

Good evening and thank you for joining us! Tonight we finish our study in the book of Song of Solomon, so would you please turn to SOS chapter 6

Last week we saw how there was trouble in paradise!

Tonight we'll see reconciliation between Solomon and the maiden. And we'll pick up some pointers we can apply to our relationships.

We'll study chapters 6-8, and the title of tonight's message is Reconciled Again
Let's pray

Back at the end of chapter 5, the Shulammite had convinced the daughters of Jerusalem that her love for her husband was deep and genuine. Remember she had procrastinated, and her husband had left and now she can't find Solomon. So she's searching.

I Am My Beloved's
The Daughters of Jerusalem

1 Where has your beloved gone,
O fairest among women?

Where has your beloved turned aside,

That we may seek him with you? Continuing from chapter 5's narrative, it's a bit difficult to tell if these on-looking friends are supporting the maiden or being sarcastic towards her.

The Shulamite

2 My beloved has gone to his garden,
To the beds of spices,
To feed his flock in the gardens,
And to gather lilies. When the maiden thought about where her beloved Solomon would be, she remembered that he would be in his garden, doing his work (to feed his flock) and looking for ways to show his love to her (to gather lilies).

3 I am my beloved's,
And my beloved is mine.
He feeds his flock among the lilies. As Mrs Solomon remembers these things, who her husband was, and what he would be doing, it's stirring her heart. She has a renewed sense of longing to be with him.

This is opposite to the attitude of self-indulgence and laziness shown in the first part of chapter 5.

And in v4-13 there's restoration

Praise of the Shulamite's Beauty
The Beloved

4 O my love, you are as beautiful as Tirzah,
Lovely as Jerusalem,
Awesome as an army with banners! So evidently the bride goes to the garden, and she sees Solomon. And Solomon sees her and compliments her. He compared her beauty and stature to noble and beautiful cities of Tirzah and Jerusalem.

She's also described as impressive as an army with banners. Well if you saw an army with banners what would happen, your knees would knock, you'd be weak in the knees. He's saying that's what her beauty does to him.

Now we need to keep all these words in mind as we remember what happened in chapter 5, when his wife wouldn't muster up the strength or motivation to open the door as he was knocking on it.

So notice, and we can't miss this, that there's not even the slightest hint of bitterness or unforgiveness by Solomon towards his wife and her actions. Solomon was quick to forgive and restore the relationship. He wasn't holding on to resentment.

Ephesians 4:26 Be angry, and do not sin":[fn] do not let the sun go down on your wrath,

How quickly in marriage we can hold onto hurts, and refuse to let them go. But incredibly, that's not what Solomon does!

And this is a picture of Jesus isn't it! For it was on the cross that He said it is finished. **Psalm 103:12 As far as the east is from the west,
So far has He removed our transgressions from us.**

Now we're about to see that Solomon is going to use some of the same flattering comparisons for his wife that he had employed on their wedding night.

Men this is a great idea! Despite the marital friction that just took place back in chapter 5, Solomon is assuring his wife that his love for her had not diminished.

Also we'll see that before he pursues physical intimacy, he restores connection emotionally.

5 Turn your eyes away from me,
For they have overcome me.
Your hair is like a flock of goats
Going down from Gilead. Remember, we can learn, but men we can't borrow from this book.

Solomon is poetically saying "Look away — I am so enraptured by the beauty of your eyes that I can't take it!"

Spurgeon related Song of Solomon 6:5 to Jesus and the church, noting that Jesus is overcome with love when He looks upon the church. This was true before the incarnation, as He walked this earth, and now that He has ascended into heaven.

Think about that. So often when we look at ourselves we see our flaws. We see our failures. That's not how Jesus sees you. He sees you and is overcome with love.

6-7

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

7 Like a piece of pomegranate

Are your temples behind your veil. So Solomon, once he sees his bride again after their spat, told her the same kind of things he told her on their wedding night. It was his way of saying, “I love you and value you just as much now as then.”

But here he wisely avoided describing her more sensual physical features — lips, hips and chest as he had done back in chapter 4.

Why didn't he mention these? Solomon was being romantic! He didn't want his bride thinking the only reason he wanted to make up after their spat was for physical intimacy.

Good counsel for the men.

V8 is a verse that has troubled scholars for thousands of years.

8 There are sixty queens

And eighty concubines,

And virgins without number. The mention of these other women makes some wonder if Solomon wrote this when he had more than one wife.

I believe the queen's concubines and virgins without number refer to those attached to the court of the king but not a part of his personal harem.

9 My dove, my perfect one,

Is the only one,

The only one of her mother,

The favorite of the one who bore her.
The daughters saw her
And called her blessed,
The queens and the concubines,
And they praised her. The greatness of her beauty wasn't only
evident to Solomon, but also to others around her.

10 Who is she who looks forth as the morning,
Fair as the moon,
Clear as the sun,
Awesome as an army with banners? This high and poetic praise
assured the maiden that her relationship with Solomon was truly
reconciled. There was no lingering bitterness or withheld
forgiveness.

And look the application for married couples is clear. When
forgiveness has occurred, make sure you verbally tell your
spouse!

The Shulamite
11-12

11 I went down to the garden of nuts
To see the verdure (fresh fruit) of the valley,
To see whether the vine had budded
And the pomegranates had bloomed.
12 Before I was even aware,
My soul had made me

As the chariots of my noble people.^[fn] The reuniting of their relationship, the return of springtime for their love, was so exhilarating to her that the bride felt that her soul was as free and as fast as a chariot.

So let me speak one final word to couples about forgiveness. As a couple, you are no longer 2 but 1. And if there's strain in the marriage, it's important to remember that God can restore and bring springtime to troubled relationships.

The Beloved and His Friends

13 Return, return, O Shulamite;

Return, return, that we may look upon you!

The Shulamite

What would you see in the Shulamite—

As it were, the dance of the two camps?^[fn] Her response shows she has a level of humility. She seemed surprised at the attention she received.

Now some believe that the idea of two camps refers to the internal battle of the soul and is a mention of the inner battles the maiden has fought and is fighting.

Chapter 7 1-3 Description of the maiden's body.

Now that reconciliation has occurred, romance is in the air, which is why this description of her body is different than what we just read in v6.

Expressions of Praise

The Beloved

1 How beautiful are your feet in sandals,

O prince's daughter!

The curves of your thighs are like jewels,

The work of the hands of a skillful workman. This begins another extended description of the maiden's beauty.

The mention of the dance of the two camps in Song of Solomon in v13 suggests that the maiden was dancing. This is also suggested by the description of these verses, which begins at her feet and continues up her body to her head.

This would be much more natural in describing someone who was standing and dancing. Yet did she dance before a group of onlookers or privately for her beloved?

2-5

2 Your navel is a rounded goblet;

It lacks no blended beverage.

Your waist is a heap of wheat

Set about with lilies.

3 Your two breasts are like two fawns,

Twins of a gazelle.

4 Your neck is like an ivory tower,

Your eyes like the pools in Heshbon

By the gate of Bath Rabbim.

Your nose is like the tower of Lebanon

Which looks toward Damascus.

5 Your head crowns you like Mount Carmel,

And the hair of your head is like purple;

A king is held captive by your tresses. The beauty of her hair is so striking that it can only be related to royalty (is like purple) and captivates royals (a king is held captive).

6-10

**6 How fair and how pleasant you are,
O love, with your delights!**

**7 This stature of yours is like a palm tree,
And your breasts like its clusters.**

**8 I said, "I will go up to the palm tree,
I will take hold of its branches."**

**Let now your breasts be like clusters of the vine,
The fragrance of your breath like apples,**

9 And the roof of your mouth like the best wine.

The Shulamite

**The wine goes down smoothly for my beloved,
Moving gently the lips of sleepers.[fn]**

10 I am my beloved's,

And his desire is toward me. The bride is completely secure in her husband's love. She understands his desire as not a demand or a burden, but it's wonderful and appropriate in the marriage relationship.

11 Come, my beloved,

Let us go forth to the field;

Let us lodge in the villages. Responding to the desire of Solomon the maiden invited him to come away on a trip to the countryside where they could enjoy their intimacy.

12 Let us get up early to the vineyards;
Let us see if the vine has budded,
Whether the grape blossoms are open,
And the pomegranates are in bloom.

There I will give you my love. None of this is describing a duty; there is a spirit throughout the Song of Solomon that shows how good marital love can be for both partners.

Song of Solomon teaches that true freedom does not come by someone being liberated from marriage. The truth is that genuine liberation comes within marriage.

Marriage is a secure hedge that protects love as it grows. As love is nurtured, it produces freedom and fulfillment.

13 The mandrakes give off a fragrance,
And at our gates are pleasant fruits,
All manner, new and old,
Which I have laid up for you, my beloved. This difficult to translate phrase may have the sense that she is inviting him to enjoy intimacy in ways that are both familiar and new to the couple.

The maiden takes an active role, puts some thought into it, and invites Solomon to partake in fun new ways.

Chapter 8

Lovers Reunited at Their Country Home

1 Oh, that you were like my brother,
Who nursed at my mother's breasts!

If I should find you outside,

I would kiss you;

I would not be despised. Now this verse at first glance is confusing. But it's important to know that Ancient Near Easterners frowned on public displays of intimate affection unless closest blood relatives exchanged them. There was no PDA between couples.

It was probably for this reason that the wife wished that her husband was her brother. She wished that she could be as open with her beloved as she would be allowed to be with her actual brother.

2 I would lead you and bring you

Into the house of my mother,

She who used to instruct me.

I would cause you to drink of spiced wine,

Of the juice of my pomegranate. The bride wanted to enjoy the intimacy of married love with her beloved, but to enjoy in the context of the approval of their family.

(To the Daughters of Jerusalem)

3 His left hand is under my head,

And his right hand embraces me. This phrase was used before in Song of Solomon 2, describing the maiden's desire for physical intimacy.

4 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem,

Do not stir up nor awaken love

Until it pleases. Now this is the third time that this phrase is used in the Song of Solomon (previously at 2:7 and 3:5).

In terms of relationship it means, “Let our love progress and grow until it’s matured and fruitful, — don’t let us go too fast.” In terms of intimacy it means, “Let our passion continue without interruption until we are both fulfilled.”

We should pause for a moment and ponder-why is this mentioned 3 times in the scripture? See its a reminder that love is so sacred it must be handled with great care.

Love Renewed in Lebanon

A Relative

**5 Who is this coming up from the wilderness,
Leaning upon her beloved?** Pause here.

The idea here isn’t that the maiden is old and infirmed; rather that she simply accompanies her beloved and walks with him, the union of 2 people becoming one.

Spurgeon used this as a picture of the closeness and dependence of the Church upon Christ. “Beloved, there is no part of the pilgrimage of a saint in which he can afford to walk in any other way but in the way of leaning.”

**...5 I awakened you under the apple tree.
There your mother brought you forth;**

There she who bore you brought you forth. This describes the couple's youth and family roots. They were now grown and happily married but still connected to their families.

The Shulamite to Her Beloved

6 Set me as a seal upon your heart,

As a seal upon your arm; Pause here. Married love should be like a seal, in the sense that a seal speaks of permanence, belonging, and security.

Because think about it. Whenever you break a seal, try as you might, it's never quite as strong or attractive as it was before. And when folks break the seal of marriage, there is always irrevocable damage done.

...6 For love is as strong as death, Love is like death in its permanence and strength.

Jealousy as cruel as the grave;^[fn] It is hard to know if this was meant in a positive or a negative sense. There is a jealousy that is good and appropriate in the marriage relationship, and there is another aspect of jealousy that is dangerous and destructive.

We should have a jealousy in our heart regarding our love for Jesus, hating anything that might come between Him and us. He certainly has such a jealousy towards us.

...6 Its flames are flames of fire,

A most vehement flame.^[fn] The idea is that love is like a fire, with great power and usefulness — for good or even for destruction.

Love has lifted some to great heights; it has consumed others and left only ashes.

7 Many waters cannot quench love,
Nor can the floods drown it.
If a man would give for love
All the wealth of his house,
It would be utterly despised. By its very nature love must be given. No one can purchase love. It is only available as a gift.

Verses 8 through 12 flash back to the Shulammite's life before meeting Solomon and their first encounter.

We'll see that v8-9 are a look back at a planning session held by the maiden's brothers when she was still a fairly young girl. They recognized that they had a responsibility towards her; to plan ahead for the day she would be married.

The Shulamite's Brothers

8 We have a little sister,
And she has no breasts.
What shall we do for our sister
In the day when she is spoken for?
9 If she is a wall,
We will build upon her
A battlement of silver;
And if she is a door,
We will enclose her

With boards of cedar. These words, which were apparently spoken by the Shulammite's older brothers reveal their desire to prepare her for a proper marriage. Comparing her to a "wall" likely means that she would use self-restraint and remain a virgin until marriage. If she behaved this way her brothers would honor her by providing her with various adornments.

But 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.

The Shulamite
She answers her brothers

**10 I am a wall,
And my breasts like towers;
Then I became in his eyes
As one who found peace.** Now the Shulammite speaks. She had proved to be like a wall rather than a door. Consequently she had become a great delight to Solomon.

**11 Solomon had a vineyard at Baal Hamon;
He leased the vineyard to keepers;
Everyone was to bring for its fruit
A thousand silver coins.** Those who used the king's property were required to pay rent
(To Solomon)

**12 My own vineyard is before me.
You, O Solomon, may have a thousand,**

And those who tend its fruit two hundred. The bride is not required to give. Instead, she desires to give to Solomon.

And here scholars have noticed a picture of living by the law.

See when you live under the law you're thinking of requirements-
"You must do this. You can't do that. That's the law.
But those who live in love say, "Lord, I desire to give myself to You."

The law says, "Responsibility!"
Love says, "Respond."

The Beloved

13 You who dwell in the gardens,
The companions listen for your voice—
Let me hear it!

The Shulamite

14 Make haste, my beloved,
And be like a gazelle
Or a young stag

On the mountains of spices. These verses reflect the desire that Solomon and the Shulamite still felt for each other.

And we mustn't forget the love that Jesus has for us. John 13:1
Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.