

Chapter 3

Good evening and once again thank you for joining us! Would you please turn in your bibles to SOS chapter 3.

Now it's been a few weeks since our last study in this book, so let's do a quick reminder of where we are at. Remember this is a song of a king-Solomon taking a bride, the maiden or the Shulamite to himself, which of course is the story of redemption.

Now tonight we're gonna keep it PG, but there are some sections in our study that get a little steamy, but you can use your imagination for those words, you don't need me to provide commentary for that.

But its important to remember that God is not ashamed or embarrassed of sex. He created sex, in the confines of marriage
Hebrews 13:4 Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

The Bible consistently condemns sex outside of the marriage commitment (fornicators and adulterers God will judge). But the Bible celebrates sexual love within the commitment of marriage, as indicated in The Song of Solomon.

Remember there's more to this book than just a love story of a husband and wife. We'll see many times where SOS also paints a picture of the believer and our Lord. Because He's the king, and the NT reminds us repeatedly we're the bride of Christ.

We're gonna study chapters 3-5 and the title of tonight's message is Love for Our King
Let's pray

So remember the 2 main characters. The beloved is king solomon. The maiden is the shulamite.

Now in your Bibles chapter 3 likely has the title
A Troubled Night
The Shulamite

1-3

1 By night on my bed I sought the one I love;
I sought him, but I did not find him.

2 "I will rise now," I said,
"And go about the city;
In the streets and in the squares
I will seek the one I love."

I sought him, but I did not find him.

3 The watchmen who go about the city found me;
I said,

"Have you seen the one I love?" Evidently the maiden woke in the middle of the night and instantly felt alone, longing for her beloved. She sought him but could not find him anywhere in the house.

Now scholars are kinda split regarding this whole scene. Some say it's what really happened, others say this is a dream or a daydream like we saw back in chapter 2.

4 Scarcely had I passed by them,
When I found the one I love.
I held him and would not let him go,
Until I had brought him to the house of my mother,
And into the chamber of her who conceived me. 4 times we see
here in the first four verses the phrase 'the one I love.' And now
she's found him, and you can picture the relieved maiden clinging
to Solomon.

This seems to have been the same kind of embrace that Mary
Magdalene had upon Jesus when she first saw her resurrected
Lord

John 20:16-17 16 Jesus said to her, "Mary!"
She turned and said to Him,[fn] "Rabboni!" (which is to say,
Teacher).
17 Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet
ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I
am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and
your God.' "

Now there's a cool application we can see in these 4 verses in the
relationship with Jesus and His people. Because there's times
when we feel like we may be far from him.

Applying this symbolically, Charles Spurgeon noted the steps of
the maiden's progress towards her beloved:

SHOW SLIDE She loved him.
She sought him.

She found him

She held him.

She brought him with her. **CLOSE SLIDE**

5 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
By the gazelles or by the does of the field,
Do not stir up nor awaken love
Until it pleases.

Of course v5 can be interpreted in a couple of ways.

In terms of relationship it means, "Let our love progress and grow until it is matured and fruitful, don't let us go too fast."

In terms of passion it means, "Let our love making continue without interruption until we are both fulfilled.

Now in v6-8 we see the spectacular arrival of the wedding party.

The Coming of Solomon

The Shulamite

6 Who is this coming out of the wilderness
Like pillars of smoke,
Perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,
With all the merchant's fragrant powders?

7 Behold, it is Solomon's couch,
With sixty valiant men around it,
Of the valiant of Israel.

8 They all hold swords,
Being expert in war.

Every man has his sword on his thigh

Because of fear in the night. The 60 valiant men were there to show that Solomon was a powerful man who could genuinely protect his maiden.

9 Of the wood of Lebanon
Solomon the King

Made himself a palanquin:[fn] [SHOW PIC](#) Now a palanquin was a portable, ornate couch for carrying an important person. [CLOSE PIC](#)

And in this scene we see 2 vital truths every prospective husband should learn. First, the husband must be able to provide and protect himself. Because only then will a prospective wife find comfort and security from her husband.

This is why a boy must grow up and become a man before he can be a good husband
10-11

10 He made its pillars of silver,
Its support of gold,
Its seat of purple,
Its interior paved with love
By the daughters of Jerusalem.
11 Go forth, O daughters of Zion,
And see King Solomon with the crown
With which his mother crowned him
On the day of his wedding,
The day of the gladness of his heart.

Now, knowing what we know about Solomon through our study of Ecclesiastes on Sundays, it's hard to see how this amazing collection of love poems in SOS could have come from such a corrupt man.

This all seems so loving, and personal and intimate. This is why we know SOS took place earlier in his life, long before he married 700 wives.

Chapter 4

The Bridegroom Praises the Bride

The Beloved

Now as we get into this section, we're about to see that the husband was skilled at showing affection to his maiden. The Apostle Paul would later write, **1 Corinthians 7:3 Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.**

It's wrong for a husband to withhold affection from his wife; and since Paul meant this to apply to every Christian marriage, it shows that every wife has affection due her because she is a wife of a Christian man.

**1 Behold, you are fair, my love!
Behold, you are fair!
You have dove's eyes behind your veil.
Your hair is like a flock of goats,**

Going down from Mount Gilead. Men, notice that Solomon didn't begin with aggressive or selfish actions, but with tender and confidence building words to his wife.

Back in chapter 1 she had doubted her beauty, yet Solomon truthfully assured her that she was the most beautiful woman in the world to him.

Solomon did all this with poetic language more familiar to her ears than to ours. We're about to read these words and think-uh, you're really gonna say that to your wife? But clearly Solomon wanted her to know how beautiful she was to him.

2-5

2 Your teeth are like a flock of shorn sheep
Which have come up from the washing,
Every one of which bears twins,
And none is barren among them.

3 Your lips are like a strand of scarlet,
And your mouth is lovely.
Your temples behind your veil
Are like a piece of pomegranate.

4 Your neck is like the tower of David,
Built for an armory,
On which hang a thousand bucklers,
All shields of mighty men.

5 Your two breasts are like two fawns,
Twins of a gazelle,
Which feed among the lilies. Notice he goes from head to toe.

Now we don't understand these allegory's here. And there are volumes of books written to explain them and translate them to today's vernacular if you wanna study that.

6 Until the day breaks
And the shadows flee away,
I will go my way to the mountain of myrrh
And to the hill of frankincense. You can use your imagination here. This is speaking of the consummation of their marriage.

7 You are all fair, my love,
And there is no spot in you. After giving a detailed description of his maiden's beauty, Solomon summarizes his observations. She was more than fair; she was all fair, and there was no spot in her.

8 Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse,
With me from Lebanon.
Look from the top of Amana,
From the top of Senir and Hermon,
From the lions' dens,
From the mountains of the leopards. Since the maiden came from the north, Solomon poetically invited her to leave the northern region, to leave her family and her fears (alluded to with lion's dens and leopards) — and to “come with him.”

This is the first time he calls the maiden his spouse, his bride — and then he uses the word repeatedly.

See Solomon knew God's design for marriage. Jesus said in Matthew 19 4 And He answered and said to them, “Have you not

read that He who made[fn] them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’[fn] 5 and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’?[fn] 6 So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”

9 You have ravished my heart,
My sister, my spouse;
You have ravished my heart
With one look of your eyes,
With one link of your necklace. Here Solomon went beyond praising the maiden’s beauty and character; he described the effect that she had upon him. He says with one look of your eyes, he was a changed man.

10 How fair is your love,
My sister, my spouse!
How much better than wine is your love,
And the scent of your perfumes
Than all spices! Solomon’s praise of the maiden’s love reminds us that she was not a passive recipient of his love. He initiated the relationship and pursued her; but she responded with beautiful and precious love all her own towards her husband.

11 Your lips, O my spouse,
Drip as the honeycomb;
Honey and milk are under your tongue;
And the fragrance of your garments
Is like the fragrance of Lebanon.

Now in v12-15 The beloved praises the virginity of the maiden

12 A garden enclosed

Is my sister, my spouse,

A spring shut up,

A fountain sealed. With these three images Solomon praised the virginity of his maiden. Her sexuality had not been given to another; it was like an enclosed garden, a protected spring, a fountain sealed, all things could only be given to the rightful owner.

Now in v13-16 he's gonna make some descriptions regarding her sexuality, and again we can't really grasp the full meanings here as we don't have an agrarian culture.

13-15

13 Your plants are an orchard of pomegranates

With pleasant fruits,

Fragrant henna with spikenard,

14 Spikenard and saffron,

Calamus and cinnamon,

With all trees of frankincense,

Myrrh and aloes,

With all the chief spices—

15 A fountain of gardens,

A well of living waters,

And streams from Lebanon. The images reinforce the idea of richness and abundance.

The Shulamite

16 Awake, O north wind,
And come, O south!
Blow upon my garden,
That its spices may flow out.
Let my beloved come to his garden
And eat its pleasant fruits. Here, for the first and only time in this
section, the maiden speaks.
Notice in v16 she calls it both her garden, and his garden.

Chapter 5

The Bride Praises the Bridegroom
The Beloved

1 I have come to my garden, my sister, my spouse;
I have gathered my myrrh with my spice;
I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey;
I have drunk my wine with my milk. Pause here. Using the images
of luxury and satisfaction, Solomon poetically described how
pleasing their experience of intimacy was.

(To His Friends)

Eat, O friends!

Drink, yes, drink deeply,

O beloved ones! There is a bunch of disagreement among
commentators as to who speaks these words. Some believe that
the groom left the marriage bedroom and spoke to the remaining
guests of the wedding party.

Others think of an imaginary chorus, such as the previously
mentioned Daughters of Jerusalem.

But now the scene shifts in chapter 5.

Hey marriage is awesome. It's exciting and thrilling. But after you get married, you what happens? Life. life happens. And things come up, just like we talked last time in chapter 2 about the little foxes.

Here we see a picture of a marriage spat.

The Shulamite's Troubled Evening

The Shulamite

2 I sleep, but my heart is awake;

It is the voice of my beloved!

He knocks, saying,

“Open for me, my sister, my love,

My dove, my perfect one;

For my head is covered with dew,

My locks with the drops of the night.” The maiden heard the voice of her beloved outside her door. He had come, either for an unexpected rendezvous, or after a long day of looking after his responsibilities.

And now Solomon found himself locked outside the maiden's home — which, presumably, was also his own home.

And there's some interesting observations here. Solomon called for his maiden, but the sound of his voice was not enough to persuade her to open the door. Then he affectionately praised his

maiden. But none of this was enough to persuade her to open the door.

Like a shepherd out late at night watching over the flocks, his head was wet with the moisture of the dew that covered the land that night.

And what is the bride's response?

3 I have taken off my robe;

How can I put it on again?

I have washed my feet;

How can I defile them? In response to the warm appeal of Solomon, the maiden answered only with excuses. She was comfortable in her bed, so he couldn't come in.

She couldn't be bothered with the inconvenience of dressing herself and preparing herself for sleep again (I have washed my feet; how can I defile them?).

Perhaps she was simply not willing to be inconvenienced; perhaps she did not appreciate the unexpected nature of Solomon's visit. Maybe Solomon came home much later than she had expected him, and she was upset.

I'm sure there's more to the story here...

Whatever the specific reason, she refused to promptly rise from bed and open the door.

4 My beloved put his hand

By the latch of the door,

And my heart yearned for him. The maiden could hear that Solomon put his hand upon the latch mechanism of the door. This was a clear indication of his desire to enter and be with her, but only at her invitation. Solomon would not break or force the latch of the door but insisted that the way be opened to him.

5 I arose to open for my beloved,

And my hands dripped with myrrh,

My fingers with liquid myrrh,

On the handles of the lock.

As the maiden finally rose from bed and came to the door, she noticed that the door or the latch of the door had been anointed with sweet perfume. This was another reminder of the beauty and the quality of Solomon's love for her.

These verses give us an emotionally accurate picture of the dynamic of conflict in a relationship, especially in marriage.

The maiden felt resentment towards the Solomon-we don't know why.

Solomon refused to force himself upon his maiden and would only enter at her invitation.

Solomon made a true and persistent appeal to his maiden, that they might be together and enjoy their relationship.

Because of her resentment, the maiden delayed her response.

When she finally did respond, it seemed too late — the moment had passed, and Solomon was gone.

In applying this dynamic of conflict to a relationship, significant damage may be done to a relationship for several reasons:

SHOW SLIDE

Holding on to resentments and refusing to be generous with forgiveness.

The attempt to force one's interest and affections upon another, and not waiting for their response.

Refusing or delaying response when approached in a loving and persistent way

CLOSE SLIDE

6 I opened for my beloved,
But my beloved had turned away and was gone.
My heart leaped up when he spoke.
I sought him, but I could not find him;
I called him, but he gave me no answer. When the maiden finally came to the door she was too late.

Now the roles were reversed. Before Solomon called for the maiden and heard no response, now the maiden calls for him but hears no answer. She had foolishly waited too long to respond, actually working against her own self-interest.

7 The watchmen who went about the city found me.
They struck me, they wounded me;

The keepers of the walls

Took my veil away from me. V7 is why most commentators think this is a dream. Those who did not sympathize with her search also mistreated her.

8 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
If you find my beloved,
That you tell him I am lovesick!

Back in chapter 2 she mentioned she was lovesick because she was overwhelmed by the presence of love; here she was aching at its absence.

The maiden's plea to the daughters of Jerusalem shows that she came to regret and suffer under her previous selfish actions.

The Daughters of Jerusalem

9 What is your beloved

More than another beloved,

O fairest among women?

What is your beloved

More than another beloved,

That you so charge us? They wanted an explanation as for why she was so lovesick

10-16

The Shulamite

10 My beloved is white and ruddy, whiteness speaks of purity

Chief among ten thousand. Superiority of Jesus

11 His head is like the finest gold, Jesus' diety

His locks are wavy,
And black as a raven. Jesus never changes
12 His eyes are like doves,
By the rivers of waters,
Washed with milk,
And fitly set. Jesus has eyes of compassion
13 His cheeks are like a bed of spices,
Banks of scented herbs,
His lips are lilies,
Dripping liquid myrrh.

14 His hands are rods of gold,
Set with beryl., speaking of His authority
His body is carved ivory,
Inlaid with sapphires.,
15 His legs are pillars of marble,
Set on bases of fine gold., Speaking of strength
His countenance is like Lebanon.,
Excellent as the cedars.,
16 His mouth is most sweet.,
Yes, he is altogether lovely.,
This is my beloved.,
And this is my friend.,
O daughters of Jerusalem!

Every man, no matter how spiritual or holy he might seem, is still flawed and imperfect. But there is One who is All Together lovely—Jesus Christ.

As the bride began to think about, and comment on the beauty of her shepherd-king, the daughters of Jerusalem said, “What’s so special about him?”

That is what the world asks us. “What’s so special about your Shepherd-King? What’s so special about your Bridegroom?”

Do we have a love relationship with Jesus?