection is the basis for marriage. God intended it to be so. This book also reveals that mutual satisfaction is not only complementary, but it is also exclusive. The man and the woman in this book each saw the other as the only one for them (2:2-3). For satisfaction to be complete, there must be a commitment to exclusivity. There is usually a promise to forsake all others in wedding vows. When love is not exclusive, it is diluted (cf. Gen. 2:24; 1 Tim. 3:2). The foundation of love, then, is mutual satisfaction that is both complementary and exclusive.

(2) STRENGTH = This book also reveals the *strength* of love. It is the strongest force in life (8:6-7). People will do for love what they will not do for any other reason. However, when mutual satisfaction breaks down, the strength of love grows weaker. People who want strong love in their marriage should commit themselves to satisfying each other more than themselves.

(3) HOW = This book also reveals *how* to love. It shows Solomon taking the initiative in reaching out to his loved one with intensity, and protecting her. It also shows the Shulammitte responding to her beloved by yielding to him and trusting in him. These are the usual actions and reactions of the male and the female in love. Sometimes there is a reversal of roles, but not usually. God intended these methods of expressing love to be instructive for us. They are applicable in both our love for our spouse and in our love for God.

(4) FRUITS = This book also reveals the *fruits* of love. These are three. In true love there is rest. There is a perfect contentment that turmoil outside or within cannot destroy. The home in which genuine love resides is a haven from the storms of life. In true love there is also joy. No matter what other conditions may exist (poverty, misery, etc.), real love fills the heart with song and brightens the darkest day. And in true love there is courage. Both individuals gain strength from their love to face circumstances boldly, and to recover from their failures and go on. All three of these fruits of love are prominent in this book.

****Remember:**

The second value of this book is that it reveals spiritual experience at its highest level. Some people these days have trouble seeing that the book has anything to say about our relationship to God. One could say the same thing about the Book of Esther. But here it is helpful to remember what Jesus said to the Pharisees: "You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me" (John 5:39). We, too, can study the Scriptures and miss what they have to teach us about what is most important: God Himself. Every other book of the Bible teaches us about God, and so does this one.

The *foundation* of our love for God and His love for us is also mutual satisfaction. He satisfies our every need and our every want. Nevertheless, He also finds satisfaction in us. This is amazing! Zeph. 3:17 reveals that God rejoices in His people!

We see the *strength* of God's love for us when we look at Calvary. The strength of our love for God is the extent to which we respond to Him in obedience (1 John 2:3-6).

We see *how* to love as we observe God initiating love for us, reaching out intensely and protectively. We express our love for Him by yielding to Him and trusting in Him.

The *fruit* of love is the same in our relationship with God as in our relationship with another human being. We enjoy rest, joy, and courage. God does too. He experiences courage in the sense of encouragement.

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Ian Provan --- Eccl / Song of Songs, NIVAC

Historically there are 2 primary ways to read the SONG:

- 1) as a text that concerns the love & sexual intimacy of human beings
- 2) As a text that uses the language of human life and intimacy to speak of something else (God and ISrael // Christ and the Church)

In 550 AD, in the Council of Constantinople it famously "OUTLAWED the literal reading of the SONG of Songs altogether, enshrining the allegorical interp henceforth as *THE ONLY RIGHT INTERPRETATION*' (p.238)

In POST REFORMATION, a more literal approach once again surfaced among Christians...

The ALLEGORICAL reading is old

The ARAMAIC Targum sees it as a history of salvation in 5 movements...

1. Exodus and Sinai (1:2-3:6)
2. Solomon's Temple (3:7-5:1)

3. The Monarchy (5:2-6:1)
4. The Return from Exile (6:2-7:11)
5. The End Times (7:12-8:14)

**Even as early as the Greek Codices...

Codex Sinaiticus (4th c. AD)

Codex Alexandrinus (5th c. AD)

>> they both add marginal notes to the text intended to INDICATE the SPEAKERS and the persons addressed (p.245)

Human love-- including erotic love -- always points beyond ourselves to the love that undergirds all of reality and in whose Presence alone ALL longing can be satisfied. It is a sacred thing, but it points always not to itself, but to the Sacred that lies beyond it.

OUTLINE:

1. Lovers presented (1:1-17)
2. Springtime in Palestine (2:1-17)
3. The terrors of the night (3:1-11)
4. A man enraptured (4:1-5:1)
5. The lovers entranced (5:2-6:10)
6. The dance of delights (6:11-7:13)
7. Love Strong as Death (8:1-14)

**EJ Young

The Song does celebrate the dignity and purity of human love ... it reminds us, in particularly beautiful fashion, how pure and noble true love is. This, however, does not exhaust the purpose of the book. Not only does it speak of the purity of human love, but, by its very inclusion in the Canon, it reminds us of a love that is PURER than our own (EJ Young, quoted by Provain, p. 255)

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DOUGLAS SEAN O DONNELL -- THE SONG OF SOLOMON

There are some helpful directions -- signposts to help us through the book.

Beginning with this Scripture, how do we teach the good news about Jesus... (Acts 8.35)

And reveal something about the meaning of the mystery of marriage (Eph 5.32)

1. This is a song.

V.1.1 - this is a SONG -- it's not a letter, gospel, law book, prophecy, or apocalypse. It's a SONG -- and it's written to be sung

2. This is a song ABOUT HUMAN LOVE.

It's a song about human love in the context of marriage.

At first reading, the Song of Songs appears to be an unabashed celebration of the deeply rooted urges of physical attraction, mutual love and sexual consummation between a man and a woman. Tom Gledhill maintains that the Song of Songs is in fact just that -- a literary, poetic exploration of human love that strongly affirms loyalty, beauty and sexuality in all their variety (p.19)

THE REASON WHY THE HISTORY OF INTERP of Song of Songs as NOT seen it about human love (at all) but rather divine love -- is because of the “presupposition that HUMAN SEXUAL LOVE is an inappropriate topic for Scripture” (19)

As old as Theodoret of Cyrus (393-457 AD) have written: “Those who give the Song of corporeal (fleshly) interpretation have committed an awful blasphemy” (p.20)

>> yikes!

The lyrics here about tasting and touching are CANDID but not crude! They are not prudish -- but neither are they immodest.

> it's not X-rated. It's PH -- pastoral/parental guidance!

#3 - found in the Bible.

This isn't scribbled on the NYC Subway.

This is God's Song

4. Written to GIVE US WISDOM.

It's in the wisdom lit in Bible.

SOLOMON is the author

4 guideposts...

1. It's a song
2. It's about human love
3. It's found in the Bible
4. It's written to give us wisdom

>> p.25

The SONG asks the Christian couple:

How's your love life?

Is your wedding bed dead or alive?

Is it as cold as a frozen pond in February or as hot as the FLorida sand in August?

*reading, studying, listening to and feeling the Song of Songs is like attending a wedding and witnessing the ripeness and rightness of YOUNG LOVE.

This SON is God's provision to sustain loving marriages and renew loveless ones.

It is God's provision for increased intimacy that reflects the intimacy of Christ's love for the Church, an intimacy that makes the world turn its head to view our marriage and say: “So,

that's the gospel...I see it now... your love -- God's love...I get it. What must I do to be made *wise* unto salvation? What must I do to share in *that kind of intimacy*? (p.25)

“The Song was written to give us wisdom --
To the unmarried -- the wisdom to wait
To the married -- the wisdom to warm up to each other again ... and again... and again (p.25)

Maybe we could call Proverbs -- a song for BOYS/young men -- be wise
Song of Songs might be -- the song for GIRLS//young women -- be wise; be patient; have uncompromised purity now; unquenchable passion then

There are 2 refrains/choruses in the song

1. I ADJURE YOU -- TO NOT AWAKEN OR AROUSE LOVE... = to singles
2. MY BELOVED IS MINE AND I AM HIS = to marrieds -- mutual compability, absolute intimacy, two becoming one (p.25)

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Daniel Akin, SONG OF SONGS

Song of Songs paints a picture of marital love that reflects the love that instructs us in God's good design and points us to our faithful Shepherd-King, JESUS (p.3)

This is an 8-chapter, 117-verse long LOVE LONG

This is not a random collection of Syrian, Egyptian or Canaanite cultic, erotic liturgies.

It's a theological and lyrical masterpiece that shows what MARRIAGE OUGHT TO BE (p.4)

Marriage is an earthly institution that in itself images something GREATER THAN ITSELF

This song points us to the Bridegroom King whose name is JESUS who loved the Church & died for Her.

Jesus said the Scritpures testify about Him (John 5.39) -- that includes the Song of Songs

The SONG addresses the GIFT OF MARRIAGE as it was intended by our great God (p.5)

“Sex, marital intimacy, is a good gift from a great God (6)

God is PRO-SEX when we engage in the act as HE designed it and we do it for HIS glory

> yes the glory of God should be the goal of sex, the goal of marriage

PIPER:

“The ultimate thing to see in the Bible about marriage is that it exists for God’s glory. MOST foundationally, marriage is the doing of God. Most ultimately, marriage is the display of God. It is designed by God to display His glory in a way that NO other event or institution does” (p.6)

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James Hamilton - SONG OF SOLOMON

I do NOT deny that this Song is about human love

I contend that Solomon intended his audience to detect a correspondence between the King’s marriage to his Bride and Yahweh’s covenant with Israel

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JAMES DURHAM - commentary on Song of Songs

ONLINE: <http://www.puritansermons.com/durham/durindx.htm>

James Durham (1622-1658) was a minister at Glasgow's "Inner Kirk" and was renowned as a preacher and writer during his short life. His Commentary on the Song of Solomon is his best known work.

Until recently it was common for the Song of Solomon to be interpreted allegorically as describing the mutual love of Christ and His church. In our present age allegorical interpretation of the Scriptures is frowned upon and is no longer accepted by most scholars. Nevertheless Durham in his [Key Useful](#) gives his reasons for adopting the allegorical method and the reader may find this interesting and thought-provoking.

Even if the reader should reject Durham's method of interpretation, his book is still valuable for the Christian reader. Throughout the book he expounds classic Puritan ideas concerning the believer's relationship with Christ and His Church. Durham's knowledge of the Bible and of the believer's heart are brought together here in a powerful way. As [John Owen](#) says, "I am persuaded every reader, whose mind is exercised about, and conversant in these things, whose

heart hath an experience of their power and reality, will [discover] the uselessness of any recommendation of this treatise unto those who are willing conscientiously to enquire into the sacred truths treasured up in this excellent portion of scripture, and to improve them unto their own advantage in faith and obedience."

Allegorical interp of the book:

First, Because it is acknowledged by all, not only to be authentick Scripture, but an excellent Piece thereof; and therefore is to be made use of by the Church, and not to ly hid, nor to be laid aside, as if the meaning thereof were not to be searched into, because it seems dark and obscure.

Song of Solomon 1 -- Notes

INTRO>>>

The capacity to delight in physical beauty, to be attracted by members of the opposite sex, the desire to form secure and intimate relationships, and to express love and affection in demonstrably physical ways --- these are all a very fundamental part of our common humanity. THE SONG OF SONGS is an unabashed celebration of these deeply rooted urges” (Tom Gledhill, *BST*, p.13)

IN OUR DAY (21st c) ...

Advertisements, commercials, movies

Tv

Videos

Novels

Internet

Social media

Dating platforms

Bars/clubs

Rondezvous --- there is an instant and immediate desire for satisfaction of every urge paramount in our day.

Permanency in relationship is OUT -- and we find ourselves IMMERSED in this society (p.14)

“The book has proved to be a stumbling block and a source of embarrassment to many readers and commentators” (p.26-27, Gledhill)

WE desperately need this SONG today.

We have massive sexual confusion, distortion, perversion. PORN is pervasive. Adultery is celebrated (and laughed at), the devastation of divorce is normalized, the fiction of same sex marriage is legalized, the same sex attraction is now embraced by the Christian community -- ALL Satanic attempts to make immorality moral & acceptable (Jim Hamilton, 16)

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A few things about the book...

1. It's a SONG - a poem, figure of speech, erotic, full of language, pictures, --- it's not a sort of anthology of brief poems of love but a unified piece of Spirit-given poetry.
2. It's in the BIBLE -- it's inspired, authoritative, binding, relevant, needed, sufficient, for ALL of us, and it's part of the unfolding of God's plan of REDEMPTION.

3. It's about LOVE -- it's about human, marital love & its satisfying physical delights. It's relished *only* in the context of a heterosexual marriage, the Bible's ONLY authorized context for expressions of physical intimacy between a man and a woman
4. It's to give WISDOM -- it's the wisdom genre of Scripture (capping off the poetic writings: Job, Pss, Prov, Eccl & Song of Songs). The refrain gives wisdom: Don't arouse/awaken love till it pleases (2:7; 3:5; 8:4)
5. It's about the SON OF DAVID -- it's about Solomon -- David's Son and yet there is another Son of David who came & who is the ultimate BRIDEGROOM (John 3:29; 2 Cor 11.2; Rev 19.6-9; 22:17)

OR: 4 signposts (O'Donell) p.16ff

1. It's a SONG
2. About LOVE
3. In the BIBLE
4. To give WISDOM

****OUR CULTURE** suffers from the deadly plague of PORN

Perhaps nothing so threatens the purity of the church today than the smut the world slobbers over -- (from the pew to the pulpit, from the people to the pastor). FREEDOM from the filth of this evil comes in the desire for a more powerful & a more satisfying pleasure --

THE degrading, dehumanizing, objectifying prostitution of pleasure on offer from the world (=porn) is a twisted perversion of the true satisfaction to be found in the enjoyment of God's good gift within the boundaries of God's good commandments (=sex in marriage!)

>> Jim Hamilton, p.24)

There's a reason why so much of the book is about the couple getting away into garden-like settings -- which is to take us back to the Eden-like settings of Gen 1-2.

The creating of marriage + God's design

The present marriage + God's gift

The future marriage + intimacy w/ God in eternal glory

Some Key verses in the BOOK:

"I am my beloved's, and his desire is for me" (Song of Solomon 7:10).

"Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. If a man offered for love all the wealth of his house, he would be utterly despised" (Song of Solomon 8:7).

***An interpretive KEY >> help in the book**

Flashbacks

Because the entire contents of the book consist almost entirely of intimate conversations between two lovers, they often reflect upon past instances in their relationship. At times they reflect upon

their initial meeting, and at other times they reflect upon their wedding night, etc. If the possibility of these “flashbacks” be kept in mind, it will aid in interpreting the poem. Flashbacks are typical of parabolic poems of this nature.

ALSO:

love poetry in the ANE is RICH in metaphor and imagery (Hess, 39)

Just remember what John Milton wrote...

“True poetry is simple, sensuous (feel it), and passionate
>> then this is poetry

CONTRIBUTION TO US/ and to the CANON of Scripture

1. the glory of marital love
2. the supremacy of covenantal love
3. the sweetness of Christ's love

Probably God's primary purpose in inspiring this book of the Bible was to give us revelation concerning the way love between a man and a woman should look. (Constable)

"The Song of Songs hearkens back to God's prototypical design in the Garden of Eden of one man and one woman, in marriage, a relationship God designed to be mutually exclusive. This book, then, presents a most relevant and urgent message for today." (Paul Tanner)

The love relationship between a man and a woman is an illustration of the love relationship within the Godhead and between God and Israel and between Christ and the church (cf. Hos. 3:1; Eph. 5:32). Therefore part of the purpose of this book seems to be the revelation of those more basic love relationships for application by the reader.

*

The SONG is crucial because it contrasts the abuse of sex with the beauty and appreciation of true biblical, God honoring sex as a gift from God.

The Song endorses sex and celebrates it beyond all expectation.

Abuse and the idolatry/lust of sex is to be avoided, SEX is not inherently evil, nor limited merely to procreation purposes.

"Sex enables an experience of love whose intensity has NO parallel in this cosmos and serves as a signpost to point to the greater love that lies beyond it (Richard Hess, 35)

Longman:

"There is absolutely nothing in the Song of Songs itself that hints of a meaning different from the sexual meaning. As a result, the assignment of spiritual meaning to the text assumes an incredibly arbitrary character. Unless one commentator is simply following in the tradition of another, there are virtually unlimited possibilities for interpretation" (p.36)

***Excellent note on NO allegorical interp:**

John Murray (shows the difficulties of the allegorical method of hermeneutics & advocates normal rendering):

"I cannot now endorse the allegorical interpretation of the Song of Solomon. I think the varieties of interpretation given in terms of the allegorical principle indicate that there are no well-defined hermeneutical canons to guide us in determining the precise meaning and application if we adopt the allegorical view. However, I also think that in terms of the biblical analogy the Song could be used to *illustrate* the relation of Christ to His Church. The marriage bond is used in Scripture as a pattern of Christ and the church. If the Song portrays marital love and relationship on the highest levels of exercise and devotion, then surely it may be used to exemplify what is transcendently true in the bond that exists between Christ and the Church (quoted in Carr, 23)

JEWISH HISTORY>

the book of Song of Solomon has been read during the Feast of Passover

it was read in the Synagogue on the 8th day of Passover

They read the Song of Solomon at Passover as a historical allegory beginning with the Exodus and ending with the coming of Messiah.

the song is unbridled desire, with its exclusive commitment.

====

Expressions of Longing & Love (2-11)

Expressions of Growing & Praise (12-17)

*A few thoughts linguistically...

vv.2-4 - the rapid shifts between him/his and you/your = is odd to us, but it was very common in love poetry in ANE poems

Big outline of BOOK:

REAL BIG PICTURE OF THE BOOK

INTRO (1:1)

1. COURTSHIP (1:2-3:5)

beginning of love (1:2-11)

growth of love (1:12-3:5)

- 2. WEDDING (3:6-5:1)
 - procession (3:6-11)
 - consummation (4:1-5:1)
- 3. MATURITY (5:2-8:4)
 - fighting apathy (5:2-6:13)
 - communicating affection (7:1-10)
 - initiating love (7:11-13)
 - intoxicating intimacy (8:1-4)
- CONCL (8:5-7)
- EPILOGUE (8:8-14)

- 1. The Longing & Love of the Bride (1-7)
- 2. The Adoration & Love of the Bridegroom (8-12)
- 3. The Adoration & Affection of the Bride (13-17)

****MARITAL** ELEMENTS to bring out:**

- the longing of one for another's kisses and love (v.2)
- the woman'd desire for the man to draw her after him (v.4)
- there is a deep, rooted love of the SOUL for one another (v.7)
- the man verbalizes supreme delight in his bride (v.8)
- the man affirms her beauty and appearance (v.9-10)
- the man tenderly and specifically marvels at her loveliness (15)
- the woman affirms the pleasantness of her lover (16)

Affirmation, not flattery
Exclusivity, not wandering hearts
Love, earnest soul-driven love
Enjoyment of each other
Communion

- honest
- affirming
- tender
- caring
- yearning
- heart-wooing

++++

***BIG PICTURE* of Song chap 1**

TEXT	SPEAKER	THEME
1:2-7	FEMALE	Longing for her lover!

1:8-11	MALE	Response w/ invitation & praise!
1:12-14	FEMALE	Her lover is sweet like fragrance
1:15	MALE	Praise of her beauty
1:16-17	FEMALE	Love in paradise!

++++

VERSE - BY VERSE COMMENTARY

1:1 - the opening verse

Hebrew: SONG of THE SONGS (it's truly the Song of all Songs)
WHICH (that song)
BELONGS TO SOLOMON -- it's his. Authored by Him. The best of Solomons

v.2 - the woman: SHULAMMITE
> simply: a feminine form of "Solomon" -- like saying, "Mrs Solomon"

1:2

Kinlaw: "this book begins with the girl expressing her deep desire for physical expressions of love by her lover" (1215)
your love is better than wine
She longed for his physical expressions -- but the statement here means that the physical affections of HIS were exhilarating, refreshing, and a great source of joy! (v.4)

The girl found her boyfriend's physical affection very stimulating. (Constable)

For your "LOVE" -- *dod* -- this is a hebrew word that refers to the act of *making love* (Prov 7.18).
It intoxicates and gives more pleasure and delight than wine ever could provide (Provain, 265)

The language of WINE is more than just 'thirst' --- as a picture of love (w/ 'kisses') it has the idea of delight and intoxication certainly that would have come to mind (Hess, 50)

v.2 - the language of kisses of the mouth and lovemaking and wine ALL join together to provide the readers with an INTRO verse that plunges them into the 'heady waters of this poem'

- > there is assonance in sounds (similarity/phonetic wordplays)
- > word pictures of kissing with desire
- > lovemaking like intoxicating wine
- > the poet leaves the reader in NO DOUBT as to the direction they're going!

(Hess, 50)

This isn't a kiss for an honorable king -- this is a ROMANTIC KISS -- the climax of a wedding celebration -- you may kiss your bride -- where the PUBLIC kiss turns into many private kisses that continue into the bridal chamber

Why is this young lady so drawn to the man? Because his love is intoxicating
his kisses are sweet and powerful
they swept her off her feet

The love of the man is EXHILERATING

That's what love is to do -- be a picture of the exhilarating, perfect love of Christ
The love is exhilarating, raises the spirits, gives cheerfulness to the soul (Borrows, 153)

**The fact that the lady/girl speaks first is VERY SIGNIFICANT. The young lady seems to see herself as of equal stature with the male. SHE longs to express her love to him and she wants him to reciprocate that love.

>> there's a very real sense in which she's the real major character in the poem (she speaks most of the time)

NOTE:

the main female character speaks 53 percent of the time and the male 39 percent in the book.

". . . there is no other female character in the Bible whom we get to know so well through her intimate and innermost thoughts and feelings." (Exum)

Let us long for the acquaintance and love and fellowship with Christ as this bride does for the man (John Cotton)

1:3 -- not only the physical kisses but even his fragrance is attractive....

His perfume/scent -- was attractive to her.
She was attracted to and aroused by his presence.

HIS reputation goes before him positively like his sweet scent also (Longman, 92)

HIS NAME is like oil -- someone's name represented his character/reputation/personhood.
THUS -- his character is pleasing and attractive to the beloved
THUS - many were attracted to him

THE NAME =
a person is always much more than just physical appearance
is he honest? what's the character?
Christlike spirit?
financially responsible?
bad temper?
is he a flirt? a lustful animal?
> what is his 'name'? reputation/character/personality?

John Cotton -- Puritan -- says: how to get this name/fragrance?

Be enriched with God's graces -- manifest the sweet savor in all your business
Fill your hearts with the good gifts and graces of God
Let God's graces show forth in your speech, your answers, your practices (p.5)

> Christ is the ultimate model

It is in Jesus that we have the FULL exhibition of this moral and spiritual excellency. The nature of Christ is illustrated by the richness and pleasantness of the best perfume -- Christ is the High Priest.

The loveliness of Jesus consists in this divinity, this fountain of liquid perfume which is continually pouring forth in deeds of kindness to his creatures; and these acts of goodness are the means of showing forth his glory, and developing his excellence (George Burrows, 155-56)

v.3 - emphasizes fragrance (smell)
and when he's near the sound of his NAME (sound) = makes it vivid

The man's SCENT and His PERSONALITY excite her.

*NOTE: He tastes good and smells good.
He brushes his teeth; He uses mouthwash.
He takes a bath and shower (uses soap)

NOTE: sex is never sinful when it takes place God's way and for God's glory
> She waits for the right time (2:7; 3:5; 8:4)

1:4-

The WOMAN longs to be alone with the man

Note that some of the main words used FIRST are verbs -- action

bring me into his chambers --
it's probably a request: may the king bring me into his chambers
> she is expressing her desire for intimacy and marriage with the lover

DRAW ME.... NOTE how she's not confused about 'gender roles'
She wants the man to come and he must kiss and take her away
SHE IS *NOT THE LEADER like in today's movies/TV shows*
She doesn't pull his tie & force & lead & wear the pants in the home (ODonnell, 31)

The INTIMATE consummation has NOT happened yet (seems to be in 4:16-5:1) -- so she is LONGING that it would come to pass -- and she WANTS TO BE WITH HIM (Hamilton, 43)

***APPLICATION::**

By the way -- note how the bride longs to be with the bridegroom & be intimate with him
> so should the Church LONG to be with Christ & forever be with Him
2 Tim 4.8 - long for the coming of the Bridegroom
1 Cor 1.7 - the coming of the Lord Jesus
Heb 9.28 - Jesus comes a 2nd time for those 'eagerly waiting for him'

HOW can we (as the bride) long for our BRIDEGROOM?

1. Word of God
2. **Prayer**
3. Ask God to give a deeper love for Jesus
4. A better understanding of & craving for him
5. Read the Word

6. Memorize the Word

7.

We could translate the words, "The king has brought me into his chambers," (v. 4) as, "May the king bring me into his chambers." This is an expression of longing for intimacy. (Constable)

The beloved longs for her lover to take her away with him -- and quickly! Her emotion is intense, and she longs to be able to act upon it.

NOTE how the romantic desire for physical intimacy is NOT EVIL, it's good (Prov 5.18-19)
> rather than with drugs, wine, or other people, or virtual fantasies (of any sorts)

* note it should be more than just physical -- animal attraction -- note how Solomon's NAME'/ character won her.

last 3 lines of v.4

The last three lines of verse 4 were evidently the words of the "daughters of Jerusalem" (v. 5; cf. 2:7; 3:5, 10, 17; 5:8, 11, 16; 8:4). These may have been hometown friends of the woman,⁵⁷ the female inhabitants of Jerusalem,⁵⁸ women who display the characteristics of city girls, (Constable)

the "WE" -- probably speaks of the daughters of Jerusalem or the friends of the bride (woman)

1:5 the girl's insecurity...

The young lady felt embarrassed because she had very dark skin as a result of having to tend her family's grapevines. Her skin was dark because of the sun's rays, not primarily because of her race. (Constable)

NOTE: a TAN was not a great thing in Solomon's day. Women prized fair skin and the 'indoor look'.

- > this girl is a country girl who had been looked upon negatively by the 'sun of nature'
- > she had to be a worker in the vineyards

the beloved's suntanned appearance (black but lovely)
she worked in the fields

Kedar -- a territory southeast of Damascus where the Bedouin roamed -- there tents were made of the skins of black goats.

> her color is due to the exposure to the sun as she worked in the vineyards for her brothers (v.6)

*She is from a family where the girls had to work.

1:6-

she was insecure -- v.6 - don't stare at me

her explanation for her dark appearance was almost an apology

v.6 - i have not taken care of my own VINEYARD (her appearance/body)

Her "own vineyard" (v. 6) refers to her personal appearance.⁶³ "Vineyard" is a frequent metaphor for the physical body in this poem (cf. v. 14; 2:15 [twice]; 7:12; 8:11 [twice], 12) (Constable)

Simply: She has not paid attention to her own body (=vineyard) because she has been busy taking care of the needs of her family.

> the darkness of her physical appearance and her claim to a desirable form become a double edged argument both for exotic beauty and for her devotion to her own family (Hess, 58)

"She had not had available to her the luxurious baths and toiletries or fashionable clothing of the court. There had been no opportunity for her to take care of her hair, skin, or hands according to the obvious courtly style. (Patterson)

The point of v.6 - the female's body has not been cared for as would be appropriate for someone seeking love. She has not devoted herself to her physical appearance because her domestic tasks have not permitted it. Worse than that, they have actively CONTRIBUTED to a skin condition other than what she might have wanted (Hess, 57)

1:7 -

her own insecurities aroused in her a desire for the presence of her lover

they are separated -- they are pained. it hurts. it confuses
> we don't know why he is gone; but that he is gone.

She addressed him as though he were a shepherd (pasture your flock)
that was COMMON in the ANE (to talk to a man as if he was a leader/shepherd)

She wanted to know WHERE he grazes the flock so she can be near him -- if not with him.

TO wear a VEIL -- would be embarrassing -- it could give the impression that she was a prostitute or even 'mourning' in sadness.

The girl (by veing VEILED) -- does not want to be mistaken for a cult prostitute -- a good picture of which is seen in Gen 38.13-15).

> she is not a loose/immoral woman

She has made a commitment to ONE - and only one

> and she wants to know where she can find HIM -- and HIM ALONE

1:8

hard verse to interpret

Maybe a reply of disdain from the friends

: if you cannot find him, then go to the other shepherds where you really belong anyway
(go back to the fields)

more probably...

Or it may be a valid/kind response of superlative beauty from her FRIENDS (maidens)
describing her beauty.

these are probably the words of the girl's friends (cf. v. 4b). They evidently meant that if she thought Solomon would not want her because of her dark skin and hard work, she was being ridiculous and should go back to her flocks. After all, she was a very attractive woman.
(Constable)

OR, v.8 - is a King answering the bride and her concerns

>> he gives HER the info she needs to find him

*NOTE how he is accessible to her.

He tells her where she can find him

He removes her concern about how she will appear in the community -- and he assures her that she has nothing to fear about her appearance

- > a COMFORTING man
- > a reassuring man
- > an encouraging man
- > a STRONG man
- > a leading man

****NOTE: how he listens, pays attention to the woman and addresses the concerns of the woman.**

- > he's a good listener
- > he's a good communicator
- > he's tender, loving, honest, praising -- but yet not flattering

1:9 - THE THEME OF PRAISE>> (Solomon is gonna praise her passionately)

the answer to the woman's insecurity was the PRAISE OF HER LOVER (Groom)

This shows the power of praising your spouse -- encouragement, praise (reflecting Christ's love)
OUTLINE:

1. tell HER how valuable she is to you (vv.9-11)
2. tell HIM how special he is to you (v.12-14)

He frequently called the woman HIS DARLING (1:9, 15:2;2, 10, 13; 4:1, 7; 5:2; 6:4)

"My darling" (NASB)

"My love" (ESV) *** -- commitment & devotion & pleasure

the word means: darling, dearest, 'my love'

word occurs 9x in the song

the root idea of the word means: associate, companion, friend

> it has the idea in this SONG (in Hebrew) of COMMITMENT + DELIGHT

>> let us all have that for each other.

In ancient Arabic poetry, women were sometimes compared to horses as objects of sheer beauty

and --

In Solomon's day Egyptian horses were the best, as Arabian horses later were the best.
(Constable)

A horse?

YES -- this is like beautiful, noble, valued, and exceptional in their midst in Egypt --- LIKE THE WOMAN.

> he's complimenting her.
She is like the one and only woman in a world of men, and she is stunningly beautiful at that.
She is priceless
NO ONE is like her
She is CHOICE and VALUED

LIKE CHRIST (the husband) who verbalizes his love for the Bride (church)
“George Burrows: “This shows the deep, devoted, preeminent, and tender love of Jesus for His people” (p.203)

Among all his creatures, there can be none for whom he has a stronger affection than for the redeemed (George Burrows)

vv.9-11 use the images of jewelry.

1:10-11

he affirms her physical attraction/beauty
because she had been self-conscious about her appearance, not how the lover praised her physical beauty so that her detractors were forced to agree with Him

Remember the context -- Solomon affirms the womans beauty LIKE a chariot horse of Pharaoh (v.9b)

"We have forgotten what a thing of beauty a horse can be when compared to other animals. We are also unaware what valuable creatures they were in the ancient world. They were beautiful in themselves, and the ancient royal courts insisted on brilliantly caparisoning [adorning with rich trappings] the ones that pulled the king's chariot. The beloved's jewelry, earrings, and necklaces make him think of such." (Kinlaw)

The man is saying that the earrings and jewels provide ENHANCEMENT of the woman's beauty (that is already there). They already make MORE beautiful what is already desirable. They do more -- they are appropriate only for one so noble and beautiful (as her)

> he wants to emphasize the incredible desire that he feels for her beauty (Hess, 65)

NOTE how Solomon has used her beauty as a means to restore her confidence by reinforcing HIS LOVE for her in the one area that she has displayed insecurity (Hess, 67)

V.10 -- cheeks enhanced by ornaments -- these are the ear rings that emphasize the roundness of her face.

1:11

Her friends volunteered to make more ornaments for her so she would be even more attractive to Solomon. (Constable)

Or more prob: this is Solomon still speaking...

NO COST is too great to honor her!

no price tag can be put on the one to whom God knits our hearts.

Solomon will not withhold anything from her.

"Whatever the cost, he will honor her. The focus of his love has no limits as to the cost or task that he must undertake" (Akin, 26)

THE HUSBAND will do anything for her -- his love has no limit

***This is demonstrated / modeled in CHRIST & CALVARY**

Christ didn't withhold anything from us --

"He adorns us to the utmost possible that such wisdom & power of his can come up with (George Burrows, p.108)

*SO how does Solomon win her heart (from Matt Carter in his book)

1. I will tame my tongue (quick to listen)
2. I will talk to my wife the way I would if a special person were visiting and listening
3. I will always be upbeat and positive in my interactions with her
4. I won't use my words to try and TAKE from her
5. I will strive to SERVE my wife every day
6. I will win my wife's heart so SHE will WANT to be mine
7. Just as divorce is NOT an option with me, I want that same reality to be true for negativity or harshness with my wife -- it's NOT an option.
8. I will sow seeds of righteousness by consistently committing to walk with the LORD (in Akin, p.27)

1:12

THE GROWTH OF LOVE

NOW she praises HIM (in reply)
> who can out-praise each other
>> NOT FLATTERY

Note proverbs:

Prov 16.24 - pleasant words are a honeycomb; sweet to the taste and health to the body

*This lady is a true Prov 31 woman.

1:12 - 3:5 -- this is a series of units in the progression of the courtship of the lovers.

- > they long for & praise each other
- > it intensifies and expands

OVERVIEW:

A growing intensity in desire, praise, and security (1:12-2:6)

The refrain (2:7) is an appeal for patience since love cannot be forced

The most intense longing yet, and after an appropriate refrain, which is an appeal for patience (3:5)

this longing and patience is finally followed by the reward of marriage (3:6-5:1)

*NOTE: up to this point the images/context has been vineyard-like/fields-like/full of outdoor imagery.

> now the shift is of a table, expensive and exotic perfumes and spices from far away places (and a king!)

v.12 - what does the woman say?

tell him...

1. I desire you (12)
2. I love you (13)
3. I need you (14)

she praises the king/man for his pleasing and attractive characteristics

verse 12 -

She wore nard (spikenard, "perfume" NASB, NIV; cf. Mark 14:3; John 12:3), which was an ointment that came from a plant grown in northern and eastern India. He was as sweet to her as the fragrant myrrh sachet that hung around her neck. (Constable)

"Hebrew women often wore small bags of myrrh between their breasts." -- hung around their neck (Woudstra)

The spreading forth of the fragrances here provides an environment that presents the male as of the GREATEST WORTH and separated from everyone else (Hess, 69)

- > he is supreme
- > he is the best
- > she prepares
- > she is thoughtful

SHE is sexually aroused and seeks to elicit emotions in him.

The release of the perfume and fragrance creates an environment for lovemaking and romance. HE is precious to her. She holds NOTHING back (Akin, 29)

1:13

She shows how he was constantly in her thoughts as myrrh -- in a necklace around her neck was constantly giving an aroma)

Myrrh -- a resinous gum, came from trees in Arabia (Abyssinia, and India). it was HIGHLY prized in the ANE and was valuable in international trade.

It was used for incense (Ex 30.23), for perfuming garments of special people for marriages (Ps 45.8), for lovers beds (Prov 7.17), for preparing girls for visits with Oriental kings (Esth 2.12) and for embalming corpses (John 19.39)

"between my breasts" = some interpreters have sought to ascribe to the two breasts here the OT and the NT with Christ between them

- > that's not here!

NOTE: Hess writes:

There is no indication in the Song that this is intended as anything more than the deepest yearning of the female lover for her partner. In her musings she opens to him the most precious parts of her body and longs for his lovemaking as a means to express the love they share (Hess, 70)

SO ;;; she is comparing the shepherd-king to this precious sweet-smelling bundle of myrrh, one that lies ALL night between her breasts close to her heart.

- > intimate love, longing, loyalty that cannot be broken.

> NOTE: She trusts him so completely, she loves him so dearly, she can make available to him even the most intimate parts of her body. SHE HOLDS NOTHING BACK.

1:14

All other men were like a desert

Among them ALL -- this man was a closter of flowers in a desert oasis (like En Gedi)

This is LIFE in the midst of the desert.

Death is outside in the desert. There is life in this paradise!

Note she calls him: "MY BELOVED" -- my love -- an exclusive relationship.

He is a one woman man

She is a one man woman.

HENNA -- a Palestinian shrub -- its leaves produced bright orange-red dye.
it was used in ANE to color hair, hands, feet.

The blossoms, however, were VERY FRAGRANT -- and it is the smell of the blossoms that the woman refers to here!!!

EN GEDI -- Oasis on the Dead Sea -- a fertile place because of the spring.

>> THE POINT> the IMPACT of the man (the girl's lover) on her is encompassing and inescapable -- her consciousness of him sweetens her life the way the aroma of a sachet of perfume placed between a woman's breasts makes a girl move in a CLOUD OF FRAGRANCE.

The thought or sight of him is as pleasant as the aroma wafted from a field of henna blossoms.
Love has its own hallowing touch on ALL of her life (Kinlaw)

WHAT ARE SOME WAYS THAT YOU CAN SAY TO YOUR SPOUSE TO PRAISE/
ENCOURAGE THEM...

good job

you are wonderful

that was great

you look gorgeous today
i don't feel complete without you
i appreciate all the things you've done for me all these years
you come first in my life -- before kids, career, friends, church
i'm glad i married you
you're the best friend i have
if i had to do it all over again, i'd still marry you
i wanted you today
i missed you today
i couldn't get you out of my mind today
it's wonderful to wake up next to you
i will always love you
i love to see your eyes sparkle when you smile
i trust you
you make me feel good
i was wrong
what would you like
what is on your mind
let me listen
you are so special
i can't imagine life without you
pray for me
i'm praying for you today
i prize every moment we have together
thank you for loving me
thank you for being my spouse
(in Akin, 31-32)

1:15

*Did you know: that cohabitation in the US has increased by more than 1,500 % in the past 50 years!

more than half of ALL marriages now are preceded by cohabitation

SIN has many people looking for love but in the WRONG places

He -- the man -- returns the praise by commending her beauty but also her character (quiet/ tranquil)

THE MAN talks ___ and praises her!

Teh response: 7 words (2 of which are repeated)
the word "beautiful" is repeated --- as though the male cannot stop calling attention to THIS
FACT

> he verbally affirms her ... her beauty.

in these verses he admires her attractiveness. He tells her (again) she is beautiful (cf. 1:8) and
now, 1:15)

Note how the man praises her -- he speaks to her lovely & tenderly

LIKE CHRIST -- he speaks to us in terms of the strongest & most tender affection
(George Burrows, 109)

NOTE how often this is NOT found today... it's easy to say hurtful, emotionally charged words to
HARM the relationship

I told you so
you're just like your mother
you're always in a bad mood
you just don't think
it's your fault
what's wrong with you
i can't do anythign to please you
why don't you ever listen to me
can't you be more responsible
what were you thinking?
i can do whatever I want
can't you do anything right?
that was stupid
all you ever do is think of yourself
if you really loved me, you would do this...
what's your problem?

>>> let us learn the importance of words (Akin, 37)

Let us FAN the flames of love with words of affirmation and blessing (Akin, 37)

DOVES -- noted for cleanliness and tranquility (harmlessness)

Solomon returned her praise by commending her beauty and tranquil character. Doves were
examples of tranquillity in eastern literature (cf. Gen. 2:18-25).

speaking of "EYES"

According to Rabbinic teaching:

A bride who has beautiful eyes possesses a beautiful character; they are an index to her character"

"The dramatic image is that of the couple staring deeply and lovingly into one another's eyes."
(Hess)

The eyes are a window into the soul ... and they reflect a persons character and personality.
THE KING will delight in the loveliness of his bride, and he begins with her eyes (Hamilton, 49)

1:16

both v16 and 17 spoken by the beloved/the woman(BRIDE)

She knew and recognized his physical looks (handsome) ==>> she was more taken by his charm and personality

"Pleasant" refers to Solomon's charming personality.

the word "Charming/pleasant" -- means lovely -- and the combination of being HANDSOME AND PLEASANT -- was as rare then as it is now

She calls him "My beloved" (or, my lover)

this is the first of about 2 dozen times that she referres to him this way

OUR COUCH is luxuriant -- the idea of "luxuriant -- usually refers to a tree (but that s the very point since we're dealing with poetic language/figures here)

The country (by the trees) is the place of private intimacy in the song (T. Longman, 108)

Let us have periodic, marital checkups --- SEXUAL attaction is one thing; but marital intimacy and passionate intimacy is another thing.

questions...

how often do you show affection for each other that your mate truly appreciates?

how often do you laugh at each other's jokes

how often do you say something nice, kind, and tender to each other

how often do you compliment each other in front of others?

how often do you enjoy sexual intimacy?
how often are you playful with each other?
how often do you look into each other's eyes when talking?
how often do you give each other a little surprise?
how often do you say please and thank you?
how often do you say to your spouse: I've sinned...will you please forgive me?
(in Akin, 45)

1:17-

the beams of the houses/cedars
the rafters - cypresses

>> probably does NOT refer to a literal built but probably poetically to the field-like setting where they first met

> note v.16 - the bed/couch is luxuriant (green) = which may refer to the field where they fell in love & sat talking.

They share a moment of intimacy together -- they lie in the grass and look around and above, they are surrounded (=protected) by the trees.

The trees provide privacy and more: the cedar and juniper trees produce PLEASANT SCENT -- making this spot a pleasant place for an intimate encounter (Longman, 108)

"Luxuriant" implies a grassy area, and the other terms seem to indicate that trees overarched it. (Constable)

SO much of the language here is full of nature-metaphors --- cedars, fir trees, greenery -- and the hints are echoing back to the Garden of Eden (Gen 2.18-25) with its simplicity, naivete, equality, purity.

>> it's almost as if this is the original couple (Kinlaw)

=====

SOME CONCLUDING THOUGHTS::

Gender roles are given by God & must be known & obeyed to have a God-glorifying & joyful marriage: We find in this chapter a text that **INSISTS** that male female relationships when lived out in **FULFILLMENT** of God's creation purposes, are about mutuality and not about sheer domination.

- > the woman speaks first
- > the woman initiates
- > the woman is honored, prized, spoken delightfully about

The desire for sexual pleasure is created by & given by God & is good. *The desire for sex is NOT demonic -- the intimacy desires are good

- > but guard -- guard! Col 3.5, 6; 1 Cor 6.19-20

Don't focus merely on external appearance. Focus also on character/reputation. NOTE in this chap how both attraction & reputation/character are important

She loves him for his **HANDSOME/ATTRACTIVENESS**

And she loves him for his good reputation ("NAME")

- >> both matter.
- >> don't settle for ONE without the other.

And the man's NAME must be a sound character

- > and we must look to Christ
- > he is beautiful, he is sound, His name is perfect, lovely, trustworthy, faithful.
- >> MEN = emulate Christ.

Keep the passionate fire of love burning hot in marriage. In all marriages, the fuel & fire of love need not fizzle out -- it must not fizzle out.

- > desire your spouse
- Remember your spouse -- remember what first fueled the flame
- Pray about it, men must take the lead

Never justify sinful, reckless, improper behavior. NOTE how true love never allows/justifies reckless behavior (1:7)

- > nothing improper
- Nothing sleazy or shady -- nothing seedy or wicked.

It is important to verbally affirm and encourage your mate. HUSBANDS -- men -- verbally compliment your wives

Her beauty,

****FOR ALL OF US -- speak tenderly, edifyingly to each other**

Eph 4.29

Eph 4.15 - speak truth

SOME applications>>>

1. The Gender Roles in a marriage/relationship - the man leads; the wife follows
2. The only legitimate marriage is a heterosexual one -- a man and a woman
3. The mutual love & mutual enjoyment of initiating & longing for physical love
4. The only proper context for sexual pleasure is *only* the marriage covenant.
5. The paramount importance of having character *and* attraction to a relationship.
6. The God-given and blessed attraction that a man has for a woman & vice versa
7. The blessing & necessity of godly, edifying, comforting words of affirmation
8. The importance of seeking to please the other person by being attractive for them
9. The need for believers to be BOLD and UNBLUSHING at God's clear truth regarding erotic desires, sexuality, passion, and lovemaking.
10. The man's availability and willingness to be with & found by his spouse (hide nothing)

NOTE how passionate the WOMAN was for the MAN.

The Bride's LOVE and AFFECTION and VERBAL PRAISING and LONGING for him
>> that should be the CHURCH's love for the BRIDEGROOM.
> how eager should be our affections to COMMUNE with Him

=====

SONGS

O the deep deep love of Jesus

THE GRACE OF LIFE IS THEIRS

To the tune: Join all the glorious names

The grace of life is theirs
who on this wedding day
delight to make their vows
and for each other pray.
May they, O Lord, together prove
the lasting joy of Christian love.

Where love is, God abides:
and God shall surely bless
a home where trust and care
give birth to happiness.
May they, O Lord, together prove
the lasting joy of such a love.

How slow to take offence
love is! How quick to heal!
How ready in distress
to know how others feel!
May they, O Lord, together prove
the lasting joy of such a love.

And when time lays its hand
on all we hold most dear,
and life, by life consumed,
fulfils its purpose here:
May we, O Lord, together prove
the lasting joy of Christian love.

==

As man and woman we were made

As man and woman we were made
that love be found and life begun:
the likeness of the living God,
unique, yet called to live as one.
Through joy or sadness, calm or strife,
come, praise the love that gives us life.

Through joy or sadness, calm or strife,
come, praise the love that gives us life.

Now Jesus lived and gave his love
to make our life and loving new
so celebrate with him today
and drink the joy he offers you
that makes the simple moment shine
and changes water into wine.

that makes the simple moment shine
and changes water into wine.

And Jesus died to live again
so praise the love that, come what may,
can bring the dawn and clear the skies,
and waits to wipe all tears away

and let us hope for what shall be
believing where we cannot see.

and let us hope for what shall be
believing where we cannot see.

Then spread the table, clear the hall
and celebrate till day is done;
let peace go deep between us all
and joy be shared by everyone:
laugh and make merry with your friends
and praise the love that never ends!

laugh and make merry with your friends
and praise the love that never ends!

===

On Christian Marriage

To the tune of: O for a thousand tongues

375 C.M. John Berridge

On a Christian Marriage. John 2. 1, 2; Heb. 13. 4

1 Our Jesus freely did appear
To grace a marriage feast;
And, Lord, we ask thy presence here
To make a wedding-guest.

2 Upon the bridal pair look down;
Who now have plighted hands;
Their union with thy favour crown,
And bless the nuptial bands.

3 With gifts of grace their hearts endow;
(Of all rich dowries best!)
Their substance bless, and peace bestow,
To sweeten all the rest.

4 In purest love their souls unite,
And linked in kindly care,
To render family burdens light,
By taking mutual share.

5 True helpers may they prove indeed,
In prayer, and faith, and hope;
And see with joy a godly seed,
To build thy household up.

6 As Isaac and Rebecca give
A pattern chaste and kind;
So may this new-met couple live,
In faithful friendship joined.

Song of Solomon 2 Notes

SERMONS ONLINE:

<http://themasterspotteryshop.com/blessed-reciprocity-by-edward-payson/>

<http://gracegems.org/SERMONS/2-1.htm>

===

The communication, love, speech & tenderness between the man and the woman

Text: Song of Solomon 2

Title:

the Bride's admiration of the man>>

2.1-2 - admiration of the man

2.3-7 - the woman expresses her longings for and affirmations of his love

2.8-17 - the woman's poem & song of love

the woman seems to be in her own home in the city (v.9)

she hears her lover's voice as he comes to visit her (v.10-13)

the coming of his delights her (v.14)

they want to be careful (v.15)

they belong to each other & are longing for love (v.16)

she is ready for him to graze on her lips (v.17)

Speakers:

WOMAN: affirms her beauty (1)

MAN: affirms her beauty (2)

WOMAN: affirms her longing for him (3-7)

WOMAN: longing for him (8-13)

MAN: passion for her body (14)

WOMAN: deal with problems (15)

WOMAN: desires for intimacy (16-17)

****OUTLINES*****

Some helpful lessons from this chapter ...

Affirm one another (1-2)

Long for one another (3-6)

Wait for one another (7)

Romance one another (8-14)

**Protect one another (15)
Be exclusive to one another (16-17)**

**** INTRO NOTES****

***Statistics on men/women living together & immorality...**

***Men from mars & women from venus.**

WORDS HAVE POWER:

“You are so special to me!”

“You never do anything right!”

“You are so beautiful!”

“You just make me sick!”

“I hate you!”

“You just don’t get it -- you never get it!”

“You are my precious love! I treasure you!”

WORDS have power! We all know it.

They can build up; or they can tear down.

They can heal or hurt; they can cure or kill.

“Death and life are in the power of the tongue (Prov 18.21)

Where are we to go to reorient our desires & recalibrate our expectations so that we want what we should want (and want what GOD wants) rather than the distortion that the world offers (Hamilton, 53)

There’s nothing prudish about the SONG. Some people may be prudish -- but the Song of Solomon is not. God is not. The Bibel is not.

> let your sensibilities be shamed by Scriptural sensibilities.

> this poem is a radically wonderful invitation to sexual joy/intimacy within marriage (O Connell, 59)

Chap 2 is essentially a woman’s response to a man who PROTECTS, her PROVIDES for her, PURSUES her, and WOOS her (Hamilton, 54)

+++++

****VERSE BY VERSE COMMENTARY****

2:1

"Rose of Sharon" --

The Shulammitte described herself as a rather common, albeit attractive person. The "rose of Sharon" probably refers to the crocuses (possibly narcissuses, lilies, or meadow saffrons) that grew on the plain of Sharon that bordered the Mediterranean Sea south of the Carmel mountain range.

Lilies grew and still grow easily in the valleys of Israel. She did not depreciate her appearance here as she had earlier (1:5-6), though she was modest. Perhaps Solomon's praise (1:9-10) had made her feel more secure.

The self description of the female here is one of self-confidence in which her beauty becomes a key to fruitfulness & success for the male (Hess, 75)

> this nature imagery is going to continue thru the entire book

There are many songs (and hymns/choruses) that speak of Jesus as the "Rose of Sharon" -- but its sadly not the case. This is the WOMAN speaking of herself. She affirms that SHE is a crocus/ a rose, a lily of the valley. She is specially for him. Ready for him. Blossoming for him.

2:2

*The man responds in this verse to her
he calls her a lily among a world of thorns.

in a world of pain, dryness, barrenness, and hardship = SHE is a most beautiful & precious lily.

Solomon responded that in comparison with the other single women, she was not common but a rare beauty.

Solomon is saing...

"Line up all the ladies and let me look. YES, to me they look as briars and brambles compared to you. You're the best looking. You are the ONLY one worth looking at (O Donnell, 44)

"My darling" = my friend, my companion, my associate, my helpmate.

She is his friend and companion -- the most beautiful among the women (Carr, 88)

"LOTUS" -- the lotus continues the nature imagery of the preceding text & it ties with the preceding verse (v.1) as a means by which the male affirms the female's boast of her attractions.

> LOTUS continues theme of prosperity, success, natural form, beauty that this delicate flower possesses (Hess, 76)

NOTE how quick the man is to respond to her expression of self-beauty.

He says:

"you are unique, utterly remarkable, my darling. You are not just a flower among flowers, one of a million; no, you are one IN a million, a beautiful wild flower among thorns!! (Akin, 39)

>> you are a flower that reminds me of **EDEN**

you are like an only flower in a world of thorny weeds

you are different, distinct, separated in my eyes from ALL others. your beauty outshines all others. (Akin, 40)

The man says: "She is the best looking of ALL the women; the only one worth looking at" (Longman, 111)

He is a ONE WOMAN MAN >>

This man is:

Exclusive to his gal

Affirming about his gal

Tender toward his gal

Reassuring to his gal

Married men:

If you don't look at your wife and say to her v.2, then you need to repent.

You need to stop looking as man looks (on the outward appearance) and you need to start looking as the LORD looks.

You need to cultivate a physical attraction for our wife and for her alone. PURSUE her.

LOVE her and LOOK at her and TALK to her as if she's a gloriously fragrant and appealing lily in the midst of dry, dead worthless brambles & thorns. (Hamilton, 56)

***Gospel --**

William Law:

But we are here especially taught, that we must surpass all others in holiness of walk. The lily blooms attractively amid thorns. So our excellence and fragrance should be discerned as raising us high above the sons of men. We should be as preeminent now, as we shall be in glorious inheritance. The thorns and briars shall be gathered together in bundles for the burning, when believers shall shine forth above the brightness of the skies.

WE are the lily that has been rescued by Christ from the thorns of the curse (Gen 3.17-19). we are beautiful in his eyes and loved with particular passion (Akin, 46)

2:3

vv.3-7 is a longer speech from the woman TO the man
her senses are stirred by his presence & his affirmations of his love
This expresses the loving desires that she has for the man (rather than her actual lovemaking experiences)

v.3 - she LIKES to be with Him
v.4 - she is LOVED by him
v.5-6 - she is LONGING for him

SHE responds to him. "Every woman longs to have a man who is strong, reliable, dependable and trustworthy. THIS WOMAN has found such a man and she lets him know it. She honors, respects, affirms and encourages him. She lets him know she wants him (Akin, 40)

She responds to him
The girl responded that Solomon, too, was a rare find. He was as rare as an apple (or possibly quince or citron) tree in a forest of other trees: sweet, beautiful, and outstanding.

SHE feasts upon it all

"Apple" occurs 6x in the Bible; 4 of which occur in the Song.
The terms portray a fruit that is DELICIOUS and ENHANCED by the flavor of the whole cluster.
An apple tree in the forest is one that can distinguish itself by its usefulness in providing something that is nourishing (Hess, 77).
Apples seem to be used LESS for sustenance and MORE for refreshment & pleasure & joy

"Shade" = intimacy, closeness, nothing in between
"'Shade,' 'fruit,' 'apple tree' are all ancient erotic symbols, and erotic suggestions are what she has in mind (2:3-4). . . . 'Shade' speaks of closeness."

The metaphors that follow show that Solomon satisfied three needs of this woman: protection, intimate friendship, and public identification as her beloved. A woman's lover must meet these basic needs for the relationship to flourish. (Constable)

He provides protection, care, intimacy, friendship & affirmation.

This woman feels SAFE, SECURE, AND PLEASED (Hamilton, 57).

***Gospel:**

William Law

Thus the soul, wearied with fruitless search for peace in forms and services, and lifeless works, beholds the refuge, which the sheltering shade of Christ presents. Here it feels that labors end, and peace is obtained. The fiery darts of Satan cannot pierce the covering protection. Thus what the needful soul requires is found in Christ.

But under His covering there is more than perfect peace. The Tree of Life bears all manner of fruit. Each craving is supplied. Rich abundance gives nourishment and delight. Happy they who thus sit down beneath this noble Tree!

We find shade = eternal rest, security & comfort in our SHEPHERD KING

we are sustained by his living water (John 7)

and the bread of life (John 6)

Let us find our shade and refuge in our glorious GOD (Pslm 91.1-2)

=====

God has given some guidelines/principles regarding the good gift of sex (Danny Akin, 40)

SO, how do we respond the right way in this tender and sacred area of life to our mate?

1. Sexual relations within marriage are right, holy, and good. God encourages intimate union and even warns against its cessation (1 Cor 7.5)

2. Pleasure in sexual relations is both healthy and expected as we share our bodies with one another (Prov 5.15-19; 1 Cor 7.5)

3. The pursuit of sexual pleasure is to be guided by the principle that "i will esteem the needs of my mate as more important than my own" (Phil 2.3-4)

4. Sexual relations are to be regular and normal. NO exact number of times is right or correct each week, but the biblical principle is that BOTH parties are to provide adequate sexual satisfaction to their mate so that both 'burning' (sexual desire) and temptation to find satisfaction elsewhere are avoided (1 Cor 7.9)

5. The principle of satisfaction means that each party is to provide sexual enjoyment as frequently as the other party requires/wishes. Other biblical principles (moderation, seeking to please another rather than oneself, etc.) also come into play. Consideration of one's mate always is to guide one's desires for sexual relations.

6. There is to be no sexual bargaining between married persons ("I'll not have relations with you unless you..."). Neither party has the right to make such bargains. That's pride and manipulation. This is a form of "marital prostitution" and must always be avoided.

7. Sexual relations are equal and reciprocal. The Bible does NOT give the man superior rights over the woman or the woman superior rights over the man. Mutual stimulation and mutual initiation of relations are encouraged in Scripture.

8. Whatever is safe, pleasing, enjoyable, and satisfying to both is acceptable. The body of each belongs to the others (1 Cor 7.4). Neither should ever demand from the other what is painful, harmful, degrading, or distasteful to him or her.

>>> in AKIN, p.40-41

as they approach the wedding night -- (4.1-5.1) -- as they anticipate their wedding, the flames of passion are under control but they are burning (Akin, 42)

Do I hold Christ in high esteem?

Is he unique to you?

Is he better than all else to you?

Is his shade the best? Are you in it?

Is his shelter and comfort that which you love and nejoy?

John Owen wrote: “When the heat of wrath is ready to scorch the soul, Christ, interposing, bears it all. Under the shadow of his wings we sit down ... putting our trust in Him with great delight” (in Gary Brady, 82-83)

George Burrows:

When we come under the shadow of Christ, we have great delight, and find food for the hungering heart; his ways are ways of pleasantness and all his paths are peace (111)

“Christ is the shade of his people. The LORD is thy shade on thy right hand. A shade does not deprive of the light of the sun. It so breaks and tempers the force of the beams as to keep them from injuring us; and enables us to enjoy their brilliancy and warmth... Within this sacred shelter, no evil spirit can enter, no affliction injure, and no fiery dart fall (269).

“Think of all the blessings & privileges that BELIEVERS have resting in Christ’s shadow...

Faith in Christ will compose & comfort believers in the midst of the greatest difficulties.

There are many excellent fruits in Christ that flow from him to believers. All the spiritual benefits and privileges that believers enjoy are Christ’s fruits; they are his fruits by purchase and right, and by him are communicated to believers.

Christ’s fruits are exceeding sweet, when they are eaten; they are satisfying and thus are sensibly sweet. (James Durham, 129)

2:4

It's the woman who ensures that the man knows he is loved (vv4-6)

'his banquet hall -

language of KING, ROYALTY, AUTHORITY

her man is like a king and has brought her to the banquet

a banquet -- satisfaction, lingering, joy, happiness, delights, fullness, pleasantness

NOTE: the verse begins with a verb (he has brought me) --- the female's request (1:4, 7) is NOW answered as the man ****TAKES THE INITIATIVE AND BRINGS HIS LOVER TO A PLACE** for love.

>> he leads, he takes action, he initiates, he pursues

BANQUET HALL // "house of wine" (Hess, 79)

it's a house of drinking wine (Esther 7.8)

"drinking house" (Jer 16.8)

It's UNKNOWN what this is -- but it's private and it embodies the sensual pleasures of lovemaking already suggested by the image of wine (Hess)

His banner over me is love

The word "banner" in "his banner over me" may be from an Akkadian word that means "desire" or "intent." If so, the clause may mean "his intent toward me was lovemaking. (Constable)

It's a reference to a MILITARY banner used in warfare to rally and gather troops. The ideas are of strength, protection & identification.

The lover is NOT ashamed to declare his love for her in FULL PUBLIC DISPLAY.

HIS intentions to make love are rooted in a love that HE IS HAPPY and UNASHAMED for all to see (Akin, 42)

do you publically express affection for your mate?

do you publically show affection for your mate?

Thus: "The man has marked her out as his own and has stamped her with a public display of his love. The metaphor implies belonging, inclusion, and commitment" (Tremper Longman, 113)

As a military flag indicates location or possession, so Solomon's love flew over his beloved one (see Numbers 1.52 & Psalm 20.5) (MacArthur)

The "house of wine" is ****NOT**** a place for drunkenness but a symbol of erotic love, pleasure and delight that formed the reason for going there (Hess, 79)

The man LEADS

Gospel

James Durham: "Christ's love is in itself a most stately & triumphant thing. It is only the love of Christ that secures believers in their battles and March against the spiritual adversaries. (p.130)

William Law

The believer approaches the banquet which Christ enriches. He finds the truth, "He that comes to Me shall never hunger. He that believes on Me shall never thirst." While he thus feasts, his eye discerns the banner which overshadows him. It is a revelation of Christ's love. O marvelous--O transporting view! But it is as real as it is amazing. Who can doubt this love, who sees Christ lying in the manger--whose eye beholds Him hanging on the cross--whose faith looks to the extended hands, and the unceasing intercession! When these perceptions of Christ's love come like a flood into the raptured soul, the adoring spirit is verily overcome. It feels that it can bear no more. It verily faints in ecstasies of delight.

*Consider: how public Christ's love is for us. He put on PUBLIC DISPLAY his love for us (Romans 3 -- God displayed publicly)

The cross of Christ where the KING expressed and declared for the world to see: "I love my elect Bride" (Akin, 46)

Think of 1 John 3.1 - God is not ashamed to welcome us as SONS into his family.

George Burrows:

Christ brings us to this feast, with the exultation of a conqueror returning in triumph with a loved one wrested from the power of an enemy (275)

Under ALL circumstances in life, and in death, the love of Christ enlists all the perfections of the Godhead in behalf of his saint. As the flag shows to what country we belong, so by love we are shown to be citizens of heaven (Burrows, 276)

See 1 John 4.10 - God's great love.

2:5

Seems to be using similar ideas of v.3 -- refresh me // revive me /// with raisins//with apples as the intensity of the passion for their love increases, so does the delirium that the arousal of love brings (Hess, 79)

v.1 begins with "I" and v.5 ends with "I". It's the female and her joy in her lover that are the "concern" in this (these) verses (Hess, 80)

The verbs describe REFRESHMENT and REVIVAL.

very poetic language

Raisin cakes and apples = has to do with celebration.
they are pleasure foods

NOTE:

she has an overpowering sense of passion for her lover and it leads her to call for a SUBSTITUTE or something distracting nourishment that will give her strength.
On the other hand, her comparison of her lover with apple tree (v.3) brings to mind these foods which speak of erotic intimacy that brings refreshment, joy & revival

She longs for his love -- she is LOVESICK = lit> "For I am sick for love, I am!"

*****GOSPEL*****

****Are we lovesick for Christ?**

Do we ache for Christ?

Have you almost been ILL in your desperation to be with Christ?

Why are our longings NOT greater?

Ps 42.1-2

Ps 63.1

Ps 84.1-2

> let us ache for God as this woman aches for her man! (Brady, 86)

George Burrow writes:

“The sense of God’s amazing goodness, of his tenderness to such unworthiness as ours, this it is that overcomes us, and makes us weep. We are thus sweetly subdued, because we are able in a clearer manner to behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us that we should be called the sons of God. The predominating feeling is: “I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou has shown to thy servant” (281-82)

2:6

she began the song longing for his kisses (1:2) but now she wants his full embrace

the female is resting in the lover's arms -- it describes the "EMBRACE"

It is the female picturing herself PASSIVELY YIELDING TO THE MALE'S ADVANCE

****Image of the woman's security & trust in HIM**

they are as physically close as only lovers may be (Hess, 81)

"They melt into one another's arms and the dizziness of love's overpowering sweetness is enhanced rather than removed" (Hess, 81)

SHE is carried away by her passions and she relishes the joy.
She cannot move too fast too soon --- or it'll be spoiled.

2:7 = the refrain // the chorus

2:7; 3:5; 8:4

To prevent something bad -- he calls the women of Jerusalem (other friends/maidens) NOT to encourage love beyond its right and proper place

there is a word that's repeated (don't arouse ... indeed, don't arouse) - the repetition is for emphasis, like saying: "Whatever you do, don't arouse..." = a strong caution! (Longman, 115)

"not once, twice, but three times we read in his song: don't arouse or awaken love until the appropriate time. there is a pledge of purity that is good and noble.

We read it here at the beginning (2:7), right before the wedding (3:5) and then after the wedding (8:4). Thus, this is a refrain that explicitly expresses her commitment to a pure and holy life BEFORE marriage, and ALL THROUGHOUT the duration of the marriage.

*It seems to be the woman who warns her FRIENDS/companions to promise to act in a certain way (Hess, 82)

It's almost as if the woman is asking/seeking the accountability of the daughters of Jerusalem

"I ADJURE YOU"

almost like saying: "give me your word" or "promise" or "swear to it" ---

why "Gazelles and WILD DOES of the field?"

both are creations of God, beautiful female animals, vigorous and sexually active IN SEASON -- the right time ordained by their creator.

Gazelle -- a swift, handsome, cautious, curious, strong -- but not violent -- easily excitable, and sexually eager animal, especially in the spring (ODonnell, 56)

****Adjure you by the GAZELLES AND THE HINDS???***

The meaning is in the Hebrew -- it's a word play to bring in the divine name (without actually saying the divine name) -- these hebrew animal words sound like the divine names/titles for God!

There is something phonetically BRILLIANT about Solomon's language...

Hebrew for Gazelle "Sebaoth" -- sounds like Hebrew of Yahweh Sabaoth (LORD OF HOSTS)

hebrew for Wild Does "Ayeloth Hassadeh" like El Shaddai (God ALMIGHTY)

>" This would be a creative, and even a playful way of evoking the "DIVINE NAMES" without actually using them to strengthen and raise the stakes of the oath that these women were being placed under" (Akin, 43-44)

"Wait for love to blossom; don't hurry it."

***Trust God's timing for intimacy before marriage! (ODonnell, 54)**

This charge by Solomon occurs again later (3:5; 8:4) and serves as an indicator that one pericope has ended. The point of Solomon's words is that others desiring the kind of relationship he and his beloved enjoyed should be patient and "let love take its natural course." (Constable)

Hess says: "The joys of physical love and the arousal to that ecstasy are NOT to be toyed with. If the text means anything, it refers to this rather than a request not to disturb their love (82-83)

LOVE is so powerful that it carries such enormous power that it must NOT be misused (Hess, 83)

It's a warning against the artificial stimulation of love and desire (Murphy)

LONGMAN says: "love is NOT a passing fling but rather a demanding and exhausting relationship.

***SO >>>**

This verse teaches that the FULL appreciation of the joys of physical love can happen ONLY when love comes at the appropriate time with the partner that love chooses.

The powerful message here is that physical love is a GIFT OF GOD that is according to his will & timing.

too fast, too soon would spoil it all (Kinlaw)

Consequences of NOT waiting:

1. Social consequences -- chaos
2. Spiritual consequences -- a seared conscience & coming judgment of God

NOTE:

OUTSIDE OF MARRIAGE, sex may give pleasure but it comes with shame, fear, guilt and regret. Within marriage, love will please. (Hamilton, 61)

>>"This is a great verse for singles."

"Do not stir up or awaken love until the appropriate time"

Eccl 3.5 - there is a time for everything -- a time to embrace and a time to avoid embracing = sexual relations are a good thing -- a GOD THING -- when they happen at the right place with the right person in the right way at the right time. NOT JUST any time is a good time. There is a proper time, a God time, and it's MARRIAGE. PATIENCE NOW, PASSION LATER.

(Akin, 44)

"Trust God's timing before marriage -- wait for your spouse and for your wedding day -- WAIT!
(O Donnell)

It's not a warning about "love" -- it's a warning about the importance of ALWAYS PLACING LOVE IN THE RIGHT & GOD-GIVEN CONTEXT. (Ian Provan, p.292)

Are we being mean & killing joy & fun as Christians?

NO! We want people to have the MOST PLEASURE with the LEAST REGRET and to honor GOD THE MOST.

Don't have more than physical encounters that cheapen, demean, and dehumanize the glory of God's creation of physical intimacy (Hamilton, 61)

FOR YOU, Christian:

Phil 1.21 - do live is Christ...

****But what if you haven't been pure***

Adultery

Immorality

Pornography

Sexual mistreatment (received/victim)

> Remember Luke 7:36-50 -- GOD has glorious forgiveness to sinners!

2:8

2:8-17 and 3:1-5 make up two poems of the woman for the man

brief outline

1. express your desire for love (8-14)
2. expect some dangers to love (15)
3. enjoy the delights of love (16-17)

Evidently whereas everything up to this has referred to ISRAEL -- NOW we are north in Lebanon (her home)

Whereas the setting so far had been Israel, it now shifts to the Shulammitte's home that was evidently in Lebanon (cf. 4:8, 15).

AT THIS SECTION>

it's springtime & love is in the air

their wedding day (3:6-11) and the wedding night (4:1-5:1) are fast approaching.

time is growing short, every thought, every action, every emotion is heightened and must be carefully weighted and considered (Akin, 49)

The woman is overwhelmed with the man and calls him "my love" 5x (vv.8-10, 16-17)

He is her king but he is also her lover

She exclaims joy!

LISTEN!

MY BELOVED!

wow, can you imagine! look! here he is!

'dod' -- my beloved = my passionate one, my lover, my intimate companion.

vv.8-9 --

The girl described her young lover coming for a visit in these verses. He was obviously eager to see her.

She says how much she desires him by SAYING IT WITH HER ACTIONS (8-9)

NOTE how excited SHE is for the arrival of the BRIDEGROOM

she's looking

she's exclaiming!

she's speaking!

she's affirming!

she's adoring!

he's moving quickly; he's not walking or even running -- he is leaping and bounding. He is *EXCITED* and *EAGER* -- to be with her (Longman, 119)

****GOSPEL**:**

If a bridegroom does this, how much more would the PERFECT, DIVINE BRIDEGROOM.

Christ is said to be leaping & skipping along here... which means:

He comes with agility in him and a peacefulness to overcome whatever is in the way.

He comes with a cheerfulness and heartiness in doing it.

He comes with delight over the highest hill that is in his way and he returns to his people

He comes with speediness -- he comes quickly, and he is never behind his time and he cannot be unfaithful.

He comes with beauty, majesty and stateliness (manliness) in his coming -- as one in triumph (James Durham).

2:9

the woman affirms, adores, and is excited over the man's appearing, form, body, and presence.

v.9 - like a Gazelle - a gazelle is a swift and athletic and a beautiful animal. Speeding across mountains and hills

v.9 - he is looking thru the lattice -- the picture is one of the lover, like a buck, staring with fixed eyes toward the beauty of his beloved (Hess, 90)

There is reciprocal action between the man and the woman.

The MALE gazes toward her

she sees him and he is aware of her view

2:10

vv.10-13 -- one simple point: they walk together in 'spring'

She related his invitation to take a walk in the countryside. His invitation, "Arise . . . come along," (vv. 10, 13) brackets a beautiful description of spring that was as much a feeling in Solomon's heart as a season of the year.

it's teh woman providing what THE MAN said to her...

v.10 -- he calls her "my darling, my beautiful one..."
sandwiched between "COME" (v.10)

the male lover is not creating NEW expressions but using customary addresses of love to frame his description of the place where he wishes his lover to join him (Hess, 93)

He calls her to come along with him ---

*Akin believes that the man is NOT calling the woman to have sex, but to simply go for a walk in the countryside.

> this "When 2 people are in love they wanna spend time alone, just the two of them" (Akin, 52) was extremely romantic.

Remember how we are to LIKEWISE hear the voice of God (Psalm 95.7-11 and Heb 3.7-19).
COME to him now, today to enjoy the rest, the joy, the fruitfulness made possible by another garden.

Gospel

Who can listen to the voice of Christ without a thrill of joy! The Church here states that His address now reached her ear. He calls to her. He bids her arise and break from delay, and come with Him in holy fellowship to refreshing scenes. The beauties of reviving nature are introduced as alluring to this sweet communion. Let these lovely scenes now pass before our view. (William Law)

2:12

winter is past (darkness, coldness, gloom)
> SPRING is here (v.12-13)

She recounts what the man says...

v.11 - he describes her in sensual beauty to ENTICE her.

the cold and rain of the winter months are gone. No longer need one to remain inside.
The warm sun of the summer has come.

*it's the climate of Palestine -- 2 main seasons (summer & winter)

*Symbolically: the lover suggests that the couple has now fallen in love and so all that went before was cold and without joy (rainy, gloomy, cloudy, dark, alone) -- but NOW that's ended and their love begins the early summer with all the following pictures (vv.12ff)

a verse of rejoicing in God's creation.

the blossoms and flowers suggest their generation of NEW LIFE and NEW LOVE (Hess, 94)

2:13

THE MAN calls her: to arise, my darling and his beautiful one

NOTE the words of affirmation, tenderness, affection

The man uses all 5 senses here -- he address "all his lover's senses and gently repeats words of endearment as he invites her to come away"

SOUND - his call to her

SMELL - the fragrance

SIGHT - the blossoms

TASTE - figs

TOUCH -- arise and COME along

This is the invitation of love that the male makes --- has a powerful significance that calls beyond that of young lovers (Hess, 95)

Gospel

William Law

Jesus now invites to closer fellowship with Himself. He bids the soul to arise--to leave its couch of sloth and indolence, and disconsolation. He calls it to put forth strength and to break from all entangling fetters to join itself to Him in closer fellowship, and to enjoy with Him the beauties of this newborn state.

If such the sweetness of His present call, what will it be when His voice shall bid our bodies arise from the grave's cell, and come away to His eternal presence, and to exult in fullness of joy, and

to partake of the pleasures, which are at His right hand forever more! Lord, may we be ever listening for the last trumpet's clang!

Christ calls us to COME! Christ must be a kind & loving Husband; ...How happy are they who are effectually called to the marriage of the Lamb!" (James Durham, 145)

2:14

LONGINGS // passions for each other

v.14 - O my dove --- gentle bird
symbolizes the female woman and also the concept of love

"Doves are gentle and beautiful. They often nestle in the clefts of the rock out of sight and safely hidden. Solomon compares his woman to such a dove and urges her to come out to him

he longs to be alone
he longs to see her form
he longs to hear her voice
he longs to affirm her body

The desire to be alone with one's lover is both natural and legitimate. Unfortunately it sometimes departs after marriage. (Constable)

The Gospel

If a husband calls the woman a 'dove' -- a white, pure, innocent, peaceful creature -- *HOW MUCH MORE* could Christ call the church a dove.

Consider:

We are washed in Christ's blood, justified by his righteousness, and sanctified by his grace; for even though while in this state of nature (flesh), we still have some spots and sin, yet now we are called a partaker of divine grace, we look like the wings of a dove" (John Gill, 99).

2:15

It is a difficult verse.

it seems best to understand here the metaphors for those who would ***THREATEN** the couple and their love" (Hess, 97)

Solomon uses imagery of the vineyard -- but now he introduces little villains that have the potential to wreak havoc and destruction. They're called: "Little foxes" (Akin, 53)

They are SO dangerous that he commands us to 'catch' them before they RUIN the vineyards. The idea is an imperative; "CATCH them quickly; and be AGGRESSIVE about it! (Akin, 53)

In the ANE, foxes were notorious in the the ancient world for damaging vineyards

*we have a bit of conflict in the story:::

She was evidently urging Solomon, poetically, to deal with some problems in their relationship, rather than telling him to clear literal foxes out of her family's vineyards. "Foxes" may refer to "the ravages of the aging process that can sap the beauty and vitality of persons (the 'vines' or vineyards)." (Constable)

All couples encounter some potentially destructive situations in their relationships that need dealing with occasionally. Often the woman senses these first, as here, but the man should take the initiative in dispelling them and thus protect his loved one. (Constable)

It may be a call to others around them to RESTRAIN the young men/women from taking advantage of them and undermining their love (Hess, 97)

"vineyard in blossom" -- seems to be a clear meaning referring to sexual relations

++++ 2 lessons for us:

1. trouble in marriage is usually in the small things

foxes are NOT large creatures - they are small, sly, sneaky and quick.

they usually come out at night when you can't see them & they're gifted at hiding.

2 SINNERS saved by grace thru faith in Christ are still ... SINNERS.

communication, role responsibilities, finances, sex, children, in -laws, aging parents, grandchildren, conflict resolution don't always naturally come together in a marriage! (Ha!) (Akin, 53)

2. the relationship of marriage is a uniquely sensitive thing -- the vineyards are in bloom.

a marriage needs time to grow and bear fruit -- it's a tender relationship.

We are vulnerable to attack -- and so we must provide necessary and essential protection.

in our words, actions, attitudes we must with "dogged determination" resolve to nurture and tend to our relationship with great care & concern (Akin, 54)

What are some of the LITTLE FOXES that can be avoided if these issues are discussed CAREFULLY & PRAYERFULLY as a couple (so they don't grow & become BIGGER issues)

1. have you discussed and come to agreement on what the Bible means when it says that the husband is to be a loving leader & the wife is to be happily submissive? (Eph 5.22-33)?

2. Have you agreed always to tell your spouse the truth, to speak the truth in love? (Eph 4.15)?
3. Have you committed never to criticize your spouse in public?
4. Are you in agreement on how decisions will be made when disagreement occurs?
5. Are you both committed to intimacy in your communication as a couple, giving the effort this will require?
6. Do you both want to be used of God to help your spouse grow in Christlikeness? (Rom 8.28-30)?
7. Do you like your mate's values and outlook on life?
8. Are you personally committed to making your marriage a success whatever the cost or sacrifice?
9. Have you determined to follow biblical premarital sexual standards with honest and open discussions so that your decision honors the LORD and your partner?
10. Does the woman realize that men move from the visual to the physical (quickly!) and therefore they need a healthy sexual relationship with their spouses to deter temptation?
11. Does the man realize that women move from the emotional to the sexual (sometimes it may be slowly) and therefore they need to love demonstrated in verbal and practical ways often?
12. Can you identify a day or time period when you placed your faith in Christ for salvation?
13. Do you have the certainty that your mate has come to faith in Christ?
14. Have you decided where you will attend church together and to what degree you'll be involved?
15. Are you comfortable sharing openly your feelings, desires, and goals with your spouse?
>> from Akin, p.55-56

INDEED there are some little foxes that we need to guard against & to PURSUE a god honoring picture of his grace...

1. beware of the fox of ROLE REVERSAL or ABUSE
2. beware of the fox of INTIMACY STAGNATION
3. beware of the fox of POOR COMMUNICATION
Prov 15.1-2, 4
guard from: criticism, defensiveness, contempt (mocking, sneering), and stonewalling (just withdrawal/indifference/apathy)
4. beware of the fox of TIME POORLY SPENT TOGETHER
guard from hobbies that become gods.
guard from internet, social media, email, TV, sports, children & video games that TAKE AWAY TIME FROM MATE.
the average video male player for men is now 35
5. beware of the fox of OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE
guard from the sensual lust of adultery (Prov 5.1-14)

*10 signs that this evil fox of adultery may be lurking near, hiding out in your vineyard

1. feelings of 'going thru the marriage motions
2. inventing excuses to visit someone of the opposite sex

3. increasing male female contacts in normal environments (work, sharing meals)
4. being preoccupied with thoughts about another person
5. exchanging gifts with a 'friend' of the opposite sex
6. making daily or weekly contact with someone by phone (even text)
7. putting yourself in situations where 'friend' or 'employee' might be something more
8. having to touch, embrace, or glance at a person of the opposite sex
9. spending time along with anyone of the opposite sex
10. inordinate time on the internet

>> these *might be some warning signs that you should pause, communicate, talk, confess, be open with mate

> Akin, 69

6. beware of the fox of FATIGUE THAT SEPARATES YOU

God hates divorce

just say it: "divorce will never be an option"

7. beware of the fox of MISUNDERSTANDING.

from AKIN, p.62, 69-70

Akin says: "A Christ centered, God focused marriage will AGGRESSIVELY be on guard against what Solomon calls the "little foxes" (p.75)

These may be little foxes that prowl at night when it's hard to notice, see it, or catch it UNTIL afterwards when the damage is done. If we're not PROACTIVE in preventing these 'little foxes' -- the damage can be great and the repair and restoration can be hard, and difficult. (Be proactive instead of reactive)

It is the MEN who -- by the power of the Holy Spirit & with His Wisdom -- strive to MIGHTILY kick from the vineyard the foxes of bitterness, anger, wrath, shouting, slander, malice, lust -- even apathy.

> and he must replace these little foxes with beautiful blossoms and flowers of kindness, compassion, forgiveness, love

But little foxes -- little sins --- are NO match for the power of the gospel lived out by 2 spouses that are transformed by the power & grace of God.

Gospel

William Law wrote:

The picture leads us to mark the subtleties which lurk to spoil the Spirit's work. We are here called to mark the INNATE CORRUPTION of our nature. When sin entered, terrible was the ruin which ensued! Every imagination of the thoughts became evil, and that continually. A noxious fountain was opened to send forth poisonous streams. Briers and thorns sprang up in the blighted soil. These corruptions are as the foxes in the vineyard. They are perpetually assailing

the sweet fruits of grace. Let us be wise, and ever on our guard. Corruption undetected--unopposed--will kill the buddings of sanctity within, and soon render the soul a desolate and barren wilderness.

SATAN, also, ever hates, and ever plots, and ever watches to check the holy work. He is termed the old serpent. Is he not, also, a wily fox? How stealthily he crept into Eden's fair garden--with what deceitful words he enticed our first parent! With a lie he tempted and prevailed, and with daily lies he still continues to succeed. But let us meet this fox with resolute determination. When boldly encountered he will instantly depart. We know, that if we resist the Devil, he will flee from us. We know, also, that if our strength is weak against this ensnaring foe, we may call Jesus to our aid. Satan may be strong--but Jesus is stronger. The arch-enemy may have power--but Jesus wields omnipotence. Thus let us catch the fox and all his brood. The victory will be ours. We shall tread Satan under our feet shortly.

***George burrows:**

We as believers must be careful to guard against sin, especially the little sins that spoil the vines with tender grapes. (115)

“This verse teaches that those who are favored richly with grace, and whom our Lord is drawing towards heaven, will be careful to guard against sin -- especially against LITTLE sins” (Burrows, 311)

****NEVER is our carefulness in guarding against sin so great, as when most deeply filled with the love of Jesus; against the slightest sins we wish most carefully to guard (Burrows)**

2:16

glorious & mutual affirmation of exclusive love.

Even though they faced problems, the Shulammitte rejoiced in the security of her beloved's love and in the assurance that he would take care of his responsibilities to her (v. 16b). (Csontabel)

The King's commitment to Protect, Provide, Woo, and Converse bears fruit in the bride's affirmation here (in v.16) (Hamilton, 63)

Enjoy the DELIGHTS of love
as you consider your relationship, which best portrays your relationship at this present moment... (stage)

1. SUMMER DRAUGHT - the temperature is high and your relationship is dry, suffering from a lack of vital nourishment
2. A FALL HARVEST -- you are reaping some rewards in your relationship but your love is fading and cold days and nights (!) seem on the horizon
3. WINTER DEADNESS -- things are frozen, lifeless, and somewhat dead-looking
4. SPRINGTIME - life is everywhere. Things are blooming, fresh, exciting, and beautiful.

v.16 -

My loved is MINE
and I AM HIS

There's a very simple and yet profound reality here; it's so essential & yet so overwhelmingly absent from many marriage relationships --- YOU MUST KNOW THAT YOU BELONG TO EACH OTHER (v.16)

I belong to HIM
HE belongs to ME

> what's mine is his; what's his is mine

"the language here speaks of delight, desire, confidence and assurance"
Theirs is an exclusive and intimate love.

v.16b - pastures his flock among the lilies -- might have the idea of the male feeding/enjoying the plants = referring to the physical intimacy and relationship to the female. (Hess, 99)
This means that the man delights and enjoys the love and pleasures that she has to offer.

>>Please note this: A biblical & healthy relationship has 2 givers -- there is NOT a giver and a taker or 2 takers. NO! There must be 2 givers.

The husband GIVES of himself to the wife.

And she in return is set free to give herself without reservation or hesitation to him.

> This the beauty & rarity & glory of a redeemed, Christ-centered relationship (Akin, 57)

Gospel

It is Gal 2.20 - I no longer live but Christ lives in me. The life I live is the life of faith...

“Christ is ours, when by faith we apply him and all his graces --- his death, his resurrection, ascension, intercession, unto ourselves as our own! (Henry Ainsworth, p.705)
William Law

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noxious fountain was opened to send forth poisonous streams. Briers and thorns sprang up in the blighted soil. These corruptions are as the foxes in the vineyard. They are perpetually assailing the sweet fruits of grace. Let us be wise, and ever on our guard. Corruption undetected--unopposed--will kill the buddings of sanctity within, and soon render the soul a desolate and barren wilderness.

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John Cotton:

The church enjoys familiar and comfortable communion with Christ. (13)

“Jesus says to us, give yourself to me, and I will give myself to you. On this principle does he act; and to the degree we surrender ourselves up to him, will we ever find him communicating to us his grace & causing us to receive his fullness. This is a blessing of unspeakable value” (George Burrows, 313)

We are Christ's by possession. We have HIM and all things pertaining to life and salvation with Him. We have HIM in us as the hope of glory -- dwelling in our hearts by faith, living there as in his own house & temple and he reigns there by His grace and Spirit, as in his own palace. And we can say: “I have an interest in Him, for I am in possession of Him. Thus, Christ is the church's (John Gill, 106)

From our belonging to Christ, it means that we are NOT OUR OWN -- our persons, our time, and talents, our gifts and graces, are not our own, but his. And therefore we should give up all unto him and glorify him with all: nor are we any other person's possession. We are NOT Satan's, for Christ has delivered us as lawful captives out of his hands. We are NOT Sin's, for Christ redeemed us from it; We are NOT the world's, for Christ has both chosen and called us out of it. And therefore we should serve NONE but Him, who has an incontestible right to us, and a sovereign power over us! (John Gill, 106).

If a man & a woman can say this: how much more Christ & His Bride...

James Durham:

There is an excellent union & a peculiar tie between Christ & believers --

It is SO excellent...

It is a NEAR union (one flesh)

It is a REAL union (not imaginary)
It is MUTUAL (Christ is wholly hers; and she is wholly dedicated to him)
It is A KIND union (full of relation, sweetness, tenderness, and kindness)
It is a FULL union (Christ is wholly hers and she is wholly his)
It is an INDISSOLVABLE (eternal) union -- there is no breaking of it
-- James Durham, 153

2:17

this is, quite simply, a verse that expresses that they want each other.
they long for marital union & sexual consummation.
> they want no barriers in the way

The "divided mountains" is also "Mountains of Bether" -- it literally is mountain of separation = a reference to her breasts.

With ALL of his desire & passion before her, she welcomes him --- the unreserved love of this man who has entered her life has effected a great change. She is a godly woman. He is a godly man. They're excited for one another.

"Together the two of them are far better and more beautiful than they ever could have been alone (Akin, 57)

Let him be on the mountains of BETHER>>>>

Verse 17 probably looks forward to their wedding and to its physical consummation. "Bether" is a transliteration rather than a translation. Since no Bether mountains apparently exist in this part of the Middle East, it seems preferable to translate the Hebrew word (bater) as "cleavage" or "separation." The mountains of cleavage then may be an allusion to the Shulammitte's breasts. Another possibility is that Bether refers to the cleft in the mountains where the deer suddenly appears. (Constable)

These mountains are simply a symbol of the woman herself -- and her body. She's inviting him to enjoy her (Murphy)

Vv14-17 give 4 tests for lovers...

1. The DELIGHT test -- do you delight in each other (v.14)
2. The DETERMINATION test -- do you persevere & deal with anything that comes (15)
3. The DUALITY test -- are there absolutely exclusive & mutual feelings for love (v.16)

4. The DEVELOPMENT test -- love yearns for more & deeper intimacy

CONCL:

This here is erotic love poetry that makes NO apology for appealing to all of the senses that God has created. Yet it also affirms that there is an order to this wonderful gift of sex. Its potency and wildness does not mean that there is no restraint (Hess, 101).

MEN / Husbands - if you want your wives to talk thi sway to you -- then you need to treat your wife the way the KING treats the Bride in this song.

He wins her heart, her confidence, her trust. Then she responds this way.

SOME APPLICATION LESSONS

1. Let us see the God-designed, God-given, God-ordained heterosexual relationship. Marriage, marital love, and sensual passions are *only* to be heterosexual & monogamous -- between ONE man and ONE woman alone (within the covenant bond of marriage) [Song of Solomon 2:1-2]
2. There is NO doubt that the man is exclusively devoted to ONE woman and her alone. She alone has captured his heart, his eyes, his mind, and his body. He speaks exclusive love to her. He shows exclusive love to her. He publicly speaks of exclusive love to her. [Song of Solomon 2:2]
3. The woman rests confidently, comfortably, and securely in the shade of her man. She trusts him. He respects him. She loves him. She loves his presence and love. [Song of Solomon 2:3]
4. The woman longs for intimacy with the man. She ponders and muses on the intoxicating joys and wonderful delights of love that God has given for enjoyment at the proper time and in the proper place. [Song of Solomon 2:4-6]
5. Men and women must not indulge in sexual love and sensual passions before the proper time. Though hard and difficult, sexual purity must be maintained at all costs. God's wonderful gift of sexual intercourse and all sexual pleasures are to only be wonderfully and regularly enjoyed only at the right time (marriage) with one person (your spouse). [Song of Solomon 2:7]
6. A healthy relationship is one where each the man and the woman longs for each other and takes periodic getaways to be alone, enjoy each other, and delight in each other's love. [Song of Solomon 2:10-13]

7. There must be frequent, specific, heartfelt, and exclusive words of affirmation that both the man speaks to his wife and that the wife speaks to her husband. Tender words, affirming words, encouraging words are to be lavishly verbalized one to another. [Song of Solomon 2:13-14]

8. A godly and growing relationship must proactively guard from and zealously protect from little “issues” that can creep into the relationship and, if not attended to, will grow and cause great damage. [Song of Solomon 2:15]

9. There must be an overwhelming sense of exclusivity in the relationship. No intruders allowed. No other lovers permitted. The woman must know that she (and she alone!) is her husband’s first love. [Song of Solomon 2:16a]

10. There should be regular and sweet occasions of sexual intimacy between every husband and wife. There should be full openness, unhindered communication, selfless love, and passionate pursuing between one another in the context of marital lovemaking. [Song of Solomon 2:16-17]

11. The man is called to lead, initiate, protect, and be the head [leader] of the relationship. This is not a dominating, self-serving, authoritarian notion. Rather, it is a passionately pursuing, happily initiating, selflessly serving, and tenderly leading his wife throughout the relationship. [Song of Solomon 2:8-13]

SONGS

Jesus I Come

1. Out of my bondage, sorrow and night,
Jesus, I come; Jesus I come.
Into Thy freedom, gladness and light,
Jesus, I come to Thee.
Out of my sickness into Thy health,
Out of my wanting and into Thy wealth,
Out of my sin and into Thyself,
Jesus, I come to Thee.

2. Out of my shameful failure and loss,
Jesus, I come; Jesus, I come.

Into the glorious gain of Thy cross,
Jesus, I come to Thee.
Out of earth's sorrows into Thy balm,
Out of life's storms and into Thy calm,
Out of distress into jubilant psalm,
Jesus, I come to Thee.

3. Out of unrest and arrogant pride,
Jesus, I come; Jesus, I come.
Into Thy blessed will to abide,
Jesus, I come to Thee.
Out of myself to dwell in Thy love,
Out of despair into raptures above,
Upward forever on wings like a dove,
Jesus, I come to Thee.

4. Out of the fear and dread of the tomb,
Jesus, I come; Jesus, I come.
Into the joy and light of Thy home,
Jesus, I come to Thee.
Out of the depths of ruin untold,
Into the peace of Thy sheltering fold,
Ever Thy glorious face to behold,
Jesus, I come to Thee.

By vows of love together bound

AMAZING GRACE (Tune)

By vows of love together bound,
The twain, on earth, are one;
One may their hearts, O Lord, be found,
Till earthly cares are done.

As from the home of earlier years
They wander, hand in hand,
To pass along, with smiles and tears,
The path of Thy command.

With more than earthly parents' care,
Do Thou their steps attend;
And with the joys or woes they share,
Thy loving kindness blend.

O let the memory of this hour
In future years come nigh

To bind, with sweet, attractive power,
And cheer them till they die.

And to that blessèd, fadeless land,
Where partings may not be,
Lead them—a happy household band—
Forever near to Thee.

O LOVE THAT WILL NOT LET ME GO

O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
That in thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be.

O light that followest all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to thee;
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
That in thy sunshine's blaze its day
May brighter, fairer be.

O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain,
That morn shall tearless be.

O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be.

Hymns: <http://www.hymntime.com/tch/top/weddings.htm>

Song of Solomon 3 Notes

SONG 3

TITLE: "Dreaming for Love & the Arrival of the Wedding Day!"

THIS ultimate /supreme "SONG of all SONGS" penned by Solomon as God the SPIRIT guided his hand should be understood by us.

5 tips to remember = It's a SONG, it's IN THE BIBLE, it's about LOVE, it's to give WISDOM, it's about the SON OF DAVID!

THEME: "in Song 3 we see King Solomon coming to his wedding -- answering the eager longings of the Bride (Hamilton, 68)

SUMMARY:

ch.1 - the King giving the Bride confidence & assurance by his words (tenderness & verbal affirmations)

ch.2 - the King coming & leaping over the hills to call the Bride to come away with him (wooing & passions)

ch.3 - the BRIDE now longs for him & arrives for the wedding feast!

INTRO:

after one's conversion, the most important occasion in one's life is WHO YOU MARRY.

There is a "Premarital Wedding COVENANT" that we do well to read, study, sign & embrace...

Preamble:

the decision to marry is the second most important decision one will ever make in a lifetime. The first is the decision whether or not you will personally commit your life to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Keeping this in mind, we commit to God, our minister, and each other to...

THE COVENANT:

1. to seek God's will for our lives personally and together by following biblical principles for Christian living and marriage.

2. to not engage in premarital sex or any inappropriate sexual activity.

3. to be sure to do everything possible to build a Christian marriage and home. This means that both of us have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and that we desire growth for that relationship over the entire course of our lives by being obedient to His Word.

4. to read and listen to ALL premarital material provided by our pastor.

5. to be active together in a Bible-believing, Bible-preaching local church beginning and during our marriage.

6. to buy and read ...(books to be read in Premarital counseling)

7. to maintain total oneness and honesty with our pastor and with each other both now and after our wedding.

8. to postpone or cancel the marriage if, at any time between now and the wedding, either one of us comes to believe this marriage is not right.

9. to never allow the word divorce to enter the realm of our relationship. We are in this together for the duration of our lives. Divorce is not an option for us!

10. To seek competent, biblical counseling should we encounter any difficulty in our marriage, beginning with the pastor who performs our wedding.

With the above commitments made, we believe God will be honored and the prospects for a meaningful and happy marriage enhanced. With God's help, we will seek to honor God with our lives and marriage all the days of our lives.

Man's signature _____

Woman's signature _____

>> from Danny Akin, p.101-102.

Why did God design marriage?

1. procreation - bearing children
2. satisfaction -- sexual pleasure
3. sanctification -- growing in grace
4. completion -- complete man's need
5. companionship -- friendships
6. illustration -- displaying the gospel

MARRIAGE: A COVENANT BETWEEN ONE MAN & ONE WOMAN FOR LIFE

Marriage is a COVENANT = binding

Marriage is HETEROSEXUAL = one man & one woman

Marriage is PERMANENT = for life

WEdding Day

Celebration

Expectation

Jubilation

Weddings in Judaism in the ANE

Weddings in Israel took place in front of the local town elders, NOT the priests. They transpired in homes, not in the tabernacle or temple (or synagogue). They were civil rather than religious ceremonies.

There were 3 parts to a wedding in the ANE.

1) the groom's parents selected a bride for their son. This involved securing the permission of the bride's parents and the approval of both the bride and the groom themselves. Though the parents of the young couple arranged the marriage, they usually obtained the consent of both the bride and the groom.

2) on the wedding day the groom proceeded to the bride's house accompanied by a group of friends. He then escorted her to the site of the wedding ceremony, and finally took her to their new residence accompanied by their friends. Physical union consummated the marriage the night after the wedding ceremony took place.

3) the couple feasted with their friends -- usually for 7 days following the wedding ceremony (in Constable)

Outline:

A lover's seeking (1-5)

The Bridal Procession (6-11) (Kinlaw)

HOMILETICAL OUTLINE*

Song of Solomon 3

The rendezvous with the lover 1-4 [DREAMING]

the lover

the looking

the lovemaking

or

the separation

the searching

the celebration

The repetition of the charge 5 [DECLARING]

THE PLEA! Listen!

THE PICTURE! Consider!

THE PATIENCE! Wait!

The royalty of the procession 6-11 [DELIGHTING]

the DAY of the wedding

the PROCESSION of the wedding

the GROOM of the wedding

=====

Quotes/Structure/Background/Setting

after the preparation period, they finally have arrived at the "WEDDING DAY"

Consider all the hope & thinking & planning & preparation & excitement for the DAY OF CELEBRATION! (ch.3 is it!)

This whole poetic section/unit seems to be a dream sequence (Kinlaw)

"The blessings & benefits of marriage are FAR too many to count. As two become one, the life experiences shared, involving both joy and pain, enrich our lives and make us better" (Akin, 90)

The wedding day = full of excitement, expectation, anticipation, commitment, covenant, public, family, friends, joy

"The pomp and beauty of this procession were wholly appropriate in light of the event's significance. The Scriptures teach that marriage is one of the most important events in a person's life. Therefore it is fitting that the union of a couple be commemorated in a special way. The current practice of couples casually living together apart from the bonds of marriage demonstrates how unfashionable genuine commitment to another person has become in contemporary society. This violates the sanctity of marriage and is contrary to God's standards of purity" (Jack Deere, quoted in Akin, 104)

The larger section here is Song 3:6 - 5:1
WEDDING PROCESSION (3:6-11)
MARITAL CONSUMMATION (4:1-5:1)

COMMENTARY NOTES

3:1-5 is a dream -- or maybe -- a nightmare --- that the bride to be had ONE NIGHT as her wedding day was approaching.

there was excitement -- but also anxiety (Akin, 92)

Again: most commentators take these verses as the girls' very troubled dream which ends, however, in a very happy climax (Tom Gledhill, 144)

GOOD Summary by Tom CONstable (vv.1-4)

The Shulammitte narrated an experience she had had "on her bed," namely, a dream (v. 1). She dreamed she could not find Solomon even though she searched everywhere for him. After much distress, she did find him and then took him to the most secure and intimate place she knew: her mother's bedroom. Her strong love for her beloved comes through in the recurring phrase "whom my soul loves" in each one of the four verses. Such fears are common during the courtship. Will

the marriage finally take place? She dreams of consummation, but she wants the consummation to be proper.

3:1

The first line of this poetic unit sets the place/time: she is seeking the 'one whom my soul loves' (Hess, 101)

vv.2-3 - her failure to find him

v.4 - she finally finds him

"on MY bed"...

NOTE she calls it MY bed and not OUR bed. It appears that they're not married yet -- they've not yet consummated nor do they live together.

this is a section recounting the Bride's troubled DREAM

on her bed

night after night

ESV: "by night" -- just means: 'in the nights' --

it might be a dream

or -- just a poetic, repetitive, longing for her man thru the nights

in Hebrew just means: "Night after night" >>>***

they are NOT married yet.

"She cannot sleep because of the feverish excitement of longing for her lover, wherever he might be" (Hess, 102)

HERE: the lover is the maiden's obsession night and day. >> so in a dream she seeks him.

she goes about the city & she's asking those whom she meets about the beloved (vv.2-3)

The hebrew word: "Search" (baqash) is fronted for emphasis = the point is "THE QUEST!" and it occurs in v.1 and v.2 = it shows the importance!!! (Hess, 101)

If there is one thing for sure -- the BRIDE definitely LONGS for her King! (Hamilton)

*how to sleep well? [a theology of sleep]

1. get in bed only when you're gonna sleep

2. fill your heart/mind with God's Word the last thing you do.

3. pray & ask for God's grace in giving good, uninterrupted sleep
4. IF God wakes you up -- FIGHT the battle of the MIND
pray, read, meditate, ponder, worship

*What if God does WAKE YOU & you've had very TROUBLING dreams?

1. win the battle in the mind (2 Cor 10.5)
2. transform your mind with spiritual truth (Rom 12.1-2)
3. determine to thank, praise & worship God (Ps 4.4-8)
4. confess, repent & comfort your soul w/ Gospel (Gal 1.1-2)
5. hold & recite & rejoice in God's promises (Heb 13.5-6)

SO in this section it appears that the woman is EITHER: (1) dreaming at night, or (2) lying awake daydreaming about her man's return (ODonnell, 65-66)

"WHOM MY SOUL LOVES"

the inward parts of a man committed to another

"NEPHESE" --- seems to convey the sense of "longing/heart/desire" -- the female's soul (=desire) is for her lover, equal intensity to her desire to live, will cause her to go forth and seek him (Hess)

This speaks of the heartfelt deep seated LOVE (Brady, 107)

*** GOSPEL ***

Sometimes we can long for our lover like this & miss him & SO Desire him...

NO desire is so intense as the craving of a healthful soul after Christ (George Burrows, 319)
how do we get this craving?

1. seeing the manifestations of the love & loveliness of Jesus thru the Holy Spirit
2. a disclosure of the beauty & glory of heaven
3. the assurance of hope
4. strong desires for beholding the glory of Christ (Burrows)

=====

3:2

so because she couldn't find the lover -- she does something about it.

In fact, she risks her life and reputation in the process.

She goes into the city -- (3:2)

*NOTE: going out at night alone was NOT something that a woman would do in that era (Akin, 93)

One commentator said that the woman's actions are: "Irrational, impractical, and impossible" (Gledhill)

the cohortative verbs (I will...I will...) --- indicates the intentional search -- that is, one that looks eagerly and holds NOTHING back (Hess, 103)

*But her love for the man is so great that she will risk it all for him (Akin, 93)

where have things gone wrong?

are there sins to repent of?

how can matters be put right again?

>> good questions if there is a rift in the relationship (Gary Brady)

Married couples, do you remember what it was like to be engaged as you were LONGING for the wedding/wedding night?

**NOTE her love is SO strong that she has to ARISE NOW and search for HIM...

> if there are times where your beloved seems far away & you can't find him.

>> don't be lazy & sit back.

>> UP, and ARISE and GO SEARCH FOR HIM!

James Durham: "I will rise now; that is, seeing the sluggish endeavors doth not avail me, I will delay no longer, but will now presently fall about it in more earnest. It is the SIGN of a sincere resolution, when it does not put off or shift duty, but engages the soul in a present undertaking of it" (p.162)

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3:3

she approaches the guards, the patrol, the officers == and she asks.

> but they have no answer since they've not seen him.

So the bride encounters watchmen -- official keepers of the peace in the city.

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3:4

This verse carries forward the female's search & adventure to FIND HER MAN.

****SHE CANNOT GIVE UP**** = love doesn't allow for this.
whatever the risk (at night, in a city, all alone)
SHE will not be deterred from the object of her desire.

This is LOVE = the devotion of the lover to the object of her desire (Hess, 105)

in her dream she searches until she finds him & then she brings him into the mother's home -- into the very room where SHE was conceived (v.4)

>> SO -- she is dreaming // or daydreaming of the SEEKING HIM, FINDING HIM, AND BRINGING HIM to the place of the intimacies of lovemaking (ODonnell, 66)

I found him whom my soul loves -

"I held on to him..."

same word used in 2.15 of the capture of the foxes. It's not an enemy who is captured (here) but the lover's determination and capture "holding" is no less intense.

I held on to him and would not let him go

same root "would not let him go" -- same word used by God in his promise to Israel (Deut 31.6 & Josh 1.5) --

>> the word speaks of LOYALTY + FAITHFULNESS**

Spurgeon commented on 3 points here:

1. The EUPHORIA of finding him -- knowing the person & experiencing their presence
2. The ECSTASY of holding him --- a deeper and more sustained experience
3. The ELATION of loving him --- a great, heartfelt sharing one with another

>> Spurgeon (in Brady, p.114)

We must be clear -- there are gender roles & functions that God has designed within marriage -- but please here this. THE WIFE is to be and have desirous attitudes and even (can I say it)

aggressive and passionate & enticing actions toward her husband -- his love, his body, his love, and his intimacy.

>> for here, we have a picture of HER pursuing HIM.

She is "NOT a stiff thorn, nor is she a passive, silent, inactive wallflower or doormat.

She is eager & aggressive.

She lovingly & happily holds him tightly and longs for the love they can enjoy together. IT IS NOT ungodly, or unscriptural, or unclean, or unholy for the GODLY WIFE to have a passionate desire to bring her husband to bed & enjoy love with him. (ODonnell, 69)

Modeled by God

> emulated by lovers

> loyalty to each other + faithfulness to each other

NOTE:

1. LOVE
2. EMOTIONS
3. CLINGING
4. COMMITMENT/PERMANENCE
5. INTIMACY

Kinlaw: "SHE is NOT looking for an illicit (impure) consummation of their love. Consummation is what she wants, but even in her dream she wants that consummation to be RIGHT (and proper). Where in HUMAN literature does one find a text so erotic and yet so moral as this? (Kinlaw, 1225)

*It may be that the woman bringing the man into the mother's home REFLECTS GENESIS 2.24, where the husband is to leave Father and mother, but no like command is given to the woman. This passage may reflect ancient Israelite marital customs that are NOW unknown to us.

>>Perhaps we should notice that Isaac brought Rebekah into the tent of his mother, even though Sarah was deceased, and there consummated their marriage (Gen 24.67)

THE MOTHER'S BEDROOM may not be (for us!) the most thoughtful place of intimacy, but in the world of the SONG it is a place associated with intimacies.

a mother's house is a place of security

it's also important b/c the mother played an integral role in arranging the marriage for the daughter

>> THIS is the context of (intimate) lovemaking b/c of the context of v.5 -- teh plea for purity.

** Some features of engagement for our young people>>>

1. LONGING -- desire/anticipation
2. LOVING --- self less sacrifice
3. LINGERING --- enjoy each other, waiting
4. LOOKING --- looking for, enjoying, anticipating
5. LEAPING --- excitement, eagerness

NOTE the summary of vv.1-4 --- note there is DAVID, Solomon's Father, who wrote of HIS LONGING for God (Ps 63.1-6)

- > like the woman longing for her King
- > So here is David, God's beloved -- longing for his KING!

John Cotton: "Let us take up our thoughts & meditations about Christ -- let us go forth and behold him till abundant graces fill our empty souls" (p17)

**Maybe a contemporary embellishment...

"She is in bed...She can't sleep. She's either having a dream or daydreaming --- about her man.

So she gets out of bed. She is searching the city for him.

She finally finds him. She hugs him, perhaps even kisses him, and then she tightly holds his hand and leads him home.

She has been waiting for him and for intimacy.

They walk through the front door.

It's the house that she grew up in -- her mother's house that is now somehow theirs.

She won't let go of his hand -- and she says: "Come here, my dear Husband... -- and she beckons him and wins him and woos him and carresses him.

He complies happily.

They walk into the bedroom, her parents' old bedroom, yes, even the 'chamber' in which she was conceived years ago, which she sees as a beautiful thing, a continuation of a family romance and potentially the family tree.

She had been tossing and turning -- but now the bed is finally ready for love.

She has planned it all.

The tea light candles are still burning, and now burning very low.

Subtle sprays of her perfume and scent-sticks are wafting in the air.

And a very romantic music is playing in the background.

So she says: "Let the intimacy begin... BUT OH for me, dear daughters of Jerusalem, it's for ME

>> not yet for you. your time is not yet -- don't arouse or awaken love until it so pleases..."

>> in ODonnell, p.67)

GOSPEL >>

As with sexual love, the consummation of God's love for His people follows a similar principle == it achieves Its FINAL GOAL of true union with God in a life beyond this world (Hess, 108)

"The manifestations of the loveliness of Christ on earth, lead to the glorious displays of his love in heaven; and our finding him, as just noticed, is the preparatory step to finding him in the splendor of his throne at the right hand of God (George Burrows)

"With eagerness does the soul then lay hold on our Lord" (George Burrows)

When we FIND Jesus we are anxious to commune with him in secret ... we are drawn unto him in private communion, seeking intercourse with him by prayer (George Burrows)

*held him & would not let him go...

This holding of Christ and NOT letting go means...

1. a holy kind of violence, more than an ordinary way in which the Bride strives to retain the groom.
2. that Christ waits for the believer's consent in the wrestling
3. it imports an importunate adhering to him, and not consenting upon any terms to quiet him.
4. the singular and inexpressible satisfaction she had in him (James Durham, 169)

Let us see the affectionate cleaving of such a soul to Christ" (John Cotton)

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3:5

- do not arouse/awaken love

Here is our "CHORUS" -- 2nd of 3 occurrences (2:7; 3:5; 8:4)

THE POINT? "Don't rush into love, but rather to wait for the right moment" (Longman, 131)

**SO tragically, many in our world // in our nation -- have been convinced that premarital sex is the norm & that it's OK.

Mark Regnerus and Jeremy Uecker wrote in their book: "Premarital Sex in America" (2011) -- expose what they call 10 myths about sex in emerging america.

10 myths:

1. myth: long term relationships are a thing of the past.
2. myth: sex is necessary to maintain a struggling relationship.
3. myth: boys are sexual beings and cannot be expected to follow sexual norms.
4. myth: you are entirely in charge of your own sexuality; others' decisions don't matter.
5. myth: others are having more sex than you
6. myth: sex doesn't need to mean much
7. living together is a positive step toward marriage
 - >> Myths deceive & many are deceived -- but God's WoRD is the SURE and CERTAIN GUIDE>
 - > don't be deceived.

Put under oath -- divine solemnity to this oath NOT to give way to sexual passion until the right time. (Akin, 96)

And that time is "marriage" -- the Bible makes clear -- in the covennat rleationship (1 man/1 woman) for life

Note a few features of this verse:

- A SOLEMN call - I adjure you...
- A DIVINE call - by the gazelles or the hinds
- A PATIENT call - do not arouse
- An ABSTINENT call - do not ...
- A HOPEFUL call - until she pleases...
- An WISE call - arouse love until she pleases...

Remember what Jesus said: Matt 19.6 - what God has joined together, let NO MAN separate

*Again, we are reminded that SEX is a good (great!) gift from a great God. but what is necessary for maximum enjoyment is the RIGHT person at the RIGHT PLACE at the RIGHT time. HERE there is maximum protection, pleasure, partnership & worship (Akin, 96)

****GOSPEL****

The Song of Songs is a beautiful love story to be sure. And it is a door that opens up to us an even greater love story, the greatest love story of all, found in a greater King, a greater Solomon, the King whose name is JESUS (Danny Akin, 99)

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3:6

"This unit is one of the most intriguing of ALL the Song. It's obviously a wedding procession" (Kinlaw)

NOTE what Edwards says:

First, the saints are, and shall be, the subjects of this blessedness. Of all the various kinds of union of sensible and temporal things that are used in Scripture to represent the relation there is between Christ and his church, that which is between bridegroom and bride, or husband and wife, is much the most frequently made use of both in the Old and New Testament. (Jonathan Edwards)

The focus of this entire marriage procession (vv.6-11) is SOLOMON -- he is mentioned 3x (v.7, 9, 11

the suffix "his" -- refers to the king in v.7, and in v.9 and 4x in v.11

the final word in the section is "his heart"

THE KING is the subject of every verb & participle in v.9-10

> the king remains the key figure and theme of this portion of the SONG (Hess, 117)

"PILLAR OF SMOKE" --- it's like a cloud of smoke

> all that is seen is smoke in the distance, but described NOT only by sight but also by smell -- which can be the result of poetic imagination since smells don't cover such a distance (Longman)

The smell is the sweet smell of PERFUME -- the finest of all smells!

MYRRH and FRANKINCENSE.

> not native to Israel but are brought in from far distant places like Arabia and India (exotic luxuriant atmosphere of the scene!)

>> intended for us to be sitting on the 'edge of our chair...' what is that coming on the horizon????'

"coming up from the wilderness" -- wilderness/desert is a rich theme in the OT -- it evokes ideas of exodus, wandering, difficulty, hardship.

it reminds us that the ravaging effects of the curse are ever present in this fallen world. (Akin)

Remember Elijah (1 Kings 19)

John the Baptist (Matt 3)

Jesus (Matt 4)

>> all had wilderness experiences

>> but GOD IS FAITHFUL

COMING from the *Wilderness* -- is meant to remind us of the Exodus from Egypt. Solomon clearly means to remind us of the exodus from Egypt and it implies that the King's wedding to the Bride was meant to CALL TO MIND the Sinai Covenant, with Solomon representing Yahweh and the Bride representing Israel.

Q #1? - who is riding in the procession (v.6)

already in v.1 - the male has addressed the senses of SIGHT & SMELL (Hess)

SOLOMON here is making a FULL public display of his love and affection for his bride and he invites all who are there to join in this celebration (Danny Akin, p.104)

> what is the public display of Christ's love & affection for His own Bride? A ROMAN CROSS & AN EMPTY TOMB! (Akin, 105)

****As we await our consummation & intimacy with our Bridegroom what is the PILLAR OF SMOKE // fragrance that comes up till his arrival?**

it is the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ (2 Cor 2)

> it is spreading everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of God!

NOTE how Jesus is bringing his church OUT of the desert of this world and into the glory of heaven above and the marriage supper of the Lamb.

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3:7

Henneh = LOOK! Behold! == drawing attention to something!

> it identifies the key figure!

the wedding 'carriage' is identified as belonging to Solomon

The "Litter" or NASB: "The traveling couch"

This was a palanquin -- a covered, box-like, enclosed vehicle carried on poles that rest on the shoulders of men.

A box with curtains is almost like a tent (almost like Solomon's personal Tabernacle)

****NOTE** the parallels:

"Just as Yahweh came out of Egypt (wilderness), residing in the Tabernacle over the mercy seat on the ark of the covenant, carried along by the poles on the shoulders of the priests, preceded by pillar of fire and cloud, SOLOMON comes up like a column of smoke from the wilderness, in a boxlike, covered, moving 'tent'/tabernacle carried on poles that rest on the shoulders of those who serve him, surrounded by his special forces, arriving in the city of the Great King, JERUSALM, for the consummation of the covenant" (Jim Hamilton, 76)

NOW note the carriage:

SOLOMON here is the owner of the carriage.

He is NOT on the bed.

The bed BELONGS to Solomon, but he's not on it. He sees his lover

The scene portrays the most luxuriant method of travel, one that ONLY THE WEALTHY COULD AFFORD.

THE BED/COUCH/ is a piece of furniture on which a person would recline or lay.

> THIS bed, however, is not **only** a symbol of wealth & luxury but also of power since it's accompanied by 60 men (Longman, 136)

The number "60" -- is often associated with Solomon and his wealth and power.

Solomon's temple had 60 mentioned (1 kings 6.2; 2 Chron 3.3)

provisions (1 kings 4.22)

>> SIMPLY: the sheer quantity of 60 emphasizes the royal security that the female enjoys (Hess, 119)

These are "mighty men" -- these are like the elite soldier, the Navy Seals, the Army Rangers, the Deputy Sherriffs

1. they're warriors from the mighty of Israel
2. all of them are skilled with swords and trained in warfare
3. each has his sword at his side to guard against the terror of the night

****Practically**, here is a man who is providing for his wife...

he is thinking through the issues of safety & protection.

He also is providing -- he's coming to pick her up. 60 warriors carrying her into town -- an ENORMOUS wedding day.

The kind of wedding day that little girls dress up like princesses for, and practice, beginning at a very young age for this kind of amazing wedding day (Mark Driscoll quoted in Akin, 106)

****GOSPEL****

Lift up your eyes, Church! your redemption draws near. The Bridegroom is coming!
Blessed are those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb
(Rev 7.14)

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3:8

this verse dwells on the men // the heroes // who accompany the traveling couch of Solomon
> they are battle ready

They PROTECT .. and their protection **never stops** (Longman)

CONSTABLE

The 60 warriors were Solomon's chosen friends. Normally the groom's friends accompanied him to the house of his prospective wife. These friends were very likely members of Solomon's bodyguard. His example of providing protection for his bride is one that every new husband should follow. This might include a measure of financial security for her.

GOSPEL

All these expressions show that here and only here in Christ's place may a soul rest secure. THERE IS NO access for wrath to seize upon them that are in Christ, nor to devil to pull them away from Christ -- for HE and His Father are stronger than all, and none is able to pluck them out of his hand (James Durham, 181)

"In a word, believers are NOT only guarded with angels, but with DIVINE attributes, the wisdom and power of GOD, and this makes them dwell in safety!" (James Durham, 181)

JUST as a husband protects his wife, HOW MUCH MORE does CHRIST PROTECT HIS BRIDE.

the peace and comfort may not be broken of the church -- which this text shows the safety and security of the Church, so it does likewise show the tender care and concern of Christ for her" (John Gill, 125)

3:9

it appears from vv.9-10 that Solomon even oversaw the building of the carriage.
Here Solomon's name occurs (as it did once before, 1:5)

vv.9-10 also describe the beauty & extravagant care of this traveling couch/entourage.

>>

Solomon provided his bride with the best he could afford. This self-sacrificing attitude shows his genuine love for her. (Constable)

Cedar-wood from Lebanon was the most PRIZED in construction.

Cedar was already mentioned in Song 1:17
and HERE it is restated a bed made of the FINEST OF WOOD -- imported from the north as aromatics were from the south (Hess, 121)

"Timber of LEBANON" -- represented the 'best quality lumber available' (Longman)
THUS, it was relatively rare and expensive and thus it showed the wealth & opulence.
it was used for the Temple, the Royal Palace (1 Kings 4.33; 5., 6, 9, 14

vv.9-10 are all about 'THE PLEDGE OF LOVE'

When it comes to cohabitation in our day there's one big, essential element that is DREADFULLY missing -- COMMITMENT.

"Marriage is designed by God to involve a lifelong commitment to covenant love.

The "SEDAN CHAIR -- this is the very best materials that money could buy in that day.
The wood was from LEBANON -- the timbers from these forests were in great demand throughout the ANE

POSTS OF SILVER -- and supports of GOLD and a
SEAT OF PURPLE

>> all of this is exquisitely beautiful & expensive.

it was solomon's way of saying: "I'll keep NOTHING back from you. ALL i have now belongs to you"

*All that is HIS is now HERS.

>> NOTHING he keeps and hoards for himself.

>> they are 2 becoming one. ONE FLESH -- in everything.

3:10

This is just more descriptions of the 'sedan chair'.

>> different parts are described ONE BY ONE.

**The overall impression from vv.9-10 is that this is "luxurious; it radiates wealth & power" (Longman, 137)

It is made out of the most precious of materials -- silver, gold, purple, cloth, ALL associated with royalty (Longman, 137-138)

'the interior was made with love' ---- probably the 'tokens of love that were carved or embroidered as in the the interior of the chariot, so that the midst thereof was paved with love.

>> all the parts was made with thought, intentionality, and commitment & exclusive delights.

This phrase suggests: "All that is romantic" (Phillips)

It suggests ALL that one person commits to another in covenant marriage.

LOVE not lost will be our companion for life.

> its 1 Cor 13.4-8

GOSPEL

Note this spiritually:

As the bridegroom chooses the bride for his peculiar friend above all others in the world, so Christ has chosen his church for a peculiar nearness to him, as his flesh and his bone, and the high honor and dignity of espousals above all others, rather than the fallen angels, yea, rather than the elect angels. (Jonathan Edwards)

"Its interior lovingly fitted out..."

"God's actions toward his people breathe out love, they walk on love, sit on love, rest on love: it must be good to be here; and love is reserved for the midst of it, to show that though its excellency and beauty may in some way shine and glitter to those who are outside, NONE knows

or can know the heart and bowels of the covenant and the love that is there, but those who are WITHIN" (James Durham, 188)

LOVE is a main ingredient in this work of redemption, and the predominant qualification of this covenant, love being the thing which he chiefly intended to make conspicuous and glorious therein (James Durham, 189)

"This pavement of love signifies that the whole Gospel is full of love -- the love of God the Father, contriving and drawing the scheme and the model of our salvation before all time; and in sending His Son in the fulness of time, to accomplish what was agreed on before, that he should do it; as ALSO THE LOVE OF CHRIST in becoming man, sustaining all the sorrows of life; and sufferings of death, and ALL for the sake, and in the room and stead of vile, sinful, and rebellious sinners; it gives us such instances of love as never were heard of before, which never were, nor never will be paralleled; its whole language is love; it is nothing else but a free promise and declaration of God's love and grace to sinful man; so that it may be well be said to be paved with love (JOHN GILL, p.130).

3:11

here we are told that Solomon wears "THE CROWN" -- which his mother crowned him for his wedding day.

> it's not a reference to his coronation, since the high priest presided at that event (1 Kings 1.32-48; 2 Kings 11.11-20)

Solomon's crown was a special one his mother Bathsheba gave him for this occasion. It evidently represented his joy as well as his royalty. (Constable)

He has a CROWN = a symbol of royalty (Ps 21.3)

the crown seals his kingship; it adds glory to the wedding ceremony.

we know from Rabbinic tradition that crowns were worn by bridegrooms and brides until the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD >> a day of happiness NOT ONLY for the king & his queen but also for ALL who shared in this great event!

Here* and only here in this section & indeed in the entire Song, is a "WEDDING" (hatunah) explicitly mentioned (Hess, 122)

>> everything has been building to this CLIMAX

This is what brings joy to the heart of the king (not wealth, power, military might)

This is very helpful for us:

SOME commentators (and people in our day) think that "sex" is the great & final goal in order to experience true joy and happiness.

> indeed, mutual admiration of the lovers, their physical bodies and sensualities is NOT the true source of joy.

Rather, 3:11 here shows that the JOY OF THE HEART is tied with the final commitment of marriage.

"It is only within the commitment of marriage that all the joys of the male and female lovers come together -- for it is ONLY here that they realize the freedom to express those joys without restraint, knowing that the marriage bond seals their love in a lifetime commitment to each other" (Hess, 123)

ANE/historical note

The references to King Solomon, like the crowns worn up to the present day by Jewish brides and grooms on their weddings, represent the images that the male and female possess in the eyes of one another.

the female here appears perfumed with the finest of aromatics, guarded by a retinue of the strongest of warriors, and housed in the most gorgeous and exotic of chambers.

She presents an altogether magnificent spectacle of one who might well have come from the ends of the earth to her lover.

The male is the greatest of ALL kings of Israel, whose crown and glory are unsurpassed.

Previous sections have considered their passion and pure sensual desire for one another. Later chapters will turn to describe in detail their physical bodies. *But here the erotic poetry pauses as it considers ONLY the manner in which the lovers appear in the eyes of one another.

They are QUEEN and KING.

Is this hyperbole? OF COURSE IT IS -- from the perspective of those of us who read this poetry.

Of course it is NOT -- from the perspective of those of us who find here our own beloved and recall how beautiful or handsome they seemed to us on our own wedding day (*remember that feeling*?)

For the lover -- the object of his or her desire is one who exceeds everyone and everything else.

We gaze upon the object of our love in desire, admiration, and ultimately joy because we want to do so, because we see there the fulfillment of all that we long for" (Hess, 124)

*****GOSPEL*****

Jonathan Edwards draws the parallel:

In that resurrection-morning, when the sun of righteousness shall appear in our heavens, shining in all his brightness and glory, he will come forth as a bridegroom. He shall come in the glory of his Father, with all his holy angels. And at that glorious appearing of the great God, and our

Savior Jesus Christ, shall the whole elect church, complete as to every individual member, and each member with the whole man, both body and soul, and both in perfect glory, ascend up to meet the Lord in the air, to be thenceforth forever with the Lord. That will be indeed a joyful meeting of this glorious bridegroom and bride. Then the bridegroom will appear in all his glory without any veil. And then the saints shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father and at the right hand of their Redeemer. And then the church will appear as the bride, the Lamb's wife.

****CROWNED****

John Flavel writes...

When we were converted we crowned Christ as KING over our souls. When a king is crowned he is given the right to reign. It is a glorious day when people gladly consent to his reigning and a day of great gladness & Joy (Gary Brady, p.131)

"Consider Christ in the beauty wherein he appears to believers, and with the esteem they have of him, as full of grace and truth, when they acknowledge him, and become subject to him, and he will be seen to be exceedingly stately and lovely" (James Durham, 193)

v.11 - "The meeting of Jesus with a redeemed soul clothed upon with a spiritual body, in the last day, at our entrance into heaven, is represented as the day of our espousals (wedding) with Him. He is waiting to receive us, in his kingly robes and crowned with many crowns; and those who have been on earth a spectacle unto the world shall THEN be viewed with admiration by all the holy angels and the heavenly host (George Burrows, 120)

"These words (in v.11) show the reception awaiting us on our arrival in heaven. While the magnificent cortege just noticed are coming up thru the wilderness, the greater than Solomon, the Prince of Peace, is standing ready to receive us with all the gladness of a marriage festivity" (George Burrows)

HOW will Jesus receive us to heaven?

he is awaiting us with all the glory of heaven, and with the affection of the bridegroom receiving the bride.

it will be a day of marriage festivity; the conflict is over (George Burrows, 346)

""Christ is ever cheerful, then, when sinners are thronging on him by faith, and he is never discontented with that; for that is the day of the gladness of his heart" (James Durham)

"The bridegroom cannot more rejoice over his bride on his marriage-day, than Christ does over poor coming sinners -- and when all his saints are together with him in heaven to behold His glory -- what JOY and GLADNESS will then fill his heart? (John Gill, 133)

***GOSPEL CALL++**

O PROFESSORS! Would you see a beautiful sight? Then get up, and set yourselves to take up Christ, more glorious than Solomon, either on his coronation or marriage-day (to which there is an allusion here) and because few see great comeliness and beauty in Christ, why he should be desired; therefore, she adds what a sight it is she understands. Endeavor to behold, him as he is discernable to believers, when they close with him, and accept of him; if so ye will exercise faith in Him, so as ye may perfect espousals with him, and satisfy him by resting on him, ye will then have a STATELY AND RAVISHING object to look upon, otherwise Christ is not always and to every one, pleasant and cheerful company" (James Durham, 196)

CONCL.:

when we are red hot with passions for love -- we cannot mistake lust for love.

Note a few important distinctions:

LUST:

1. focuses on self (Gal 5.13)
2. leads to frustration (James 4.2)
3. continually wants more (Eph 4.18-19)
4. enslaves self (Rom 6.16, 19)
5. desires to gratify the sinful nature with things contrary to the Spirit (Gal 5.17)
6. excludes Christ (Rom 1.28-29)
7. sins to gratify the desires (Eph 2.3)
8. entices with evil desires (James 1.14)
9. wars against the soul (1 Pet 2.11)
10. avoids commitment and leads to tragedy (Prov 6.25-26)

BUT LOVE>>>>

1. focuses on the other (Phil 2.4)
 2. leads to fulfillment (Eph 3.19-20)
 3. brings satisfaction (Heb 12.11)
 4. encourages self control (1 Cor 9.27)
 5. desires to live by the Spirit (Gal 5.16)
 6. includes Christ (Rom 13.14)
 7. seeks God to gain its desires (Ps 37.4)
 8. prevents sin (Gal 5.14-15)
 9. nourishes the soul (Gal 5.14-15)
 10. commits to one another (Gal 5.13)
- >> GOOD POINTS from Dennis Rigstad (in Akin, 110-112)

+++++

GOSPEL

This passage in Song 3.6-11 is ALL ABOUT the return of the shepherd-king for his bride. he comes with his armies and he is wearing a crown fit for the occasion. tis' magnificent.

>> but it anticipates and prefigures and foreshadows a GREATER WEDDING PROCESSIONAL in Rev 19

He returns from heaven to get his bride (Rev 19.7)

he comes not from the wilderness but from heaven itself

he comes on a white horse

his head is not a simple crown but many crowns because he is KING OF KINGS (Rev 19.12, 16)

the armies of heaven accompany him (Rev 19.14)

he rules the nations w/ an iron scepter (Rev 19.15)

This passage should STIR US, STIMULATE US, STRENGTHEN US, AND SWEETEN OUR HEARTS as we long for the sure to come wedding day that will CONSUMMATE history

> the marriage of the Lamb (Rev 5.9-10)

*JONATHAN EDWARDS WROTE OF THIS DAY....

"The church shall be brought to the full enjoyment of her bridegroom, having ALL tears wiped away from her eyes; and there shall be no distance or absence. She shall then be brought to the entertainments of an eternal wedding feast, and to dwell forever with her Bridegroom; YEA, to dwell eternally in HIS embraces. Then Christ will give her his loves; and she shall drink her fill, yea, she shall swim in the ocean of His love" (in Edwards, "The Church's Marriage," p.22)

[fuller text of Edwards:

But this mutual rejoicing of Christ and his saints will be in its perfection at the time of the saints' glorification with Christ in heaven. For that is the proper time of the saints' entering in with the bridegroom into the marriage, [Mat. 25:10](#). The saints' conversion is rather like the betrothing of the intended bride to the bridegroom before they come together. But at the time of the saints' glorification that shall be fulfilled in [Psa. 45:15](#). "With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought; they shall enter into the king's palace." That is the time when those whom Christ loved, and for whom he gave himself — that he might sanctify and cleanse them, as with the washing of water by the word — shall be presented to him in glory, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. Then the church shall be brought to the full enjoyment of her bridegroom, having all tears wiped away from her eyes. And there shall be no more distance or absence. She shall then be brought to the entertainments of an eternal wedding-feast, and to dwell forever with her bridegroom, yea, to dwell eternally in his embraces. Then Christ will give her his loves. And she shall drink her fill, yea, she shall swim in the ocean of his love.

<http://www.apuritansmind.com/puritan-favorites/jonathan-edwards/sermons/the-churchs-marriage-to-her-sons-and-to-her-god/>

]

>>Thomas Watson -- mystical union between Christ & His Church - <http://www.puritansermons.com/watson/watson3.htm>

No husband loves like Christ. The Lord says to the people, "I have loved you," and they say, "In what way have you loved us?" (Mal. 1:2). But we cannot say to Christ, "In what way have you loved us?" Christ has given real demonstrations of his love to his spouse. He has sent her his Word, which is a love-letter, and he has given her his Spirit, which is a love-token. Christ loves more than any other husband:

- Christ puts a richer robe on his bride: "For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels." (Isa. 61:10). In this robe, God looks on us as if we had not sinned. This robe is as truly ours to justify us, as it is Christ's to bestow on us. This robe not only covers but adorns. Having on this robe, we are reputed righteous, not only as righteous as angels, but as righteous as Christ: "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21).

- Christ gives his bride not only his golden garments but his image. He loves her into his own likeness. A husband may have a dear affection for his wife, but he cannot stamp his own image on her. If she is deformed, he may give her a veil to hide it, but he cannot put his beauty on her. But Christ imparts "the beauty of holiness" to his spouse: "Your fame went out among the nations because of your beauty, for it was perfect through My splendor which I had bestowed on you," (Ezek. 16:14). When Christ marries a soul, he makes it fair: "You are all fair, my love" (Song 4:7). Christ never thinks he has loved his spouse enough till he can see his own face in her.

- Christ discharges those debts which no other husband can. Our sins are the worst debts we owe. If all the angels should contribute money, they could not pay one of these debts, but Christ frees us from these. He is both a Husband and a Surety. He says to justice what Paul said concerning Onesimus, "But if he has wronged you or owes anything, put that on my account." (Philem. 1:18).

- Christ has suffered more for his spouse than ever any husband did for a wife. He suffered poverty and ignominy. He who crowned the heavens with stars was himself crowned with thorns. He was called a companion of sinners, so that we might be made companions of angels. He was regardless of his life; he leaped into the sea of his Father's wrath to save his spouse from drowning.

- Christ's love does not end with his life. He loves his spouse for ever: "I will betroth you to me forever" (Hos. 2:19). Well may the apostle call it "a love which passes knowledge" (Eph. 3:19).

Thomas Watson: Dear Church -- REJOICE IN CHRIST, YOUR BRIDEGROOM/BELOVED:

2. Rejoice in your Husband, Christ. Has Christ honoured you by taking you into the marriage relationship and making you one with himself? This calls for joy. By virtue of the union, believers are sharers with Christ in his riches. It was a custom among the Romans, when the wife was brought home, for her to receive the keys of her husband's house, intimating that the treasure and custody of the house was now committed to her. When Christ brings his bride home to those glorious mansions which he has gone ahead to prepare for her (John 14:2), he will hand over the

keys of his treasure to her, and she shall be as rich as heaven can make her. And shall not the spouse rejoice and sing aloud upon her bed (Psa. 149:5)? Christians, let the times be ever so sad, you may rejoice in your spiritual espousals (Hab. 3:17,18). Let me tell you, it is a sin not to rejoice. You disparage your Husband, Christ. When a wife is always sighing and weeping, what will others say? "This woman has a bad husband." Is this the fruit of Christ's love to you, to reflect dishonour upon him? A melancholy spouse saddens Christ's heart. I do not deny that Christians should grieve for sins of daily occurrence, but to be always weeping (as if they mourned without hope) is dishonourable to the marriage relationship. "Rejoice in the Lord always" (Phil. 4:4). Rejoicing brings credit to your husband. Christ loves a cheerful bride, and indeed the very purpose of God's making us sad is to make us rejoice. We sow in tears, so that we may reap in joy. The excessive sadness and contrition of the godly will make others afraid to embrace Christ. They will begin to question whether there is that satisfactory joy in religion which is claimed. Oh, you saints of God, do not forget consolation; let others see that you do not repent of your choice. It is joy that puts liveliness and activity into a Christian: "the joy of the Lord is your strength" (Neh. 8:10). The soul is swiftest in duty when it is carried on the wings of joy.

(c) How fervent is Christ's love towards you! He loves you in your worst condition, he loves you in affliction. The goldsmith loves his gold in the furnace. He loves you notwithstanding your fears and blemishes. The saints' infirmities cannot wholly remove Christ's love from them (Jer. 3:1). Oh then, how the spouse should be endeared in her love to Christ! This will be the excellence of heaven. Our love will then be like the sun in its full strength. (Thomas Watson)

SONGS

All hail the power of Jesus Name

The Sands of Time are Sinking

- Samuel Rutherford

All glory laud and honor to thee redeemer King

The sands of time are sinking, the dawn of Heaven breaks;
The summer morn I've sighed for—the fair, sweet morn awakes:
Dark, dark hath been the midnight, but dayspring is at hand,
And glory, glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land.

O Christ, He is the fountain, the deep, sweet well of love!
The streams of earth I've tasted more deep I'll drink above:
There to an ocean fullness His mercy doth expand,
And glory, glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land.
Oh! Well it is forever, Oh! well forevermore,
My nest hung in no forest of all this death doomed shore:
Yea, let the vain world vanish, as from the ship the strand,
While glory—glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land.
There the Red Rose of Sharon unfolds its heartsome bloom
And fills the air of heaven with ravishing perfume:
Oh! To behold it blossom, while by its fragrance fanned
Where glory—glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land.
The King there in His beauty, without a veil is seen:
It were a well spent journey, though seven deaths lay between:
The Lamb with His fair army, doth on Mount Zion stand,
And glory—glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land.
Oft in yon sea beat prison My Lord and I held tryst,
For Anwoth was not heaven, and preaching was not Christ:
And aye, my murkiest storm cloud was by a rainbow spanned,
Caught from the glory dwelling in Immanuel's land.
But that He built a Heaven of His surpassing love,
A little new Jerusalem, like to the one above,
“Lord take me over the water” hath been my loud demand,
Take me to my love's own country, unto Immanuel's land.
But flowers need nights cool darkness, the moonlight and the dew;
So Christ, from one who loved it, His shining oft withdrew:
And then, for cause of absence my troubled soul I scanned
But glory shadeless shineth in Immanuel's land.
The little birds of Anwoth, I used to count them blessed,
Now, beside happier altars I go to build my nest:
Over these there broods no silence, no graves around them stand,
For glory, deathless, dwelleth in Immanuel's land.
Fair Anwoth by the Solway, to me thou still art dear,
Even from the verge of heaven, I drop for thee a tear.
Oh! If one soul from Anwoth meet me at God's right hand,
My heaven will be two heavens, In Immanuel's land.
I've wrestled on towards Heaven, against storm and wind and tide,
Now, like a weary traveler that leaneth on his guide,
Amid the shades of evening, while sinks life's lingering sand,
I hail the glory dawning from Immanuel's land.
Deep waters crossed life's pathway, the hedge of thorns was sharp;
Now, these lie all behind me Oh! for a well tuned harp!

Oh! To join hallelujah with yon triumphant band,
Who sing where glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land.
With mercy and with judgment my web of time He wove,
And aye, the dews of sorrow were lustered with His love;
I'll bless the hand that guided, I'll bless the heart that planned
When throned where glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land.
Soon shall the cup of glory wash down earth's bitterest woes,
Soon shall the desert briar break into Eden's rose;
The curse shall change to blessing the name on earth that's banned
Be graven on the white stone in Immanuel's land.
O I am my Beloved's and my Beloved's mine!
He brings a poor vile sinner into His "house of wine."
I stand upon His merit—I know no other stand,
Not even where glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land.
I shall sleep sound in Jesus, filled with His likeness rise,
To love and to adore Him, to see Him with these eyes:
'Tween me and resurrection but Paradise doth stand;
Then—then for glory dwelling in Immanuel's land.
The Bride eyes not her garment, but her dear Bridegroom's face;
I will not gaze at glory but on my King of grace.
Not at the crown He giveth but on His pierced hand;
The Lamb is all the glory of Immanuel's land.
I have borne scorn and hatred, I have borne wrong and shame,
Earth's proud ones have reproached me for Christ's thrice blessed Name:
Where God His seal set fairest they've stamped the foulest brand,
But judgment shines like noonday in Immanuel's land.
They've summoned me before them, but there I may not come,
My Lord says "Come up hither," My Lord says "Welcome home!"
My King, at His white throne, my presence doth command
Where glory—glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land.

SONG OF SOLOMON 4 NOTES

Song of Solomon 4 Notes

Text: Song of Songs 4:1-5:1

Title: "The Wedding Night: The High & Holy & Hot Delight Between Two Lovers"

Theme:

wedding night expressions of love between lovers

it's the godly man & woman that have just gotten married. Now they're in the chamber consummating.

One ancient document (WCF) called this book (and a literal reading): "A hot carnal pamphlet" (in Provan, 328)

>> it is a HOT pamphlet

>> it is in the BIBLE

The Bible approves the wholesomeness, the wonder, the delight of sex.

>> After all, God chose to put this glorious 8-chapter, Divine masterpiece in the MIDDLE OF OUR BIBLE.

If we have a different view, we must repent and make appropriate changes (Provan, 328)

We need to be delivered from the FILTH of our culture -- from the bad sinful ways of thinking and talking which should not even be named among us (Eph 5.3)

THIS SECTION>>

It's private enough that details are left out. It's instructive enough that we learn that this can be -- and must be! -- a worshipful act between one man and one woman in the covenant-bond of marriage.

It's private (between 2 lovers, alone in a chamber)

It's profound (deep, intoxicating love)

It's pointing (pointing to eternal truths of the gospel)

It's passionate (hotly & emotionally passionate)

It's pleasing (satisfying, intoxicating)

It's biblical (it's in the Bible for our instruction, wisdom & enjoyment)

v.1-15 - the HUSBAND speaks words of uncontainable & soul-enflamed LOVE

v.16 - the WIFE speaks a word of invitation & desire & impassioned LOVE

5:1 - the HUSBAND affirms the blessing of indulging in God-given LOVE

5:1b - CONCLUSION: Drink & be intoxicated in the deep waters of divine-love

HOW TO WORSHIP GOD AS A MARRIED COUPLE ENJOYS SEX

1. verbal words of tender & heartfelt affirmation
2. communicate openly, honestly to each other
3. always remember your duty to serve & give to your mate (*not just take*)
4. speak exclusive words of reassurance, tenderness, and commitment
5. indulge in sexual intimacy regularly in the marriage
6. you are to worship God by selflessly serving others & doing what pleases them most
7. speak, pray thru & refocus on the future intimacy with Christ that sex now points to.

DURING LOVEMAKING -- A FEW FEATURES ARE NOTICED:

- they are communicating
- they are serving
- they are selfless
- they are satisfied/fulfilled/intoxicated
- they are affirming/recognizing
- they are inviting, welcoming, enjoying, alluring, leading on
- they are tender, thoughtful, colorful, picturesque in affection.

SEX is *NOT*....

ungodly
dirty
to be shunned
optional
selfish/self-serving/self-gratifying
just physical
unspiritual

SEX IS* ...

godly
worshipful
clean & beautiful
to be embraced & enjoyed
mandated
selfLESS, others-serving/others-gratifying
all-encompassing (physical, emotional, spiritual)
spiritually instructive

12 features that describes a Godly couple engaging in God-glorifying Sex:

1. they make sex a priority (it's important to them -- both)
2. they make time for sex
3. they stay emotionally intimate
4. they know how to touch and what works
5. they keep romance alive by meeting each other's needs
6. they keep their sexual anticipation alive
7. they know how to play and foreplay (both in and out of bed)
8. they know how to talk to each other
9. they remain lovers and friends
10. they maintain a sense of humor and know how to laugh
11. they want to please each other
12. they cherish each other as a sacred and precious gift of God

INTRODUCTION:

- what is the secular view of sex?
 - how do nonbelievers view sex? intimacy?
 - where does it go wrong?

In our society, purity is NOT a virtue. It is mocked and ridiculed. Those who are 'sexually inexperienced' and 'virgins' are looked upon with contempt and scorned, or pitied. This will elicit reactions of GUILT that we can't measure up to others or feelings of HOSTILITY/anger to those who don't conform to their own immoral behavior (Gledhill)

We live in a world that SHOWS ALL and TELLS ALL -- there are immoral images everywhere.

But God's design is different: Show your husband your body; and tell her, O husband, how beautiful she is.

Keep it private, enjoyable, exclusive & frequent.

The world says: "Sex means nothing. It's for you. Get it where you can. Get it however you can. Get as much as you can.:

BUT GOD says: "Sex means unity -- it is spiritual union" (OConnell, 79)

NT view of sex?

Gen 2.24-25

Gen 4.1

Prov 5-7

Matt 19
Eph 5
Heb 13
1 Thess 4

SEX means unity. Indeed, it is an inexplicable act of mutual passion, possession, and submission: I give my total self to you, and you give your total self to me. (ODonnell 81)

Remember a few key intro concepts...

1. Sexuality is part of humanity which God created

Tragically: The sexual act was intended ONLY for the marriage bed and once it is ripped from that context (in any of its forms) --- it slowly but surely becomes the MEANINGLESS MONSTER, the HOLLOW TORMENTER, that it is for so many today (Gary Brady, p.156)

Let us remember: "There is NOTHING so beautiful, continually fresh, and surprising, so full of sweet and perpetual ecstasy as love and lovemaking under the rules of our loving Maker (ODonnell, 76)

We need God's Truth on the Matter, to...

1. engage with culture
2. teach our children
3. protect CFBC's purity
4. retain distinctive witness
5. represent Christ accurately
6. enjoy our marriages

"In an article titled: "What they didn't teach you about sex in sunday school" -- Peggy Fletcher Stack writes: "many people assume the Bible just has one message about sex --- JUST DON'T DO IT.

> but anyone who affirms this obviously has not read the bible -- all of it.

GOD has a lot to say about sex and much of it is good.

Indeed, God is PRO-SEX when it is enjoyed HIS way for HIS glory by HIS design!!!

"SEX as God designed it is good, exciting, intoxicating, powerful, and unifying. The Bible is NOT a book on sex but it does contain a complete theology of sexuality....

purposes for sex

warnings against its misuse

beautiful picture of the real meaning of sex

"THE ONE-FLESH relationship is the 'MOST INTENSE PHYSICAL INTIMACY AND THE DEEPEST SPIRITUAL UNITY POSSIBLE BETWEEN A HUSBAND AND WIFE' (Akin, 115)

Note a few factors:

sexual activity in marriage can affect the Christian life -- even the prayer life (1 Cor 7.5)
both the husband/wife have different desires and needs and these must be met in marriage (1 Cor 7.3)

each must be selfless & serve the other & NOT to serve self (Phil 2.3-5)

Our Great God gave marriage for...

1. knowledge (Gen 4.1)
2. intimate oneness (Gen 2.24)
3. comfort (Gen 24.67)
4. procreation (Gen 1.28)
5. play and pleasure (Song 2 and 4)
6. avoidance of temptation (1 Cor 7.2-5)

NOTE:

the husband is to find satisfaction in his wife (Prov 5.19) and joy in her (Ecc 9.9) and ONLY in her (Gen 2.24)

He must meet her specific needs (Deut 24.5; 1 Pet 3.7)

The WIFE is to be available for him & willing to meet & fulfill his sexual desires (1 Cor 7.3-5), preparation and planning (Song 4.9-11), interest in him & in pleasing him (Song 4.16; 5.2) and sensitivity to specific masculine needs (Gen 24.67)

THE WEDDING NIGHT>>

There is beauty & blessing in the Christian bedroom!

GOD has designed it this way. it's good, holy, encouraged, blessed & wonderful.

Though this chapter is a Spirit-given chapter on Solomon's wedding night with his wife, it gives a portrait of what the Christian bedroom should be like.

>> it's a return to the Garden of Eden

****SONG OF SONGS REVIEW****

ch.1- the bride was insecure and the King lavished her with affection & love & verbal praise

ch.2 - a wall that separated them as the woman was at home in the North & he summoned the Bride to come away with him

ch.3 - she sought the King & finally found the King. Then he came up in the wedding procession to get his Wife.

HOMILETICAL OUTLINES

1. Expressions of love: Husband TO the Bride

note all the expressions:

1. eyes
2. hair
3. teeth
4. lips
5. mouth
6. temples
7. neck
8. breasts
9. whole body
10. lips (v.11)

THE INVITATION (V.8) - pursuit

THE EMOTION (V.9) - passion

THE INTOXICATION (V.10) - pleasure

2. EXpressions of love: the bride TO the husband

SETTING

SWEETNESS

3. Expressions of love: Husband TO the bride (5:1)

lovemaking (5:1a)

satisfying (5:1b)

indulging (5:1c)

**another outline::

expressions of love, delight, pleasure & marital joy ---

1. To the BRIDE
2. To the GROOM
3. To the COUPLE

-----OR:

1. Praise (4:1-15)
2. Invitation (4:16)
3. Response (5:1a)

4. Joy (5:1b)

**another outline: (from Jack Deere)

1. the beauty of the Beloved (4:1-7)
2. the request of the King (4:8)
3. the praise of her love (4:9-11)
4. the praise of her purity (4:12-15)
5. the consummation of the marriage (4:16-5:1)

***An outline by Danny Akin**

1. Express your LOVE for your mate (4:1-7)
2. Express your DESIRE for your mate (4:8-11)
3. Express your AVAILABILITY for your mate (4:12-16)
4. Express your SATISFACTION in your mate (4:16-5:1)

Structure/Setting/Notes

4:1-5:1 is the wedding night

In song of songs 4 it is the only place in Scripture where the naked woman is praised and admired without restriction (LaCocque, in Longman, p.140)

MOST of the SONG is the woman speaking -- and yet MOST of this chapter (on the wedding night) is the man speaking. He is praising her, longing for her, satisfied in her, exclusively happy in her, and sexually intoxicated with her!

++ BIG IDEA:

By GOD's design, sexual intimacy is meant for the marriage bed and is to be kept pure, so that in its fullness it brings JOY to the couple and reflects the purity of Christ's love for His church" (Akin, p.115)

COMMENTARY NOTES:

vv.1-7 --- speak of the bride has now come to the GROOM.
The time for consummation has arrived.

> and: a godly husband will BLESS HIS WIFE WITH HIS WORDS! He is conscious of affirming & praising her!

3x in this section does he tell her that she is beautiful (v.1), very beautiful (v.1), and absolutely beautiful (v.7)

4:1

the first one to speak on the wedding night was the man (Solomon) and his words praised the woman's beauty.

3x on this wedding night he tells her that she is beautiful (v.1, 2x and v.7)

This one that the man adores is not the *generic* beauty who fulfills a requirement of lust, but rather an individual, a person who is LIKE NO OTHER. She is special & significant, unique among ALL other women (Richard Hess)

>> and the man will know HER (and no other woman) -- in every way possible (Hess, 125)

v.1 & 7 both contain Yafe -- beautiful --- INCLUSIO/envelope construction.

THIS is why it's SO important: DON't cohabit, Don't fornicate, Don't look at porn, Don't create a standard of beauty that is NOT YOUR SPOUSE and then compare your spouse to that 'standard of beauty'. have your SPOUSE be your standard of beauty. It's the biblical principle: ONE WOMAN MAN --- the Bible is against lust & comparisons.

HUSBANDS must not compare their wives with other women

the standard of beauty is your wife.

*This is one of the most devastating effects of porn --- you lust after people, compare your spouse with them.

Again -- the standard is always your spouse (Mark Driscoll)

What's going on?? "The man is touching her heart (mind) through her ear. He is winning & wooing her heart by showering her with his passions & delights & love ONLY for her.

This teaches us a good lesson ---

MEN need to spend TIME with their wives. and they must TALK to their wives (Akin, 118)

*ALso -- not only is there a husband's role to bless his wife with the words. but the WIFE has a role to bless her husband with her body (vv.1-7)

> the woman is a culture of the ear

> the man is a creature of the eye --- he is moved by what he sees

WOMEN in the ANE were not ordinarily to wear a veil except at the time of their wedding, and then removed it i the wedding chamber.

The BRIDE in biblical fashion is veiled (v.1)

- > but now the lover is free (and encouraged!) to enjoy her physical charms.
- > the veil both HIDES and ENHANCES her beauty

The result is an erotic physical inventory of the details of her beauty.

> these images may seem "foreign"/ and humorous to us moderns -- but even then, the power of this bit of love poetry is moving.

THE BODY is not evil -- but good & worthy of praise!!

Solomon is gonna admire 8 different parts of her body

Solomon begins with her EYES ...

So Solomon, seeing her eyes behind her veil he said that they were "doves"

Doves were known for their tranquility in the ANE and since one's eyes are 'windows of the soul' reflecting their character -- Solomon is praising the woman for her calm and innocent character.

THEN HE GOES TO HER HAIR>>

Her HAIR is like a flock of goats coming from Mt Gilead

- > hardly sounds like a compliment -- but it was!

SEEN from a distance the dark hair of Pelstinian goats was beautiful in the sunset as a flock was descending from the mountains.

The dark hair had the same beautiful quality.

Mt Gilead was a mountain range east of the Jordan River in Gilead (East of the Jordan), known for its fertile pastures and many flocks.

<APPLY> note the importance of verbal affirmation & love

vv.1-6 -- there is only ONE occurrence of "I" -- all the rest is the man's absolute obsession with his bride and her body and her love.

- > totally selfless, others-centered
- > marital love must always be caught up with the OTHER person & never self-pleasing, self-focused, self-gratifying

4:2

everything mentioned here -- teeth, hair, lips, cheeks, bodily features was veiled before -- but NOW IT IS HIS (Kinlaw)

TEETH -- white andn perfectly matched
> each has its twin

In a sense: it's as if he is saying to her: "your teeth are white, and you even have all of them!" >> it's a picture of sheep coming up from a washing (glistening white)

4:3

LIPS -- red and thin, were like a scarlet ribbon

The word for lips is a rare/unusual hebrew word that we get the word "SPEAK" from --- no doubt her mouth notonly looked attractive but spoke honestly, kindly, and winningly.

>> does that describe YOUR lips?

RIBBON is lit. "thread" referring to the perfect outline and delicately formed shape of her lips

TEETH and LIPS made her mouth BEAUTIFUL.

TEMPLES -- probably including her cheeks -- were reddish and sweet like pomegranite fruit.

it speaks of the face (behind the veil, v.1)

he is praising her face & head

it speaks probably of her "complexion" --- the fruit is a sort of reddish/orange (Longman, 146)

We have the idea even from these verses (vv.1-3) that her modesty is protected.

4:4

Tower of David -- may have been the tower of the King's palace.

>> may not seem like a compliement to us to speak of her neck like a LONG, FAT NECK -- like a linebacker's neck on a football team! (yikes!)

> the point is not so much that she has a long, fat, thick neck -- but that it is grand, strong, dignified, perhaps elegant (Longman, p.146)

It may have been built or used by David for military purposes -- or built by Solomon and given David's name.

Hanging SHIELDS on the tower was symbolic of the warriors' allegiance to and valor for a particular king or country

> all the hanging shields may resemble the jewelry that a woman may wear

her NECK is like the tower of David means that Solomon was emphasizing NOT SO MUCH HER NECK'S SYMMATRY AND BEAUTY as much as he was making a statement about HER *PERSON* -- she had a queenly bearing and appearance as awesome and majestic as King David's tower.

The long neck made her stately in appearance -- like a prominent nose, seems to have been a mark of beauty in the ANE (Kinlaw)

4:5

her BREASTS are like two fawns -- he compares their softness, *not the color* or form.

Fawn/Gazelle --- they are known for the variety of qualities, including speed, sleekness, sensuality.

> they were attractive in form.

the fawn was a youthful deer, so the breasts of a young woman are probably mentioned here

Looking on the soft coat of a little fawn makes a person want to stroke it.

Solomon wanted his bride to know that her soft and gentle beauty had kindled his desire for her and he wished to express that desire with his carresses of her body.

Her breasts had the grace & beauty that evoked tenderness like that produced by two fawns at play (Kinlaw)

The idea? SHE IS HIS; and HE IS HERS.

4:6

the mountin of myrrh -- hill of frankincense --- refer to THE BREASTS of the woman.

The man talks about going to his mountain of myrrh and hill of incense -- he's referring to the breasts he has just described and the body that awaits him. The night gives covering & invitation for their love (Kinlaw)

>> he will not leave her but he will COME TO HER (Hess)

The point of the comparison not in the *visual* so much as in the realms of function and value. Myrrh and incense were used to perfume the body as well as the bedroom in order to make the person and surroundings more attractive --- and so they would give their love to each other.

MYRRH -- and incense --- were not native to Palestine. Both were LUXURY items that had to be imported at a considerable cost.

*A mountain of myrrh and a HILL o frankincense would have been greatly valued. THUS>> to Solomon, his Bride's breasts were attractive and of great value to him! (Jack Deere)

Again: "It's as if the man -- having joyfully praised one part of the lover's body after another, he finally reaches the breasts and can go no farther. A torrent of sensual images and passions come cascading down upon him as he determines in his mind to spend the night with her and to realize the love that he has imagined" (R. Hess, 137)

It all begins with "cool of the day" -- an echo back to Gen when God walked with Adam & Eve in the cool of the day.

> it's a way of speaking of the holy & sacred act about to occur with the holy & sacred body of the woman that God has made (Hamilton, 87)

We need to use the reverence & decorum Solomon uses --- with reverence due to ALL women (p.87)

CONSIDER: one day we will be with Christ & gaze on HIS beauty & he will gaze on our beauty (as His Church).

But even now -- the KING is enthralled by your beauty; honor him, for He is your LORD (Ps 45.11) -->> messianic psalm.

all of this section leads to v.7>> summary.

4:7

She is altogether beautiful

- > totally caught up with his bride
- > even when others may have not seen her that beautiful, when society didn't affirm her beauty

my darling

- > my companion
- > my friend
- > my COMPANION & my COMMITTED one & my DELIGHT

There is NO BLEMISH in you (no flaw) -- NO physical defect.

5:2 - he calls her: 'my perfect [flawless] one'

no BLEMISH, defect, imperfection, error, wrong, uncleanness
the hebrew word speaks of NO physical imperfection.

>> often used of sacrificial animals who could have NO defect (Lev 22.20-21;
Deut 17.1) (Longman)

Solomon praises 8 parts of this woman's body -- eyes, hair, teeth, lips, mouth, temples, neck, breasts

He is committed to HER and ONLY her. No one else can compare! None is like her.

*CONTEMPORARY application+++++

there may be some woman/wives today who feel uncomfortable about their own appearance. But remember: initially the daughters of Jerusalem did not seem to regard this woman as a beautiful woman. Unlike the other ladies, she was *not* fair skinned --- she was dark-skinned (fair skin was a sign of beauty)

BUT in her lovers eyes she was beautiful -- even though she did not meet the 'objective standards' of beauty in her society. IN OTHER WORDS -- though few people in any age meet their own particular culture's standard of beauty, a woman is beautiful in the eyes of her lover simply because he loves *her*.

Every husband who genuinely loves his wife can say: "TO ME you are beautiful and there is *no flaw* in you (Jack Deere)

vv.1-7 -- these verses only have one "I" word --- in other words, the entire account is focused on the BRIDE and HER BEAUTY.

The CONCLUSION? SEX -- when properly enjoyed within marriage, draws attention AWAY FROM oneself to one's mate, to HIS or her needs and pleasures and desires.

second, the metaphors and imagery here that Solomon uses in praising her were drawn from the agricultural, outdoors setting -- doves, goats, sheep, pomegranates, fawns, gazelles, mountains, hills.

>> Solomon's bride -- having been raised in the country of Lebanon -- understood & appreciated these images.

> This kind of language would have created a sense of peace and security in her on the anxious night when her new life began with a new man and new surroundings and new love.
(Jack Deere)

****GOSPEL****

Dear friend: if this young newly wed Bride is described as faultless, how much more can YOU, O child of the beloved King, be described as faultless.

You and I are made beautiful through Christ's body and blood on the cross.

We are -- literally & fully -- altogether beautiful!

The bride has a husband who views her as perfect, flawless, 'with no imperfection/blemish' (4:7)

>> Indeed, we as the bride of Christ have such a Bridegroom.

We are redeemed and purchased with his own blood (Acts 20.28)

we are made new in Christ, our Divine Bridegroom, and he makes us holy, cleansing us with the washing of water with the word ... to present to himself the church in all her glory having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing ... but that she'd be holy & blameless (Eph 5.26-27)

THIS IS HOW our BRIDEGROOM views us thru the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ

BUT we are only glorious & beautiful & dazzling in the eyes of God by the sovereign, irresistible, saving, life-giving, beautifying work of the SPIRIT (John 3; John 6)

HOW great and HOW REAL is this love of Christ for His BRIDE???

Robert Saucy says:

"The love of Christ for His Bride far surpasses anything known in the human level ... Never has a husband loved as Christ loved the Church. For Christ did not love those worthy of love, but sinners and enemies (Rom 5.8-10). ... Christ loved the church NOT because it was perfectly lovable but IN ORDER TO MAKE IT SUCH" (in Akin, 128)

4:8

Calls her "MY BRIDE" -- 5x (vv.8-12) also confirms that ch.4 speaks of their "wedding NIGHT"

The idea of "COME WITH ME" -- is simply "iti' -- with me...with me... twice repeated, simple prepositional phrase used as an invitation.

HE wants her with him

There are MANY verbal & biblical echoes back to Gen 2.24-25
he longs to become one flesh with her & they are naked & not ashamed (Gen 2.25)

"WITH ME" -- just sums up his desire.

For the first time he calls her his BRIDE = the word for "bride" refers to the married status of the woman, particularly on the sexual element presupposed in the status as the completed one.

THE SECTION is marked by:

1. invitation (v.8)
2. captivation (v.9-11)

Lebanon -- far north -- come with me

> the idea of: LEAVE YOUR HOME and your family -- and come enjoy new life with new marriage with new love & new allegiance

**Marriage: a leaving of old home/family/allegiance/priorities & establishing and making NEW ones

NEW priority in life is the spouse (before work, kids, sports, money, every thing else)

Amana -- Senir and Hermon

Amana -- the eastern part of the Anti-lebanon range of mountains facing Damascus

Senir and Hermon are two peaks in the Mt Hermon range (see Deut 3.9)

these ranges in Lebanon can reach above 10,000 ft in height at the northern end (visible far from the south)

SO HE calls her to come away with him & leave Lebanon where he would have no access to her.

From the dens of lions or haunts of leopards -- she did not live here -- but it REPRESENTS fearful places/circumstances.

> so he is asking her to come to HIM -- to join him in a place of safety, namely (HIS EMBRACE!) (Longman, 149)

the emphasis is "WITH ME... WITH ME"

HE is asking his bride to leave her thoughts of home and put her fears behind her in order to concentrate COMPLETELY on him -- as he had done for her.

>> Gen 2.24 --- LEAVE FATHER, CLEAVE TO EACH OTHER, WEAVE TOGETHER.

the idea:

the beauty of this woman is overwhelming

she has captured his heart

he wants her to be HIS forever.

4:9

v.9 begins another direct address to the woman. He tells how she has STOLEN his heart!!! (Hess, 141)

The idea of heart beating faster is an emphatic/intensified form (Longman)

He is ravished (Lloyd Carr)

his is aroused, excited -- and passions surface

this speaks of the effect of the bride's love was SO powerful that even a glance from her beautiful eyes or even seeing an article of jewelry or clothing associated with her was enchanting.

5x he calls her "my sister" because in the ANE the "sister" was an affectionate term for one's WIFE (Jack Deere, 1018)

"SISTER" --- it is well established now that the use of 'sister' as a term of endearment between an intimate couple was very common in the ANE (particularly in Egypt) (Longman, 151).

> there is nothing to hide. Near & dear & affectionate with each other.

He is caught up with her that he longs for her

He longs PASSIONATELY

He longs EXCLUSIVELY

He longs REPEATEDLY

He longs EMOTIONALLY

He longs HAPPILY

He longs VERBALLY

He longs INTIMATELY

4:10

how beautiful is your *love* --- dodim --- the hebrew word for "love" --- used for physical expressions of romantic love.

the central expression of physical love is assessed as "delightful" and "better" than wine.
(Hess)

This verse may be: "How delightful are your kisses" -- how much more pleasing are your caresses than wine"

>> her physical expressions of love had a more refreshing and intoxicating effect on him than wine, just as HIS expressions had an earlier affect on her.

Wine controls, it intoxicates, it often controls a person, it can make a person want more & more & more

>> and this is what the bride's wife does for Solomon

Why compare her love BETTER THAN WINE? SPURGEON GIVES REASONS....

1. because it can be enjoyed without question
2. it would never turn sour
3. it would never produce ill effects
4. it would produce a sacred exhilaration (Spurgeon, in Akin, p.122)

Even her *perfume* added to the excitement of their love.

NOTE all the senses here = sight, touch, smell, and sound were ALL involved in the wedding night (lovemaking) (Jack Deere, 1018)

HOW can this be said of us? How Can CHRIST say this?

Because all our sins are covered by His blood -- which he has now poured out on the cross. HE will make us perfect (Gary Brady)

4:11

THE WOMAN gave herself freely with joy to the man. She was NOT passive in the lovemaking
Her kisses were as desirable as MILK an as Sweet at HONEY

"honey" -- it's an image expressing her lips dripping the best honey -- image of sweetness in which the male can become lost.

Honey -- was the major source of sugar for the ancient Israelite diet

Milk and honey together are probably alluding to the fact that Canaan was a land of MILK and HONEY (Ex 3.8) --- and just as the land rich in agricultural prosperity was a source of blessing and joy to the people, SO HER KISSES WERE A SOURCE OF JOY TO HIM. (Jack Deere)

these are delights to be savored and consumed; they are items reminding of us of the promised land (Provan, 319)

The lover describes a source of sweetness and richness below his partner's tongue (Hess)

ALL of this speaks of the smell, fragrance & inviting & motivating environment & passions for physical intimacy (Longman, 155)

4:12

NOTE: "one of the greatest gifts a person can give in marriage is exclusive and exciting sex" (Danny Akin, 122)

Hear how crystal clear the Bible is on this topic:

all sex outside of marriage is sin -- this is premarital sex, extra-marital sex, unnatural sex (homosexuality).

God says: "RUN/FLEE from sexual immorality" (1 Cor 6.18)

vv.12-15 is a sort of connected section

v.12 - garden locked up...spring enclosed...sealed fountain

> language speaking of inaccessibility, she is closed, she is unavailable, sealed up.

> the king is obviously praising her virginity.

He calls her a "GARDEN"

1. she was altogether different from other men in the world (they are wilderness, she is lush)
2. she was sweet and beautiful to his mind
3. she is a glorious delight to walk & journey through
4. she is useful and she bears fruit and flowers

Gardens were walled to keep out intruders.

Springs were covered

Fountains were sealed on the sides with clay to indicate private ownership

>> SO ALSO -- she had kept herself "sealed" from ALL other men, thus preserving her purity for her husband.

> she saved herself as a precious treasure that belonged ONLY to him

****YOUNG PEOPLE:** Save yourself for marriage. **ALL MARRIED PEOPLE:** Stay faithful IN YOUR marriage.

****v.12 shows the BLESSING OF A VIRGIN WHO SAVES HERSELF FOR THE ONE MAN IN MARRIAGE.**

Fight for purity always!

Save your virginity passionately!

Enjoy your spouse unreservedly (holding nothing back!)

Worship your God intentionally.

SO THEN, v.12 speaks of the girl's privacy, her exclusivity, her sole allegiance for her husband. NONE other can enter, or enjoy, or view, or touch her.

> it is "Sexual exclusiveness" -- she is unavailable to ANYONE -- except him! (Gledhill)

> POINT? Keep your garden locked until the wedding night!

>>>GOSPEL

consider how the Lord Jesus speaks of us as a GARDEN LOCKED... we are inclosed all around. It's not OUR faithfulness -- but the wall around us that prevents us from being lost & damned.

1. we are locked & enclosed by the Father's everlasting election
2. we are locked & enclosed by the Son's propitiating love
3. we are locked & enclosed by the Spirit's effectual call

>> we must keep ourselves locked & pure till Christ returns.

>> we must be PURE and HOLY for our Bridegroom.

4:13

v.13-14 -- these verses extend the metaphor of the garden where Solomon conveys to his beloved wife Just how much he values her purity! (Jack Deere)

She was like a rich exotic garden -- with rare and valuable plant life.
> this garden was valuable, attractive, desirable

This woman is like a garden --- beautiful flowers, many kinds, many sizes, many scents
all flowers have roots
all flowers need the light of the sun
all flowers need water & dew for growth & health
all flowers are in danger of weeds
all flowers need pruning & digging
all flowers GROW
all flowers are DIFFERENT -- some are brilliant and showy, but others are hidden, small,
short.
(JC Ryle, the Upper Room)

4:14

describing this garden...

Henna -- a shrub with white flowers; its leaves provide a reddish dye that is used to color hair

Nard - fragrant ointment from a plant native to India (mark 14.3; John 12.3)

fragrant oil

Saffron - a powder from the pistils of a plant in the crocus family ('rose')

purple flowers and produces an oil that gives a sweet and spicy floral scent

Calamus -- possibly sweet cane

sweet cane oil, which has a warm, woody, spicy oror

Cinnamon, from the bark of a tall tree

the aromatic bark of any of a number of trees

Myrrh and aloes -- plants native to an island in the Red Sea whose partially decayed wood gives off a fragrance

Spices -- perfumes in this context

**ALL OF THIS shows that Solomon values his bride for her pleasing attractiveness
and all her scents, tastes, sights, smells.

The idea is that a garden could contain all of these pieces ONLY in fantasy or by transplanting ,
so only the wealthiest could afford it (Hess, 150)

4:15

this is water as before was inaccessible and stored up (she was a virgin & pure) -- but now the water is ACCESSIBLE and available to Solomon.

WHEN the woman surrendered her virginity to her husband, she was NO less pure for doing so.

>> ALL WOMEN: Save yourselves for your husband & him alone.

Purity and pleasure go hand in hand when it comes to sex (Danny Akin, 124)

NOTE the progression in v.15:

a garden spring...

a well of fresh water...

streams flowing from Lebanon

>> all speaks of the progression and indication that his beloved MORE than quenched Solomon's desire for her and fully satisfied him.

As mountain streams are refreshing so SHE refreshed him!!! (Jack Deere, 1020)

With v.15 the man ends his long, flowing speech to the woman. He has expressed intense desire for the woman & for the intimate union with her.

>> NOW v.16 she will respond to him and his longing.

ALL OF THIS can serve to show the groom's love for the bride.

>> how much more does Christ have CHIEF SUPREME care and delight in His Church (Richard Sibbes, 11)

>> the church is the place of God's delight (Richard Sibbes)

>> PProv 15.8 - the upright are His delight

4:16

the language is strong, enticing, figurative, poetic, and wooing.

She invites her man to ENTER her garden, make it his own, and enjoy its fruits.

OUTLINING the section:

1. there is HUMAN SATISFACTION in marital consummation (4:16-5:1a)

2. there is DIVINE SATISFACTION in marital consummation (5:1b)

NOW the woman has a request that the 'winds blow on her garden' -- that is, HER OWN BODY (v.12, 15) = this is a delicate, poetic invitation to her lover to fully possess her.

May my beloved (man) COME INTO his garden. >> speaking of sexual intimacy.

> "there is no doubt about the fact that she invites him to sexual union of the most intimate type" (Longman, 158)

She wished to be his with her charms as available as fruit on a tree (v.13)

She has a desire for her lover and for his appearance. SO she calls the winds to stir up passions through the circulation of her fragrance. In this way the young man will be reminded of the desirability of her garden and enter it (Hess, 153)

Note how all of this has led up to this point by GOOD COMMUNICATION.

> the sexual part of the marital relationship is not divorced from communication, tenderness, patience, and selflessness

GOSPEL:::>>>

Note how SHE had such a great love & desire for her Bridegroom.

>> this must be our great love & desire for our Bridegroom also.

5:1

With utter exhilaration Solomon declared that their marriage was now complete & consummated.

He had totally enjoyed his garden (v.12, 15-16) --- that is, his BRIDE.

POSSESSING her was more delightful than gathering myrrh in a garden, as sweet as eating honey, as enjoyable as drinking the best WINE and MILK (Jack Deere).

The honey, wine, milk all describe abundance in food and drink -- and its the best and most desirable produce of the land (R Hess)

Indeed -- the senses of taste and touch are overloaded with the produce described here. SWEETNESS, intoxication, and the rich taste of creamy goat's milk ALL describe a full indulgence.

EAT, O FRIENDS, DRINK>>>

the NIV margin attributes the last part of this verse to the 'friends' of the couple (maybe companions, associates, relatives, friends).

"This unit is a problem to most commentators. because of the question we must ask: WHO IS SPEAKING???? and TO WHOM are they speaking???"

It may in fact be better to see this as GOD HIMSELF speaking to the couple (because it's unlikely that others were in the bedroom when they consummated).

Only the creator would have been a "guest" on that occasion.

Since their love was from GOD it was fitting that HE approve it.

HE invited them to enjoy sexual love in marriage as if it were a banquet (eat...drink...)

THIS clearly indicates God's approval of marriage, which He designed in the Garden of Eden (Gen 2.24)

>> from jack Deere, p.1020)

it is GOD who is the "unseen but present guest in the bedroom" (Akin, 125)

He observes ALL that happens and he tells what he thinks about it.

>> AND HERE he believes and speaks that is a GOOD THING (Akin, 123)

Craig Glickman writes on this:

"God lifts His voice and gives hearty approval to the entire night. He vigorously endorses and affirms the love of this couple. He takes pleasure in what has taken place. He is glad they have drunk deeply of the fountain of love. Two of His own have experienced love in all the beauty and fervor and purity that He intended for them. In fact, He urges them on to more ... That is His attitude toward the giving of their love to each other. And by the way, that's also His attitude toward couples today (in Akin, p.126)

1. Sexual Love must be FREQUENT
2. Sexual Love must be SELFLESS
3. Sexual Love must be WORSHIPFUL
4. Sexual Love must be HOLY

Remember: the woman NOW belongs to the man and the man to the woman.

>> this changes ALL other personal relationships.

EAT...DRINK...

The language here refers to intoxication -- though it can be used simply to refer to drinking without restraint.

EAT -- and drink -- lovemaking is already likened to wine and intoxication, so its appropriate here to build on this image with more words for 'drinking'

THE IDEA = it implies feasting upon one another's bodies in the satisfaction of sexual desire. (Hess)

GOSPEL>>>

Christians look forward to the time of reunion with their Messiah & full enjoyment of salvation -- portrayed as a wedding feast of eating & drinking (Matt 8.11 & Rev 19.7, 9)

It's the picture of Eden - Gen 2-3

** Let us often think of this nearness between Christ & us --- if we have once given ourselves to him, he gives of Himself to us.

If you have anything evil to say of your sins, then go to Christ

Devil: if you have anything evil to say of me, then go to my Husband (Richard Sibbes)

Christ delights himself in his love to his church, and his church delights herself in her love to Christ. Christ's delight was to be with the sons of men, and ours is to be with Him (Richard Sibbes, p.59-60)

The EROTIC pleasures of sexual love are NOT a capitulation to sin (it's not dirty and wicked and sleezy)

Sexual love in its proper context of committed marital love remains a sign of God's good world and those elements of it that remain forever (Hess, 159)

****Why all of this????***

Because SEX creates a hunger for something infinitely more powerful, beautiful, pleasurable, and satisfying --->> GOD!

Sex is great. But it's not a god.

Sex is wonderful. But it's a gift from God.

Tremper Longman writes:

“God gave us sex to arouse and satisfy a hunger for intimacy. Sexuality arouses a desire for union. Sexual consummation satisfies the desire, but it also mysteriously creates a hunger for more --- not only for more sex, but also for a taste of ULTIMATE UNION, the final reconciliation with God.” (in ODonnell, 83)

>> So sexual intimacy is a *precursor*, a *foretaste*, a *picture* of future intimacy to come!
> it is designed by God to be a pointer to the LORD of love -- in whom all longings are ultimately satisfied.

SEX is the sign-post (the banner, the billboard, the illustration) --- that drives us to God's intimate presence & union with His people (ODonnell, 83)

SONGS

The Bride of Christ
to the tune of: There is a fountain filled with blood

1. O church of God, thou spotless bride,
On Jesus' breast secure;
No stains of sin in thee abide,
Thy garments all are pure.
Of unity and holiness
Thy gentle voice doth sing;
Of purity and lowliness
Thy songs in triumph ring.

2. Thou lovely virgin, thou art fair,
Thy mothers only child;
Thy heav'nly music let me hear,
Thy voice is sweet and mild.
Thy cheeks adorned with jewels bright,
Thy neck with chains of gold;
Unfurl thy banners in thy might,
Thy graces rich unfold.

3. She stood attired in spotless dress
The early morning through,
And then into the wilderness
On eagle's wings she flew.
And nourished there from heav'nly clime,
She lived for many years;
Now, in this blessed evening time
Her glory reappears.

4. She leans upon an Arm of love
No sin her garments taints;

They're made of linen wov'n above—
The righteousness of saints.
The marriage of the Lamb is come,
His bride all ready stands;
The Bridegroom soon will take her home
To dwell in heav'nly lands.

WILLIAM GADSBY

1

The Father, in eternal love,
His heart upon Zion did set;
Her name he enrollèd above;
Nor will he fair Zion forget,
He chose her in Jesus his Son,
And gave her to him for a wife;
Who freely accepted the same,
Though knowing she'd cost him his life.

2

He saw her polluted with sin,
Enveloped in debt and distress;
Determined her heart he would win,
Engagèd to save her by grace,
He took all her debts and her woes,
And for her was surely made sin;
He fought and he conquered her foes,
And with him she shall live and reign.

SINNERS MARRIED TO CHRIST

by William Gadsby

1

My soul with holy wonder views
The love the Lord the Saviour shows,
To wretched, dying man;
So strange, so boundless is his grace,
He takes the vilest of our race
With him to live and reign.

2

He'll charm them with a holy kiss,
And make them know what union is;
He'll draw them to his breast;
A smiling eye upon them cast,

Which brings them to his feet in haste,
Each singing, "I am blest!

3

"I'm blest, I'm blest, for ever blest;
My rags are gone, and I am dressed
In garments white as snow;
I'm married to the Lord the Lamb,
Whose beauties I can ne'er explain,
Nor half his glory show."

BEFORE THE THRONE

Before the throne of God above
I have a strong and perfect plea
A great High Priest whose name is love
Who ever lives and pleads for me
My name is graven on His hands
My name is written on His heart
I know that while in heav'n He stands
No tongue can bid me thence depart
No tongue can bid me thence depart

VERSE 2

When Satan tempts me to despair
And tells me of the guilt within
Upward I look and see Him there
Who made an end of all my sin
Because the sinless Savior died
My sinful soul is counted free
For God the Just is satisfied
To look on Him and pardon me
To look on Him and pardon me

VERSE 3

Behold Him there, the risen Lamb
My perfect, spotless Righteousness
The great unchangeable I AM
The King of glory and of grace
One with Himself, I cannot die
My soul is purchased by His blood
My life is hid with Christ on high
With Christ my Savior and my God
With Christ my Savior and my God

Song of Solomon 5 | CFBC sermon

TEXT: Song of Solomon 5

Title: The Troubles & Growth in Your Marriage Relationship

Song of Songs 5:2-8:4 is the maturation/growth in marriage

It's called: "THE LIFE OF LOVE" by Kinlaw

The Bible is very truthful, honest & real. "We have now entered LIFE after the honeymoon in a FALLEN WORLD" (ODonnel, 86)

INTRO:

JC Ryle is correct: "Marriage is, after all, the union between two sinners, and not two angels"

> But in Christ we are two sinners saved by grace & empowered by the Spirit (2 Cor 5.17-18)

Elizabeth Elliott wrote:

When sinful people live in the same world, and especially when they work in the same office and sleep in the same bed, they sin against each other. Troubles arise. Some of those troubles are very serious and not subject to easy solutions. BUT GOOD NEWS? God knows ALL about them, and knew about them long before they happened. He made provision for them!" (in Danny Akin, 142)

The intimacy, joy and physical desire of the wedding night DID NOT FADE as if often common in many marriages nowadays. They nourished their life together so that the joy of their married life increased rather than decreased.

>> they did have problems, even potentially harmful ones

THIS SECTION (ch.5) opens with the problem of indifference & offers a paradigm for the successful resolution of a serious marital problem (Jack Deere)

We are SUCH flawed and fragile creatures, and interpersonal relationships contain such subtleties. With our joys quickly come fears. Often they surface in dreams, arising from a sense of failure or fear of inadequacy (Kinlaw, 1232)

Because of Sin ALL marriages will experience hardship. Because of the gospel, biblical marriages will be filled with persistent love, radical grace, true repentance, lavish forgiveness, and joyful reconciliation (Daniel Akin, 130)

*REMEMBER: "What takes place OUTSIDE the bedroom will influence what takes place INSIDE the bedroom" (Danny Akin, 130)

=====OUTLINES>>>

or:

hesitancies in marriage
praises in marriage

separating of heart (5:2-8)
renewal of affection (5:9-16)

or:

1. PROBLEM: Wife's indifference & husband's absence (5:2-8)
2. PASSION: Wife's admiration & attractiveness for her husband (5:9-16)

or:

HUSBAND: The Initiative of Lovemaking

WIFE: The excuse she Presented

HUSBAND: The continuation of pursuit

WIFE: The moment is lost (5-6)

he departed

she searched

she is longing

WIFE: The admiration of Solomon

head (gold)

Hair (black dates)

Eyes (doves)

Cheeks (balsam)

Lips (lilies)

Hands (rods of gold)

Abdomen (ivory)

Legs (pillars)

*Appearance like Lebanon

Mouth (sweetness)

THIS IS MY

Beloved

and

Friend (16)

++HOMILETICAL OUTLINE++

After the honeymoon & in the marriage, there is maturation that happens --- to everyone!

1. CONFLICT in the marriage (2-8)

The Pursuit
The Excuse
The Conflict
The Change

2. GROWTH in the marriage (9-16)

the wife's part: what she does & says (the husband's part, next week in ch.6)
praise his uniqueness (10)
note his attractiveness (11-16)
cultivate his friendship (16)

=====

Summary of the SONG of SONGS so far...

ch.1- the bride was ashamed of her appearance & the King assured her & affirmed her beauty

ch.2- she was separated from him & the King chased her, summoned her & sought her to get away together

ch.3 - the king comes up & the wedding procession happens!

ch.4- the wedding night & they consummate, love & adore each other physically, emotionally & sexually

ch.5- the relationship between the King & His Bride has conflict & she longs for her groom!

=====

INTRO / NOTES/ BACKGROUND

In this last major section of the book, the married love of Solomon and the Shulammitte is in view.¹¹⁴ This stage of love is not without its share of problems. However, the king and his bride worked through them, and these chapters provide insight into dealing effectively with basic marriage difficulties. (Constable)

Guard from Apathy/laziness, selfishness in the Marriage:

Guard diligently from indifference, withdrawal, apathy, separation, lukewarmness of heart

2 sinners coming together is BOUND to bring conflict.

*Conflict is not necessarily sinful.

*how we respond TO and how we respond IN that conflict is what can be sinful.

*selfishness, laziness, self-centeredness, live by feelings and not by truth,
disobedience, accusations,
sinful expectations, control, fear, anxiety, self-love
>> these are all sinful & must be PUT OFF by Christ's power & thru the power of
the Spirit & replaced w/ godliness

Iain Provan writes: "The SELF giving that human love thus involves is OF COURSE only a reflection of the SELF GIVING love of God (p.342)

"The commitment we make in marriage, rather, is a warm, passionate commitment, which cannot rest content with anything less than intimacy and which therefore works hard at problems even while recognizing the limitations that all of us face in resolving some of them. THE FOUNDATION OF THIS HARD WORK MUST ALWAYS BE SELF GIVING LOVE (Provan, 346)

True love seeks and pursues and runs after the lover. True love never gives up.
There is no fear in love (1 John 4.18)

He pursued her

She resisted and made an excuse

He lost heart and went out of the room

She then searched for him but he was gone

She went on a hunt to find him & met mean men

Then she describes his excellencies to her friends

When the impulse of love exists, pursue it & satisfy each other.

Ch.5 -- the couple has married and celebrated the wedding night. But then real life sets in. TROUBLE ENTERS. There are problems that set in. *But with this shift from the wedding night to the troubles in marriage, we see some 'very helpful and practical wisdom for ALL as we adjust in marriage, work thru conflict, and emerge on the side reconciled and reunited" (Akin, 131)

How easy it is to BE SELF-CENTERED & say something that is selfish, unloving, NOT sacrificial & hurtful.

> and then you think: "O, why did I say that!???"

> you make restoration -- but it can be difficult, hurtful, painful.

+++summary of chapter 5 +++

Now that the couple is married, marital conflict/trouble sets in. The man is gone late one day into the late hours of the night & he returns home & is longing for lovemaking. She's tired, in bed & not interested in making love. She hesitates & makes a few excuses. In love, he gently and tenderly persists again but at her hesitation, the moment is lost. Then she finally opens up to him and he has gone away. They don't come together. She then goes into the streets looking for her husband but to no avail. She, tragically, is found by watchmen & she is seized, struck, wounded & shamed (abused!). She is earnestly seeking her lover & wants him! She tells her friends to keep her eye out for him. When they ask why, she provides a very poetic account of his appearance & his handsomeness & his personality. She is totally committed to & dazzled by his sweetnesses.

+++

+++++++COMMENTARY NOTES+++++++

5:2

Here the bride's INDIFFERENCE is introduced by her dream (5:2-7) --- this problem caused temporary absence of her husband-lover.

Then she asked the daughters of Jerusalem to help her find him (5:8)

Then she described his attractiveness (5:9ff)

In her dream, her husband came to her—having been outdoors in the evening. His mind appears to have been on making love in view of what follows. (Constable)

This is a dream. There is a dream-like quality to this section of the Song. >> it is evocative poetry!

THIS is another recorded dream (cf. 3:1-4) --- and the wife is approached by her husband. The man said: "OPEN TO ME" (cf. 5:6) --- the fact that the lover addressed her no longer as "MY BRIDE" indicates that there may be some time lapse between the wedding night & here in v.2 (Jack Deere)

He did address her by other terms: My sister, My darling, My dove, My flawless one

>> the man uses ALL these terms of endearment!

>> what overwhelming love, passion, commitment, affirmation, tenderness & delight he has in her!!!

tender words: words like "honey, sweetie, sweetheart, dear, babe, baby, beloved, gorgeous, love, precious, treasure, heart ... etc (Brady, p165)

The man comes KNOCKING & CALLING!

>> Married couples can relate to this

The man is earnestly desiring sexual intimacy with his wife. He has strong desire -- a yearning for union (Tremper Longman, 166)

>> His mind appears to have been on making love in view of what follows. (Constable)

v.2 - his head & hair COVERED WITH DEW -- this means he had been outside. Dew in Israel was often heavy (Jack Deere)

> all this means: He has worked late. He's been outside ALL day. It's probably near or after midnight. NO DOUBT he had a long, hard day and even went into the night (Akin, 131)

*WORK won the day; he worked late, and he wasn't home to be with his bride, and the challenge of time management had beaten them. The *stage is set for a confrontation.... (Danny Akin, 131)

> He wants love.

> she is bathed, undressed & in bed. She just wants to sleep.

NOTE what the KING DID!

He asked, he wanted, he desired, he stated the call!

But she said no (which was wrong on her part) -- but He loved her enough to put *her desire* above his own. So he left the blessing and went away! (Jim Hamilton, 102)

The man comes home and finds her and the door is locked! But he tries anyway... affectionate terms:

1. MY SISTER -- you are my friend, and my lover, my wife and I have familial love/affection for you
2. MY DARLING --- my love; I take pleasure in you. You have my heart (love + commitment)
3. MY DOVE --- you are gentle, pure, peaceful, quiet, tender. I have peace with you
4. MY PERFECT ONE --- you are flawless, blameless and without any blemish. (the goal for which Christ redeems his bride, Eph 5.26-27)

*This is the picture that occurs in REVELATION 3:20 where John apparently draws off of Song 5:2 for his image of Jesus knocking at the door of his beloved Bride (Hess,167)

In an article titled: "What your wife really wants" Bob Turnbull writes that wives can dry up and wither on the inside if 4 things are MISSING in the marriage (MEN TAKE NOTE):

1. TIME -- the currency of the relationship; clear space in the calendar: MAKE THE TIME! It says: You are valuable to me
2. TALK --- this is how the woman connects with you.
3. TENDERNESS --- it feeds her soul when she is nourished and knows she is cherished (verbally tell her this!)

4. TOUCH --- non sexual, affectionate touches of love (in AKIN, 132)

GOSPEL

Consider how this King loved His Bride! But wait -- KINGS don't plead, they demand!@ They don't beg, they command! They have all commanding authority. And yet -- that's true of earthly kings. But there is a PERFECT KING // A HEAVENLY KING -- a Shepherd-king who stands at the door knocking, asking his bride to let him enter that they may enjoy sweet communion & intimacy.

>> Where in the world would we find such a KING?

What tenderness Christ has standing at the door of his bride -- begging & asking & knocking to commune with her!

This has a tremendous application for "SLEEPY CHRISTIANS" who are neglecting close covenant communion with the Savior, the Lord Jesus. It is the Sweet Savior, the Loving Bridegroom, who stands at the door and knocks (to believers, cold, drowsy, distracted, unfaithful) --- but isn't given admittance (Gary Brady, p.167)

Do you see how they are married -- but the Husband comes knocking.

What do we learn about our most pursuing & faithful Bridegroom who knocks?

1. He LOVES us
2. He PURSUES us
3. He CARES for us
4. He LONGS for us
5. He is TENDER toward us
6. He is FAITHFUL toward us

****HOW DOES JESUS KNOCK at the door of the heart of believers?**

Richard Sibbes...

1. the mercies of Christ
2. the corrections/rebukes of Christ
3. the preaching of the Word
4. the examples of others
5. the inclinations & promptings of the Spirit

5:3

However, she had lost interest. She gave a weak excuse: she had already gotten ready for bed (and may have had a headache!). (Constable)

So the bride responds:

it's inconvenient to be awakened, to get ready for lovemaking.
it's inconvenient, she's tired, she doesn't wanna get ready, prepared.
Is it selfish? Yes

"FEW SINS are more lethal in marriage than the sin of selfishness" >> it is a form of heart-idolatry.

HE disappointed his wife (he failed at the 4 Ts above) -- but she responds wrongly. His SIns NEVER justify HER sinful & selfish response.

THE SINS of one spouse never VALIDATES or PERMITS a sin on the other spouse's part in return (never)

Basically the woman says: "I don't have time for you. Serving you is too much trouble. I'm too tired. I don't want it"!

God is clear: "The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife & likewise the wife to her husband. The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to himself alone but also to his wife... do not deprive each other (1 Cor 7.3-5)

BUT: it's INCONVENIENT for her (Kinlaw).

- > She has already undressed, she has washed her feet, and is now in bed (vv.2-3)
- > she is slow to his impulses, desires & hints at sexual lovemaking

v.3 - she said that she had already GOTTEN READY FOR BED.

- > it was a trivial excuse for not opening the door for her husband
- > it revealed her INDIFFERENCE OR APATHY toward her husband.

*Somehow she had grown COOL toward his advances toward her (sexually, emotionally, maritally)

*TODAY: it'd be like her saying: "not tonight, I'm tired. Not tonight, I have a headache. Not tonight, it's too late. You came home late & didn't even call. I'm gonna deny you, punish you, get even with you. Knock all you want, the door is staying locked!" (in Danny Akin, 133)

Tom Gledhill: "Her excuses are patently transparent and very flimsy and unconvincing" (p.178)

THEY BOTH were selfish.

The point for us to learn is to "DENY SELF" -- selfless love overcomes obstacles to intimacy & harmony.

HE is selfish because he has come home too late (he was not considerate, maybe he thought he was at the drive-thru and wanted things his way right away. He was inconsiderate, demanding, foolish & selfish).

SHE is also selfish and is unwilling to let him in because it's just 'inconvenient.' She's too tired and thus not enthusiastic to make love. v.3 is dominated by the woman's, "I..." I..., I..."

<<SOME TIPS on dealing with relational conflict>>

1. confront problems --- as soon as possible after they arise. DON'T ALLOE them to fester & cause bitterness.
2. Master the art of LISTENING --- show the spouse respect by hearing her or him out. Ask for clariication. Don't interrupt or finish the sentence/thought. Listen, Be quiet, and be patient.
3. LImit the discussion of the conflict to the present issue --- don't drag out or bring in yesterday (or last year's!) bad /sinful issues
4. Use "I" messages --- make your point & express your emotions. Acknowledge, confess, repent, seek forgiveness, grant forgiveness. Don't say... "YOU always... but YOU... but YOU responded..." .. Keep it "I..."
5. Avoid exaggerations -- such as always, never, etc. Such statements are seldom true and overloded with emotional volcanoes that are quick to erupt.
6. avoid character assassination (name calling, put downs, comparisons). Point out character flaws or demeaning others will do nothing but stir up greater disharmony and anger.
7. Use appropriate words and actions --- NOT all arguments are worthy fighting at peak volume. The fact is, no argument is worth getting angry, yelling, and fuming over. Be calm, peaceful, humble, biblical, Christlike.
8. Don't be concerned about "winning or losing" --- it's better if both parties can be more concerned about resolving the conflict. Don't be selfish & try to have things YOUR way.
9. Determine limits --- comments that are hurtful or damaging must be avoided. Speak to your spouse the way you want to be treated.
10. Choose to forgive -- and do it immediately,fully, lavishly (as Christ forgave you) --- ALL people sin. complete forgiveness MUST be granted.

>> in Akin, 133-34

But he did not accept her excuse.

He tried to opne the door but failed and then left.

*NOTE: This is a remarkable picture of the kind of adjustments that are necessary in life style in marriage.

OUR natural sloth (laziness), the differences between a man and a woman, our uncertainty about the other's thinking, the variations in our life rhythms, our unwillingness to alter our preferred patterns for the other, our own self-consciousness, and selfishness --- ALL contribute to the problem of reading the other persons advances.

The lover misunderstands and departs.

GOSPEL

WAIT: there is another bridegroom that comes to us at "inconvenient" times -- when we're not ready, expecting. Sometimes we are tired to be with him, too tired to love him, too tired to be with Him.

> sometimes God appears to bring inconveniences into our lives.

BUT WAIT> should we refuse our beloved Bridegroom (Jesus) because it inconveniences us? (is that selfish?)

We exist for Him! He redeemed us! He has given us salvation, love, grace, power, salvation!

The LORD comes near to us with winning words and wooing actions -- but sometimes we are cold and uninterested.

HOW slow we are to pray. To read. To memorize. To evangelize. How unwilling we are to sit under the preached Word to hear from Christ's voice.

We forget that drawing near to Christ is in our best interest; we forget our calling. There is too much worldliness, distraction, corruption and even too great a willingness to justify ourselves and to make the laziness of others an excuse for our own inactivity" (Gary Brady, 169)

5:4

The man is undeterred by the wife's apparently cool & non-interested reception to his arrival, he tries to put his hand on the door knob and bring his way in!

When he tried to open her door but found it locked, he gave up and went away. It may be that "the opening" is a euphemistic reference to the entrance into the woman's private parts.¹¹⁶ If so, this is probably only an implied allusion, a double entendre, since the hole in a literal door is clearly evident in the context. It was not long before she knew she had erred in discouraging him. (Constable)

*Maybe you've been there where you said something & then you said: "WHY DID I SAY THAT>>>>>>"

That's what the woman did here.

1. she locked the door to the bedroom
2. she told her husband to take a hike

- > he's not worth the trouble
- > his sweet talk in v.2 isn't working this time
- * But the man doesn't give up

Earlier the mAN failed at the 4T response, now she fails at the 4C response. A very helpful reminder of what a husband longs to receive from his wife... (The SHulammitte DID NOT DO THIS FOR SOLOMON):

1. His CHEERLEADER -- a man thrives on his wife's encouragement, approval, affirmation, tenderness
2. His CHAMPION --- a wife's respect & encouragement lifes a man's spirit
3. His COMPANION --- a man wants hsi wife to be HIS BEST FRIEND (no other rivals; no children, parents, friends, ladies)
4. His COMPLEMENT --- a woman is necessary to complete the man
>> AKin, p.135

THEN when he left, her feelings were AROUSED for him -- and she decided to open the door.

The hebrew: "My heart began to pound" (My bowels/heart was aroused) --- is used elsewhere pity or compassion (Jer 31.20). (Jack Deere)

GOSPEL

Think of Christ and how he extends his hands for us.

- > I spread out my hands all day long (God says)
- > What a tender, pursuing -- not forceful, but peaceful --- Savior & Lover

And when the bridegroom is so tender, note how we respond to him...

He pursues us, WE RESPOND

He is tender toward us, OUR HEART IS WON BY HIM

He longs for us, our HEARTS ARE WOOED by HIM

He initiates love for us, our hearts/bowels/affections are DRAWN for him

Christ initiates, we respond.

5:5

STILL IN HER DREAM >> She describes how she then went to open the door for her husband "My lover" --- used of HIM 6x in vv.2, 4, 5, 6, 8

She found myrrh on the door handles and got some on her hands.

*Myrrh was often associated with "lovemaking" (Prov 7.17; Song 4;6 & 5:13)

Perhaps the lover had put liquid myrrh on the door handles as a token of the affection he had for his wife.

HE WANTED MORE THAN RELIEF FROM THE NIGHT AIR OUTSIDE .. HE WANTED TO LOVE HIS WIFE! (Jack Deere)

****GOSPEL****

His hands dripp with myrrh --- he is supremely sweet & delightful.

5:6

BUT >> she responded too late (vv.6-7). When she set out to look for him she did not find him.

WE DON" T KNOW WHY HE LEFT >> but maybe it was a natural response to the woman's reluctance.

maybe he was sad, frustrated, and went away. (Longman, 168)

In her dream this action by the watchmen may indicate that she was to blame for her separation from her lover.

She went to the door and found that he had been ready to make love (v. 5; cf. Prov. 7:17; Song of Sol. 4:6, 5:13). She opened it but discovered he had gone. The fact that in her dream the watchmen beat her may indicate that she subconsciously felt that someone should punish her for refusing him. (Constable)

GOSPEL

Keep looking for the Bridegroom Christ and DO NOT GIVE UP when you feel distant from him.

PURSUE!

SEARCH!

PERSEVERE!

5:7

Because of v.7, I am inclined to think that all of vv.2-7 is a *dream* and she is recounting it (and Solmoon writes it)

It's hard for me to believe that Solomon's wife, the queen of Israel, would be treated this way.
(Akin

BUT when she was looking for him she was found and BEATEN* by the city watchmen.

In fact, the watchmen here are HOSTILE to the woman. They "beat wound and shame her"
(Kinlaw, 1232)

in Dream #1 (3:3) the watchmen helped her look for the lover, but this time they mistook her for a criminal. (Jack Deere)

Literally, it is not too harsh to speak of their treatment of the woman as physical or sexual abuse. They hit her hard enough to leave bruises. They remove her clothing (Longman, 169)

*Most importantly, this dream symbolized the PAIN OF SEPARATION brought about by "selfishness" (indifference, apathy, non-interest) and the dream dramatized her need of the LOVER for her well-being, joy, and protection (Jack Deere)

Quite simply: "These are NOT pleasant experiences that the woman has, and the female surely suffers HUMILIATION & PAIN, as a result of her impulsive actions (Hess, 177)

>> GOOD NOTES on the poetic, wisdom literature picture of discipline leading to repentance.

**NOTE: She is stopped, struck, and stripped. It is probably viewed to be BLOWS OF REPENTANCE given to her by the Lord that lead her to repentance, restoration & reconciliation with her husband (Akin, 136)

*WHAT IS REPENTANCE (CFBC CATEHCISM): to be sorry for sin and to hate and forsake it because it is displeasing to God.

Spurgeon: "It is a discovery of the evil of sin, a mourning that we have committed it, and a resolution to forsake it. It's a change of mind of a very deep and practical character" (in Akin, 136)

SHE KNOWS HER WOUNDS TO THE MAN WERE DEEP and she wants the HEALING TO BE COMPLETE!!!

There is a sense of raw honesty that this Song (ch.5) brings out here >> wedding day/night love & ecstasy is a joy but it doesn't perpetually live on without its conflicts, struggles, and interruptions.

For every moment of joyful ecstasy, there seems to be the moment of hurt and pain.

The openness that lovers experience with each other makes both extremes possible.

TIME and HUMILITY & PATIENCE & COMMITMENT are essential

5:8

So now the woman seeks out the friends (daughters of Jerusalem) to help her find the lover.

The message they are to give him: 'I AM FAINT WITH LOVE' /// LOVESICK!!!

"Lovesick' here seems to describe frustration from sexual abstinence rather than exhaustion from sexual activity (cf. on 2:5) (Constable)

"LOVESICK" --- She now wants his embrace (2:5-6).

She had been indifferent to him, but now her attitude had changed so that she was anxious for him (Jack Deere)

The bride LOVES her man and she wants ****everyone**** to know it

She was SELFISH

Now she's SEEKING

And she's LOVESICK

And she's SINGING (his praises)

10 helps on how to bless rather than curse your marriage relationship:

1. make a commitment to recognize your spouse as made in God's image & that Christ died for them
2. Receive the spouse as someone valuable in your life. God uses your spouse to conform YOU into Christ's image
3. Accept personal responsibility for your marriage. DO NOT PLAY THE BLAME GAME
4. Rejoice in and value your differences.
5. Determine to always communicate in a Godly manner -- the way Christ does to you

Sharing

Listening
Talking
Affirming
Exclusive

6. Never assume anything. Grow in your understanding of your mate (talk!)
7. Be an encourager
8. Be real --- be honest, and willing to admit your own failures
9. remember your identity IN CHRIST. Always remember you don't need to earn a standing/find an identity/keep a status.
10. be a LOVER. Learn to love sacrificially, selflessly, tenderly, constantly -- even when it's not noticed nor reciprocated.
(Akin, 138-39)

VV.9-16 ---

what the woman (wife) can do to cultivate love/friendship with the husband

1. praise his uniqueness (5:10)
2. recount his attractiveness (5:11-16)
3. cultivate his friendship (5:16)
(Danny Akin, p.141)

This pericope contains the most extensive physical description of any character in the Old Testament, namely: Solomon. Of course, it is poetic and so not a completely literal description. (CONSTABLE)

Nevertheless, the Shulammitte still loved Solomon very much, as is clear from her description of him here. The comparisons illustrate his value and attractiveness to her, more than just giving us a picture of his actual physical appearance. (Constable)

5:9

v.9 - the friends are asking the woman 'what's so special about your man? that they should help look for him?'

>> this gives the wife an opportunity to 'praise her husband'...

>> in recounting his character, personality, handsomeness, this REKINDLES HER FORMER FEELINGS OF LOVE...

This is "Extravagant Praise" (Tom Gledhill, 182)

Sometimes when things are great (ch.4) and then conflict occurs and there's a breach (ch. 5), what to do? GO BACK and do the things you did at first (Rev 2)

****GOSPEL***

Every Christian can do this. ALL True Christians can give a description of the Savior they love! We ought to be constantly reminding ourselves and speaking to others of Christ's beauty & wonder (Gary Brady, 179)

Teh friends say:

We might hear this attitude expressed in these words today: "What is so great about him? Surely you could find someone who would treat you better than he does!" (Constable)

In a word: "What's so remarkable about this guy? How is he different from other grooms?" (Kinlaw, 1233)

5:10

vv.10-16 is a most remarkable section (Kinlaw)

It's one of the FEW poems in the ANE that we have in which the "FEMALE gives an inventory of the MALE's features" (Kinlaw, 1233)

> most ANE descriptive poems are the MAN describing the WOMAN, but THIS ONE is rare (woman > to the man)

These verses show that a woman has the right to enjoy her husband's body (cf. 1 Cor. 7:4). (Constable)

It should also be noted: in the 3rd section (5:2-8:4) of the book, 80 of the 111 lines are spoken by the BRIDE. It's really HER book and HER DESCRIPTION OF HER LOVER. (Kinlaw)

> It's like Gen 2.18-25 --- God gave woman as a HELPER, help mate, completer for the husband!!!

All that will be said here is important: THIS MAN IS ONE IN TEN THOUSAND!!! (Kinlaw) There is NONE OTHER in her estimation.

He is 'distinguished' --- No one is like him. He's in his own category. None are like him! He is towering above all else!

> note the verbal affirmation & affection & admiration of this mAN publicly to others about him!!!!

Note structure of vv.10-16 - chiasm

v.10 - My Beloved

Dazzling, outstanding

Wholly Desirable, full of sweetness (v.16)

v.16 - My Beloved

"The emphasis is on color, form, beauty & strength" (Lloyd Carr)

Brief summary of how the woman praises her Bridegroom (Gary Brady, p.179ff)

1. His outstanding nature (v.10) --- radiant, ruddy, outstanding...
2. His noble character (v.11) --- head of gold, glorious, lasting, noble
3. His tenderness (v.12) --- eyes like doves, looks with love, pity, tenderness, compassion
4. His richness & profuseness (v.13) ---- cheeks, manliness, perfume, attractive, abundant
5. His fragrant words (v.13) ---- lips like lilies, wonderful words
6. His gracious works (v.14) --- arms are rods of gold, full of blessing, providing, upholding, caring, enduring
7. His strength (v.14) -- body like polished ivory, he is imperishable, strong, immovable, invincible, courageous
8. His splendid appearance (v.15) -- appearance like Lebanon, something strong, tall, manly, respectful.
9. His sweetness (v.16) --- mouth is sweetness, words, kisses of affection, how tender, loving, pleasant, welcoming.
10. His loveliness (v.16) -- most desirable, most attractive, incomparable, unrivaled, unsurpassed, unequalled.

>> if this is true of a man (Solomon!) -- HOW MUCH MORE for the greater Son of David>

JOHN OWEN said: Christ is lovely with regard to his person, birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, glory and majesty, grace and consolations, tender care, power, and wisdom, ordinances, vengeance, and pardon. He is altogether Lovely (John Owen, in Brady, p. 184)

"RUDDY" --- healthy complexion of a young man; that is, he's 'manly' (comes from the Hebrew word for man).

"Outstanding" --- he is chief, distinguished, something unmistakably visible & lovely. (Carr)

5:11

most of vv.11-15 are to be visual comparisons for the most part >>> indicating the man's VALUE + ATTRACTIVENESS

She was committed to his: PERSONHOOD & HIS HANDSOMENESS!

She loved him for his ATTRIBUTES & HIS APPEARANCE!

She loved him for his CHARACTER and his ATTRACTIVENESS!

It's as if she SINGS >>> she sings of the handsomeness of her lover (Kinlaw, 1234)

This section is nearly entirely DEVOID of verbs --- it's highly emotional, poetic and beautiful. she begins the phrases with: My lover, His head, His locks, His eyes, His cheeks, HIS lips, HIS arms, HIS waist, HIS legs, HIS looks, HIS mouth...

> very emotional, very tender, full of a heart of love. (Hess)

His complexion is RUDDY and GOLDEN

his head is like GOLD -- pure gold.

> not a reference to color, but his dealings with her had symbolized that his head was of the "finest" rarest "expensive" quality!

> a reference to value as gold (Jack Deere)

locks // hair --- wavy and black

5:12

his eyes are like doves --- peaceful, gentle like doves, reflecting his peaceful and gentle character

>> like HIS description of HER eyes (1:15; 4:1)

Grey or black doves washed in milk pictured the dark pupils of his eyes set off by the whites of his eyes. (Jack Deere)

SO HIS EYES .. the pupils of the eyes are set in a field of WHITE within the eye (Hess, 182)

5:13

CHEEKS --- delightful and desirable like spice or perfume.

his LIPS ---- soft and beautiful like lilies >>> applied flowing myrrh to give additional FRAGRANCE

MYRRH --- one of the vivid of aromas --- the origin is from lotuses or blossoms is poetic imagery and the intoxicating effects were well known in the ANE (Hess, 184)

> thus the picture is of KISSES like myrrh --- the suggestion here is of kissing.

*Today: it's like the man just 'smells good' = he wears cologne

5:14

**it's as if she is saying: "My lover is handsome, carved and cut, powerful and strong."
(Akin)**

His body possesses the might necessary to carry the rest of his muscular frame and to protect the female from harm (Hess)

his arms (lit. 'hands') were as attractive and valuable as GOLD (like his head, v.11 & his legs, v. 15).

"BODY// abs" --- was as handsome as ivory and sapphires (v.14).

Polished with sapphires may have also a reference to the hard muscular shape of his abdomen (abs!)

> this refers to the strength in its smooth and solid form (Hess, 185)

This speaks of his muscular frame to protect the female from harm.

Also: Ivory is a substance HIGHLY prized for its value, beauty, and ability to be carved into artistic forms. (Hess, 185)

5:15

LEGS --- were strong, handsome, and valuable --- like marble and gold (vv.11,14)

v.15 - APPEARANCE --- overall was breathtaking; he is TALL like the tall cedar trees of Lebanon (v.15)

>> Amos 2:9

Lebanon with its mountains denotes beauty and grandeur.

they are majestic trees here.

they were SO rich and beautiful & powerful that these Cedars of Lebanon were used to construct the Temple (Longman, 174)

5:16

His mouth (speech and kisses) was highly desirable. He was just handsome in EVERY SINGLE WAY (Song 5:16)

lit. "Palate" --- speech/conversation/whispers --- the organ of taste as well as speech.

SHE counters this with the delights of his kisses (Prov 5.3)

The point here: The inside of his mouth is sweet --- "She wants to taste him" She wants a DEEP KISS.

His speech causes her to want more!

Think of Ps 19.10 - God's speech/words are more desirable than gold...than much fine gold! (Hamilton, 108)

He is WHOLLY DESIRABLE

Earlier he says that she was beautiful without flaw (4:7) and my perfect one (5:2) --- and NOW she reciprocates that with him being "altogether desirable" (5:16)

It's a PLURAL form for *emphasis* --- everything about this man is "delightfulnesses" --- he is absolutely, utterly, unmistakably, uncontained, boundless sweetness/delights! (Lloyd Carr)

>> This vision of the BRIDE for her HUSBAND points us to another revelation of a greater HUSBAND/KING ... Rev 1!

In Rev 1.13-16 we see one like the Son of Man (our Shepherd-King)
Comparing Song 5:10-16 and Rev 1.13-16 ---
we see a magnificent description of
head
hair
eyes
face
mouth
> Majestic & awesome, much like our Bridegroom in the Song of Songs ... BUT SO
MUCH MORE!!!
Our King is other-worldly and wholly desirable! He is 'full of sweetness & perfect!

CHRIST JESUS is "altogether lovely" (Song 5:16 in the KJV)
Lovely in his person, glory, majesty, resurrection, ascension, grace, power, wisdom, pardon & in
his selfless incarnation & death for sinners! (ODonnel, 95-96)

****NOTE PARALLELS****

SONG 5	REV 1
Head	head white like wool
Hair	hair white like wool like snow
Eyes	eyes like a flame of fire
Cheeks	face like the sun shining in its strength
Lips	voice like sound of many waters
Hands	right hand held seven stars
Abs/Form	girded across his chest w/ a golden sash
Legs	feet like burnished bronze
Mouth/Speech	mouth came sharp sword

see Ch.3:19 -- those whom the Bridegroom LOVES he reproves & disciplines. Therefore, be zealous & repent!

v.20 - I stand at the door and knock! (The Bridegroom LONGING for intimacy & union w/ His Beloved Blood-bought Bride)

hear his voice, open the door, and I will come in to him & dine with him & HE with me!

***Dear Christian, I must ask you...**

as the bride of Christ, how do you feel about, explain, talk about, describe your LOVER, Your Husband, Your Christ?

1. let us rest upon his obedience & righteousness
2. let us labor to be IN Him
3. let us remember to set our heart upon him frequently
4. keep examining to make sure Christ is your supreme love

HOW IS HE YOUR LOVE? *Heart-examining questions for growth...*

- how do you value Christ?
- are you ready to suffer for him?
- does it show in the way you speak/talk?
- do you know that holy discontent which is inevitable to every believer living on this earth?
- labor to make your sins bitter/hateful so that Christ may become sweeter to you.

(Gary Brady, 187)

vv.9-16 == CONCLUSION

COUPLES MUST ask themselves this question: Do you LIKE each other? Not, do you love each other, but do you like each other?

WORK and work and work to grow in becoming and staying each other's BEST FRIEND!

(Akin, 144)

all of this is really addressed to the daughters of Jerusalem (5:9-16). she is speaking ABOUT her lover, her 'friend'

the word "FRIEND" (v.16) is real -- the masculine counterpart of his regular designation of her.

He has called her my "Friend" (1:9, 15; 2:2, 10; 4:1, 7; 5:2)

the ROOT of "Friend" (reah) means COMPANIONSHIP + DELIGHT [+ COMMITMENT]

the root meaning means: "to associate with" --- to be a friend, companion

This word demonstrates: 'PARTNERSHIP' (Hess, 188)

It's an EXCLUSIVE relationship between them

Lloyd Carr: "Happy is the husband or wife whose spouse is also a "FRIEND"" (p.144)

The Song of Solomon no doubt is erotic & highly (and unashamedly) EROTIC/SEXUAL == but it's not satisfied in mere animal attractiveness or sex alone --- *TRUE LOVE (AND SEXUAL PLEASURES) is meaningful if there is trust and commitment, and delight in one another (as well as in the body)

> love the heart and the body

> win the heart & delight the body

In the song of Solomon, the hero (the man) is the LOVER*, but he's more than just a male who wants sex; he is the committed friend, delightful husband who is ravished by, overwhelmed by his gorgeous bride & he's not ashamed to TELL HER THAT!

be married to your best friend...

1. marriage will be a blessing to hang out with your best friend -- for life!
2. marriage will go the distance because best friends don't give up on best friends!

Chapter 5 gives some clues as to HOW a WIFE can bless her husband...

1. give him admiration & respect (Eph 5.33)
2. provide sexual fulfillment to him (PRov 5.15-19; Song 4.9-5:1; 1 Cor 7.1-5)
3. cultivate home support (PRov 9:13; 19:13; 21:9, 19; 25:24)
4. strive to be an attractive wife (inner & outer beauty) (Song 1:8-10; 6:13-7:9; 1 Pet 3.1-5)
5. become his best friend (develop mutual interests; enjoy them together) (Song 8:1-2, 6)
6. speak well about him to others (not negative, but praise, positive) (Song 5 & Eph 5.33)

in chapter 5, it leads to the growth & redeemed relationship in ch.6

The WOMAN's part (6:1-3)

1. study his tendencies (6:1-2)
2. welcome his advances (6:3)

The MAN's part (6:4-10)

1. tell her she is beautiful (4)
2. tell her she is irresistible (5-7)
3. tell her she is beautiful (8-9)
4. tell her she is awesome (10)

NEXT WEEK, in Ch.6, 5 ways to bless your wife:

1. Be a spiritual leader (Ps 1; Eph 5.23-27)
2. give her personal affirmation & appreciation (Prov 31; Song 4.1-7; 6.4-9)
3. show personal affection (romance) (Song 6.10, 13; Eph 5.28-29, 33)
4. initiate intimate conversation (Song 2.8-14; 8:13-14; 1 Pet 3.7)
5. Always be honest & open (Eph 4.15; Prov 15.22-23)
6. provide home support & stability (1 Tim 5.8)
7. Demonstrate family commitment & priority (Eph 6.4; Col 3.19-20)
>> in Akin, 148-49

NOTES ON WEDDING/MARRIAGE BOOKS >>>=====

Gary & Betsy Ricucci, Love That Lasts

NOTE: "when one spouse is disappointed by the other, the RESPONSE often can be anger, unkindness rather than love and self control. And a husband and a wife can easily (and sinfully & selfishly) justify his or her sinful response to the other (Ricucci, 98)

"No matter how long you have been married, disagreement and conflict simply indicate that GOD IS AT WORK, sanctifying and maturing you through the instrument of marriage, making you more like Christ" (Ricucci, p.99)

RESOLVING conflict is not only possible --- it is COMMANDED (Eph 4.3)

> what causes quarrels, fights? James 4.1-3 >> The "fundamental cause of conflict NOT is NOT circumstances, misunderstanding or competing ideas, but the Bible places it squarely in the DESIRES, cravings, and passions of our own hearts (Ricucci, p.101)

Disagreements become conflicts because we *CRAVE* something so much that we will go to war to get it, or will fight to keep someone else from getting what they crave. It is incredibly simple ... and extremely serious. The pattern:

1. Desire -- I want something...
2. Disagreement -- the desire has begun to reveal a craving, lust, or sinful passion.
3. Deserving --- it now leads to something that you feel that you 'deserve' that you're not getting. We believe our desire is deserved when emotion stirring in our hearts influences the tone or content of what we say...
4. Demanding --- when we feel that we deserve something, we're justified (so we think) to demand it. In our own defense we may then in our own personal wrongly interpreted verse of the Bible for support
5. Dependence --- underneath this escalating war, the heart is exposed as depending on the thing desires. It's not a want or need, now it's I MUST HAVE... I NEED this...
6. Deification --- Now all this means that I have deified / worshiped my self and my desire. It's MY KINGDOM. We bow to the idol of SELF and SELF's desires.
7. Destruction -- this ultimately leads to destroyed relationships (and, of course, us as well!). Apart from repentance, this idol worship can fuel a war that can become a way of life.

**SO???

1. recognize sin
2. confess your sin
3. ask forgiveness
4. complete forgiveness of sin

"In marriage, conflict resolution draws us closer to each other, resulting in deeper levels of understanding, humility, and intimacy. Each conflict biblically, thoroughly, and happily concluded deepens our marriage union" (Ricucci, 113)

====

Winston Smith, "Marriage Matters"

in a chapter: "God is up to good in conflict" he writes: "In fact, God uses conflict to accomplish good in the lives of his people by destroying sin and establishing the very peace he desires" (p. 138)

As conflict begins to emerge, "you must ask yourself: "What Do I really WANT..." (James 4.1-3) Remember: "Love is about seeking what is best for the OTHER, NOT about getting what you want" (Smith, p.148)

WAYS to handle conflict...

1. appease --- find a way to appease or satisfy the other so there's no reason for conflict.
2. ignore -- pretend the problem doesn't exist.
3. win -- settle problems by prevailing

"Peace is not necessarily the absence of conflict --- it's established by destroying sin." And this happens when conflict is dealt with rightly, accurately, humbly, honestly, and genuinely" (Smith, p.160)

Dealing with conflict...

1. remember the big picture in conflict (God is in it & is working for your growth)
2. be alert to the dangers & sins of defensiveness (selfishness, needs, I deserve...)
3. deal with YOUR OWN SIN first.
4. adopt the biblical approach that fits the understanding of YOU, your SPOUSE, and the need of the MOMENT
5. don't get stuck on who is RIGHT and WRONG; always act to build up the other person in edifying, selfless, Christ-like LOVE

=====

TIM SAVAGE, No Ordinary Marriage

"Whenever discord arises between husbands and wives, the remedy is straightforward. It begins with the recognition that every rift can be traced to a single cause: THE failure to express self-giving love. In one or both partners selflessness has been gobbled up by selfishness" (Savage, 39)

BUT HOW should a partner respond when he or she succeeds at loving the other but is met in return by INDIFFERENCE, UNKINDNESS, OR EVEN CRUELTY? Do such rebuffs give license to withdraw our affections, to indulge in self-pity, or worse, to respond UN KIND? NO. Rather, they provide opportunities to become even MORE selfless in our love.

>> Like Christ, whose sacrificial love shone brightest when it was poured into those who gave him the greatest offense, our love is MOST radiant when it is expressed in *trying* circumstances! (Savage, 40)

IT IS IMPORTANT for husbands and wives to know that whenever disharmony arises, they must recognize the true nature of the problem: it is the SIN OF SELF-CENTEREDNESS" (Savage, 55)

=====

Wayne Mack, YOUR FAMILY GOD'S WAY

Scripture declares that we have conflicts because of our desires that battle within us (James 4); because we want something we cannot have. IN OTHER WORDS: differences often turn into conflicts BECAUSE WE ARE 'SELFISH' (p.188)

=====

Paul Tripp, What Did you Really Expect:

Laziness -- is rooted in self love. It's the ability to take ourselves off the hook. It's the willingness to permit ourselves NOT to do things we know we should do. It's believing that good things should come our way without having to work to get them.

Laziness is always self focused and self excusing.

Laziness is undisciplined and unmotivated.

Laziness permits us to be passive when decisive and loving action is needed

(Tripp, 111)

"YOU SEE, Patience in marriage is vital, because the goal of marriage is GREATER THAN MARRIAGE. The goal of marriage, from God's perspective, is NOT that you would reach some mutually agreed-upon plateau of romantic and interpersonal happiness. No, God's goals are MUCH WIDER AND MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN THAT. God's goal is that your marriage would be a major tool in HIS wise and loving hands to rescue you from claustrophobic self-worship and form you into a person who lives for nothing SMALLER than HIS kingdom, HIS righteousness, and HIS glory. God's goal is to transform you at the casual core of your personhood --- YOUR HEART. He is working so that everything you think, desire, say, and do is done in loyal and joyful service to Him. God's goal is not to deliver to you your well-thought-through dream of personal happiness. No, his goal is nothing less than holiness; or as Peter says, 'that you may become partakers of the divine nature' (2 Pet 1.4)."

>> in Tripp, p.244

SONGS

I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus the Nazarene
Fairest Lord Jesus
Chiefest among 10,000 (Toplady) --- to the tune of: Amazing Grace

"The chiefest among ten thousand." Song. 5. 10

A. M. Toplady C.M.

1
Compared with Christ, in all beside
No comeliness I see;
The one thing needful, dearest Lord,
Is to be one with thee.

2
The sense of thy expiring love,
Into my soul convey;
Thyself bestow, for thee alone,
My All in all, I pray.

3
Less than thyself will not suffice
My comfort to restore;
More than thyself I cannot crave,
And thou canst give no more.

4
Loved of my God, for him again
With love intense I'd burn;
Chosen of thee ere time began,
I choose thee in return.

5
Whate'er consists not with thy love,
O teach me to resign;
I'm rich to all the intents of bliss,
If thou, O God, art mine.

===

Christ Altogether Lovely
by JOHN Berridge
Christ altogether lovely
[Ps. 45.2](#); [Song 5.16](#)

1 Soon as faith the Lord can see,
Bleeding on the cross for me,
Quick my idols all depart,
Jesus gets and fills my heart.

2 [None among the sons of men,
None among the heavenly train,
Can with Jesus then compare;
None so sweet and none so fair.]

3 Then my tongue would fain express
All his love and loveliness;

But I lisp and falter forth
Broken words, not half his worth.

4 Vexed, I try and try again;
Still my efforts all are vain;
Living tongues are dumb at best;
We must die to speak of Christ.

5 [Blessèd is the upper saint,
Who can praise and never faint,
Gazing on thee evermore,
And with flaming heart adore.]

6 [Let the Lord a smile bestow
On his lisping babes below,
That will keep their infant tongue
Prattling of him all day long.]

=====

He is altogether lovely
John Berridge
Song of Songs 5.16
TO THE TUNE OF IN CHRIST ALONE

If gazing strangers want to know
what makes me sing of Jesus so
I love his name, tis very dear
And would His loveliness declare
His head abounds in wisdom deep
No secret can his notice slip
And sweet instruction he conveys
to mend my heart and guide my ways

No sinful taint his bosom knows
but with amazing kindness glows
He wrought a righteousness divine
And bids me take and call it mine!
His eyes are full of melting love
more soft and sparkling than the dove
A single smile, from Jesus given
Will lift a drooping soul to heaven

His open arms like rainbows stand

and circle round a guilty land
and in his side is dug a cave
where all my guilt my find a grave
his mercies like himself endure
and like his love are ever sure
And when your eye His worth can view
Your heart, like mine, will love him too!

https://books.google.com/books?id=JBZXAAAACAAJ&pg=PA251&lpg=PA251&dq=if+gazing+strangers+want+to+know+john+berridge+hymn&source=bl&ots=GVSxhX_-Iq&sig=RFXHW6Me8WhGCxo1MdgHI766NEo&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwin4MSO-YfQAhXGwiYKHccrBHQQ6AEIHjAA#v=onepage&q&f=false

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HOW IS CHRIST EXCELLENT? | sermon after election @ CFBC -- **Song of Songs 5.16**

TEXT: Song of Solomon 5:16

TITLE: "Our Glorious Christ: Altogether Lovely & Wholly Desirable!"

Christ is excellent in his person, his offices, his works, his loveliness, his attractiveness, his judgments, his deliverances, his unfathomableness, his condescension, his crucifixion, his intercession, his passionate pursuits.

If a BRIDE in Song 5.16 speaks of the dazzling nature of her bridegroom Solomon (a son of David), how much more can WE the BRIDE OF CHRIST speak of our great Bridegroom, THE Son of David.

She spoke of his excellencies & praised him for His loveliness.

>> we wanna speak of Christ's excellencies & praise him for his loveliness.

We wanna gaze upon, be distracted by & be utterly consumed in our souls with CHRIST HIMSELF.

> if you were in a room of dim & flickering flashlights, and Christ came in BRIGHTER THAN 10,000 SUNS, you wouldn't be transfixed to a dimly flickering flashlight in a corner somewhere! RIGHT???

The luster and brightness of Christ's glory is so great that, should He now let forth the beams thereof upon them—it would dazzle and astound them; it would strike them blind. Yes, it would strike them dead. (Thomas Vincent)

> But Christ has infinite loveliness to win and draw our love.

<<<*HOMILETICAL OUTLINE***>>>**

1. Excellent in His DEITY (he is fully God// all God's perfections found fully & visibly in Christ); he is altogether lovely to the Father, the Spirit & choice & precious.
2. Excellent in His COMPASSION (he is eager and willing to save and love & lavish affection/ he knows you)
3. Excellent in His RIGHTEOUSNESS (he is perfect)
4. Excellent in His PROPITIATION (he ran to the mighty anger of God & swallowed it for you)
5. Excellent in His REDEMPTION (he bought & purchased & owns us)

6. Excellent in His PROTECTION (he keeps us)
7. Excellent in His SWEETNESS (wonderful traits of his dazzling supremacy)
8. Excellent in His COMMUNION (this wins and woos our heart to him)
 HOW does Christ come to us? In private worship, public worship, ordinances (Lords Supper), prayer, family worship
9. Excellent in His TENDERNESS. (a bridegroom)
10. Excellent in His INFINITUDE (infinite depths of Christ)

What is heaven? But as Thomas Vincent says:

Christ bringing His own to the "full discovery of Himself in glory!" (WOW!)

HOW beautiful is it when the darkness of the night is eclipsed by a beautiful, pink, orange, purple, blazing & bright SUNRISE on the horizon & painted across the skies ---- SO IT IS when Christ manifests himself to our hearts!

ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF SONG 5:16.....

KJV: "altogether lovely"

NASB: "wholly desirable"

ESV: "altogether desirable"

NLT: "Desirable in every way"

Hebrew: all of him is desirablenesses.

APPLICATIONS of the loveliness of Christ for us...

so then...

1. Let us LOVE him
2. Let us DESIRE him
3. Let us WORSHIP him
4. Let us LEARN him [study/indulge]
5. Let us PROCLAIM him
6. Let us ENJOY him
7. Let us CONTEMPLATE him
8. Let us ENTERTAIN him [he is a friend]

Thomas Vincent:

Lift up the hands that hang down; lift up the heart that is cast down. Look up, then, dejected soul; your Savior is before you! Open your eyes and look, look with the eye of faith. Can you not see a marvelous beauty in His countenance? Do you not perceive some smiles in His face, some smiles upon your soul? Do you not feel His Spirit sweetly breathing upon your heart, persuading you, and giving you a sweet sense of Christ's special love unto you? Do you not perceive some inward knockings at the door of your heart, and hear some inward callings? "Open to Me, and I will come in and sup with you." This is the voice of your Beloved; make haste and open to Him. Open all the faculties of your soul; lift up the everlasting gates to this King of glory. Send forth the handmaids of your desires to invite the Lord in. Let your faith take hold on Him and usher Him into your soul; and then embrace Him in the arms of your dearest love and give Him such

entertainment that He may abide with you forever! [in his sermon: "Christ's manifestation of himself to those who love him"]

8. Let us GLORIFY him [brag on him; boast in him; make HIM big/great]

See also 1 Peter 2:4 -- and coming to HIM (Christ) as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God...

Isaiah 49:3 --- "He said to ME (the servant of Jehovah): "You are my Servant, Israel, in Whom I will SHOW MY GLORY"

2 Thess 1.10 -- when Christ comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed...

Remember: Matthew Henry: "Christians, who are well acquainted with Christ themselves, should do ALL they can do make others acquainted with him!" (p.1069)

Christ is Perfect in His PERSON, PURITY, PERFECTIONS, PROPITIATION, PRIESTHOOD, OFFICES, BLESSINGS

=====

Gary Brady

Altogether lovely...

no one can match him

he is most desirable

most attractive

he is incomparable, unrivalled, unsurpassed. without equal, he reigns supreme.

In applying this to Christ, JOHN OWEN referred to Christ 11 as being lovely.... lovely with regard to his

person

birth

life

death

resurrection

ascension

glory and majesty

grace and consolations

tender care

power and wisdom

ordinances

vengeance
and pardon

>> He is altogether lovely (184)

Christ is lovely in that he has a twofold nature -- both GOD and MAN.. and he has a THREEFOLD office --- prophet, priest, and king and many titles (150+)

He is the "woman's seed crushing Satan, passover lamb, the high priest, the pillar of cloud and fire, the prophet greater than Moses, the captain of our salvation, the Judge, the Kinsman-Redeemer, the Anointed One, the perfect King, the faithful scribe, the one who rebuilds broken walls, the Savior, the Defender, the Refuge, the Lord, the Shepherd, the Lover, the Bridegroom. He is everlasting father, prince of peace, wonderful counselor, mighty God, the righteous branch, weeping Prophet, the wheel that turns in all directions, the Son of Man, the longsuffering Husband, the one who pours forth His Spirit, the one who bears our burdens, the great resurrected missionary, the messenger with beautiful feet, the avenger of God's elect, the great evangelist who cries for revival, the restorer of God's lost heritage, the cleansing fountain, the King who brings peace, the humble, gentle One, riding on a donkey, the Sun of righteousness, Messiah, wonder working servant, perfect man, Son of God, ascended Lord, the one who justifies sinners, our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption, one who sets men free, our riches, our peace, our God who provides, the fulness of the Godhead, our soon coming King, the mediator, the faithful shepherd, the Friend who sticks closer than a brother, the one greater than all whose blood washes away our sin, the Shepherd of our souls, the Chief shepherd, the everlasting love, the keeper of our souls, the Lamb slain and the Lion of Juda, the King of Kings and LORD of lords.

Richard SIBBES>>>>

If Christ IS altogether lovely...

1. lets rest upon his obedience and righteousness
2. lets labor to be IN CHRIST and ensure we're WALKING IN HIM
3. lets labor to make sure our heart, desires, passions are pursuing HIM preeminently.
4. lets work to value him more and have a holy discontent with the things here till we reach heaven.

****EXCELLENT NOTES>>>>**

George Burrows, SONG OF SOLOMON

When we would understand the loveliness of that human person through which the Son of God, teh eternal Creator, manifests himself as our Redeemer, these separate clusters, radiant with his glory, and scattered at large in his works, must be gathered into a form of the man Christ Jesus; and we are told that, just as beautiful as a person must be, whose appearance would impress us with all the ideas of loveliness got from the most fine gold ... so beautiful is CHRIST.

IN JESUS there is every thing that can be desired ... he is ALTOGETHER LOVELY (129)

THIS person (Jesus), combining beauties beyond what man may possess, or the mind of man, in the farthest stretch of his imagination, unaided by the SPIRIT of God, could conceive 'this is my beloved and my friend' v.16 (p.129)

"Were it possible for all these splendors and beauties to be united in any individual, how far would he transcend the fairest of the sons of men. COMBINE into focus at the heart all the ideas and feelings of beauty gathered from ALL these objects of splendour, and then you have something resembling the delight had by the believer in contemplating the Lord Jesus" (p.438)

ALL THESE, however, infinitely more than these, are found in the person of HIM who is 'fairer than the children of men'

literally: "His wholeness is delights" --- his very constitution and nature consist of PURE delights.

JESUS, is viewed as the source of happiness in us, or as the author of pleasing sensations in us, is said to be DELIGHTS (440)

THERE IS NOTHING in Jesus which does not cause delights. There is NOTHING in him which is not lovely; and there is NOTHING delightful which is NOT centered in Him. The WHOLE creation is a manifestation of the glory of God (Tabernacle, mankind, gardens, flowers) (440)

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"We come very far short of attaining FULL views of the blessedness of Jesus, by taking only one aspect or representation of him at a time, instead of combining in one view ALL that the Scriptures shadow forth of his glory. That is, at one time, we view him as a King, then as Almighty, then as a Lamb, then as Light. This mode of unfolding his character is necessary and wise. BUT in studying his excellencies, let us NOT detach any one of them from the rest; let us view them as a glorious COMBINATION FORMING TOGETHER ONE WHOLE. The KING crowned with many crowns is Jesus, but not the full development of the glory of Jesus. (441) And all of these attributes and titles of Jesus in the Bible, however beautiful when viewed alone, are FAR MORE GRAND AND DEEP when seen amid the cluster to which they belong! (441)

>> imagine if I were to show you the best, rarest, most beautiful, most costly DIAMOND. Utterly breathtaking as you see this ONE, beautiful, glorious SPARKLING DIAMOND.

>> but what if I put that ONE sparkling diamond & set it in its place as ONE DIAMOND in a WHOLE complex of diamonds the size of the Empire State Building (102 stories).

>> you would be breathless, speechless, motionless, awed by the OVERWHELMING GRANDEUR OF SUCH A COMPLEX OF DIAMONDS IN THIS UNIFIED WHOLE.

>> that's like what it is to view ONE attribute of Christ; but we must view it in the WHOLE COMPLEX of the PERFECT UNITY and GLORY of Jesus Christ, our LORD! In forming a conception of Jesus, let us bring together into ONE PERSON or individual all the detached representations given of him in the Scriptures -- Son of God, King of Kings, King crowned with many crowns, Judge on the great white throne, the Godhead coming with clouds, the Lamb leading his flock to living fountains, the glory of Zion, the tender friend weeping with his people in sorrow at the grave of Lazarus, the first-born from the dead, the elder brother of the saints! LET US GATHER ALL OF THEM INTO ONE --- so far as the mind is able to do this, and then we have something of what the Scriptures represent Jesus Christ as HE IS in glory (p. 441-442)

When we see the pictures and attributes of Christ independently, we see the glory of Christ. And when the heart has studied them separately, it is anxious to rise to the highest conceptions possible of Jesus, by bringing these clusters of Christ's glory ALL TOGETHER, but it finds its powers (faculties in our minds) to fail under the effort. (442)

*IN HEAVEN, we shall see that blessed One combining ALL these visions of beauty and glory in HIS ONE PERSON, together with innumerable others of which the heart of man cannot now conceive (p.444)

Thus, contemplating our adorable Redeemer by a living faith, through the Holy Spirit, we say with humble exaltation, in the language of the spouse: "This is my beloved, and this is my friend and my companion..." (5:16)

*FAR FROM BEING ASHAMED OF HIM, in HIM ALONE now we glory. HE is the absorbing centre of our affections; his company is the desire and delight of our heart" (p.445)

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James Durham, SONG OF SOLOMON

O THERE in Christ, is exceeding, unexpressible and unconceivable, delight and satisfaction to be found! (318)

There is no other thing can have any such sweetness or relish to a believer as Christ has; and to a spiritual taste, the excellency of all created beloveds will be as the white of an egg in comparison of this. ... It's a good sign when all our affections and spiritual senses can relish nothing but Christ (318)

WOULD YOU KNOW HIM??

"O, I, even I cannot tell you all his excellent properties: for HE IS MOST justly called Wonderful (Isa 9.6) but in sum he is altogether lovely ... he is all desires, all he desires...the word that means "lovely/desirable" is a word that has the idea of 'coveting' --- and thus, Christ is NOT simply

lovely, but of such an attractive excellency, as makes him the proper object of the most ardent and holy coveting desires, or after which all desires should go forth, as towards the best and most desirable object; the words are meant to express somewhat that is not expressible, or rather the unexpressibleness of that Beloved" (p.318-19)

Whatever is in Christ is exceedingly desirable; go through ALL his parts, qualifications, attributes, or works, whether of I have given you a hint ... and you will find ALL OF THEM wholly desirable" (319)

*NOTE>>> There is NOTHING truly desirable, but it is to be found in Christ. THE soul cannot rationally imagine that satisfaction that is not to be found in Christ, otherwise all desires were NOT in him ... this is sweet, even very sweet; what idol is perfect? None! But my Beloved is perfect: ALL the beauties, and perfections that are scattered among all creatures are in an eminent and transcendent way gathered together, contracted and to be found in HIM AT ONCE, so that whatever can be desired, whether it be for this life or that which is to come, whether for sanctification, justification, comfort, it is EMINENTLY AND ULTIMATELY to be found in our Lord Jesus

Col 1.19 - in whom all the fulness dwells

Eph 1.23 - He is ALL IN ALL

John 1.14 - he is full of grace and truth (p.319)

The more that we insist on and meditate on Christ's loveliness, the hearts will warm the more with it and it will be found to be the greater depth.

O what a lovely object then must Christ Jesus be! They never knew him rightly, who were satisfied with their own thoughts of him, or expressions concerning him. (p.320)

There is a UNIVERSAL loveliness in Christ, the WHOLE of Christ is lovely --- he cannot be divided but everything in him is wonderful and lovely. Even his lowest sufferings, and seeming infirmities, his frowns and seeming greater austerity, are lovely and profitable; he is altogether lovely (p.320)

Empty and undesirable are ALL beloved in the world beside Christ, and broken cisterns will they all prove; for all desires are in him, and there is NOT ONE desirable thing that found in them, that is not found in Christ (320-21)

Christ is so perfect: he fills all the relations that he stands in to his people and that he does exceedingly well --- he is a singularly loving, faithful king and tender HUSBAND. and he is a singularly kind, faithful, and unchangeable friend, the best friend that ever a believer has. (321-22)

To be the SOUL's beloved implies 3 things...

1) Christ is eminently and only loved by his people and that nothing is admitted to share in their affection with him (Phil 3.8)

2. There is in the soul a high esteem/respect for him, which begets and births and fuels this love for Him
- 3) there is such an ardent (passionate) affection to him, as it makes us long for union with him, as love naturally desires union with that which it loves, it desires to be with Christ here and even in heaven -- for that is the best of all (Phil 1.23)
- 4) it supposes a delight and satisfaction that the souls take in Christ and expect from union with him. All our happiness lies in this.
- 5) It supposes a kindness in their love, and well groundedness --- faithfulness. There is heart contenting and satisfying love.
- 6) It means that whatever else men may set their love upon besides Christ, it will prove unsound, and unfaithful friends in the time of need. (p.323)

"THERE IS an excellency in Christ in every relation which He stands under to His people, and an infinite disproportion between him and all other creatures in respect of this" (p.323)

NOTE at the end of the verse how she calls the daughters of Jerusalem to know the beauty of her husband (5:16)

1. ALL those who love Christ will be desirous to have others knowing and loving HIM ALSO.
2. ALL those who love Christ will endeavor to have Christ made known to others and to have them divorce from their idols and engaged to him ... to love him.
3. ALL those who love Christ should instruct others in the knowledge of the excellencies of Christ, that they may be brought in to the love of Christ (p.325ff)

ALL OF THIS IMPLIES>>>>

1. there is a matter of boasting and holy bragging in Christ Jesus.
There is nothing besides him that we can confidently boast of

TO BOAST of Christ means...

a high estimation of him
confidence in him ... without fear
satisfaction with him, having full contentment in him
eminent joy resulting from these which cannot be shaken

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JOHN COTTON, Song of Solomon

Believers find nothing in Christ but what is WHOLLY DESIRABLE. (p.28)

There is nothing to be more desired than Christ. (p.28)

This is my beloved and my friend --- this is the doctrine of the certainty of our adoption (John Cotton, 28).

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Henry Ainsworth --- Song of Solomon

"Every whit of him is desired... (727)

He is much to be desired, he is wholly amiable.

Here Christ is to the spouse and her friend glorious and beautiful; but to the world he is base and ignominious (foolish) (p.727)

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John Gill, SONG OF SOLOMON

"he is exceeding desirable to believers ... there is none in heaven or in earth they desire besides him.

one of the ways he was known in the OT was the 'desire of all nations'

And now what makes him so desirable to the church and to all believers, are, the divine excellencies and perfections which appear in his person (Gill, 229)

There is NO perfection or excellency in the Deity but what may be found in Christ, and if so, there can be nothing that is excellent in any creature, either in heaven or earth, but what is eminently so in him; and therefore, he must needs be a desirable person" (Gill, 229)

He is the FULLNESS of grace -- life and salvation is in him -- and makes him altogether desirable for souls ... when they can see nothing in themselves and all in Christ, an emptiness in the creature, and a fulness in him; that it is in vain to expect salvation elsewhere; but that there is enough in him to answer all their wants, present, and future; every thing that will make them comfortable here, and happy hereafter; HOW can he be otherwise than exceeding desirable to them?? (Gill, 229)

Christ is ALTOGETHER LOVELY...

1. Christ, and all of Christ, is lovely to believers -- in his person, offices, in his people, and in his ordinances --- even what may seem frightful to others is lovely to the saints. even the cross of Christ
2. there is a perfect loveliness in Christ, every thing in him is lovely. NOTHING is lovely but what is in him.
3. He is so to all: he is lovely to his father, as he is to his Children.
4. Christ is lovely in himself and lovely to all others, so it is that he makes all the saints lovely to God: there is nothing in them, nor done by them, that can make them grateful to Him; they are only accepted with God 'in the beloved'. He is pleased with Christ and HIS righteousness, and with them as considered therein. Christ is altogether lovely and that makes ALL the saints who are in Christ lovely too. (Gill, 230)

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Robert Murray M'Cheyne said in a sermon on Song of Songs 5.2 :

https://books.google.com/books?id=DFgXAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA340&lpg=PA340&dq=robert+murray+mccheyne+i+sleep+my+heart+waketh&source=bl&ots=AiIT3exhtl&sig=-LZynA6AF1k-s3C8tJsmP_XuG24&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwji9f2ou4XQAhVD0oMKHVFLCVwQ6AEII TAA#v=onepage&q&f=false

"Christ is the health of the countenance" ... The soul is content with Him ... at rest in Him.

The believer commends the Savior -- there is NO MORE distinguishing mark of a true believer than this (M'Cheyne)

some thoughts...

1. don't be content in your lukewarmness toward Christ
2. lead others to seek Christ and His beauty with you.

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CHRIST ALTOGETHER LOVELY --- by John Flavel

<http://www.puritansermons.com/sermons/flavel1.htm>

The bride says:

Secondly, What he is, or what she claims of him: That he is a lovely one. The Hebrew word, which is often translated "desires," means "to earnestly desire, covet, or long after that which is most pleasant, graceful, delectable and admirable." The original word is both in the abstract, and plural in number, which says that Christ is the very essence of all delights and pleasures, the very soul and substance of them. As all the rivers are gathered into the ocean, which is the meeting-place of all the waters in the world, so Christ is that ocean in which all true delights and pleasures meet.

Flavel writes:

As a theologian long ago said, "There is nothing in him which is not loveable.

If you compare Christ and other things, no matter how lovely, no matter how excellent and desirable, Christ carries away all loveliness from them. "He is (as the apostle says) before all things," Col. 1:17. Not only before all things in time, nature, and order; but before all things in dignity, glory, and true excellence. In all things he must have the pre-eminence. Let us but compare Christ's excellence with the creature's in a few particulars, and how manifest will the transcendent loveliness of Jesus Christ appear!

All other loveliness is derived and secondary; but the loveliness of Christ is original and primary.

Christ is altogether lovely in his 3-fold OFFICES TO THE BELIEVER>>>>

If light be pleasant to our eyes, how pleasant is that light of life springing from the Sun of righteousness! Mal. 4:2. If a pardon be sweet to a condemned criminal, how sweet must the sprinkling the blood of Jesus be to the trembling conscience of a law-condemned sinner? If a rescue from a cruel tyrant is sweet to a poor captive, how sweet must it be to the ears of enslaved sinners, to hear the voice of liberty and deliverance proclaimed by Jesus Christ? Out of the several offices of Christ, as out of so many fountains, all the promises of the new covenant flow, as so many soul-refreshing streams of peace and joy. All the promises of illumination, counsel and direction flow out of Christ's prophetic office. All the promises of reconciliation, peace, pardon, and acceptance flow out of his priestly office, with the sweet streams of joy and spiritual comforts which accompany it. All the promises of converting, increasing, defending, directing, and supplying grace, flow out of the kingly office of Christ; indeed, all promises may be reduced to these three offices, so that Jesus Christ must be altogether lovely in his offices.

CHRIST shows us his love by actually dying for us (not wishing but accomplishing & perfecting DEATH for us).....

"No friend in the world loves his friend with as impassioned and strong affection as Jesus Christ loves believers. Jacob loved Rachel, and endured for her sake the parching heat of summer and cold of winter; but Christ endured the storms of the wrath of God, the heat of his indignation, for our sakes. David manifested his love to Absalom, in wishing, "O that I had died for you!" Christ manifested his love to us, not in wishes that he had died, but in death itself, in our stead, and for our sakes. "

****SOME APPLICATIONS >>> "SO WHAT DOES THE LOVELINESS OF CHRIST BECKON YOU TO DO???"**

1. Is Jesus Christ altogether lovely? Then I beseech you set your souls upon this lovely Jesus. I am sure such an object as has been here represented, would compel love from the coldest breast and hardest heart. Away with those empty nothings, away with this vain deceitful world, which deserves not the thousandth part of the love you give it. Let all stand aside and give way to Christ. O if only you knew his worth and excellency, what he is in himself, what he has done for you, and deserved from you, you would need no arguments of mine to persuade you to love him!

2. Esteem nothing lovely except as it is enjoyed in Christ, or used for the sake of Christ. Love nothing for itself, love nothing separate from Jesus Christ. In two things we all sin in love of created things. We sin in the excess of our affections, loving them above the proper value of mere created things. We also sin in the inordinacy of our affections, that is to say we give our love for created things a priority it should never have.

3. Let us all be humbled for the corruption of our hearts that are so eager in their affections for vanities and trifles and so hard to be persuaded to the love of Christ, who is altogether lovely. O how many pour out streams of love and delight upon the vain and empty created thing; while no arguments can draw forth one drop of love from their stubborn and unbelieving hearts to Jesus

Christ! I have read of one Joannes Mollius, who was observed to go often alone, and weep bitterly; and being pressed by a friend to know the cause of his troubles, said "O! it grieves me that I cannot bring this heart of mine to love Jesus Christ more fervently."

4. Represent Christ to the world as he is, by your behaviour towards him. Is he altogether lovely? Let all the world see and know that he is so, by your delights in him and communion with him; zeal for him, and readiness to part with any other lovely thing upon his account. Proclaim his excellencies to the world, as the spouse did in these verses. Persuade them how much your beloved is better than any other beloved. Show his glorious excellencies as you speak of him; hold him forth to others, as he is in himself: altogether lovely. See that you "walk worthy of him unto all well pleasing," Col. 1:10. "Show forth the praises of Christ," 1 Pet. 2:19. Let not that "worthy name be blasphemed through you," James 2:7. He is glorious in himself, and he is sure to put glory upon you; take heed that you do not put shame and dishonours upon him; he has committed his honour to you, do not betray that trust.

5. Never be ashamed to be counted as a Christian: he is altogether lovely; he can never be a shame to you; it will be your great sin to be ashamed of him. Some men glory in their shame; do not let yourself be ashamed of your glory. If you will be ashamed of Christ now, he will be ashamed of you when he shall appear in his own glory, and the glory of all his holy angels. Be ashamed of nothing but sin; and among other sins, be ashamed especially for this sin, that you have no more love for him who is altogether lovely.

6. Be willing to leave every thing that is lovely upon earth, in order that you may be with the altogether lovely Lord Jesus Christ in heaven. Lift up your voices with the bride, Rev. 20:20 "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly." It is true, you must pass through the pangs of death into his intimacy and enjoyment; but surely it is worth suffering much more than that to be with this lovely Jesus. "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and the patient waiting for Jesus Christ," 2 Thes. 3:5.

7. Let the loveliness of Christ draw all men to him. Is loveliness in the creature so attractive? And can the transcendent loveliness of Christ draw none? O the blindness of man! If you see no beauty in Christ that causes you to desire him, it is because the god of this world has blinded your minds.

8. Strive to be Christ-like, if ever you would be lovely in the eyes of God and man. Certainly, my brethren, it is only the Spirit of Christ within you, and the beauty of Christ upon you, which can make you lovely persons. The more you resemble him in holiness, the more will you show of true excellence and loveliness; and the more frequent and spiritual your communication and communion with Christ is, the more of the beauty and loveliness of Christ will be stamped upon your spirits, changing you into the same image, from glory to glory. Amen.

<http://www.puritansermons.com/sermons/flavell1.htm>

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THOMAS GOODWIN: "heaven would be hell to me without Christ"

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Samuel Rutherford:

"Put the beauty of 10,000 thousand worlds of paradises, like the Garden of Eden in one, put ALL trees, all flowers, all smells, all colors, all tastes, all joys, all loveliness, all sweetness in ONE. O what a fair & excellent thing that would be! And yet it would be less to that fair & dearest well-beloved CHRIST than one drop of rain to the whole seas, rivers, lakes, and foundations of 10,000 earths!"

To the Laird of Cally, he wrote in 1637, "Give Christ your virgin love; you cannot put your love and heart into better hand. Oh! If ye knew Him, and saw His beauty, your love, your liking, your heart, your desires would close with Him and cleave to Him."

Rutherford had many sweet times of communion with Christ in Aberdeen. "I never knew, by mine nine years' preaching, so much of Christ's love, as He has taught me in Aberdeen," he wrote to his congregation. "Sweet, sweet have His comforts been to my soul; my pen, tongue, and heart have no words to express the kindness, love and mercy of my Well-beloved to me, in this house of my pilgrimage" (Letters, pp. 227, 357).

Rutherford sought to reconcile with those with whom he had quarreled and died peacefully on March 30, 1661, at St. Mary's College, St. Andrews.

Some of his last words were, "I shall live and adore Christ; glory to my Redeemer forever. Glory, glory dwelleth in Emmanuel's land." To his fellow ministers he said, "Dear brethren, do all for Christ. Pray for Christ. Preach for Christ. Beware of men-pleasing."

Speaking of Rutherford = "His favorite theme is the union of Christ and His people as illustrated by courtship and marriage."

Like Letters, these sermons show Rutherford's devotion to Christ as well as the poetic and experiential gifts that made his preaching so moving. Here is one example: "Christ, for this cause especially, left the bosom of God, and was clothed with flesh and our nature, that he might be a mass, a sea, and boundless river of visible, living, and breathing grace, swelling up to the highest banks of not only the habitable world, but the sides also of the heaven of heavens, to over-water men and angels" (p. 11).

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Thomas Vincent --- Christ's manifestation of himself unto those who love him...

<http://www.apuritansmind.com/the-christian-walk/christs-manifestation-of-himself-unto-those-who-love-him-by-rev-thomas-vincent/>

What is it for CHRIST to manifest himself to us???

(note how it's inseparable from the Spirit's Work & from the study of the WORD, by the Grace of God!)

when He makes a clearer revelation unto His disciples of the excellency of His person; when He further unveils Himself and lets forth some beams and rays with greater luster and brightness, to reveal more of the radiance and transcendence of His soul-ravishing beauty unto them, of which they had but a dimmer light and darker apprehensions before. And this is done when Christ more fully imparts the Spirit of wisdom and revelation unto them. Upon this account, the Apostle prayed on behalf of the believing Ephesians that the Lord would give them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation to enlighten their understandings in the knowledge of Him, [Ephesians 1:16-18](#). They had the Spirit and some knowledge of Christ before—but he prays that God would give them a fuller measure of the Spirit to make a clearer discovery of Christ—that the eyes of their understandings might be more and more enlightened unto a more spiritual discerning of the surpassing beauty and excellency in Christ's person, in the knowledge of whom the most enlightened Christians are capable of further growth unto the end of their life. Hence that exhortation of the Apostle Peter, [2 Peter 3:18](#), “Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.”

The love of Christ is like fire that cannot conceal itself long. There is no fire so strong, or has such a vehement flame—as the love of Christ to His people.

****HEAR CHRIST SAYING THIS TO YOU>>>>**

His love will engage Him to manifest and reveal Himself, and say, “I am Jesus, your Savior! Come near Me, My brethren! Come near Me, that you may have a clearer view of Me, that you may know Me, and know that I love you!”

The luster and brightness of Christ's glory is so great that, should He now let forth the beams thereof upon them—it would dazzle and astound them; it would strike them blind. Yes, it would strike them dead. (Thomas Vincent)

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Thomas Goodwin, the HEART OF CHRIST

WHEN THOMAS GOODWIN was on his deathbed, he said...

"I am going to the Three Persons, with whom I have had communion ... my bow abides in strength. Is Christ divided? No, I have the whole of HIS righteousness; I am found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, who LOVED me, and gave himself for me... CHRIST cannot love me better than he doth. I CANNOT love Christ better than I do; I am swallowed up in God ... Now I shall be ever with the LORD"

Thomas Goodwin believed that many people have Christ SCARCELY (rarely) in all our thoughts ... and so Goodwin said that we must look WHOLLY out of our selves unto Christ ... and so Goodwin labored to set forth Christ to draw our gaze to HIM" (p.xi)

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JOHN BUNYAN --- "Come and welcome to Jesus Christ"

"OH! The heart attracting glory that is in Jesus Christ, when he is discovered, to draw those to him that are given to him of the Father. And the reason why others do NOT come, but perish in their sins, is for lack o a sight of his glory. (p.73)

There is therefore heart pulling glory in Jesus Christ which, when discovered, draws the man to him; therefore, 'by shall come to me,' Christ may mean that when his glory is doscovered, then they must come, then they shall come to me.

There is therefore heart attracting glory in the Lord Jesus Christ which , when discovered, subjects the heart to the Word, and makes us come to him (p.74)

THEN, "they see glory in his person, glory in his undertakings, glory in the merit of his blood, and glory in the perfection of his righteousness; yes, heart-affecting, heart-sweetening, and heart changing glory (p.75)

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SAMUEL RUTHERFORD, letters

"I find Christ with me. I burden no man, I want nothing, no face looketh on me but it laugheth on me. Sweet, sweet is the Lord's cross. I overcame my heaviness. My Bridegroom's love-blinks fatten (fill) my weary soul. (p.33)

"O what a sweet step were it up to my father's house through 10 deaths, for the truth and cause of that unknown, and so not half well loved, Plant of Renown, the Man called the Branch, the Chief

among 10,000, the fairest among the sons of men! O what unseen joys, how many heart-burnings of love, are in the remnants of the sufferings of Christ (36)

The love of Christ is a mystery to the world. I would NOT have believed that there was so much in Christ as there is. 'Come and see' maketh Christ to be known in his excellency and glory. I wish ALL this nation knew how sweet his breath is. it is little to see Christ in a book, as men do the world in a card. But to come NIGHT to Christ and clasp him and embrace him is another thing" (p.44)

... And yet I could hold LITTLE of it. O world's wonder! Oh, if my soul might but lie within the smell of HIS love, suppose I could get no more but the smell of it. OH but it is long to the day when I shall have a free world of Christ's love. O what a sight to be up in heaven, in that fair orchard of the new paradise, and to see and smell and touch and kiss that fair field-flower, that ever-green Tree of Life!...

Christ, Christ, nothing but Christ can cool our love's burning langour. O thirsty love! Wilt thou set Christ, the well of life, to thy head, and drink thy fill? Drink and spare not; drink love and be drunken with Christ! ... O if we were clasped in other's arms (p.51)

... I am pained, pained that I have NOT more to give my sweet Bridegroom. HIS comforts to me are not dealt with a niggard's hand... but I would fain learn not to idolize comfort...

The Bridegroom HIMSELF is better than ALL the ornaments that are about him. NOW I would not so much have these as God Himself, and to be swallowed up of love to Christ. (81)

Hot and burning hath Christ's love been to me. I have no vent to the expression of it; I must be content with stolen and smothered desires of Christ's glory. O how far is his love behind the hand with me ... (92)

O that men were taken and caught with his beauty and fairness! they would give over playing with idols, in which there is not half room for the love of one soul to expatiate itself. And man's love is but heart-hungered in gnawing upon bare bones, and sucking at dry breasts" (p.101)

... "O if I had paper as broad as heaven and earth, and ink as the sea and all the rivers and fountains of the earth, and were able to write the love, the worth, the excellency, the sweetness and due praises of our dearest and fairest WELL beloved! and then if you could read and understand it! (111)

... All the comforts of Christ in the Old and New Testaments are yours. O what a Father and Husband you have. O, if I had pen and ink, and engine to write of him. Let heaven and earth be consolidated into massy and pure gold, it will not weigh the thousandth part of Christ's love to a soul, even to me a poor prisoner. O that is a massy and marvellous love. (115)

"O what a fair one, what an ONLY one, what an excellent, lovely one is Jesus. PUt the beauty of ten thousand thousand worlds of paradises like the garden of Eden in one, but all trees, all

flowers, all smells, all colors, all tastes, all joys, all sweetness, all loveliness in one. O what a fair and excellent thing that would be. AND YET it would be less, to that far and dearest WELL beloved, Christ, than one drop of rain to the whole seas rivers, lakes, fountains of ten thousand earths. O But Christ is heavne's wonder, and earth's wonder. What marvel that his bride says: "He is altogether lovely" (5:16). Alas that black souls will not come, and fetch all their love to this far one! (p.120)

O if I could invite and persuade thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand of Adam's sons to flock about my LORD Jesus and to coe and take their fill of love. O pity forever more that there should be such an one as Christ Jesus, so boundless, so bottomless, and so incomparable in infinite excellency and sweetness, and so few to take hi! Oh Oh, you poor, dry and dead souls, why will you not come here with your empty souls to this HUGE and fair and deep and sweet well of life; and fill all your empty vessels. O that CHRIST should be so large ins weetness and wroth and we so narrow, so pinched, so ebb and so void of all happiness. And yet men will not take him. They lose their love miserably who will not bestow it upon this lovely one (120)

But let us come near and fill ourselves with Christ, and let his freinds drink and satisfy our hollow and deep desires with Jesus. O come all and drink at this living well! Come drink and live for evermore. Come, drink nad welcome! Welcome, says our Fairest Bridegroom. (121)

"O who can add to him, who is that Great ALL! If he would create suns and moons, new heavens and thousand thousand degrees more perfect than these that now are; and again, make a new creation ten thousand thousand degrees in perfection beyond that new creation; and again still in eternity multiply new heavens; they should NEVER be a perfect resemblance of that infinite excellency, order, weight, measure, beauty and sweetness that is in him. (166)

=====

As one preacher, Ian Campbell said...

"I wanna know how much more glorious Christ has become to you TONIGHT?"

=====

Matthew henry (Song 5.16)

"Every thing in Christ is amiable (lovely)" (1068)

To those who believe in Christ, he is PRECIOUS (1069)

This is a full assurance of faith concerning the complete beauty of the Lord Jesus.

The Bride says: "he is truly love, y he is wholly son; there is nothing in him but what is lovely, and nothing lovely but what is in him. He is ALL desires -- and he has all in Him that one can desire (Matt Henry 1069)

"To see Christ, and not to see him as ours, would be rather a torture than a happiness; but to see One that is **THUS** lovely, and to see him as ours, is a **COMPLETE SATISFACTION!**" (Henry, 1069)

Remember: Song 5.16 teaches us: "All who have **CHRIST** as their beloved shall have Him also as their friend. He is a special friend to all believers. (p.1069, Matt Henry)

Indeed: "Others may do as they please, but this is my **SOUL'S CHOICE** > my soul's rest, my life, my joy, my all; this is he whom I desire to live and die with" (Matthew Henry, concluding Song 5.16 commentary).

["Christ has infinite loveliness" by Jonathan Edwards](#)

"Christ loved us when there was no loveliness to draw His love. There was nothing attractive to be seen in us. All was abominable to His pure eyes. But Christ has infinite loveliness to win and draw our love.

He is the brightness of God's glory. He is the bright and morning star in the spiritual firmament. He is more excellent than the angels of heaven.

He is amongst them for amiable and divine beauty, as the sun is among the stars. In beholding His beauty, the angels day and night entertain and feast their souls and in celebrating of it do they continually employ their praises.

Nor yet have the songs of angels ever declared all the excellency of Jesus Christ, for it is beyond their songs and beyond the thoughts of those bright intelligencies to reach it.

That blessed society above has been continually employed in this work of meditating on and describing the beauty and amiableness of the Son of God, but they have never yet nor ever will comprehend it or fully declare it.

His excellency is such that beholding and enjoying it will yield a soul-satisfying delight. There will be more delight and pleasure in one hour than this world with all that it has can afford in seventy years."

–Jonathan Edwards, "There Never Was Any Love That Could Be Paralleled with the Dying Love of Christ"

<https://tollelege.wordpress.com/2009/01/26/christ-has-infinite-loveliness-by-jonathan-edwards/>

From SPURGEON's sermon "THE BEST BELOVED" (from the SONG of Solomon)

http://www.gracegems.org/10/altogether_lovely1.htm

The love of Jesus is unutterably precious,
and worthy of daily praise.

We prize his bounty to us, but we worship HIM.
His gifts are valued, but he himself is adored.
We enjoy his graces, but we love HIM.
We receive his blessings, but we love THE GIVER

Spurgeon said:

"He is altogether lovely."

Not only is his teaching attractive, his doctrine persuasive,
his life irreproachable, his character enchanting, and his work
a self-denying labor for the common good of all his people,
but he himself is altogether lovely.

Do not look for anything lovely outside of Jesus,
for he has all the loveliness.

All perfections are in him making up one consummate
perfection; and all the loveliness which is to be seen
elsewhere is but a reflection of his own unrivalled charms.

=====

JOHN OWEN: >> "The Loveliness of the LORD JESUS CHRIST" (summary in a blog)
<http://www.meetthepuritans.com/blog/loveliness-lord-jesus-christ>

"he is altogether desirable" ([Song 5:16](#)). Owen then concluded his exposition with a description of the loveliness of Jesus Christ:

When the spouse hath gone thus far in the description of him, she concludes all in this general assertion: "He is wholly desirable,—altogether to be desired or beloved." As if she should have said,—"I have thus reckoned up some of the perfections of the creatures (things of most value, price, usefulness, beauty, glory, here below), and compared some of the excellencies of my Beloved unto them. In this way of allegory I can carry things no higher; I find nothing better or more desirable to shadow out and to present his loveliness and desirableness: but, alas! all this comes short of his perfections, beauty, and comeliness; 'he is all wholly to be desired, to be beloved;'"—

Lovely in his person,—in the glorious all-sufficiency of his Deity, gracious purity and holiness of his humanity, authority and majesty, love and power.

Lovely in his birth and incarnation; when he was rich, for our sakes becoming poor,—taking part of flesh and blood, because we partook of the same; being made of a woman, that for us he might be made under the law, even for our sakes.

Lovely in the whole course of his life, and the more than angelical holiness and obedience which, in the depth of poverty and persecution, he exercised therein;—doing good, receiving evil; blessing, and being cursed, reviled, reproached, all his days.

Lovely in his death ; yea, therein most lovely to sinners;—never more glorious and desirable than when he came broken, dead, from the cross. Then had he carried all our sins into a land of forgetfulness; then had he made peace and reconciliation for us; then had he procured life and immortality for us.

Lovely in his whole purpose, pursuit & mission in life = his employment, in his great undertaking,—in his life, death, resurrection, ascension; being a mediator between God and us, to recover the glory of God's justice, and to save our souls,— to bring us to an enjoyment of God, who were set at such an infinite distance from him by sin.

Lovely in the glory and majesty wherewith he is crowned. Now he is set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high; where, though he be terrible to his enemies, yet he is full of mercy, love, and compassion, towards his beloved ones.

Lovely in all those supplies of grace and consolations, in all the dispensations of his Holy Spirit, whereof his saints are made partakers.

Lovely in all the tender care, power, and wisdom, which he exercises in the protection, safeguarding, and delivery of his church and people, in the midst of all the oppositions and persecutions whereunto they are exposed.

Lovely in all his ordinances, and the whole of that spiritually glorious worship which he hath appointed to his people, whereby they draw nigh and have communion with him and his Father.

Lovely and glorious in the vengeance he taketh, and will finally execute, upon the stubborn enemies of himself and his people.

Lovely in the pardon he hath purchased and doth dispense,—in the reconciliation he hath established,—in the grace he communicates,— in the consolations he doth administer,—in the peace and joy he gives his saints,—in his assured preservation of them unto glory.

What shall I say? there is no end of his excellencies and desirableness;—"He is altogether lovely. This is our beloved, and this is our friend, O daughters of Jerusalem." (Works, 2:77–78)

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Richard Sibbes....

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE BEAUTY & GLORY OF CHRIST????

from a sermon: "I am my beloveds and my beloved is mine..."

<http://www.apuritansmind.com/puritan-favorites/puritan-favorites-richard-sibbes-1577-1635/i-am-my-beloveds-a-sermon-by-richard-sibbes/>

That you may the more fully feed on this comfort, study the excellencies of Christ in the Scripture, the riches and honour that he hath, the favour he is in with his Father, with the intercession that he makes in heaven, John xvii. Study his mercy, goodness, offices, power, &c.,

Shows a sweet mixture, red and white:
All human beauties, all divine,
In my Beloved meet and shine.

3

White is his soul, from blemish free;
Red with the blood he shed for me;
The fairest of ten thousand fairs;
A sun amongst ten thousand stars.

4

[His head the finest gold excels;
There wisdom in perfection dwells;
And glory, like a crown, adorns
Those temples once beset with thorns.

5

Compassions in his heart are found,
Hard by the signals of his wound;
His sacred side no more shall bear
The cruel scourge, the piercing spear.]

6

[His hands are fairer to behold
Than diamonds, set in rings of gold;
Those heavenly hands that on the tree
Were nailed, and torn, and bled for me.]

7

[Though once he bowed his feeble knees,
Loaded with sins and agonies,
Now on the throne of his command,
His legs like marble pillars stand.]

8

“[His eyes are majesty and love,
The eagle tempered with the dove;
No more shall trickling sorrows roll
Through those dear windows of his soul.]

9

[His mouth, that poured out long complaints,
Now smiles, and cheers his fainting saints;
His countenance more graceful is
Than Lebanon, with all its trees.]

10

All over glorious is my Lord;
Must be beloved, and yet adored;
His worth if all the nations knew,
Sure the whole world would love him too!

=

JESUS OUR ALL (to the tune of: WHEN I SURVEY THE WONDROUS CROSS)

9

Jesus our All. John 10. 17; 1 Cor. 2. 2; Phil. 3. 7, 8

J. Hart

7s

1

Jesus is the chiefest good;
He has saved us by his blood;
Let us value nought but him;
Nothing else deserves esteem.

2

[Jesus, when stern Justice said,
“Man his life has forfeited,
Vengeance follows by decree,”
Cried, “Inflict it all on me.”]

3

Jesus gives us life and peace,
Faith, and love, and holiness;
Every blessing, great or small,
Jesus freely gives us all.

4

Jesus, therefore, let us own:
Jesus we'll exalt alone;
Jesus has our sins forgiven,
And will take us safe to heaven.

=====

BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR (All my days)

All my days I will sing this song of gladness,
Give my praise to the Fountain of delights;
For in my helplessness You heard my cry,
And waves of mercy poured down on my life.
I will trust in the cross of my Redeemer,
I will sing of the blood that never fails;
Of sins forgiven, of conscience cleansed,
Of death defeated and life without end.
Beautiful Saviour, Wonderful Counsellor,
Clothed in majesty, Lord of history,
You're the Way, the Truth, the Life.
Star of the Morning, glorious in holiness,

You're the Risen One, heaven's Champion
And You reign, You reign over all.
I long to be where the praise is never-ending,
Yearn to dwell where the glory never fades;
Where countless worshippers will share one song,
And cries of 'worthy' will honour the Lamb!

ALL GLORY BE TO CHRIST

Should nothing of our efforts stand
No legacy survive
Unless the Lord does raise the house
In vain its builders strive

To you who boast tomorrow's gain
Tell me what is your life
A mist that vanishes at dawn
All glory be to Christ!
All glory be to Christ our king!
All glory be to Christ!
His rule and reign will ever sing,
All glory be to Christ!
His will be done
His kingdom come
On earth as is above
Who is Himself our daily bread
Praise Him the Lord of love
Let living water satisfy
The thirsty without price
We'll take a cup of kindness yet
All glory be to Christ!
All glory be to Christ our king!
All glory be to Christ!
His rule and reign will ever sing,
All glory be to Christ!
When on the day the great I Am
The faithful and the true
The Lamb who was for sinners slain
Is making all things new.

Behold our God shall live with us
And be our steadfast light
And we shall ere his people be
All glory be to Christ!
All glory be to Christ our king!
All glory be to Christ!
His rule and reign will ever sing,
All glory be to Christ!

===

He is altogether lovely
John Berridge
Song of Songs 5.16
TO THE TUNE OF IN CHRIST ALONE

If gazing strangers want to know
what makes me sing of Jesus so
I love his name, tis very dear
And would His loveliness declare
His head abounds in wisdom deep
No secret can his notice slip
And sweet instruction he conveys
to mend my heart and guide my ways

No sinful taint his bosom knows
but with amazing kindness glows
He wrought a righteousness divine
And bids me take and call it mine!
His eyes are full of melting love
more soft and sparkling than the dove
A single smile, from Jesus given
Will lift a drooping soul to heaven

His open arms like rainbows stand
and circle round a guilty land
and in his side is dug a cave
where all my guilt my find a grave
his mercies like himself endure
and like his love are ever sure
And when your eye His worth can view
Your heart, like mine, will love him too!

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Chiefest among 10,000 (Toplady) --- to the tune of: Amazing Grace

“The chiefest among ten thousand.” Song. 5. 10

A. M. Toplady C.M.

1

Compared with Christ, in all beside
No comeliness I see;
The one thing needful, dearest Lord,
Is to be one with thee.

2

The sense of thy expiring love,
Into my soul convey;
Thyself bestow, for thee alone,
My All in all, I pray.

3

Less than thyself will not suffice
My comfort to restore;
More than thyself I cannot crave,
And thou canst give no more.

4

Loved of my God, for him again
With love intense I'd burn;
Chosen of thee ere time began,
I choose thee in return.

5

Whate'er consists not with thy love,
O teach me to resign;
I'm rich to all the intents of bliss,
If thou, O God, art mine.

====

Christ Altogether Lovely

by JOHN Berridge

Christ altogether lovely

[Ps. 45.2](#); [Song 5.16](#)

1 Soon as faith the Lord can see,
Bleeding on the cross for me,
Quick my idols all depart,
Jesus gets and fills my heart.

2 [None among the sons of men,
None among the heavenly train,
Can with Jesus then compare;
None so sweet and none so fair.]

3 Then my tongue would fain express
All his love and loveliness;
But I lisp and falter forth
Broken words, not half his worth.

4 Vexed, I try and try again;
Still my efforts all are vain;
Living tongues are dumb at best;
We must die to speak of Christ.

5 [Blessèd is the upper saint,
Who can praise and never faint,
Gazing on thee evermore,
And with flaming heart adore.]

6 [Let the Lord a smile bestow
On his lisping babes below,
That will keep their infant tongue
Prattling of him all day long.]

Song of Solomon 6 --

Text: Song of Solomon 6

TITLE: "Pursuing Reconciliation After Conflict & the Happy Delights That Follow"

INTRO NOTES/ QUOTES:

**remember those old cars that had the FRONT BENCH SEATS -- there were 3 passengers that could sit in the front (driver, passenger, and one in the middle).

>> imagine how that would serve a husband & wife newly married and how they would snuggle and be as close as they could to each other.

>> but then in conflict, imagine how the passenger would slide as FAR AS POSSIBLE away from the driver all the way to the passenger door and snuggle it!

>> what a picture of how SIN can separate!

" Our physical proximity can sometimes be a good gauge of our emotional and relationship proximity with our spouse" (Gary Riccuci, p.97)

We Gotta remember something ... as fallen creatures who love to be cheerleaders for our own rights, our own privileges, our own goodness, and at times, blast thru the megaphone how we have been wronged and we have every *reason*/right/duty/obligation to show HOW OTHERS have hurt us and how we just *have* to respond a certain way (to our own justification).....

"THE GOSPEL REMINDS US that nothing done TO US, no matter how wicked or bad, will EVER SURPASS the wickedness done BY US, to the holy Son of God. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Rom 5.8).

Resolving conflict is not *only possible* --- it is COMMANDED!!!

Eph 4.3 - being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace...

Prov 28.13 - whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy"

> if you're a Christian and you feel as though there are times that you sin and blow it -- you confess, you repent, you forsake it, and receive God's mercy (Hamilton, 111)

Marriage is a covenant commitment where one man and one woman covenant themselves (before God & others) to each other for life.

- > thru the trials
- > through the hardships
- > through the conflicts
- > through the disagreements

- > through the lonelinesses
- > through the confusions
- > through the difficulties

NOTE: When there is a marital failure, there will be a breakdown in real communication. Wherever you find marital success, you will find a good communication system (Wayne Mack).

Remember:

1. God intends the marriage relationship to be the closest of ALL interpersonal relationships (Gen 2.24)
2. This requires good communication and mutual openness and honesty (Eph 4.25; 1 John 1.7-10)
3. Self control is necessary for good communication (James 3:5-8; Prov 12:18; 16:27)
4. Judgmental, critical, demanding, demeaning, bitter spirits and attitudes must be REPLACED/ EXCHANGED with a charitable, encouraging, patient, accepting spirit (Eph 4:2, 29, 32)
5. A good relationship necessitates being a good listener (James 1:19; Prov 18:13)

****12 PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING GOOD MARITAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

(by Wayne Mack, Strengthening Your marriage, p.73ff)

1. when there are problems, each must be willing to admit that he/she is part of the problem (Gen 8:8-19; Prov 20.6)
2. each person must be willing to change (John 5.6; Matt 5.23-26)
3. avoid the use of emotionally powered/charged words. "You don't really love me..." "You always do..." "You NEVER do anything right." "I Just don't care..."
4. be responsible for your own emotions, words, actions, and reactions. Don't blame them on the other person (or anything else). You got angry, you lashed out, you became depressed, etc. (Gal 6.5; James 1.13-15)
5. refrain from having reruns on old arguments (don't bring up and rehash old matters) (Eph 4.26; 1 Cor 13.4ff)
6. deal with one problem at a time. Solve one problem and then move on to the next (Matt 6.34)
7. deal in the present and NOT in the past. Hang a 'no fishing' sign over the past unless it will help you to solve your present problems (Phil 3.12-14; Jer 31.34; Isa 43.25)
8. major on the positive instead of majoring on the negative (Phil 4.8)
9. learn to communicate in non verbal ways (Matt 8.1-2, 14-15; Ps 32.8)
10. express your thoughts and concerns to each other. relate your activities. listen, understand, and respond to the meaning of what a person is saying (John 11.20-35)
11. practice the golden rule (Matt 7.12) -- would you like your mate to do this to you? Well, then do the same for him.
12. practice the principle laid down in Luke 6.35 - do good ... do that which will help others; lend and expect and hope for nothing in return.
 - > Mack, 73-74

WHEN YOU ARE TEMPTED TO BE ANGRY (in a conflict)... pause, stop and write down the following...

1. what's happening?
2. what qualities is God trying to develop through this situation IN ME? (*thank him for the benefits and opportunities this situation provides, and ask him for his help).
3. what personal *rights* of yours do you think are being denied? (turn yourself and your 'supposed rights' over to God)
4. what may you have done to promote / contribute to this situation? (confess your wrong attitudes, actions, or speech to God and the people involved and repent, admit you've *sinned* and ask specifically for *forgiveness*)
5. what does God want you to do, and how does He want you to act at this time (search the Word)
6. what is keeping you from doing the right thing when you are tempted to become sinfully angry (ignorance? lack of desire? fear?)

Dear beloved flock...

Because GOD is sovereign and ever at work for our good and our growth in godliness, CONFLICT CAN ALWAYS BE REDEMPTIVE. The storms of conflict actually test how we're building our marriages.

> think of conflicts as "spiritual pop quizzes" from God" (Ricci, p.104)

They are providing realistic assessments of the condition of our marriages.

every disagreement is the opportunity for the *husband* to demonstrate servant leadership (take initiative, exercise self control, practice listening, discern the best course of action)

conflicts expose our pride, and the power of sin and reminding us of our desperate need for grace, mercy & wisdom of God.

*Let me say it again = ALL conflicts in marriage can be resolved. YES ... ALL of them.

Sadly -- our flesh wants us to believe this: conflict will only come when there is VICTORY for me and unconditional surrender for you!!!! *WRONG >> Selfish!

I must make a couple of quick comments...

1. when we sin we don't apologize, we must confess it, repent of it, and specifically ask for forgiveness.
2. biblical confession is specific
3. biblical confession is unqualified (don't provide an analysis, or justify it, or defend it, or blame others)
4. biblical confession is sincere (from the heart)
5. we must seek forgiveness and ask for it (plainly, clearly, without qualification)
6. we must grant forgiveness (always granting it when someone asks for it. it is never an option to NOT forgive someone -- never!)

Hear this: "A willingness to admit and forgive sin is NOTHING LESS than the good news of God's forgiveness of sin being proclaimed through your marriage" (Winston Smith).

Remember Prov 17.14 -- starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam ... so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out!

DID YOU KNOW: conflict, far from being a sign of moral or marital FAILURE, is actually God's chosen means of rescuing his people and destroying sin (Winston Smith)

OUTLINES:

as they mature in the marriage

- 1) steps toward reconciliation (vv.1-3)
- 2) restoration of intimacy (vv.4-13)

<<HOMILETICAL OUTLINE>>

or: what can we learn about marital growth // steps in marital maturing ...????

3 very important & crucial lessons

1. pursue the priority of reconciliation (1-3)

RECONCILIATION

*we don't hear the 'please forgive me' I forgive you, hug of reconciliation. We only hear the RESULTS of it

guard from INDIFFERENCE

longing

lovemaking

lovers

we need to remember that strife in the marriage can be bridged by selflessness toward the other (cf. 6:3!)

2. express the exclusivity of your mate (4-10)

AFFIRMATION

THE MAN HAS A PART TO DO...HE IS GONNA VERBALLY PRAISE HER!
HUSBANDS, we can learn...

1. tell her she is BEAUTIFUL (v.4)

2. tell her she is IRRESISTIBLE (v.5-7)

3. tell her she is SPECIAL (v.8-9)

4. tell her she is AWESOME (v.10)

these are also phrases repeated from Song 4 -- but don't be surprised in repetition in song/poetry.

the language of love bears repeating.

3. enjoy the intimacy of togetherness (11-13)

JUBILATION/CELEBRATION

*vv.11-13 tell the story of the couple's reconciliation from the BELOVED's point of view
(=the wife)

she expresses her excitement at the joyous reception that her man has accorded her.

coming together (11)

overwhelming honor (12)

exuberant joy (13)

=====

Some helpful tips on moving forward in conflict & growing in grace!

1. remember the big picture of conflict and don't give in to discouragement.
2. be alert to the dangers of defensiveness (self justification, blame-shifting, etc.)
3. deal with YOUR OWN SIN first.
4. adopt the biblical approach that fits your knowledge of yourself, your spouse, and the need of the moment (GO TO GOD and His sufficient Word as the road-map for conflict resolution)
5. don't get stuck on WHO IS RIGHT and WHO IS WRONG; always act to build up the other in selfless and Christlike love.

=====

BACKGROUND / STRUCTURE / Intro notes...

Let us not forget this is still POETIC, EROTIC, WISDOM LITERATURE.

>> these words are figures of speech, metaphors.

The couple are married = and they are describing conflict, reconciliation, growth, intimacy, togetherness, affirmation

> and these concepts are conveyed in very picturesque, poetic, illustrative, imaginative language!!!!

"The commitment we make in marriage is a warm, passionate commitment which cannot rest content with anything less than intimacy and which therefore works hard at problems even while recognizing the limitations that we all face in recognizing, resolving, and repenting from all of them.

> but by God's grace we pursue reconciliation and unity!

TRUE LOVE never -- ever -- gives up.

It pursues the beloved until the end.

1 John 4.18 - there is NO fear in love but perfect love drives out fear.

*****COMMENTARY NOTES*****

This ends the Shulammitte's second dream (5:2—6:13; cf. 3:1-4). = it seems that all of chaps 5-6 is the woman's DREAM

even though the cause of the couple's separation happened through the indifference of the wife -- and it was overcome (seen in her overwhelming praise of him, 5:10-16), they are still separated at this point when ch.6 begins.

6:1

The Shulammitte convinced the daughters of Jerusalem that her love for her husband was deep and genuine. They agreed to search for Solomon with her. (Constable)

The assembly of friends (daughters of Jerusalem) are calling out and ASKING the Shulammitte woman: Where is the man? Where did he go>

The daughters are now anxious to help find him. WHICH WAY DID HE GO? they asked

the women inquire where the man is ... they wanna help her in finding him (Kinlaw)

****GOSPEL****

The BRIDE wants others to find and know this GROOM.

> "strange that there should be such a backwardness among Christians in speaking to each other of their Lord and in commending his grace to sinners" (George Burrows)

Love breaks through this icy restraint even at the risk of being looked on with disfavor. While a relief to our own soul, this speaking of Jesus is often made a blessing to others (in salvation) (George Burrows, 446)

6:2

vv.2-3

Having expressed her love for her husband, the Shulammitte now knew where to find him. Solomon loved his gardens (Eccles. 2:5). Perhaps the catharsis of verbalizing his praise had healed her emotional estrangement, and in her dream the knowledge of his whereabouts popped into her mind. (Constable)

She really knew where to find him all along. The anxiety in her dream was without foundation in reality. Kinlaw

She answered that he was in his garden (v.2).

Their separation was more in the emotional realm than in the spatial for she apparently had always known where he was.

She knew precisely where he was. --- in his garden

Ecc 2:5 - Solomon made for himself gardens and parks and planted in them all kinds of fruit trees.

he made ponds of water for himself to irrigate a forest of growing trees (vv.5-6)

It *might* also have the same contextual imagery of the Song -- the 'vineyard' is the woman's body -- he has gone to be with her again. And they have reunited...sexually (Hess, 190)

> The two thus are together, their bodies joined in love. He partakes of the love of her body ... the two are joined, and the lover is fully engaged with his beloved (Hess, 190)

Going down to the "GARDEN" = that means, "he is intimately united with her. The garden is NO ordinary garden, but a garden of sweet smelling spices (Longman, 175-76)

v.2 ends with Gathering lilies (or lotuses) --- suggesting the "beautiful, delicate, and intoxicating effects of physical love" (Hess, 190)

Daniel Akin says: it's as if the woman is saying: "we are engaging in the joyful intimacies of marriage" (144)

>> ALL OF THIS is intended to echo the Garden of Eden imagery (Gen 1-2)

> the man and his wife were both together, naked, no shame (Gen 2.25)

They repent and reunite together.

****GUARD FROM INDIFFERENCE****

as Daniel Estes wrote:

In marriage it is easy to lose sight of how special one's spouse is. The inexorable duties of life can dilute the delight of intimacy, so that what used to provoke excitement now evokes only a yawn. Indifference is a lethal blow to intimacy, because it communicates that the relationship is not as valued as it should be" (in ODonnell, 94)

6:3

"I AM MY BELOVED'S AND MY BELOVED IS MINE" (on all the Hebrew rings!)

cf:

2:16 - My beloved is mine and I am his"

7:10 - "I am my beloved's and his desire is for me"

here in 6:3 it is the happy declaration that SHE declares herself to be his (Hamilton, 114)

This is a statement showing "THE JOYOUS UNION OF THE TWO LOVERS" (Hess, 191)

A statement of mutual possession is the INVERSE of her earlier passionate declaration (2:16a. See also 7:10)

"Mutual Affection" (Longman, 176)

> it is an AFFIRMATION OF TOGETHERNESS" (LONGMAN, 176)

*you know what we can learn from this???

people with real relationships, and with real hardships, and with real frustrations ...

REALLY CAN conduct themselves in such a way that love prevails ---- NEVER *EVER* GIVE UP! (Hamilton, 114)

>> the path to this kind of love is the path that Jesus walked (Mark 10.45)

A statement of
AFFIRMATION
EXCLUSIVITY

COVENANT
LONGING
DELIGHT
COMMITMENT
FRIENDSHIP

"As HE possesses her, SHE possesses him!" (Kinlaw)

Richard Sibbes sees here...

mutual...

ownership love

familiarity

likeness

care

complacency

It is in fellowship with Christ that true love shows and expresses itself. Nothing can sever the bond between believers and us (Gary Brady, 191)

The emotional distance had been overcome on HER part and she was confident that it had also been overcome on HIS part (Jack Deere).

All that is needed is a statement of forgiveness or acceptance from the lover (Deere, 1021)

LIKE SHE SAYS: "I am available to you. I am here for your enjoyment. I desire you too. I want you too. Our bedroom is a garden of delight. I know sex is important and because it's important to YOU it's also important to me" (Akin, 145)

*ALL HUSBANDS & WIVES = let us reaffirm these words to our spouse.

I belong to my spouse and my spouse belongs to me.

in mind, in eyes, in heart, in longings, in sex, in body, in finances, in communication, in every possible way!!!

I love the selflessness and the exclusive commitment found here.

from v.3a -- we can infer that marriage is a...

1) personal commitment - I AM...

2) exclusive covenant -- my beloved's...

3) self-sacrificing pursuit -- MY beloveds...(belong to him/her)

4) preeminent relationship -- above all others

5) satisfying union --- my Beloved's (dodi) -- speaking of lover/lovmaking/pleasure/joys

THE self giving love in marriage is only a reflection of the self giving love of God.
>> seen at the Cross.

****GOSPEL****

Think of the foundation of every spiritual blessing --- CHRIST IS MINE and I AM HIS.

It's as if Jesus says to us: "Give yourself to me, and I will give myself to you. On this principle does he act; and to the degree we surrender ourselves up to him, will we ever find him communicating to us his grace and causing us to receive of his fullness. This assurance is a blessing of unspeakable value" (George Burrows, 313).

In times of darkness and sorrow, let us therefore be comforted by the inward assurance: "My beloved is mine and I am his, and by feeling that ... Jesus will return to visit and abide with our longing hearts" (George Burrows)

6:4

Solomon's first words to his beloved were praises. (Constable)

vv.4-10 -- the man speaks again in 'poetic ode' about his beloved wife's beauty. (Kinlaw)

"Geographical, military, floral, and faunal imagery are ALL evoked to give a sense of her hold on the man's affections" (Longman, 178)

The section is book-ended// bracketed by phrases:

- she is 'awesome as an army with banners' (vv.4, 10)
- she is 'beautiful' (vv.4, 10)

Solomon knows that the way to the woman's heart is through her ears ... and so once more he speaks to her with words of great love and affection (cf. 4:1-7) (Akin, 145)

"The husband NOW openly expresses his continued adoration of her beauty and character" (Lloyd Carr, 146)

****THE MAN HAS A PART TO DO...HE IS GONNA VERBALLY PRAISE HER!****

HUSBANDS, we can learn...

1. tell her she is BEAUTIFUL (v.4)
2. tell her she is IRRESISTIBLE (v.5-7)
3. tell her she is SPECIAL (v.8-9)
4. tell her she is AWESOME (v.10)

This is not self serving flattery but a genuine desire to compliment the other (Gledhill, 193)

It can often be surprising how a SMALL word of praise goes such a LONG way in energizing and establishing a relationship (Gledhill, 193)

SO NOW --- she finds him and the first words that HE SPEAKS TO HER are full of praises --- sheer, overwhelming adoration!

you are BEAUTIFUL...

you are LOVELY...

you are AWESOME...

- > note the verbal affirmation
- > note the tender adoration
- > note the heartfelt acclamation!

WORDS MATTER!

are you complimenting and affirming your spouse?

are you speaking words of endearment -- my love, my perfect one, my beloved, my friend.

is the normal pattern of your speech honest, considerate, constructive, tender, heartfelt, loving, selfless?

The first words of the lover to his wife were words of sheer praise! She is as beautiful as TIRZAH --- a lovely city which later became the capital of 4 kings of the Northern Kingdom (Baasha, Elah, Zimri, and OMri).

TIRZAH = ancient Canaanite center that served as the capital of the N kingdom = this reference is a strong indication of a very early date for the origin of the Song (Solomonic authorship strongly supported here!) (Kinlaw)

Tirzah was built along an area above a deep wadi/riverbed and it was decked with natural flowers -- it suggests a city renowned for its BEAUTY & STRENGTH (Hess, 200)

She is lovely like JERUSALEM -- called: "The perfection of beauty" (Lam 2.15)

Jerusalem is the perfection of beauty (Ps 50.2)

it is magnificent in elevation and the whole earth rejoices to see it. It evokes joy and awe (Ps 122)

her beauty is such that it is expressed in terms of the promised land and the kingdom of God with his covenant people. What marvelous expressions of love!! (cf. Hamilton, 116)

Her beauty is SO great that it unnerved him as if an army with many banners. (Deere)

> her beauty is SO CAPTIVATING and powerful to him that it's like he was looking at an awesome army with its banners in full display. WOW, just captivating, gripping, awe-inspiring!!!! (Daniel Akin, 145)

Verse 4c probably means Solomon felt weak-kneed as a result of gazing on his wife's beauty, as he would have felt facing a mighty opposing army. (Constable)

> her beauty arouses JOY AND FEAR.

The beloved is REGAL to the point of awesomeness! (Kinlaw)

* THE MAN SEES BEAUTY & STRENGTH IN THIS WOMAN! (AKIN, 145)

6:5

vv.5-7 are expressions showing she is just irresistible!!!

My wife is...

Overwhelming

Irresistible

Incomparable
The best
Preeminent
Supreme
Amazing
Dazzling

vv.5ff --- he praises her BODY and features (like on the wedding night)

Her eyes are SO beautiful (Song 1.15 and 4:1) that they overwhelmed him.

> it's NOT that they are dreadful to behold ... but they possess a power of attraction that the man cannot resist! (hess, 201)

> the eyes overwhelm him; their beauty enchants him -- here they possess great power.

> the strength of the eyes's attractiveness, and its association with the image of martial power = the woman holds him fast! (Hess, 201)

*here is a man totally caught up and overwhelmed by the wife's beauty.

eyes, mouth, face, -- even the rest of her -- ensnared us and we have never been able to escape! (Akin, 146)

NOTE -- he repeats part of the praise he had given her on the wedding night (ch.4:1-3) -- and by so doing he was indirectly telling her that HIS LOVE FOR HER HAD NOT DIMINISHED since that first night (Jack Deere)

THE BODY is not evil -- but good & worthy of praise!!
Solomon is gonna admire 8 different parts of her body

Solomon begins with her EYES ...

So Solomon, seeing her eyes behind her veil he said that they were "doves"

HAIR - like a flock of goats
THEN HE GOES TO HER HAIR>>

Her HAIR is like a flock of goats coming from Mt Gilead

> hardly sounds like a compliment -- but it was!

SEEN from a distance the dark hair of Pelstinian goats was beautiful in the sunset as a flock was descending from the mountains.

The dark hair had the same beautiful quality.

Mt Gilead was a mountain range east of the Jordan River in Gilead (East of the Jordan), known for its fertile pastures and many flocks.

6:6

TEETH --- like a flock of ewes, come up from washing, bearing twins

TEETH -- white andn perfectly matched
> each has its twin

In a sense: it's as if he is saying to her: "your teeth are white, and you even have all of them!" >>
it's a picture of sheep coming up from a washing (glistening white)

the teeth speaks of the glistening whiteness in the first part of the verse (Longman)

6:7

TEMPLES (cheeks) --- are like slice of pomegranate behind the veil

TEMPLES -- probably including her cheeks -- were reddish and sweet like pomegranite fruit.

it speaks of the face (behind the veil, v.1)

he is praising her face & head

it speaks probably of her "complexion" --- the fruit is a sort of reddish/orange (Longman, 146)

6:8

she is SPECIAL = he just wants her to know "she is one of a kind" (remember, it's all poetic imagery!)

We must remember that God's plan, design & the Spirit-inspired Scripture tells us that God's plan for marriage is a monogamous, lifelong covenant between ONE man and ONE woman (Matt 19.4-5; Gen 2.24)

> THUS, it's prob unlikely that these verses express Solomon saying this wife is the best out of the other women back at home! (cf. Hamilton, 117)

there are 60 queens and 80 concubines and maidens without number...

>>> how does SOLOMON -- a monogamous, exclusive, newly married man speak of THESE NUMBERS OF WOMEN?

see 1 Kings 11:3

Solomon had 700 wives, princesses, and 300 concubines, and his wives turned his heart away (v.4 - when he was old)

The reference to queens, concubines, and virgins (v.8) might be a reference to the royal harem -- SHE is without equal among all women (Kinlaw)

>> NOTE carefully, the text does NOT say that she is the best among ALL concubines and queens --- the text does *NOT* SAY THE WOMEN ARE ALL *HIS*.

It's a reference to the royal court to compare the beauty of his WIFE (female) and to establish HER SUPERIORITY!

> the picture is one of the highest levels of royalty and the most beautiful women, whether those in the senior ranks of society or those among the most youthful of women (Hess, 203)

It seems that here in thi context, these women MAY be associated with the royal court but have NO FORMAL MARITAL status (longman, 182)

She transcends all other women. She is HIS standard of beauty. SHE is the best. There is NO ONE who is like his wife!

WE AS MEN (husbands) MUST ENSURE THAT OUR WIVES KNOW NONE CAN COMPARE WITH HER.

She is beautiful

She is sweet

She is our love
She has our heart
She has our body and affections
She is the best
She is MINE.

> LINE up all the women in all teh world and I'll pick my WIFE first & foremost without hesitating -- always & evermore! She is my love & my passion & my desire & my treasure!

She's not just a wife but she is MY wife, just not any woman but THE woman that is mine.

vv.8-9 --- his love and appreciation for her had GROWN since the wedding night.

Happy is the woman who receives so much extravagant praise (Gledhill, 194)

6:9

The husband assures her that she is totally unique as his dove (cf. 5:2)

emphasis: "MY" = the possessive pronoun (Hess, 203)

MY DOVE
MY PERFECT ONE

> same language as when he wanted sexual love in 5:2

She is UNIQUE (lit. ONE)

She is unique, she is different from all others. She is favored. She is chosen and pure. She is just "Special" (Longman, 182)

ON DATE NIGHT, take a walk, get coffee, get a meal and look deep into each other's eyes and say...

YOU ARE UNIQUE TO ME BECAUSE YOU...

and then provide a list of 5 or 10 or 20 or 50 ways that your spouse/wife is unique!

"These express the affection for his beloved wife and the desire for her that led him to the room in chap 5 (Hess 203)

She's the mother's ONLY daughter, ONE.

She's the PURE CHILD of the one who bore her (mother)

They ALL sing her praises.

> those who know her best love and admire her most, beginning with her husband

>>>> HUSBANDS - DO WE LOVE AND ADMIRE OUR WIVES AND THEIR BEAUTY (MORE THAN ANYONE!)

Tom Gledhill writes: "Happy is the girl who receives so much extravagant praise!"

Even the others saw her & called her blessed!

Proverbs 31:28-31

6:10

When the husband and wife (Solomon & the Shulammitte) are reconciled and now have come together, the WOMEN were amazed at her beauty.

They praised her (v.9)

They said she is as beautiful as the dawn, the moon, the sun, the stars (v.10) (Jack Deere)

Solomon used these women for comparison to show how highly not only he but many other people regarded his beloved. Her beauty had grown and was still increasing in his eyes (v. 10). (Constable)

these women are now affirming the sheer beauty & captivating glory of this sweet bride...

GROWS LIKE the DAWN...

as BEAUTIFUL AS the full moon

as PURE as the SUN

as AWESOME as an army with banners

> note the sheer recognition of glory, shiny brilliance of beauty.

> we might say that she is just heavenly or celestial in her beauty and powerful in her presence (Akin, 147)

LIKE saying:

She is out of this world (Odonnell)

The woman who was ordinary is now extraordinary in her beauty and breathtaking to behold (Garrett)

She appears like the dawn in its glory, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army with banners (vv.4, 10) --- she is IMPRESSIVE and BEAUTIFUL! (Kinlaw)

THE MOON - an unusual term emphasizing the 'whiteness' of the object. Like a giant full moon over Israel's sky.

the full moon in its whiteness, seems far distant at times, yet is infinitely enticing.

There is a longing to reach out and touch (Gledhill, 197)

SUN --- unusual and poetic word suggests that she is special and distinctive in relation to all other 'bodies' around her.

a source of light and life and heat for all who gaze upon it.

she has 'presence' (like the sun) which no one can fail to observe.

She makes an impression on ALL who come within her attractive orbit (Gledhill, 198)

"She is as awesome as the STARRY CANOPY AT NIGHT" --- to gaze upon the stars is an awesome experience (Gledhill, 198)

what are ways for the WIFE to bless the husband:

1. give him admiration and respect (Eph 5.22-23)
2. provide sexual fulfillment (Prov 5.15-19; 1 Cor 7.1-5)
3. cultivate home support (Prov 9.13; 19.13; 21.9; 25.24)
4. strive to be an attractive wife (Song 1.8-10; 1 Pet 3.1-5)
5. become his best friend (Song 8.1-2, 6)

what are ways for the HUSBAND to bless the wife:

1. be a spiritual leader (Ps 1; eph 5.23-27)
2. give her personal affirmation & appreciation (Prov 31.28-29; Song 4 & 6 & 7)

3. show personal affection (romance her) (Song 6.10-13; Eph 5.28-29, 33)
4. initiate intimate conversations (Song 2, 8; 1 Pet 3.7)
5. always be honest and open (Eph 4.15; Prov 15.22-23)
6. provide home support and stability (1 Tim 5.8)
7. demonstrate family priority and commitment (Eph 6.4; Col 3.19-20)
>>> AKIN, p.148-49

NOTE how all this is modeled by Christ --- as he died on a CROSS.

Is your marriage characterized by SELF SACRIFICE?
selfless love and selfless submission collide together wonderfully!

****GOSPEL****

what do we learn and apply from these verses?
CHRIST is full of delight in gazing upon his people.
Zeph 3.17
Ps 147.11
Ps 149.4

6:11

--- vv.11-12 - prob the wife (SHulammite) speaking now...

*vv.11-13 tell teh story of the couple's reconciliation from the BELOVED's point of view (=teh wife)

So she sets out to seek him where she knows that he will be...

SHE knew he had gone down to his garden (v.2) --- so she went there to see if their love was still in bloom (v.11).

NOTE: as a person would look in the springtime for NEW growth, buds on grape vines, and pomegranate blossoms, SO SHE LOOKED for fresh evidence of their love.

WHEN she found him there his first words were words of sheer, heartfelt, overwhelming praise (vv.4-10) --- indicating that their love WAS IN FACT FLOURISHING. (Jack Deere, 1022)

> she went down looking for blossoming love & tenderness ... and it was HOT & STEAMY!

She's speaking poetry, love-poetry. This is WISDOM. It's FULL of images, figures of speech, metaphors, imaginative language painting pictures, smelling smells, hearing sounds in your MIND.

The stroll around the garden (v.11) is a stroll around the body of the lover. It is a description of the beauty of the lover's body as well as suggesting the pleasures of love that await the speaker.

THIS ALL symbolizes the JOYS of love that the two experience in the deepening of their physical relationship" (Hess, 207)

"The verse as a whole is a suggestion of intimate relations between the man and the woman" (Longman, 184)

> exploring the GROVE --- means exploring the body of the lover.

> "Intimate union is in mind" (Longman, 185)

****GOSPEL****

and where do we experience this intimacy & gladness & celebration with our Bridegroom Christ?

Think of how CHRIST is found by his people in moments of intimacy when he draws near...

in reading the Word

praying

in hearing the Word preached

at the communion table

in sincere fellowship

in urgent evangelism

6:12

Deere: "This is one of the most difficult verses in the Bible to interpret" (1022)

The Hebrew could be:

"I became enraptured, for you placed me on the chariots of the people of the prince" (Deere, 1022)

HCSB translates it: "Before I knew it, my desire put me among the chariots of my noble people"

>> IDEA? I was overwhelmed, beside myself, with all that has happened.

>> I've been swept off my feet by my king (Akin, 153)

This verse seems to express the female lover placed beside her princely lover (husband) in a dramatic and public display of 'power' and royalty.

The term for chariot is PLURAL suggesting a squad of chariots that go to battle (battle/military language).

this represented one of the most fearful weapons appearing on the ANE battlefield (Hess, 208)

THUS> the female lover's sense of a place on board this chariot instrument of terror is a part of the excitement which provides the climax of this experience.

> the man totally loves her and he passionately loves her and he is whisking her away (Hess, 208)

POINT?

When the husband's first words in the garden to his wife were words of praise, she BECAME ENRAPTURED!!!

She was beside herself with joy!

He then placed her on his own chariot at the head of his entourage.

Thus: "To her delighted surprise, the KING sweets her up in his chariots" (Hamilton, 120)

SO when she comes to him, he welcomes her back -- most happily -- and with enthusiasm.

The scene conveys connotations of nobility, royalty, glamour and splendor (Gledhill, 200)

The girl is 'LITERALLY SWEEPED OFF HER FEET'. She is being publicly acclaimed by the crowds as the acknowledged consort of her royal hero, as she is taken off to be with him" (Gledhill, 200)

Some main thoughts/headings here from v.12>>>

1. She is utterly captured by his love.
2. He is lavishly generous toward his wife.
3. She is happily delighted by his actions.
4. He is powerfully protecting of his wife.
5. They are happily traveling off in union.

What a man! What a groom! What a lover! What an honoring Husband!!

Let us be reminded of CHRIST -- his outstanding nature, his nobility, his tenderness, the richness and profusion that characterizes him, the fragrance of his words, his gracious works, strength, splendid appearance, sweetness and loveliness.

IS HE our lover and friend --- that we search for him?

Give thanks for Him as THIS kind of matchless Savior he is. (Brady, 200)

6:13

BUT as the entourage is leaving, the inhabitants begged her to stay (COME BACK, COME BACK stated 4x!) --- and the lover noted the intensity of their desire to gaze on the Shulammitte.

The Word "SHulammitte" is the feminine form of the name "SOLOMON"

*interesting: the term here is the feminine form of SOLOMON.

> Solomon has chosen to refer to HER this way to provoke reflection on their oneness, unity, togetherness.

* interesting, there's another time in the Bible where a woman receives a name derived from the man...

MAN - ish --

WOMAN - ishah -- Gen 2.23

*THE POINT? The woman who marries the man becomes HIS helpmate, HIS companion, HIS spouse when the covenant between the two of them is made.

- > his status becomes HER status.
- > his name becomes HER name
- > his identity becomes HER identity.
- > his possessions becomes HER possessions.

>> full and undisclosed and full openness in sharing, harmony, unity, oneness. (Hamilton, 121)

So here we see in the marriage covenant...

1. equality in personhood yet difference in role.
2. similarity in identity yet difference in function.

We have a HEAD and we have one who SUBMITS.

We have a LEADER and we have one who FOLLOWS.

The idea of "Why should you gaze could better be: "HOW you gaze upon..." ...

THE POINT? they gazed upon her and her beauty (he writes) as if they were viewing a graceful dance.

In some way the town of Mahanaim is associated here with the dance, though the point of the association is not clear.

Mahanaim is EAST of the Jordan River where David fled from Absalom (2 Sam 17.24)

"she DANCED" --- the language here speaks of turn/whirling -- carries the idea of exuberant dance

> same word that the Israelites did at the golden calf (Ex 32.19)

Women often are participants of this dance -- and it has to do with battle

Like Miriam (Ex 15.20)

Jephthah's daughter (Judge 11.34)

the daughters of Shiloh (Judg 21.21)

the women of Israel (1 Sam 18.6; 21.11; 29.5)

** it's a dance of ecstatic joy --- like returning home from a great, victorious battle!
(Hess, 210)

The word "MAHANAIM" in the Hebrew sounds LIKE the word for Dance (Mehalat --- to further evoke the sense of victory dance after battle (Hess, 210)

Why are the others LOOKING/GAZING UPON HER???

it's been said already: "She is the most beautiful among women (1:8; 5:9; 6:1).

it would be natural for the king's subjects to want to see the Bride's beauty, particularly as she's reunited w/ the King

And not only are the companions and others LOOKING upon her, but so is her lover who will begin to express her beauty and admire her features (in chap 7)!

****CONCLUDING THOUGHTS****

Our marriages should be ever-developing and growing. they shuld be maturing, a relationship of increasing intimacy that gets better and better as years go by.

Jay Adams suggests that marriages should continually ask this check up question:

'HAS THERE BEEN GROWTH, DECLINE, OR A PLATEAUIING OF YOUR MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP DURING THE LAST 6 MONTHS?'

++++
SONGS..=====

Fairest Lord Jesus
Fairest Lord Jesus, Ruler of all nature,
O Thou of God and man the Son,
Thee will I cherish, Thee will I honor,
Thou, my soul's glory, joy and crown.

Fair are the meadows, fairer still the woodlands,
Robed in the blooming garb of spring;
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer,
Who makes the woeful heart to sing.

Fair is the sunshine,
Fairer still the moonlight,
And all the twinkling starry host;
Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer
Than all the angels heaven can boast.

All fairest beauty, heavenly and earthly,
Wondrously, Jesus, is found in Thee;
None can be nearer, fairer or dearer,
Than Thou, my Savior, art to me.

Beautiful Savior! Lord of all the nations!
Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor, praise, adoration,
Now and forever more be Thine.

My hope is built on nothing less

-- Edward Mote

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly trust in Jesus' Name.

Refrain

On Christ the solid Rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand;
All other ground is sinking sand.

When darkness seems to hide His face,
I rest on His unchanging grace.
In every high and stormy gale,
My anchor holds within the veil.

Refrain

His oath, His covenant, His blood,
Support me in the whelming flood.

When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my Hope and Stay.

Refrain

When He shall come with trumpet sound,
Oh may I then in Him be found.
Dressed in His righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne.

Refrain

SONG OF SOLOMON 7 | CFBC mid-week study NOTES

TEXT: Song of Solomon 7

TITLE: "The God-Blessed & God-Given Thrill of Verbal Admiration & Sexual Exhilaration in the Marriage Relationship"

Song of Songs 7 deals with, what Gary and Betsy Riccuci called: "The Thrilling Sexual Pleasure and Intimacy in Marriage" (in their biblical counseling book on marriage.

Hollywood tries -- and they portray sex.

But it's distorted. It's selfish. It's unclean. It's forceful. It's unreal. It's blasphemous.

GOD gives clarity on this widespread topic & this culturally worshiped god --- of "SEX"

- > we need clarity, not ambiguity.
- > we need TRUTH, not thoughts.
- > we need guidance, not ideas.
- > we need lasting wisdom, not self-serving tips
- > we need GOSPEL CLARITY, not worldly examples.

**

INTRO Quotes/Notes

"This section portrays the maturing of the couple's marriage.

THE PROGRESS is revealed in 2 ways...

1. the imagery in these verses is much bolder & more intimate than the imagery of the lover on the wedding night (in ch.4). This increase in sexual freedom is a normal part of a healthy, maturing marriage.
2. the climactic nature of the refrain in 7:10 also speaks of this marital maturation & overwhelming commitment & desire.

Gary Brady writes: "Here we are observing the lovers at a more mature stage in their relationship --- after the courtship and the marriage, after certain setbacks and reconciliations that have served ultimately to strengthened the relationship (203)

Regarding the marriage act of sexual intimacy, a few things should be noted....

- 1) The Bible speaks of it as a man knowing his wife (Gen 4.1)
- 2) a normal and integral part of genuine unity in marriage

3) an area over which more marital battles have been fought and more dissatisfactions manifested.

4) an area of conflict may arise because of unresolved guilt (Rom 2.15); ignoring sin

****HOW CAN someone overcome the feelings of guilt or past experiences of sinful, illegitimate, brutal sexual occasions.**

what to do?

1) examine your heart and face the sin

2) acknowledge it to God

3) seek his cleansing through the blood of Christ

4) depend upon the power of the Spirit to change the attitude and meditate on the Word of God

1 John 1.9

Ps 32.5

Prov 18.13

Eph 1.7

1 John 1.7

1 John 2.1-2

1 Cor 6.9-11

2 Cor 3.17-18

Ps 119.9, 11

Ps 119.97

Col 3.16

>>> LET US REMEMBER>>>

there is a great ignorance among the people of God about what GOD & THE BIBLE HAS TO SAY ABOUT SEX.

many people have the idea that the Bible doesn't have much to say about sex and what it does say it says it negatively and as if it's a dirty rag to be avoided & shunned & thrown out.

MD, Harry McGee wrote a booklet: "The Scriptures, Sex, and Satisfaction" when he worked through 1 Cor 7.1-6 and gave 7 principles... I think they're helpful:

1. sexual relations within marriage are holy and good (Heb 13.4)

2. pleasure in sexual relations (like pleasure in eating or in the performance of other bodily functions) is NOT forbidden but rather assumed (Prov 5.18-19 & Song of Songs)

3. Sexual pleasure is to be regulated by the key principle that one's sexuality does NOT exist for himself or for his own pleasure, but for his partner. (It should be thought of it this way: in marriage your 'rights' are totally and fully given to your partner.)

4. sexual relations are to be regular and continuous. (Both parties are to provide such adequate satisfaction that both 'burning' (unfulfilled sexual desire) and the temptation to find satisfaction elsewhere are AVOIDED.)

5. the principle of mutual satisfaction means that each party is to provide the sexual enjoyment which is 'due' his or her spouse whenever needed. (But remember, requests for sexual satisfaction

must never be governed by an idolatrous lust, but neither should it be used as an excuse for failing to sense and satisfy a partner's desire & need.)

6. in accordance with the principle of 'rights', there is to be NO sexual bargaining. (I'll not have sex with you unless you...)

7. sexual relationships are equal and reciprocal. Mutual initiation, stimulation, foreplay, and participation in the sexual act is not only permissible but enjoined. marital rights entail mutual responsibility (in Wayne Mack, p.132-33)

Gary Riccuci says: "don't try to separate sex from the rest of your marriage. It is neither an afterthought nor the starting point. Satisfying sex is vitally linked to every other topic and subject in the Christian marriage."

> "your enjoyment of physical intimacy WILL NOT be complete until you've cultivated spiritual and emotional intimacy" (Gary Riccuci, p.134)

> but here's the problem: WE AS HUMANS were not born with the gift for lovemaking. Rather, we were all born with sinful predispositions to SELFISHNESS. And when selfishness meets the lovemaking act --- it's a catastrophic trainwreck waiting to explode!

*It's tragic in our day -- and in many Churches -- that so many couples are either unaware of their need for help or are unwilling to ask for it. Some are ignorant of the need for help and others are arrogant so don't ask for help. Sexual problems generate incredible levels of anxiety, apprehension, frustration, guilt, and temptations. They also expose pride, and fear, and thus hinder couples from seeking the help they desperately need (Betsy Riccuci, p.145)

"We cannot praise our spouse too much or too often" (Daniel Akin)

+++++

**** OUTLINES****

vv.1-9

admire your mate (1-6)

embrace your mate (7-9a)

desire your mate (9b-10)

enjoy your mate (11-13)

*** HOMILETICAL OUTLINE ***

4 helps for ALL married couples for a God-exalting & God-worshiping understanding of & enjoyment of sexual intimacy...

1. verbally admire your spouse (1-6)
 - feet
 - hips
 - navel
 - belly
 - breasts
 - neck
 - eyes
 - nose
 - head
 - hair
 - v.6 - CONCLUSION!
2. tenderly embrace your spouse (7-9a)
 - illustration
 - intimacy
3. passionately desire your spouse (9b-10)
 - (woman speaking)
 - tender words
 - exclusive commitment
 - passionate desire
4. sexually enjoy your spouse (11-13)
 - make time to be alone
 - enjoy intimacy with one another
 - selflessly give for the other's delight
 - speak tenderly & exclusively with your mate

OUTLINE:

1. grow in the knowledge of your mate (1-6)
2. grow in the passion for your mate (7-10)

OR:

1. praise of the beloved & her love (1-10)
 - the charms (1-6)
 - her desire (7-9)
 - mutual possession (10)
2. the invitation from the beloved & her love (11-13)

****summary of Song of Songs****

Chapters...

1. Longing
2. Admiring
3. Marrying
4. Wedding Night
5. Conflict/Selfishness
6. Reconciling / Forgiving
7. Intimacy/ Enjoyment

*******VERSE BY VERSE COMMENTARY*******

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS/NOTES...

"This is the fullest detailing of her physical charms found in the Song of Songs" (Kinlaw, 1237)

And even though this is really the BRIDE's Song, there are three occasions where the groom describes her beauty in detail and only one where she reciprocates (he describes her in ch.4, ch.5, ch.6, and here in ch.7).

*He describes his wife earlier in 4:1-7 & also in 6:4-10 (Akin)

>>> I think there's a spiritual application here.

>> Our great Bridegroom finds us FAR MORE DELIGHTFUL & ATTRACTIVE than we find him!

> His love is pure and eternal. His capacity for love and joy is greater than ours even though he as the object of our affection is greater and infinitely more worthy (Kinlaw, 1237)

Here in this chapter we find ourselves in one of the mature settings of a married couple obediently enjoying & happily indulging in sexual intimacy & verbal affirmations. It's holy & sacred & wonderful & good.

>> consider how intimate CHRIST WILL BE WITH US on that day when we see Him & behold him face to face.

> in this chapter, the groom PASSIONATELY admires His bride!

>> how much more does Christ our husband passionately admire us, His elect Bride!

> in this chapter, the groom OVERWHELMINGLY enjoys His bride!

>> how much more does Christ our husband overwhelmingly enjoy & tenderly embrace us His bride!

> in this chapter, the groom EXCLUSIVELY desires His bride

>> how much more does Christ our husband exclusively desire and passionately give Himself to us!!!

> in this chapter, the wife HAPPILY RESPONDS to her Groom

>> how much more then do we the Church, the Bride, respond to Christ's initiative w/ love, intimacy, longing!!!

***CONSIDER ALL THE SPIRITUAL PARALLELS between this chapter & Christ & His Bride, the Church.

We think: WHY in the world would God choose to set his love upon us? (Ps 113.7-8)!

VERSE BY VERSE COMMENTARY

7:1

note one thing ... as the husband now speaks, remember that there is *no bitterness about before when he affirmed his bride and longed for lovemaking and she refused it. (Hamilton, 126)

HOW BEAUTIFUL -- yafe
v.6 - how beautiful

This poem reflects the perpetual charm of the FEMALE FORM & BODY to the male.

> in a similar way, let us remember that our great Bridegroom is perpetually overjoyed with His Bride, the Church!

MUCH of the language has been repeated so far in the song (in ch.4 and ch.6) -- but that's the nature of love.

This section examines some 14 different parts of the female body, using some 15 separate metaphors or similes (Hess, 210)
and as Solomon deals with and praises her PHYSICAL TRAITS, we also note that her character and personality are also included in the figures of speech.

Gary Brady: "the description here is intimate and personal -- NOT lustful, perverted, or disrespectful (204)

FEET

the beloved's feet were beautiful & the shape of her legs reminded him of the 'exquisite work of a master artisan' (Jack Deere, 1022)

>> even her feet are beautiful.

her THIGHS are such are like the work of some more than human artist --- and they captured him.

the hips and thighs are enticing -- her curves are enticing.

> only the finest of artists could have produced such objects of beauty (Hess, 213)

HIP > like an ornament. Like a piece of jewelry.

> it's as if the man is totally fixated on the moving body (feet and hips) of his bride!
(Longman, 194)

7:2

the comparison of the beloved's NAVAL to a rounded goblet of wine

grotesque if taken as a visual comparison!! :=)

Rather, her body was as desirable and as intoxicating as wine (cf.4 :10)

Daniel Akin believes that this word "almost certainly refers to the innermost sexual part of the woman, her vagina (vulva).

> this beautifully expresses the sexual pleasures he continually receives from his wife
(Akin, 156)

The husband would like to fill her naval with spiced wine and drink from it (Kinlaw)

it is a tasteful allusion to the pleasures and intimacies of sex (Longman, 195)

WINE >> pleasurable, delightful, sweet, enjoyment, celebration, happiness.

wine was a common staple in the diet in the ANE Palestine

v.2 - your navel like wine

v.9 - your mouth like best wine

"Wine simply stands for 'pleasure' (Gary Brady, 206)

her WAIST to a mound of wheat -- would be absurd if interpreted VISUALLY!!! :=)

what was one of the main food sources in ancient Israel (Deut 32.14; 2 Sam 4.6; 17.28)

THUS = his wife was both his 'food' (wheat) and 'drink' (wine) in the sense that her physical expressions of love nourished and satisfied him (Deere, 1022)

Her belly is round and wheat colored!

The reference to the lilies that encircle the stomach reminds us that we are dealing with figures of speech / poetic images that enrich the erotic nature of the passage (fresh, scented, delightful, luxurious)

Longman thinks that the reference here to the belly speaks of her genitalia (vagina) -- and the heap of wheat calls to mind her vaginal hair (p.195)

this simply refers to her being his wine, food, drink, wheat. "She nourishes and satisfies him as he has sought to nourish and satisfy her" (Akin, 156)

This might have NOTHING to do with the 'appearance like wheat' but everything to do with the enjoyment of high delights of the richest fare in indulging in wheat' (Hamilton, 127)

7:3

her BREASTS are like fawns ---

symmetrical objects of *grace and beauty* -- evoke tender and solicitous response.

they become the 'focal point' for the picture of physical beauty and for the desire that the male has for the lover' (Hess, 215)

Speaks of sheer pleasure, abundance, happiness, and ecstatic joy.

7:4

her NECK - was beautiful and valuable --- like an ivory tower.

>> NOT* that her neck is LONG, FAT, THICK, etc.

* Rather, it's the idea that she is grand, strong, dignified, even elegant! (just beautiful!)

gives her stature and impressiveness. strength & formidable. (Kinlaw)
a tower?

the tower formed a natural part of the fortification and defense of a city and kingdom. the neck was vulnerable in battle as a place where a mortal wound can be effected. THEREFORE, it is defended and guarded (Hess, 216)

To an Israelite, a tower is a 'symbol of excellence and a recognized standard of value' (ODonnell, 101)

>> SHE IS excellent & supremely valuable! WOW!

eyes are beautiful and their effect on him was refreshing just like POOLS of Heshbon (a Moabite city (Num 21.25)) famous for its fertility and water reservoirs.

Heshbon was a Moabite city famous for its refreshing ponds. (Constable)

POOLS > luminous, clear, and deep.

"The soft glance of her eyes reflects the peace and beauty of the Heshbon pools (Lehrman)

Those pools were near the city gate of BATH Rabbim -- whose location is unknown.
Possibly bath Rabbim was the name of the gate.

Her NOSE was well shaped -- like the tower of Lebanon!!

This strong tower helped protect Damascus so her lovely features reflect her **strong character**.
Similarly, the Shulammite's nose attractively represented her total beauty. (Constable)
the NOSE adds her stateliness.

> it's an important tower guarding Damascus --- no more important tower (supreme importance & honor!)

7:5

her HEAD to Mt Carmel - comparison -- he means that she had a queenly bearing that was majestic and awesome.

> Mt Carmel was viewed as being majestic & beautiful & flowery & just gorgeous.

Mt. Carmel was majestic (cf. Isa. 35:2; Jer. 46:18), as was she. In Solomon's day, people considered purple threads most beautiful, precious, and regal. (Constable)

The poet has gone from Heshbon, Hermon, Damascus, and now Mt Carmel. This last mountain is crowned with green forests (lush, beautiful)

Her head crowns her. She's awesome and majestic.

The HAIR --- was so beautiful that the powerful monarch Solomon was "held captive" -- Spellbound -- by her beauty.

remember: A woman's LONG HAIR is her glory (1 Cor 11.15).

SHE is the royal tapestry -- purple --- the man shows great care in treating her as a royal queen! (Gary Brady, 209)

Indeed, the husband is held captive by her. She is an object of beauty & loveliness.

7:6

CONCLUSION >> how beautiful you are.

A summary statement of her PERFECT BEAUTY, CALLING HER = O LOVE! (Deere, 1023)
he is seeing her as a 'treasure of delights' (kinlaw, 1238)

THIS is the inclusio of similarity between vv.1, 6

She is HIS love (Hess, 219)

A godly husband can learn from Solomon's example here (and from God's wise instruction for us)

"A woman finds sexual intimacy MOST satisfying when it takes place in a context of intimate sharing, communication, and affection. THOSE TAKE *TIME*. But loving your wife VERBALLY is as important as making love to her physically. Remember, touch her heart and mind before you touch her body (Gary Riccuci, p.143)

Daughter of pleasures (of delights) --- the male addresses her beauty and holds back NOTHING (Hess, 219)

She is the "Daughter of delights" = that means that he says: "everything about her, every detail, every particular of her person, is a delight, a joy, a blessing of his soul. The more he knows her the more he loves her" (Danny Akin, 157)

*DO YOU talk to your spouse this way?

Are you so committed to your spouse that it really doesn't matter how they treat you, because you are going to love your spouse the way that the Lord loves His people, the way that his people should respond to him?

NOTE:

the husband doesn't rebuke his bride

he doesn't correct her

he doesn't initiate a review of all her mistakes (or even bring them up, verbalize them, recount old faults)

he goes straight to what matters -- HER significance to him as an emblem of covenant of marital love! (Hamilton, 128)

7:7

vv.7-9 --- the man is gonna describe his wife (lover) as he compares her with a PALM TREE.

vv.7-9 -- the husband's desires are strong & passionate

A husband has the freedom to enjoy his wife's body (cf. 5:10-16; cf. 1 Cor. 7:3-5), though not to abuse this privilege, of course. (Constable)

+++++

** excuses on the Bible's view of human body **

remember: there is a high value placed on human flesh in Scripture.

the body is NOT an unworthy shell to be shucked in death.

it is destined for resurrection.

It may be the occasion for sin, but it can also be the very clothing of Deity as in the Incarnation of Christ!

Remember: Both Bodily beauty and pure passion are very good. Thus says the LORD in this Song of Songs (Douglas Sean ODonnell, p.99)

+++++

BREASTS -- like the clusters of dates

NOW the groom sees his bride as a palm tree loaded with luscious fruits. He turns again to her breasts and lips to enjoy his possession (vv.8-9).

> very erotic, holy, enjoyable, delightful, and intoxicating (Prov 5) language!

THIS IS THE URGENCY OF AROUSED DESIRE (Gledhill, p.210)

7:8

he speaks of his DESIRE for her breasts, comparing them to desirable and tasty clusters of grapes.

He wanted to enjoy the sweet and intoxicating fruit of her life.

7:9

even her BREATH --- was sweet smelling LIKE APPLES and the kisses of her mouth were SWEET LIKE WINE (cf. 4:10)

> pleasant!

ONE writer, JOhn Gries writes: "Jesus intended marriage to be happy for you! God expects regular sex in marriage, and sex is a learning process" (Akin, 158)

APPLES have a pleasant scent -- and that's good enough reason for its appearance here (Longman, 198)

he desires to get intimate with her and the sweet smells often enhance that experience.

<<< It's like the bride *interrupts* him mid sentence.

She opens her mouth and says: "you've taken the words out of my mouth...

the wine you speak of does go down smoothly -- gliding over lips and teeth (in other words = his kisses flow from his lips to mine" (Message translation)

A few summaries:

1. pure passion is PATIENT.
2. pure passion is PLEASURABLE.
3. pure passion is PROTECTIVE. (against impurities)
4. pure passion is PROMOTING (something of a greater Passion)

WHY? because the love of a husband & wife always is a signpost, a promotion, an illustration of something more!

7:9b -- new section (BRIDE TALKING)***

the woman uses the same image of wine (cf. v.9a) -- to express HER desire to satisfy her husband's wish for her.

The rapid interchange of speakers reflected their excitement in GIVING and RECEIVING kisses and caresses.

>> they are intimate, the setting is hot, the emotions are high, the bodies are close.

SHE is now gonna respond. There's NO HOLDING BACK (Kinlaw, 1239)

She belongs to Him.

There is mutual giving.

HIS GOAL is to satisfy and please her.

HER GOAL is to satisfy and please him.

>> there is mutual giving with the goal of pleasing the mate , the marvelous result is that BOTH receive the joy and pleasure God intended (1 Cor 7 & Phil 2.3-5) (Daniel Akin, 159)

7:10

the refrain of MUTUAL POSSESSION has been given already (2:16 & 6:3)

It's a mutual possession, supreme togetherness, inseparable unity.

I AM MY BELOVED's... connotes...

1. commitment
2. exclusivity
3. selflessness
4. permanence
5. unity/togetherness
6. delight
7. passion (dod refers to sexual delight/passion/pleasure)

"She gives herself to him EAGERLY, WILLINGLY, AND WITH GLADNESS" (Gledhill, 210)

Here, however, the phrase "MY LOVER" is mine" is replaced with HIS DESIRE IS FOR ME. It's a more emphatic way of stating *POSSESSION*

HOW MUCH MORE could a husband belong to his wife than for him to desire only her
>>> and for her to KNOW THIS**

She has so grown in the security of his love that she could now say that his only desire was for her.

She had become so taken by HIS LOVE for her that here she did not even mention her possession of him (Deere, 1023)

There is an echo back to EDEN in all this --- purity, exclusivity, marriage, enjoyability, togetherness, unity.

GOD commanded the husband and wife to give oneself to the other & become one flesh.

v.10 --- his "DESIRE" is for me.

> it's the same word we reflect on Gen 3.16 -- the woman's desire is for her husband (to rule him)

>> it's almost as if here in Song 7.10 we see a momentary glimpse of the reversal of the fall.

>> the way things SHOULD be.

>> her not wanting to rule him with a controlling/overwhelming desire,

>> but rather they have mutual desires for each other!

**The idea is a "very strong, almost overpowering urge" (Kinlaw, 1239)

> His desire for her easily equals hers for him. She is at NO disadvantage. She relishes the security of the relationship to her husband" (Kinlaw, 1239)

The Genesis judgment (3:16; 4:7) of each person seeking domination is reversed, with each person now seeking mutuality and willingly giving possession of their body to their partner (Hess, 224)

As a result of the fall & sin's curse...

in Gen 3.16 - the woman's *desire* is to rule over her husband but he will rule over her

in Gen 4.7 - sin's *desire* was to master Cain but he must rule over it.

NOW >> it depicts the 'setting right' of a relationship that has been distorted because of the fall.

> this is the ECHOING BACK TO THE GARDEN & THE WAY THINGS *SHOULD BE*

Jack Deere:

HOW MUCH more could a husband belong to his wife than for him to desire only her? She had so grown in the security of his love that SHE could now say that his only desire was for her!

NOTE how the Bride responds to the man's verbal expressions

HOW MUCH do we desire our Christ?

DO WE REMEMBER that He has great desires and overwhelming passions & fond love for us?

7:11

in the preceding unit (vv.1-10) the HUSBAND took the lead/initiative in the lovemaking.

NOW in vv.11-13 -- the WOMAN, WIFE takes the initiative in the lovemaking (Deere, 1023)

Secure in her love, the Shulammitte now felt free to initiate sex directly, rather than indirectly as earlier (cf. 1:2a, 2:6). (Constable)

vv.11-13 --- it's as if the Shulammitte initiates the lovemaking and invites her husband for a little getaway to the country! (Danniel Akin, p.166)

>> She is spontaneous

She is enticing

Vacations, weekend getaways, one-night getaways together, can often enhance and rekindle the passions in marriage (Akin, 166-67)

SHE invites her man to leave the city and go with her on a little getaway.

****This is the FIRST time in the entire SONG/ poem where SHE (the beloved bride) makes a direct unambiguous request for sex.**

She says: "COME MY BELOVED" --- the hebrew word is an imperative: "COME" my passionate-lover, my intimate companion.

Previously her desire had been expressed in the 3rd person (1:2a, 2:6, etc)

but NOW>> having grown MORE SECURE in the love of her husband, she felt free to initiate the lovemaking

>> and to verbalize it outright, openly, and clearly! (Deere, 1023)

SHE INITIATES INTIMACY WITH HER HUSBAND>>

1. it's APPROPRIATE for women to initiate intimacy.
2. it's BIBLICAL for women to initiate intimacy.
3. it's PLEASING for women to initiate intimacy.
4. it's SELFLESS for women to initiate intimacy.

She ***wants*** to initiate lovemaking with him.

> note how they had conflict, but reconciled.

> note how they had sinned, but repented & came together & dealt biblically with it.

> note how the husband delighted in her as lovely & beautiful (ch.6)

> note how the husband verbally admires her body & physical features (ch.7)

>> SHE RESPONDS with a heart won & wooed & wanting HIM and intimacy with

HIM.

> note how she ***knows*** that his desire (strong, passionate, longings) is for her.

*****HUSBANDS >> does your wife know (could she say this): "Your Desire is for her.**

1. passionate desire
2. exclusive desire
3. pursuing desire
4. genuine desire
5. selfless desire (not just to 'get sex')

6. increasing desire

>> BUT WHY is it often hard for women who struggle with sexual pleasure?

1. ignorance
2. resentment
3. guilt
4. physical problems (illness)
5. fear
6. passivity
7. hormones
8. weight problems
9. fatigue
10. lack of time

SHE wants to go to the COUNTRYSIDE -- they could spend the night together (making love)

John Barnett (Word Filled Family) helps with this...

how does a wife love her husband physically?

1. by exhilarating him with your love (Gen 1.27-28, 31; Prov 5.18-19)]
2. by satisfying him with your love (1 Cor 7.5)

There is a responsibility on women to understand a man's need for regular and exhilarating sexual intimacy.

WOMEN may be far more attracted by a man's personality, but men are stimulated by sight.

<AND>

Wayne Mack writes:

The sex act is much more than a physical act, it is a symbol of a spiritual relationship and the expression of the complete oneness of two persons in married love ... it is the means by which they are confirmed and nourished in that union (Dwayne Harvey)

INDEED>> Sexual intercourse is THE physical establishment and confirmation of that ONENESS in the marriage.

The true dignity of sex is in its ability to enhance this personal unity between two persons who have committed themselves to each other in love & marriage (Wayne Mack, 120)

7:12

SPRING -- Spring is a universal symbol for love. The beloved used the image of spring to ask whether there was still the same freshness and anticipation that had initially characterized their relationship (cf. 2:10-13)

JUST AS the springtime is of sprouting and blossoming, the two lovers want to be a part of that. Their love has blossomed and become fragrant and they are ripe for love (Gledhill, 211-12)

COME RISE EARLY ... a way of speaking of a calm and private setting in the vineyard. It's hard to be more suggestive than this!!!! (Longman, 200)

"There I will give you my love..." --- the picture is a metaphor of her body.

The drama and journey lead to the place of lovemaking.
a place of luxuriant vines and greenery, a place of fruitfulness (Hess, 226)

*THE GARDEN becomes a bed in which the lovers exult in their lovemaking" (Hess, 227)

The vineyard is where she will give her love to him; the vineyard again is a place of lovemaking (Longman, 201)

GOSPEL

The love of our great Bridegroom compels us as the Bride to be ALONE with Jesus is sweet & communing retirement.

When we FEEL the loveliness of Christ, and realize the greatness of HIS affection toward us, we naturally desire to be with him apart from all things interfering with his overwhelming communications & expressions of love (George Burrows, 487)

Let's get away with our LOVER and BRIDEGROOM for regular seasons of meditation, for study of the Word, for repentance, for prayer, for praise & worship.

LOVE knows no weariness in serving its cherished object; and that love to Christ only can be genuine, which leads to activity in his service (George Burrows, 489).

7:13

SHE gives the answer = in the affirmative = the answer is affirmative.

SIGNS of spring were budding vines of grapes --- blooming pomegranates, and fragrant mandrakes.

Mandrakes, plants similar in size to apples and red in color, were supposedly aphrodisiacs (Gen 30:14-16)

She says: "over our doors are ALL CHOICE FRUITS" --- maybe today we say: "chocolates, perhaps romantic candlelit meal, music, etc.

****WAIT >>** what about a woman who is eager for sexual intimacy but the husband shows little interest or seldom initiates.... what should this wife do? that can hurt very deeply. Betsy Riccuci provides 4 simple encouragements to this woman in this position...

- 1) Bathe your concerns in prayer -- persistent, clear, bold, shameless, specific prayers
- 2) prepare your thoughts carefully (even write them out, and then pray them thru)
- 3) ask the LORD to keep your heart right (don't give any place for disrespect, bitterness, arrogance, revenge, anger, fear)
- 4) then lovingly, tenderly appeal to your husband and express your desires.

IF ALL OF THIS is so in marriage (times to get away, be alone, be refreshed, rejuvenate, rekindle the blossoms), HOW MUCH MORE SO when it comes to our intimacy with Jesus Christ?

We need what Al Martin calls: "Sanctified Viciousness" --- we must GUARD OUR TIMES of being alone with the LORD to pray and read his word.

it's absolutely vital!!!!

1. let's get up early (v.12a) = do we rise early to meet our Beloved?
2. let's spend the night together (v.11b) = do we stay up late considering & loving & communing with our Beloved?
3. let's look for growth (v.12) = see if the vines have budded

*****CONCLUSION*****

After reading Song of Solomon 7 we could ask this question.. 'WHAT DOES THIS CHAPTER TEACH US ABOUT THE MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP?'

The husband verbally admires & adores his bride.

the husband longs for and pursues his bride sexually

the wife knows and affirms he loves and pursues and wants her

she initiates and invites sexual intimacy with her husband

>> THEOLOGICALLY>>

Christ verbally admires and adores his blood bought Bride

our groom, Christ, longs for and pursues his bride with tenderness & longing for the day when we meet face to face

the bride knows and affirms that CHRIST loves us and pursues us and wants us.

the Church initiates and invites regular times of being alone with Christ

(means of grace/communion)

SOME GOOD QUESTIONS to ask in marriage:

1. what is it that pleases you about your present sexual relations in our marriage?
2. is there anything about the sexual relationship that you do not enjoy? when? how? frequency?
3. what are the greatest hindrances to good sexual relations?
4. does the pattern of your sex life need to be varied or changed? If so, how and why?
5. how do we differ from each other in our sexual attitudes, feelings, needs, and desires?
6. what fears do you have about sex? if any?
7. do you think we communicate openly and freely with one another about our sexual relations?
8. do you think that a passion for sexual intimacy indicates a lack of spirituality? why do we sometimes assume this?
9. how often do we have sexual relations? do you want this to change? how can we serve each other better?
10. are the sexual relations that we have a mutually satisfying experience?
11. what can we do to meet the sexual needs of one another more fully? How can we 'give of self for the other's enjoyment' in a way that is improved?

=====

5 truths we MUST teach our children about marriage...

1. God designed marriage to be between a man and a woman.
2. Marriage is a life-long commitment.
3. Marriage is worth waiting for (sex is a gift not to be opened early)
4. Marriage is not about being compatible.
5. Marriage is about giving, not receiving.

SONG OF SOLOMON 8 Notes -- CFBC sermon

Text: Song of Songs 8

Title: God's Blueprint for Marriage: It's Love, It's Passions, & Its Permanence.

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Opening Thoughts/Observations:

love poetry in the ANE is RICH in metaphor and imagery (Hess, 39)

Carol Meyers in an article in Hebrew Annual Review writes:

"In no other book of the Hebrew Bible does the imagery figure so prominently as it does in the Song of Songs." (Constable)

Introductory Points Regarding this "Supreme Song"...

1) Some Features to Understand:

1. It's a **SONG** - a poem, figure of speech, erotic, full of language, pictures, --- it's not a sort of anthology of brief poems of love but a unified piece of Spirit-given poetry.
2. It's in the **BIBLE** -- this isn't scribbled on a wall of a NYC subway as dirty & filthy; it's inspired, authoritative, binding, relevant, needed, sufficient, for **ALL** of us, and it's part of the unfolding of God's plan of REDEMPTION.
3. It's about **LOVE** -- it's about human, marital love & its satisfying physical delights. It's relished *only* in the context of a heterosexual marriage, the Bible's ONLY authorized context for expressions of physical intimacy between a man and a woman.
4. It's to give **WISDOM** -- it's the *wisdom genre* of Scripture (capping off the poetic writings: Job, Pss, Prov, Eccl & Song of Songs). The refrain gives wisdom: Don't arouse/awaken love till it pleases (2:7; 3:5; 8:4)
5. It's about the **SON OF DAVID** -- it's about Solomon -- David's Son and yet there is another Son of David who came & who is the ultimate BRIDEGROOM (John 3:29; 2 Cor 11.2; Rev 19.6-9; 22:17)

HISTORICAL -- the Song of Songs is a poetic record of Solomon's actual romance with a woman. This view exalts the joys of love and marriage and teaches that physical beauty and sexuality in marriage should **NOT** be despised as BASE or UNSPIRITUAL. **This is the *best view that takes the text at face value.**

***How could 'Solomon' write this?** = *It was written early when he was married to ONE-woman before he fell into great sin/immorality. Exclusive, heterosexual, monogamous, intoxicating joys of marriage delights, lovemaking & pleasure.*

And it's to be read *grammatical, historical* unified poem of love.

CONTRIBUTION TO US/ and to the CANON of Scripture

1. the glory of marital love
2. the supremacy of covenantal love
3. the sweetness of Christ's love

+++++++

REAL BIG PICTURE OF THE BOOK

INTRO (1:1)

1. COURTSHIP (1:2-3:5)

beginning of love (1:2-11)

growth of love (1:12-3:5)

2. WEDDING (3:6-5:1)

procession (3:6-11)

consummation (4:1-5:1)

3. MATURITY (5:2-8:4)

fighting apathy (5:2-6:13)

communicating affection (7:1-10)

initiating love (7:11-13)

intoxicating intimacy (8:1-4)

CONCL (8:5-7)

EPILOGUE (8:8-14)

+++++++

INTRO:>>>>

+++++++

Stats on sexual content on TV:

From University of Washington (in Seattle)

Experimental education unit

Two out of every three shows on TV include sexual content, an increase from about half of all shows during the 97/98 television season. The most widely viewed shows-those airing in primetime on the major networks-are even more likely to include sexual content.

Sexual intercourse is depicted or strongly implied in one of every ten shows on TV.

Of those instances of sexual intercourse either depicted or strongly implied, only half occurred among couples who had an established relationship with one another. Ten Percent involved couples who had just met.

9% of TV programs include some sexual content involving teens. While two years ago, 3% of all characters involved in intercourse were teens, today that figure has jumped to 9%.

>> did you hear that? In a 2-year span, it nearly jumped from 3 to 9%. Next 2 years, from 9% to nearly 20%?

According to a study prepared for the Kaiser Family Foundation, fifty hours of programming selected included 156 acts of sexual intercourse

>> that's a lot if the average TEEN watches 20 hours of TV a week.
>> so in about 2 and a half weeks - the teen sees 156 acts of sex! Wow!

In a Kaiser Family Foundation study, 76 percent of teens said that one reason young people have sex is because TV shows and movies make it seem normal for teens.

+++++

There is something really STRONG as LOVE ... as DEATH

THERE IS THE ENERGIZING FORCE OF biblically great sex --- the beauty, power, and goodness of covenant love (CJ Mahaney, 91)

NOTE:

"All the sex in Solomon's Song takes place IN THE CONTEXT of this couple's loving, committed relationship.

Covenant love is THE MAIN theme of the Song, without which the book itself cannot be rightly understood (CJ, p.92)

Lloyd Carr:

"The theme of sexual enjoyment and consummation runs through the book, and the theme of commitment is central to that whole relationship. There is no passing encounter: This is TOTAL DEDICATION and PERMANENT OBLIGATION (in CJ, p.92)

**So what is the foundation of LOVING, MARITAL COMMITMENT THAT MUST UNDERLIE ALL SEXUAL INTIMACY?? the permanence of marriage & committed relationship (CJ)

COMMITTED SEXUAL love is...

1. marked with a seal (the SIGN of the covenant)
 2. strong as death (final & irreversible)
 3. flame of the LORD (unquenchable)
- CJ (p.94-96)

What is the STANDARD FOR LOVE?

GOD HIMSELF (1 John 3.16)

FOR ALL your comfort, hope, inspiration, strength & source of love --- LOOK TO THE CROSS (husband & wife!)

*AND:

Let the unifying, unquenchable power of covenant love continually strengthen your marriage in every way, that you and your spouse might testify to the world and to one another of the goodness of God. And should you someday come to a place of diminished sexual capacity, know that this same covenant love, the flame of the LORD, will be as strong and vigorous as ever!" (CJ, p.104)

**INTRO by William Frey, "Really Good Sex" - Christianity Today (Aug 19, 1991), guest editorial.
quoted in CJ, p.101-102.

****HOW STRONG IS GOD'S LOVE FOR YOU?**

Isa 43 - Don't fear --- his love is strong (vv.1-4)

Jer 31.3 - God loves with an everlasting love

Ps 103.11 - his love toward us is as high as the heavens are above the earth

Ps 36.5 - his love reaches to the heavens

John 13.1 - Jesus loves His own 'to the end' // to the max

John 17.23 - God loves us '*even as*' (in the same way/standard) as he loves the Son

1 John 3.16 - Christ loves us and laid down his life for us

Rom 5 - a love that is poured out/gushed out within our hearts

Eph 2.4 - God has a great love with which he loved us

Eph 3.19 - a love that surpasses knowledge

Rom 8.35 - nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord

These verses show the GREATNESS OF GOD'S LOVE

> the covenant of God's love

> the permanence of God's love

> the power & protection & security of God's love

**HOW great & secure is this love of God for you? Jude 24-25! Power & protection!

God's Love always is to be the GROUND and IMPETUS of our love. God's love gives meaning to Human love & human love exists to display God's Love (Jim Hamilton, 136)

QUOTES

"This relationship in Ch.8 is a covenantal relationship involving
loyalty
sacrifice
friendship

****HOMILETICAL OUTLINES****

- 1. long for physical happiness in intimacy (1-4) [PURSUE INTIMACY!]**
 - a. Express your desires for one another (1)
 - b. Indulge in intimacy with one another (2)
 - c. Embrace with tenderness toward one another (3)
 - d. Pursue purity with one another (4)
- 2. express the unconditional permanence of love (5-7) [STAY TOGETHER!]**
- 3. remember the passionate beginnings of love (8-14) [REKINDLE LOVE!]**
 - c. The priority of purity
 - d. The delight in intimacy
 - e. The supremacy of self-giving
 - f. The longings for love

It's almost as if THIS chapter is a physical/poetic ILLUSTRATION of Gen 2.24
FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE FATHER & MOTHER

Song 8:8-14 - remember the passionate beginnings of love
AND BE JOINED TO (glued to) HIS WIFE...

Song 8:5-7 - express the unconditional permanence of love
AND THE TWO BECOME ONE FLESH....

song 8:1-4 --- long for physical happiness in intimacy

some key elements about the glory of God-given & God-like & God-sanctioned love... from ch.8

- the beginnings of love (v.5, apple tree)
- the permanence of love (v.6, a seal)
- the strength of love (v.6 - love is strong)
- the jealousy of love (v.6 - jealousy)
- the unquenchability of love (v.7 - quench)
- the preeminence of love (v.7 - a man would not give money for love)
- the purity of love (v.8-9 - she is a wall)
- the self-giving of love (v.12 - my own vineyard is at my disposal)
- the enjoyment of love (v.14 - hurry ... on the mountains...)

QUITE SIMPLY --- we must teach our kids // all people // champion these truths:

Teach our kids these things.

8:2 - note the remark here that the “mother used to instruct & teach her” (in these matters of love, intimacy, marriage)... ***let us do the same...***

THE DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE: WHAT IS TRUE MARRIAGE?

1. Heterosexual [a man & a woman *only*]
2. monogamous [*ONE man & ONE woman* only.]
3. Complementary [complement each other; obey God’s ways for your gender roles/function]
4. Enjoyable [sanctifying, happy, holy, delightful, intimate, joyous]
5. Permanent [lifelong, unending, unending, **never give up**; DIVORCE is **never** an option for believers]

THE PURPOSES OF MARRIAGE: WHY DID GOD DESIGN THIS?

1. Companionship [solve a problem of loneliness]
2. Pleasure [sex]
3. Procreation [children/progeny/generations]
4. Sanctification [growth in grace]
5. Demonstration [gospel -- love of Christ]

=====

****VERSE BY VERSE COMMENTARY****

The Shulammitte's desire for her husband's love continued to increase throughout their marriage (vv. 1-3).

vv.1-4

the beloved (wife) reveals a growing desire for greater intimacy (as she is the speaker) with her husband-lover and rejoiced in the multifaceted nature of their relationship! (Jack Deere, 1023)

Vv.1-4 - the woman expresses her yearning for union w/ the man! (Longman, 203)

8:1

"brother"????

Ancient Near Easterners frowned on public displays of intimate affection unless closest blood relatives exchanged them. It was perhaps for this reason that the wife wished that her husband was her brother. (Constable)

She wishes her man were a brother (ANE culture/milieu) so that it would be 'acceptable to display her affection for him at any time = even & especially in public" (Jack Deere, 1023)

in a sense, the wife would like the liberty in public that the brother and sister in that day would have.

SHE wishes she could freely kiss him in public.

She would like to take him to the house of her own mother and to the very chamber where she was conceived! (v.2) (Kinlaw, 1239)

"NOTE: SHE doesn't want to put him to open shame, public scorn, ridicule or contempt. SHE will restrain her actions --- but her intention is LOUD and CLEAR (Danny Akin, 171)

Simply: "the bride just longs for an occasion when she has the freedom to express affection for her husband" (Hamilton, 136)

IN THE GOSPEL>>>>>>>>

not only is our great Savior and Bridegroom our shepherd- king but he is ALSO OUR BROTHER (Heb 2.11)

> what wonderful truth.

> the one who is our Savior, Lover, Lord, Master and King = also our brother

> What the Shulamite woman wishes in her husband WE FULLY HAVE IN JESUS!

(Danny Akin, 175)

8:2

vv.2-3 -

Here the wife pictures herself playfully leading her husband as an older sister or mother would lead a younger brother or son. Solomon and the Shulamite were close friends as well as lovers (cf. 5:1, 16). As his wife she desired his caresses (v. 3).

v,2 - I would lead you... the verb nahag - to lead - always refers to a superior leading an inferior and even the role of the mother.

'spiced wine' // special wine --- is on the lover's menu as well as the juice of her pomegranate.
"Ancient Egyptian love poems identifies wife's breasts with the fruit of a pomegranate" (Lloyd Carr)

THE WIFE shares the characteristics of a sister, an older sister, and a mother in her relationship to her husband.

They are also portrayed as friends (5:1, 16) in the Song. THUS >> the lovers have a multifaceted relationship (poetically and figuratively expressed in this Song) (Jack Deere)

"pomegranates" -- are beautiful and precious.

NOTE:

With ALL the strength of the union here with her husband, there is STILL the consciousness that SHE is a woman (and she doesn't neglect her marital, god-given role & function as the submissive helpmate).

SHE longs for a woman with whom she can share --- and this is her mother.

> she doesn't withdrawal from her spouse -- she wants to take him to the place fo conception (Kinlaw)

>>>GOSPEL>>>

the Shualmmite wishes she could take HER GROOM home to her home (house of her mother) but for those in Christ, the opposite will take place.

The Brigroom will take US HOME to his place.

>> John 14.1-3

what amazing grace!

I DO belong to my love and his desire is for me (7:10)

****APPLICATION****

I think the idea here is the **mother who has instructed her daughter in the facts of life & of lovemaking and it is to that school room that she wants to RETURN to show how well she has learned her lessons! :=)** (Lloyd Carr, 167)

***The art of preparing for love is best learned at home from the parents! (Lloyd Carr, 167)**

The SHULAMMITE notes that it was at HOME that she was taught and received instruction from her mother.

IN THIS CONTEXT, she must mean instruction about matters of *sexual intimacy and love** (AKin, 171)

THIS IS A VALUABLE LESSON FOR *ALL PARENTS*

>> the art of preparing for love, intimacy, lovemaking, and purity is BEST LEARNED AT HOME (Lloyd Carr)

DADS and MOMS must take charge at appropriate times and in appropriate ways in teaching their children about the "birds and the bees" -- marriage, love, etc.

THIS CANNOT be ignored, shoved aside, put off, neglected.

It cannot be relegated to friends, social media, Hollywood, social relationships, lockerroom talk, girlfriend talk.

>> Dads must instruct their sons and mothers must guide their daughters. (Danny Akin, 172)

The bride references how she was taught by her mother. She does NOT pursue forbidden, immoral relations, but sanctioned, endorsed relations with her husband (as she has been taught and instructed by her own mother) (Hamilton, 137)

>> this is precisely what an OLDER WOMAN is to do to YOUNGER WOMEN to love their husbands (Titus 2)!!!!

8:3

As his wife -- she LONGS for and WISHES for his carresses.

lit. let his left arm be under my head and may his right arm embrace me (cf. 2:6).

SHE LONGS for and YEARNNS for her lover's embrace.

they are TENDER in their affections

they are LINGERING in their affections

they are DELIGHTED in their affections

they are PASSIONATE in their affections

as the bride longs for the tender embrace of her groom, let us remember that WE ARE SAFE and secure with Christ

> and one day we will be embraced BY our Lover in heaven.

> he will never let us go (Danny Akin, 175)

**WHAT CAN WOMEN/WIVES LEARN IN DEVOTION TO THEIR HUSBANDS>>

1. show him admiration and appreciation (let him know he's your champion & lover)
2. nurture his friendship (work to be his best friend, he wants it)
3. lower your expectations (you married a sinner. he is a fallen, feeble man still in the process of growth & sanctification)
4. watch your priorities (is HE number one in your heart, mind, lips & life after Jesus)?
5. enhance your love life (continue to grow in creative, passionate, and sensual ways of love and intimacy)
6. be forgiving (as God in Christ has forgiven you --- frequently, lavishly, immediately, constantly, never holding anything back or holding a grudge or bringing up OLD/PAST faults)

INDEED>>

There are 3 things that are too amazing for me, 4 that I do not understand... the way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a snake on a rock, the way of a ship on the high seas, and the way of a man with a maiden (Prov 30.18-19)

>> HOW TRUE THIS IS!!!

+++ GOSPEL

O how we should continually desire to be continually near the heart of Jesus, to be perpetually in his remembrance, and sustained by His almighty power.

Let there be anything and everything hindering the full and perfect interchange of affection between Jesus and our soul be removed (George Burrows)

If a bride has satisfaction and love and comfort in the embrace of her husband, HOW MUCH MORE can we in the tenderness of Christ. **“There is a sweet satisfaction, and unspeakable heart quieting refreshment to be found in Christ’s arms”** (James Durham, p.411)

8:4

*This is the 3rd and final time the IMPORTANCE OF THE PROPER TIME & PROPER PERSON FOR LOVEMAKING IS ADDRESSED

2:7

3:5

8:4

>> obviously God believes the timing is important ... when, where, with whom, why?

remember that this is:

A word from God
A command from God
A time to wait
A relationship to indulge
A duty to obey

If you're not married, then work at being a marriageable person. Be Pure. Be Patient. Be Holy.

Some initial thoughts:

1. the right time for lovemaking is only in marriage between one man and one woman.
 2. with marriage, timing and sensitivity to the needs and feelings of our mate is crucial as we build & nurture affection & romance
- SEX and ROMANCE are good IN MARRIAGE (Danny Akin, 173)

SEX is good, great, beautiful, happy, intoxicating, pleasurable and encouraged (even commanded!). (Akin, 174)

>>ANOTHER REFRAIN & CHORUS

Solomon again urged his wife's friends not to try to awaken her love for him artificially but to let love take its natural course (cf. 2:7; 3:5). Her love was now fully alive and needed no further stimulation. (Constable)

REMEMBER:

love has its ecstasy when it is RIGHT, but it also has its pain when it cannot freely express itself.

- > don't open it too early
- > don't refuse it when it's appropriate

BUT DONT awaken love until *the time is right*

This kind of marital, intoxicating, happy, God-blessed & sanctioned love is to have NO constraints and NO intruders.

*** THE POINT?? PURE PASSION IS PATIENT!**

*** The proper time is MARRIAGE. The proper person is ONE'S SPOUSE (ALONE). The proper context: ONE MAN AND ONE WOMAN (ODonnell, 104)**

WAIT till marriage.
INDULGE in marriage.

OTHERS-CENTEREDNESS in marriage
EXCLUSIVITY in marriage

This section (5:2—8:4), that began with estrangement, ends with the lovers entwined in each other's arms. (Constable)

Conflict can lead to consummation

**And note one point of application: “satisfaction with one’s long-term love will NEGATE succumbing to short-term surrender to temptation” (Paul House, in ODonnell, 107)*

TO REJOICE in the wife of one’s youth, to be satisfied by her breasts and captivated by her love
IS TO WALK IN THE PATH OF THE WISDOM THAT IS GROUNDED IN THE FEAR OF
GOD (Barry Webb, in ODonnell, 107)

*****8:5-14 full outline of a LOVE THAT LASTS FOREVER*****

how to cultivate this?

cultivate a love that is...

PUBLIC (5)

PRIVATE (5)

PERSONAL (6)

PROTECTIVE (6)

POSSESSIVE (6)

PASSIONATE (6)

PERSEVERING (7)

PRICELESS (7)

PURE (8-9)

PEACEABLE (10)

PRIVILEGED (11-12)

PERMANENT (13-14)

8:5

8:5a

5a is probably a theme of the BOOK>>>

Evidently these are the words of the daughters of Jerusalem. The couple is coming up out of the wilderness. The "wilderness" connoted Israel's 40 years of trials to the Jewish mind. The couple had emerged from their trials successfully, too (i.e., insecurity, 1:5-6; the "foxes," 2:15; and apathy, 5:2-7). The "wilderness" also symbolized God's curse (cf. Jer. 22:6; Joel 2:3). The couple had likewise overcome the curse of disharmony, which God had placed on Adam and Eve, by their love for one another (cf. Gen. 3:16). (Constable)

V.5a - a summary theme of the book:

- 1. They are TOGETHER**
- 2. They leave the DESERT behind**
- 3. The wife LEANS on her man**
(from Gary Brady, p.225)

v.5 - "WILDERNESS"

associated with Israel's 40 year wandering.

a symbol of God's curse

It prepares for the image of the APPLE TREE (v.5b) --- a symbol of love, romance in ANE
it speaks of the BEGINNING OF THEIR LOVE (go back to where things started//things were hot/kindled!) (Jack Deere)

WILDERNESS

place of trial/temptation/hardship

place of judgment/curse/punishment

the bride is LEANING ON HER LOVER.

the bride is leaning on her beloved

> what a picture of true, marital, covenantal, complementary LOVE.

AFTER CONSUMMATION, there is a difference that comes in the marriage relationship...

it is a moving image of the richness & strength of covenant love.

It's the CLOSENESS, the comfortableness, and familiarity that is ONLY created by the joys of erotic intimacy (CJ Mahaney, 94)

The woman leans on her beloved -- unashamed to acknowledge her union with him publicly.
SHE and her lover are in covenant and are reveling in the new level of intimacy that such love brings. (CJ Mahaney, 94)

The way Christians are to lean upon Jesus is similar to the way a wife is to lean upon her husband. (ODonnell, 113)

it's a final picture of the Song's couple that is presented here.

>>> it's a very public display of royal love & committed affection & intimate exclusivity of this couple!

+++GOSPEL ___

THUS we are found by Jesus, quickened by him to his love, and given to him by the Father, we are led away from our disconsolate condition, up from this wilderness, to the city of the living God. THUS we lean on our blessed LORD. He gives us support, wisdom, protection. On Christ we lean in repentance, in temptation, in trial, in sorrow, in times of desertion by the light of God's countenance, or of persecution by the world, in sickness, in death, in the judgment, in our entrance into the heavenly city, and in our presentation, amid the splendors of his court, to the King of Glory!" (George Burrows, 499)

>> LET US LEAN ON HIM!

Vv.5-7 here is "arguably one of the most powerful poems in the WHOLE BOOK" (Longman, 206)

v.5b --- she speaks

The Shulammitte reminded her husband (masculine "you" in Hebrew) of the beginning of their love. The apple tree was a symbol of love in ancient poetry because of its beauty, fragrance, and sweet fruit. She had given him a type of new birth by awakening him to love. This may refer to their first meeting; he may have found her sleeping under an apple tree. (Constable)

"awakened" // aroused

this is a metaphor for new life or rather a new way of perceiving life --- which her love had brought to him.

MUCH as he was the product of his parents' love and was brought into the world by PHYSICAL BIRTH, the lover had NOW received a SECOND BIRTH or AWAKENING through the love of his beloved (Jack Deere)

there your mother was in labor with you
there she was in labor & gave you birth

"this is the place where the mother conceived and gave birth to him --- refers to the female body parts

> they are participating in the same act by which the man himself was given life" (Danny Akin, 180)

*NOTE that the passion & drive for sexual intimacy is STILL aflame & HOT even IN and DURING their marriage.

Their private time alone in the bedroom has not grown cold or stale.

> "WE SHOULD by God's grace GROW OLD TOGETHER but our love, by God's grace SHOULD NEVER GROW COLD" (Danny Akin, 180)

*remember where you were when you were found by your LOVER (Christ)

8:6

permanence of love

She asked to be his most valued possession; she wanted him to be jealous over her in the proper sense (cf. Prov. 6:34). (Constable)

The girl wants to imprint her claim to her lover DEEPLY and OPENLY on him (Carr, 169)

The wife's longing is that SHE would belong uniquely to her lover, that she might be HIS ALONE (Gary Brady, 231)

****THE GOSPEL* --- by John Flavel...**

There is nothing that believers want more than to be WELL ASSURED and satisfied of the love of Jesus Christ to their souls.

Let us love Christ more & let him be MUCH on our hearts

Let us increase in our faith in Him

And be much in mourning for sin

And: pour out your soul to God, in hearty desires, for a sealed and clear interest in His love today! (John Flavel)

"SEAL" ---

"The word 'seal' (hotam) refers to an engraved stone used for authenticating a document or other possession. This could be suspended by a cord around the neck (over the heart) as in Genesis 38:18. The word hotam can also refer to a 'seal ring' worn on the hand (in Song of Songs 5:14 'hand' is used to mean 'arm'). The hotam was something highly precious to the owner and could be used symbolically for a person whom one valued [cf. Jer. 22:24; Hag. 2:23]. . . . The bride was asking Solomon that he treasure her, that he regard her as a prized seal." (Tanner)

"An engraved stone or metal seal was a mark of ownership in the ancient world. POSSESSION of another's seal indicated mutual access and possession. HER LOVE is so total and so strong that she wants their mutual possession of each other to be as lasting as life. (Kinlaw, 1241)

A seal on the heart would be one worn with a string around the neck so that it hung in front and perhaps under the clothes. It would be a small cylinder of stone or metal that could be impressed on clay and would contain words, pictures, and designs that identified the individual. The stamp seal, made of other similar materials, could also be hung around the neck (Hess, 238)

To be imprinted as a seal on another is to be "INSEPARABLE from that person. She wishes HIS life to be HERS" (Danny Akin, 180)

As long as HIS heart beats, she wants to know and feel HIS LOVE.

NOTE the heart is mentioned *FIRST* -- then the arm. ONE is internal; the other is external. This is a commitment of the entire person; nothing is excluded. (CJ Mahaney, 95)

The relationship is NOT about any isolated aspect of life, such as sex, companionship, children, or financial or material support. THIS IS A WHOLEHEARTED, COMPREHENSIVE DEVOTION. IT'S ALL ABOUT LIFE. (CJ Mahaney, 95)

****Illustrations:**

- O my kids are the most important things in the world to me"
> well, that's totally unacceptable because that's totally unbiblical (CJ)

THIS MEANS >> "the beloved asked to be the lover's MOST VALUABLE possession." (Danny Akin, 180)

JOHN WING:

A husband's love for his wife must be the most dear, intimate, precious and entire that heart can have toward a creature; none but the love of God ... is above it, none but the love of ourselves is fellow to it, and all the love of others is inferior to it" (Puritan quote, in CJ, p.95)

>>> THE LOVE OF HUSBAND & WIFE FOR ONE ANOTHER SHOULD PLAINLY & CLEARLY & EMPHATICALLY EXCEED IN INTENSITY AND SCOPE ALL OTHER HUMAN LOVES (CJ Mahaney, 95)

***MEN // HUSBANDS>>>**

do we wear that seal upon our finger (wedding ring) as an external affirmation of the seal upon my heart?

do you truly treasure your wedding ring as a bold, unwavering, ever present assertion (to yourself & the world) of your TOTAL, EXCLUSIVE AND UTTERLY COMPREHENSIVE DEVOTION TO YOUR WIFE?

no one should be more important to you than your wife.

nothing should be the object of greater love and affection than her.

so scrutinize our lives --- is there another passion that is eclipsing our passion for our wives?

let us give our wives whatever assurance or reassurance of this unparalleled love they may need.

how will you know if your wife is completely confident that you love her *above all other things*? ASK HER!

NOT JUST on the heart -- but "ON YOUR ARM" ---

if the seal on the heart spoke of that which is DEEP and INward

the seal on the arm speaks of that which is PUBLIC AND EXTERNAL (like wedding rings today)

>> TRUE love always has a protective attitude toward one's mate.

> you want them to feel safe and secure in the strength of your love.

*****APPLICATION>>>**

ONE of the most lethal & damaging factors in a relationship is the little chipping at one another with hurtful, sarcastic, dishonest, unloving, selfish, 'emotionally-charged' (you always/you never) BARBS.

This is deadly when done IN FRONT OF OTHERS (esp the kids)

"WE must praise our mates, learn to protect our mates, especially with our words! " (Danny Akin, 181)

****GOSPEL****

How comforting to know that we have ONE in heaven to intercede for us. How inseparable from his presence. (George Burrows, 500)

My soul is in His very heart, and my sensations were such as they would be, were it possible that I could be lodged in the center of His heart with love, such love as belongs to Jesus only, above, below, around, within me, the air, the light, all, the very richness of love, my heart buried thus in the fountain of life and love, and feeling tenderly, exquisitely, the beating of the heart of Jesus in

the OUTGUSHINGS of that love in the Holy Spirit springing up within me as a fountain of water unto eternal life (George Burrows, 501)

"AS STRONG AS DEATH"

She next described the love they shared. It was as powerful as death, as controlling as the grave, as passionate as fire, as irresistible as a river, and priceless. Such love comes from God and is "the . . . flame of the Lord" (v. 6). (Constable)

this is the power behind enduring commitment = covenant love.
This love is UNIVERSAL & IRRESISTIBLE" (Danny Akin, 181)

Love is AN IRREVOCABLE COMMITMENT (Hess, 239)

LOVE IS, irresistible, resolute, and unshakable" (LONGMAN, p.210)

This is a strongly poetic demand for "UNTIL DEATH DO US PART" --- better to die than to experience the failure of love that produces jealousy.

> better to die than to divorce.

Solomon uses the image of death because of it's UNIQUENESS --- not an awful enemy or a foe, but a POWER** --- an active, final, irreversible, and irresistible power (CJ Mahaney, 96)

Covenant Love is a power that every bit is as final and irreversible as death" (CJ, 96)

Jim Hamilton:

Love is strong as death. God's people incur the penalty of death because they sin, but God's love for them is as strong as their penalty and able to overcome it!" (p.140)

"JEALOUSY"

"There are only two relationships described in the Bible where jealousy is a potentially appropriate reaction: the divine-human relationship and the marriage relationship. These are the only two relationships that are considered exclusive." (Longman)

this jealousy has NOTHING to do with *sinful envy* ---- it's a 'SINGLE MINDED PASSION THAT LEAVES ROOM FOR NO OTHER ATTRACTIONS (CJ, 96)

Paige Patterson says: "IN Godly love a righteous jealousy is as hard or inevitable as the grave" (in Akin, 181)

it's a HOLY jealousy that is passionate about ONE spouse -- and for one spouse alone (CJ, 96)

“Humans can have ONLY ONE GOD. If they worship another, it triggers God’s JEALOUSY. God’s jealousy is an ‘energy that tries to rescue the relationship. Similarly, a man and a woman can have only one spouse. If there is a threat to that relationship, then jealousy is a proper emotion. All this is because so much hangs on the integrity of the relationship. It is so basic, so deep, that it stirs up strong emotions and passions” (Hess, 239)

It's a jealousy that is FIERCE -- not with anger but with tenacity --- a jealousy that just WILL NOT LET GO.

V.8b - jealousy is severe --- or “Tenacious” --- a positive strength meaning that LOVE is tough or long lasting in spite of obstacles” (Longman, 212)

It’s a wonderful & jealous commitment to TRUTH -- modeled by God and emulated by us! (Hamilton, 140)

So covenant love establishes a determined certainty that is beyond all question. Covenant love is wonderfully powerful & final (CJ Mahaney, 97)

"ITS FLASHES OF FIRE" --- the powerful irreversible love we share w/ our wives is fueled by DIVINE POWER.

The Covenant love is the very flame of the LORD -- and thus it is inextinguishable (CJ, 97)

Interesting translations:

ESV/NASB = "its flashes are flashes of fire, the very flame of the LORD

NIV = "it burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame.

NLT: "Love flashes like fire, the brightest kind of flame.

HCSB = "Love's flames are fiery flames, fiercest of all

There is a little ending of a Hebrew word for "flame" that may be translated in the form of Yahweh: a shortened/abbreviated form: "YAHWEH"

Then it means that: "YAWEH -- GOD himself --- is the source of this mighty, fierce, blazing and passionate love.

> this kind of love is ignited and fueled by the LORD is a fervent flame, a blazing fire.

>> NOTHING can extinguish this love (from God!)

This is the ONLY time in the entire SONG that the name of God is directly mentioned -- the ***climactic point of the song***.

> Here we have reached a level of the love that transcends all other loves --- GOD IS LOVE (1 John 4.8) and laid down his life for his people (1 John 4.9-10)

WHY? It's a redhot, God-given, passionate FLAME that will endure any and all efforts to put it out

Simply: YAHWEH'S LOVE GIVES MEANING TO HUMAN LOVE!

LOVE's demands are ALL consuming.
External forces cannot quench/drown it.

No one can purchase love. It is only available as a gift. This (vv. 6b-7) is the only place in the book that reflects on the nature of love itself. (Constable)

>>> THE NT has a summary word for this:

1 Cor 13:7-8 --- it bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. LOVE NEVER FAILS.

****GOSPEL>>>>>>>**

see the GREAT LOVE OF THE KING that he has for us..

Eph 2.4 - but God...

Gal 2.20

Eph 3.19 - a love that surpasses knowledge

> THEN let us as recipients of this love BE IMITATORS OF LOVE & WALK IN LOVE (Eph 5.1-2)

8:7

>> SIMPLY: "God designed marriage to last"

It's Matt 19.6 - "What God has joined together, let no man separate"

marriage is meant for a lifetime.

The woman speaking:

"She was prepared to be a loyal and faithful wife, but Solomon ultimately had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines (1 Kings 11:3). No wonder she, not he, delivers the moral lesson of the book. He was totally unqualified to speak on the issue of godly dedicated love. He knew the physical side of it, but apparently he did not know the love she cherished." (Tanner)

"Many waters" ---- there are many various floods that could sweep over my marriage.

****Consider BB Warfield:**

a world renowned theologian who taught at Princeton Seminary for almost 34 years until his death on Feb 16, 1921.

many people know of his famous books & theological masterpieces.

but in 1876, at the age of 25, he married Annie Pierce Kinkead and took a honeymoon to Germany.

During a fierce storm Annie was struck by lightning and was permanently paralyzed.

After caring for her for 39 years, Warfield laid her to rest in 1915.

Because of her extraordinary needs, Warfield seldom left his home for more than 2 hours at a time during all those 39 years of marriage.

>> SOME may say -- here was a shattered dream.

Many men and women engaged say this: if something happens on the honeymoon, I'll keep my vows forever.

But for WARFIELD, IT ACTUALLY HAPPENED.

MANY waters cannot quench godl-like love.

*Because it has its origin in GOD, covenant love WILL ultimately triumph over all opposition, all adversity, ALL suffering, ALL trials" (CJ Mahaney, 100)

Think of many waters in the BIBLICAL THEOLOGICALY framework = the flood, the Red Sea, the Jordan Rive r--- NONE of which stopped God's love for His people (Hamilton, 140)

"IF A MAN WERE TO GIVE ALL THE RICHES FOR LOVE...IT WOULD BE DESPISED."

Simply: LOVE IS NOT FOR SALE!

You can't buy love. It has NO price tag.

It's NOT for sale!

The value for love is greater than ALL the possessions one has.
in ALL of human literature there are few passages on the power of love compared with THIS unit (Kinlaw, 1241)

Remember this young people: SEX CAN BE BOUGHT...BUT LOVE MUST BE GIVEN.

- > anyone can cheaply buy something that can be used selfishly for selfish gain.
- > but love can't be bought. It's freely given to others selflessly!
- >> because it models the gospel!

TRY to buy love --- and prepare to become a laughingstock!

WE are loyal to our spouses (totally & fully) because we want to show the truth about the love between God & His people.

We are faithful b/c we know that God's way is right and want to live that, for Him and for ourselves.

We show genuine affection b/c we feel the power of joy, the goodness of love; and we know what it's like to have been loved, and we love like that in return" (Hamilton, 141)

***SOME PRACTICAL WAYS TO CULTIVATE A 'PRICELESS' LOVE...**

1. 10 reasons why I'm the most fortunate & blessed husband/wife in the world. then *read it to your spouse.
2. surprise your mate by doing a bunch of their 'chores/duties' that they do.
3. don't just SHOW --- tell it and say: I love you"
4. communicate your plans to each other.
5. plan an appreciation celebration for your mate -- complete with his or her favorite meal.
6. look at your schedule. Make time with your spouse a *weekly* priority.
7. bring back the dating days.
8. pray together. Thank God for each other, and then pray specifically for needs/desires.
9. set boundaries in outside relationships. Don't let anyone take away too much time you spend with your spouse.
10. be a student of your spouse --- learn what he likes. Learn what she needs.
11. treat your wife like a lady. open doors, hold chairs. treat her like a royal queen
12. throw away fighting words // emotionally charged words -- "YOU NEVER..." or "You should..."
13. lead in making church attendance (EACH WEEK) a joyful priority.
14. be affectionate -- back rubs, massages, tender hand holding, kissing communicates love.
15. be a person of absolute integrity. give your spouse NO reason to doubt your word or question your commitment.

>> from Joanna Weaver " 25 ways to love your lover"

GOSPEL

God makes wonderful promises to his people in Isa 43.1-2 that have remarkable parallels to this SONG

this love in the Song points to a greater love --- between GOD and His people!

THINK of how permanent the love of Christ is:

Christ's love is STRONG

Christ's love is JEALOUS

Christ's love is UNFAILING

Christ's love is PERMANENT

Christ's love is INITIATING

Christ's love is UNDESERVED

Christ's love is FAITHFUL

8:8

vv.8-14 speak of the final epilogue of the book

Verses 8-12 flash back to the Shulammitte's life before meeting Solomon and their first encounter. Verses 13-14 reveal their final & maturing love.

v.8-14 - the wife/Shulammitte's flashback ... as she remembers....

explaining...

- 1) the protection of the beloved by her older brothers when she was a young girl (8-9)
- 2) her subsequent initial meeting with Solomon (10-14)

v.8-9 --- protection by her brothers

v.11-14 -- meeting with her man

>>>We even see a *biblical portrayal of protection & guardian-ship over YOUNG PEOPLE to promote & protect & preserve PURITY sexually!* (vv.8-10)

8:9

These words by the Shulammitte's older brothers (cf. 1:6) reveal their desire to prepare her for a proper marriage. Comparing her to a wall may mean that she might use self-restraint and exclude all unwarranted advances against her purity. If she behaved this way, her brothers would honor

her by providing her with various adornments. However, if she proved susceptible to these advances, as an open door, they would have to guard her purity for her by keeping undesirable individuals from her. (Constable)

She looks back with joy that she came to those sacred moments as a virgin!

LET US CELEBRATE PURITY -- as God does.
Love demands purity *because God's love is everlastingly & divinely pure!*
The pure are rewarded.

Was this Shulammite woman a sexually PURE woman or not?
Was she sexually OPEN to many lovers (a door)
OR, was she sexually closed & protected (a wall)

"A WALL"
if she has good character and judgment and resisted temptation (like a wall/ cannot pass thru)
This is someone who is morally pure and sexually UNavailable (chaste!)

This woman is a VIRGIN = a WALL: not let anyone in or thru (impenetrable, closed off)

then they (brothers) would allow her a large measure of freedom and reward her.

'a battlement of silver' // a tower of silver???
may be translated as a turret // a beautiful, much-valued head ornament or it may simply refer figuratively to their adorning her as people adorned defense towers with silver. (Jack Deere)

"*But if she's a DOOR*
if she were reckless and prone to immorality (OPEN ... open to advances, lets many people/men pass thru)
then they planned to restrict her freedom.
This is figuratively spoken of as enclosing her with cedar panels, like barricading a door with planks! (Jack Deere)

YOUNG PEOPLE & SINGLES>>> some thoughts to consider regarding *PURITY*

1. remember that your body is the temple of the Spirit & you've been bought with a price (1 Cor 6.19-20)
2. remember that you are to glorify God in everything that you do (1 Co 10.31). If it doesn't praise & worship God even in the moment, then don't do it!
3. pursue holiness and purity (1 Pet 1.15-16)
4. avoid the places of temptation and RUN from them (literally) (1 Cor 6.18)

5. discipline your thought life by daily immersing yourself in God's Word, seeking to develop the mind of Christ (Prov 23.7; Phil 2.5; Rom 12.1-2; 1 Cor 2.16)

>> Danny Akin, 186-87

***AND >> in the gospel it is never too late to start pursuing moral purity.

> have you been impure? unholy? immoral? unclean?

> then repent, seek God's grace, receive his forgiveness. Move on!

> NO SIN -- even sexual sin in all of its shapes and forms -- is beyond the Saviors redeeming love & healing grace! (Akin, 187)

8:10

She had proved to be like a wall rather than a door. Consequently she had become a great delight to Solomon. (Constable)

This is the wife's OWN testimony

I am a wall

She did NOT need restrictions since she was pure --- sexually pure.

V.10 - NOTE: the pure are rewarded!!! (Hamilton, 142)

Having grown up and matured physically, she was then pure for her husband which enabled her to give HIM (Solomon) CONTENTMENT.

>>

"ONE WHO FINDS PEACE" --- could just be thought of: "I became in his eyes 'CONTENTMENT'

It's an interesting WORDPLAY: Peace (Shalom) because it sounds like Solomon's name (Shlomo) and the Shulammitite's name: Shulammitite.

>> all the same Hebrew root!

>> For SOlomon, the husband of peace, and for the Shulammitite, Mrs Solomon, she became his peace/Shalom/contentment.

THIS WOMAN, made this man complete -- whole.

She was the divinely sent companion & gift & completer -- his complement & friend (Gen 2)

In her presence he finds PEACE (Akin, 187)

The *Shulammitte* brings *Shalom* to *Shlomo* --- not only the absence of strife but also FULFILLMENT, CONTENTMENT, SATISFACTION & WHOLENESS.

>> what a profound & memorable wordplay (sticks it in our minds!)

The Shulammitte brings *Shalom* (completion) to Shlomo (Solomon)

8:11

vv.11-12 - vineyard

The site of "Baal-hamon" is unknown. Evidently Solomon leased part of his vineyard to the Shulammitte's brothers who put her to work in it (1:6). There she met Solomon. Her own vineyard probably refers to her own person (cf. 1:6). Another view is that the Shulammitte is the garden in view in both verses 136 In this case, Solomon would have let out his vineyard (the Shulammitte) to her brothers for them to care for her. Solomon might not have been aware that he was doing this, but this is really what he was doing since she grew up under their care. The Shulammitte promised to give all of herself to Solomon freely, whereas he needed to pay wages to those who worked in his literal vineyard. (Constable)

"vineyard" --

apparently they FIRST MET in a vineyard --- that Solomon leased out.

SOLOMONS vineyard is large and very impressive -- very fruitful.

>> it contains a thousand vines.

> solomon must let it out to tenants to keep it and work it.

they share in the produce. IT IS A VERY EXTENSIVE WORKING OPERATION!

(Kinlaw)

"1,000 shekels (about 25 pounds) of silver for the landowner was required.

REMEMBER at the beginning of the book (1:6) the wife worked in the vineyard, submitting to her brothers' discipline.

While there she met Solomon and he fell in love with her (Jack Deere)

8:12

quite simply:

v.11 - Solomon had a vineyard and had many workers.

v.12 - She also has a vineyard -- her body -- and she belongs to NO ONE except the one to whom she chooses to give herself.

SOLOMON may own thousands of possessions, but SHE is given as a gift (Danny Akin, 188)

"My own vineyard" ---

metaphor for her own person (cf. 1:6)

Only she could give herself to another (hers to give)
and she freely chose to give herself to Solomon.

That's MARRIAGE - LOVE.

>> I FREELY CHOOSE to give of myself TO MY SPOUSE!

v.12 means that the vineyard is his alone.

IT'S ENOUGH TO SATISFY COMPLETELY.

> to possess your beloved IS ENOUGH.

it is to be wealthy beyond measure (Kinlaw)

FULL satisfaction of GIVING OF HERSELF (=vineyard as a poetic image of herself/her body/
her person/her being)

> the vineyard IS FOR HIM!

A LESSON ***

**If you are unmarried... you have a vineyard (*yourself & your own very body/person/being*).
Don't give it away until the time is right. KEEP IT until its the time to marry! (Gary Brady,
242)**

NEVER FORGET: that we are blessed and privileged to receive the affection & love from our spouses.

**

8:13

final concluding epilogue//conclusion of the book

these are the final words of the 2 lovers recalling the early passionate requests from their courtship / dating days which show that their love had NOT LOST INTENSITY!! >>> KEEP MARITAL LOVE HOT/ KINDLED/GROWING.

These verses reflect the desire that Solomon and the Shulammitte still felt for each other. Solomon seems to have spoken verse 13 and the Shulammitte verse 14. The mountains probably refer to her breasts (cf. 2:17; 8:14).

v.13 - the MAN TALKING

He talks about HER "sitting in the gardens" --- uses language that she's familiar with
> HE knows her, HE knows her past, her background, her desires, what she enjoys
>> he equates her with this tender & emotional place.

The reference (again!!) to "Garden" takes us back to the first garden where love began (Garden of Eden, Gen 2) --- when marital relationship had not been tarnished by the fall.

>> here at the end of the book, the love of the couple is STILL passionate!!!!
It is PERMANENT LOVE (Gen 2.24)

She was in the gardens --- *companions listening for her.*

>> he was longing for her. LONGING for intimacy. Wanting to be ALONE!

v.13 - Solomon says: "Let me hear your voice --- in the vineyard (maybe literally/// or her body)

HE LONGS FOR HER.

Let me hear your voice.

>>> HOW MUCH MORE...

Does Jesus, the great Bridegroom, long to hear OUR VOICE in prayer!
in prayer
in praise
in worship
in proclamation
in meditation
in confession

in intercession
in jubilation

8:14

“HURRY”!

Make haste, COME!

The idea is the BRIDE calling him to that kind of *rapid, abandoned, quick FLIGHT TO HER*.
Erotic, sexual imagery no doubt is present.

COME to me, COME and let's be intimate. Come and let's ENJOY each other!

The narrative closes with a call for the lover to return to his beloved. Many students of the Bible have noted the similarity with how the whole Bible ends: "Come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20).
"COME..."

the BRIDE's call to her husband may find an interesting parallel in the NT.

The Book of Revelation may in fact allude to this: "the SPIRIT and the BRIDE say, "COME" (Rev 22.17) (Kinlaw, 1243)

She calls him: "MY LOVER // my beloved"

The hebrew word: *Habar* -- friend, companion, associate, together/like-minded 'friend'

A very affectionate, tender & picturesque word for these TWO hotly aroused lovers!

>> they are "FRIENDS!"

Like a gazelle or a young stag (2:17)

the figures here of a deer and the mountain of spices symbolize for us for the last time the LOVER & HIS BELOVED. ALL restraints are gone!

HE is hers

and SHE is his.

>> they are free to pursue the delights of love.

>> they are encouraged to enjoy the intimacies of love.

>> they are blessed to glory in love.

In their courtship she had longed for HIM to take HER as his bride.

NOW in the marriage SHE longs with the SAME INTENSITY for his strength and agility and pursuit of her!

The desires & passions BEFORE MARRIAGE are just as strong as NOW IN THE MARRIAGE.

>>> IS IT THAT WAY FOR YOU???

"Mountains of Spices" --- like the mountains of Bether in 2:17 --- these refer to her breasts.

>> Being spice-laden means they were perfumed.

Another invitation to a continued celebration of the LOVE and communion the happy couple shares.

The joys of physical union & mutual enjoyment are stamped w/ God's approval, for the SONG OF SONGS IS PART OF GOD'S HOLY & INERRANT & SUFFICIENT WORD!
(LLoyd Carr, 175)

>>> GOSPEL:

HURRY, O my savior Jesus!

My beloved, my precious Jesus!

Beautifully come/show yourself, come present to be with me forever, my precious Jesus!!!

**

OUR HOPE is in Jesus, who reverses wrongs, whose blessings overcome curses.

OUR HOPE is in having our thinking about marriage & intimacy w/in marriage renewed & transformed by the character of God's love.

GOD's love is the paradigm and pattern for our love.

GOD's love is the ground and impetus for our love.

GOD's love gives meaning to human love, and human love exists to display God's love
(Hamilton, 144)

CONCLUSION OF SERMON <homiletical idea>

**

STORY OF JOHN NEWTON

Familiar man for "Amazing Grace".

His wife Mary Catlett -- they were married for many years.

Their mothers both knew each other when both John and Mary were young, but John's mother died when he was 7 and their pathways separated till they were teenagers.

John saw Mary again and was smitten & fell in love with her.
But his overtly godless & vile ways were a barrier to any union.
But in 1748 when he was converted, 2 years after this he saw Mary and they were married.
40 years of blissful marriage followed.

In December 1790, Mary died after a long illness. John was at her side & wrote:
“When I was sure that she was gone, I took off her ring, according to her repeated injunction, and put it on my own finger. I then knelt down, with the servants who were in the room, and returned the Lord my unfeigned thanks for her deliverance, and her peaceful dismissal (death).

THEN, at her funeral, John said:

I was NOT supported by lively, sensible considerations, but by being enabled to realize to my mind, some great and leading truths of the Word of God.

I saw, what indeed I knew before, but never till then so strongly and clearly perceived, that as a sinner, I had NO RIGHT, and as a believer, I had NO REASON to complain.

I considered her to be on LOAN to me -- which God had lent her to me and he had a right to take her back WHENEVER HE PLEASED.

And that as I had deserved to give her back every day, from the first, it became to me, rather, to be SO THANKFUL that she was given to me for SO LONG...”

JOHN, lived another 17 years after her death. In 1793, he published 2 volumes of letters that he wrote to Mary over the years --- a public testimony of thanks to God for uniting their hearts by such tender ties, and for allowing them to continue with each other for so long”

>> (Story in Gary Brady, p.244-45)

=====

CONCLUSION>>>>

In teh end we have VIRGINITY AND ESCHATOLOGY. What a combination!
Waiting...waiting for marriage.... waiting and waiting for the marriage of the LAMB.
Today we as the church join the bride of the Song of Songs and her final plea.
we wait for the return of Christ
we are waiting for the blessed hope (Titus 2.11-13)
AND SO WE WAIT... (Akin, 191)

"In a world awash with the debris of broken homes, crushed spirits, and fractured dreams, God's people need the message of the Song of Solomon as never before. The Song is a righteous antidote to a licentious society that has prostituted the sacred nature of human love. Hope exudes

from its pages. If ever a book was written with a message more salient for a later generation, Solomon's ode is that book." (Patterson quoted in Constable)

SONG OF SONGS is
God's endorsement of physical love between a husband and wife.

Marriage is to be:

1. monogamous
2. permanent
3. self-giving
4. sacrificial
5. gospel-pointing

Each SPOUSE must be *INTENSELY devoted and committed to each other, and taking delight ONLY and SUPREME and REGULARLY in each other (Jack Deere, 1025)

SEX IN MARRIAGE is NOT dirty, it's DELIGHTFUL.

It's not grouse --- it's GOD-given

It's not to be SHUNNED --- it's to be SOUGHT after

It's not to be REJECTED -- but rejoiced in!

it's not to be ignored --- but intoxicating & enthralling!

A few thoughts:

1. Song of Songs praises the physical attraction & bodily enjoyment between a married couple.
2. Song of Songs presents the different roles & happy delights of each spouse fulfilling his God-given role/design in marriage.
3. Song of Songs affirms the necessity & duty to remain morally & sexually PURE before marriage (Song 4.12)
4. Song of Songs shows that premarital sex/living together has NO PLACE whatsoever in the lives of Christians (2:7; 3:5)
5. Song of Songs glories in marital FAITHFULNESS and EXCLUSIVITY before and after marriage and all through the duration of the marriage (6:3; 7:10; 8:12)
6. Song of Songs pictures God's love for and commitment to & passionate pursuit of His Bride, His people!
7. Song of Songs exhorts married people to selflessly give and passionately please one's spouse sexually, frequently, happily, and humbly.

*****SONGS*****

Now why this fear
Arise my soul arise
What wondrous love is this
Before the Throne
And Can it be

NOW WHY THIS FEAR

Now why this fear and unbelief?
Has not the Father put to grief
His spotless Son for us?
And will the righteous Judge of men
Condemn me for that debt of sin
Now canceled at the cross?

CHORUS

Jesus, all my trust is in Your blood
Jesus, You've rescued us
Through Your great love

VERSE 2

Complete atonement You have made
And by Your death have fully paid
The debt Your people owed
No wrath remains for us to face
We're sheltered by Your saving grace
And sprinkled with Your blood

BRIDGE

How sweet the sound of saving grace
How sweet the sound of saving grace
Christ died for me

VERSE 3

Be still my soul and know this peace
The merits of your great high priest
Have bought your liberty
Rely then on His precious blood
Don't fear your banishment from God
Since Jesus sets you free

JESUS LOVER OF MY SOUL

Jesus, lover of my soul, let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll, while the tempest still is high.
Hide me, O my Savior, hide, till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide; O receive my soul at last.

Other refuge have I none, hangs my helpless soul on Thee;
Leave, ah! leave me not alone, still support and comfort me.
All my trust on Thee is stayed, all my help from Thee I bring;
Cover my defenseless head with the shadow of Thy wing.

Thou, O Christ, art all I want, more than all in Thee I find;
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint, heal the sick, and lead the blind.
Just and holy is Thy Name, I am all unrighteousness;
False and full of sin I am; Thou art full of truth and grace.

Plenteous grace with Thee is found, grace to cover all my sin;
Let the healing streams abound; make and keep me pure within.
Thou of life the fountain art, freely let me take of Thee;
Spring Thou up within my heart; rise to all eternity.

Prayer meeting themes...

ADORATION --- praising God

Arise, my soul, arise; shake off thy guilty fears;
The bleeding sacrifice in my behalf appears:
Before the throne my surety stands,
Before the throne my surety stands,
My name is written on His hands.

He ever lives above, for me to intercede;
His all redeeming love, His precious blood, to plead:
His blood atoned for all our race,
His blood atoned for all our race,
And sprinkles now the throne of grace.

My God is reconciled; His pardoning voice I hear;
He owns me for His child; I can no longer fear:
With confidence I now draw nigh,
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And "Father, Abba, Father," cry.

CONFESSION --- seeking His forgiveness

I stand amazed

I stand amazed in the presence
Of Jesus the Nazarene,
And wonder how He could love me,
A sinner, condemned, unclean.

O how marvelous! O how wonderful!
And my song shall ever be:
O how marvelous! O how wonderful!
Is my Savior's love for me!

When with the ransomed in glory
His face I at last shall see,
'Twill be my joy through the ages
To sing of His love for me.

INTERCESSION -- *pleading for others*

No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, and all in Him, is mine;
Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness divine,
Bold I approach th'eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ my own.
Amazing love! How can it be!
That Thou -- my God -- shouldst die for me?

PREPARATION --- *preparing for spiritual battle*

Before the Throne

When Satan tempts me to despair
And tells me of the guilt within,
Upward I look and see Him there
Who made an end of all my sin.
Because the sinless Savior died
My sinful soul is counted free.
For God the just is satisfied
To look on Him and pardon me.

Behold Him there the risen Lamb,
My perfect spotless righteousness,
The great unchangeable I AM,

The King of glory and of grace,
One in Himself I cannot die.
My soul is purchased by His blood,
My life is hid with Christ on high,
With Christ my Savior and my God!

