

# The Song of Solomon by William Macdonald

by William MacDonald

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*The Song of Solomon is a book that protests against unfaithfulness in marriage, highlighting the importance of genuine love and commitment, as seen in the relationship between the Shulamite maiden and her shepherd lover.*

**Duration:** 46:14

**Topics:** "Divine Love", "Faithfulness"

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## Description

This sermon delves into the poetic and symbolic interpretation of the Song of Solomon, highlighting the deep love and faithfulness between the Shulamite woman and her shepherd lover as a reflection of the relationship between God and Israel. It emphasizes the importance of staying true and steadfast in love, drawing parallels to the unwavering love of Jesus for His people despite external temptations and distractions.

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## Transcript

Well, thank you very much for a very warm welcome. I must say I feel very much at home here. This is not my first visit actually.

I love you all because you love my Savior and because you love the Word of God. I really appreciate the emphasis on the scriptures that you have in this fellowship. That's what we want to look into tonight.

I brought along a friend with me, a friend and brother, his name is Eric Shorkin. He's been serving the Lord down in Brazil for the last nine years. Eric, would you just rise please and let the folks see who you are.

I know you won't have to make him feel at home because I think he already feels at home here as I do. I just wish Damien could be here and that I could sit and listen to him. Last time I was here he was speaking about the lost sheep.

If you'd like to hear the message I could give it to you over again. Would you turn in your Bibles tonight to the Song of Solomon. We're going to be just giving an overview.

I know you're studying in the Old Testament. I know you're in the Psalms. I didn't want to interrupt that so I thought I'd just move ahead a little to the Song of Solomon and we could think of it together.

Wonderful to hear the rustle of the leaves of the Bible. Song of Solomon chapter 1 and verse 1. We will remember thy love more than wine, the upright love thee. I am black but comely, O ye daughters of

Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.

Look not upon me because I am black, because a son hath looked upon me. My mother's children were angry with me. They made me the keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard have I not kept.

Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon. For why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions? If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents. I think you know that the usual interpretation of the Song of Solomon is that it pictures the love of Christ for the church and vice versa, the church for Christ.

I have problems with that. The problem is that the truth of the church is not found in the Old Testament. The truth of the church was a secret hidden in the mind of God from ages past, but then was revealed by the Apostles and Prophets of the New Testament period.

But the Song of Solomon is found in the Old Testament in a cluster of books dealing with the nation of Israel, and so I would suggest to you that the major interpretation of the Song of Solomon has to do with the nation of Israel, not the church. That doesn't mean that we can't get applications from it. Of course we can.

Not all the Bible is written directly to us, but we can get good out of all the Word of God. Every word of God is pure. I would like to suggest to you that there are four main characters or groups of characters in the book.

There's the Shulamite maiden. We've been listening to her talking tonight in this first chapter. There is Solomon in the book.

There's the daughters of Jerusalem, and there's a fourth person whom I call her shepherd lover. Just let's keep those four in mind and see if we can pick them out as we go along. The Shulamite woman, Solomon, the daughters of Jerusalem, and the Shulamites shepherd lover.

Also at the beginning let us realize that in the original language of the Old Testament, if you knew it, I don't, but if you knew it you could, you could tell whether it's singular, whether one person is speaking, or whether several are speaking, or whether it's a male who is speaking, or a female who is speaking. And that's why in some of the modern versions of the Bible, I think if you have the New King James Version here tonight, you'll find that they've tried to break it up. Is that right? Anybody have New King James here? Do they have Shulamite, or daughters of Jerusalem, or he written? So that they've tried to break it up and show you what they don't distinguish is between Solomon and the shepherd lover.

They don't distinguish between them. As we go through, I think you'll find that when Solomon is in view, the conversation is all about the splendor and majesty of the palace. There's a lot said about gold and silver and wealth, but when the shepherd lover is in view, you don't have that at all.

You have some very rural scenes. You have agricultural talk. You have a pastoral landscape, and we'll see that too as we go along.

I would suggest to you that the major theme of the book of the Song of Solomon, it's a protest against unfaithfulness in the marriage relationship. Solomon, you know, many wives, many concubines, and in this book he tries to win another to his harem, the Shulamite maiden. But the marvelous thing about this book

is this girl has a heart that beats true to her lover.

And even the advances of a king, a wealthy king and a wise king, even his advances fail to move her. You wonder what kind of a paragon of virtue she is. You wonder how many still exist in the world today when you hear all the statistics about divorce and breakups of homes and of marriages.

Let's look at it with that in mind and see if we can get the drift. It's a protest against unfaithfulness in the marriage relationship. Why is that? Well, because God had married the nation of Israel.

The nation of Israel was in a very close relationship with God, with Jehovah. But Israel turned her back on God, and she went after other gods. Really, it's unthinkable.

She went after idols with all of the immorality and loose living that goes with idolatry. Idolatry and immorality are closely linked, you know, in life as well as in the Scriptures. And so, here's a woman that's a protest against that.

And you'll find the key verse in the book as we go through is what she says to the daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you that you awake not love until it please. Not my love until he please, but since you awake not love. In other words, Solomon was coming by artificial means, and he was trying to awaken love in her, but he utterly failed.

With that in mind, let's look at the Scriptures. In verse 2, she's thinking about her shepherd. She actually talks to him.

Well, that's kind of real life, isn't it? When a person's really in love, a lot of the things that happen in this book happen in life, too. Her mind is always on her own lover, the one who is nearest and dearest to her. And he says, let him kiss me.

She says, let him kiss me. With the kisses of his mouth, for thy love is better than wine. First of all, him, and now thy love is better than wine.

You say, well, it's not very logical English. Well, love isn't always logical, is it? It's romantic. And anyway, this is poetry, and it's beautiful poetry at that.

Thine ointments, because of the savor of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth. Therefore, do the virgins love thee? Draw me, we will run after thee. She says, the king has brought me into his chambers.

That's what happened. The king was out there one day traveling along in his entourage, and he saw this beautiful maiden working in the vineyards. And he said, stop the chariot.

And he came, and he sought to bring her into the palace, and to woo her with all kinds of offers. Follow me, and you will be working wearing pearls, that sort of thing. She said, the king has brought me into his chambers.

We will rejoice and be glad in thee. In thee, not in the king. No, no, in the shepherd.

We will remember thy love more than wine. The upright love thee. Then she goes on to give a little illustration.

She says, you know, my brother's put me to work out there in the vineyard, and that's why I'm swarthy. You know, in those days, it's wonderful today for a young lady to have a tan, isn't it? I mean, people pay great sums of money for that, to have a tan. But it wasn't considered the greatest in that day.

And so she's apologizing for that tan that she has. I am black but comely. O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the courts of Solomon.

The tents of Kedar. Kedar was a place famous for its black goats. And you can just picture the goat skins from which they made the tents that went together.

The curtains of Solomon. Look upon me, look not upon me, because I am black. Because the sun had looked, she became sunburned and then heavily tanned, right? My mother's children, that is her brothers, were angry with me.

They made me the keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard have I not kept. The expression my own vineyard there is a figurative speech for her own personal appearance. Her own personal appearance.

She said, they put me to work out in the vineyard, but my vineyard have I not kept. Well, you know, you can think of all kinds of applications for this. We can be so busy in the work of the Lord, for instance, that we neglect our own family, something like that.

My own vineyard have I not kept. We can make those applications to it. Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon.

Solomon? Solomon didn't have a flock. Thousands of them probably, but, I mean, he wasn't out there in the fields tending his flock, was he? He was in the palace ruling over Israel. She says, why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions? Well, the daughters of Jerusalem step in here and they say, well, if you don't know where he is, go forth thy way by the footsteps of the flock and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents.

Solomon appears on the scene, and Solomon really has a gift for great language, especially when he's trying to impress a young woman. He says, I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Ferriot's chariot. Well, don't tell that to a girl today.

She won't be exactly flattered by it. Whatever the meaning of that is, it was beautiful, let me tell you. We don't know exactly all that was involved in that, but you know very well that it was beautiful because his language is lovely.

Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold. We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver. He pictures her with all the jewelry that he can put upon her, you know, and he could put plenty upon her, and this is his way of trying to win her heart to himself.

Listen to what she says, while the king sits at his table, my spikenard sends forth the smell of the rug. I have my own lover. I'm not swayed by him.

Isn't it great to find a young woman like that? I think it is. I think it is. A bundle of myrrh is my beloved unto me.

Shall I all night betwixt my breasts, or it shall, that is the bundle of myrrh, my little keepsake, fragrant with herbs of the field, reminding her of her beloved. My beloved is unto me as a cluster of henna flowers, or a

campfire in the vineyards of Enkati. Notice that when she's speaking about her lover, it's all rural, isn't it? It's all in the great out of doors.

Nothing about the splendor of a palace or anything like that. Solomon appears in the scene again, and he says, Behold thou art fair, my love, behold thou art fair, thou hast dove's eyes. And she says, Behold thou art fair, my beloved, her beloved, not Solomon.

Behold thou art fair, my beloved, yet pleasant, and our bed is green. Well, you say, what does that mean, our bed is green? Well, once again, she's in the out of doors, and they've been out together, and they're sitting on the grass under a tree. That's it.

That's it. Our bed is green. The beams of our house are cedar.

In other words, she's under a cedar. They're under a cedar tree, sitting on the grass under a cedar tree, and our rafters of fur. So, it's a rural scene.

It's a country scene, and she's out there. She's reminded of times when she was out there with her beloved. Now, in verse 1 of chapter 2, it's still the Shulamite who's speaking.

It's still feminine, and she says, I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley. Now, just let me say something. We have lovely hymns.

He's the lily of the valley, the bright and warning star. He's the fairest of 10,000 to my soul. Don't let anybody rob you of that.

That's okay. You can make that application. You can take that verse and apply it to the Lord Jesus, and it's ever so true.

But in the context, it's the Shulamite maiden who's speaking in verse 1 of chapter 2. What is she saying? She's saying, incidentally, when you think of a rose of Sharon or the lily of the valley, you think of flowers that you might buy down in the local flower shop, right? That's not it. She's speaking about wildflowers, wild anemones that grow in profusion on the hillsides of Israel, and she's saying, I'm just an ordinary wildflower. That's all she's saying.

She's taking that place of humility. And Solomon says, huh, as the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters. He doesn't give up easily, does he? But I tell you, he's met somebody who, he's met his match when he meets her.

Now, notice she says in verse 3, as the apple tree among the trees of the woods, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. Now, there's a verse that we can apply, not interpret, apply to us today.

I sat down under his shadow with great delight. When I think of that verse, I think of the shadow of the cross, don't you? Beneath the cross of Jesus, I fain would take my stand. Shadow of a mighty rock within a weary land.

But, once again, I want to emphasize, it's out of doors, we're out of doors. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love. Stay me with flagons or raisins, comfort me with apples.

I am sick of love. That's beautiful. I'm sick of love.

You know what she's saying? She's saying, I'm so full of love, but that dear shepherd fellow, if I had any more, I'd burst. That's what she's saying. This is wonderful, really, really wonderful.

In the book of Ecclesiastes, all the world is not big enough to hold, to fill the human heart. All the world is not big enough to fill the human heart, but in the Song of Solomon, the human heart's not big enough to hold the love of the Lord. The very opposite, and they're placed right beside each other in the sacred scriptures.

His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me. And then she strikes the keynote of the book to the daughters of Jerusalem. I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the rows and by the hinds of the field, that you stir not up nor awake love until it please.

That's what Solomon was trying to do with his blarney, with his soft-soaked talk, with his flattery. He was trying to awaken love artificially. Let God awaken it.

Then it will stick. Then she says, and once again, it doesn't fit Solomon when she's speaking here. The voice of my beloved, behold, he cometh skipping upon the hills.

My beloved is like a leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. My beloved is like a roe or a young heart. Behold, he standeth behind our wall.

He looketh forth at the windows, showing himself through the ladder. Now, that doesn't fit for Solomon. Can you picture Solomon the king skipping over the hills? I can't, but I can picture the shepherd doing that.

It fits perfectly into the picture. My beloved spake and said to me, and then you have what he said, rise up, my love, my fair one, come away. Lo, the winter is past.

The rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth. The time of the singing of birds has come, and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land.

The fig trees, everything has to do with trees and flowers and herbs and fragrance of the great out of doors. The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grapes give good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, come away.

Why don't we just go off and get married, is what he's saying, really. And she's saying, the time hasn't come. She's saying, yes, but later, in the rest of this chapter.

Oh, my dove, he says, thou art in the cleft of the rocks, in the secret places of the stairs. Let me see thy countenance. Let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is lovely.

And in verse 15, the brothers, I think she's there, and she's kind of lost in a world of love for her beloved shepherd. And they say, hey you, you better get to work. They say in 15, take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines, for our vines have tender grapes.

She hasn't been attending to her job up there. She's been distracted, and they get after her and tell her to get to work. She says, my beloved is mine, and I am his.

He feedeth his flock. It should be among the lilies. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away.

Turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young heart upon the mountains of Bithyr. Until the day break, and the shadow, until the right time comes. And it'll come, it'll come to like thyself also in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thy heart.

Now, in the first part of chapter 3, she's speaking, and she's telling probably about a dream and about a rendezvous that she had with her lover. Is that unusual for a person who's madly in love to dream about her lover at night? It's not unusual, and that's what you have in the first four verses of chapter 3. And then again in 5, she charges the daughters of Jerusalem by the rose and by the hinds of the field, that they stir not up no awake love until it please. Now, in verse 6 of chapter 3, notice the picture changes completely now.

It's no longer agricultural. It's not rural. It's not pastoral.

It doesn't have to do so much with the outer door. It's a scene of splendor. What is it? Well, Solomon, it's a parade, and Solomon is coming along in his throne car, and everything speaks of majesty.

Everything speaks of wealth. Everything speaks of luxury. Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchants? I guess there were men there holding incense bearers as the parade moved along.

Imagine, huh? And Solomon is riding in his chariot. Behold his bed, and the bed there doesn't mean a bed as we think of it. It means where he sat in the chariot.

Behold his bed, which is Solomon's. Three score valiant men are about. That's his bodyguard, right? His bodyguard.

He wouldn't travel without that. Three score valiant men are about it of the valiant of Israel. They all hold swords.

Of course, they need swords. Being expert in war, every man has his sword upon his thigh because of fear in the night. King Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon.

That's what he's riding in. He made the pillars thereof of silver, bottom thereof of gold, covering of it a purple, midst thereof being paid with love for the daughters of Jerusalem. Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion.

Behold King Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, the day of the gladness of his heart. Hmm. Pretty fantastic, isn't it? Can you imagine a girl refusing somebody like that? Yeah, I can.

Her name was the Shulamite. Makes me think of a Ruskin the poet. Ruskin the poet was not, he was not a believer, and he fell in love with a girl who was a Christian.

Fell madly in love with her, and he proposed to her. He asked for her hand in marriage. You know what she said to him? She said, do you love me more than you love Jesus Christ? He said, I would have to say that I do.

She said, I couldn't marry you. And you know, she was smitten with tuberculosis, and it was to be, it was terminal. They didn't have the drugs that we have today, and he still loved her, and one day he sent word into her that he would like to have a visit with her, and she sent out word.

She said, do you still love me more than you love Jesus Christ? And he sent back word, yes, I do, and she said, no good could come from an interview, and she went home to be with the Lord. I tell you, that's great, isn't it? That's great. Men here tonight, if you have a wife who loves you, who loves Jesus Christ more than she loves you, you've got the right kind of a wife.

And wives, if you have a husband who loves the Savior more than he loves you, that's the kind of a man to have, and I think that's part of the message of the book of the Song of Solomon. Well, Solomon has come by in his chariot, and he sees her working in the field. Oh, stop the chariot, you know.

Behold, thou art fair. Chapter 4, verse 1. Behold, thou art fair, my love. Behold, thou art fair.

Thou hast dove's eyes within thy locks. Thy hair is as a flock of goats. Well, that sounds funny to us, doesn't it? But it really helps to have the soul of a poet when you study the Bible, especially the poetic sections of the Bible.

And this is poetry. You say, what does that mean? Well, picture a hillside. Picture a hillside with these black goats up there, and they're moving along, and the sun is glistening down on their hides.

And as they move along, it looks like waves, like curly hair, curly black hair. At least, this is the way I see it. I try to picture it this way, and it makes good sense to me.

He's not saying you're like a goat. But he says, your hair is black and curly and beautiful as the rippling of the goats as they move down the hillside. Huh? Beautiful, isn't it? Was your husband as romantic as that when he talked to you? He says, thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the waters where every one hath twins, and none is barren among them.

What he's saying there, she has beautiful teeth. She has uppers and she has lowers, and for every upper there's a lower. None of them is missing.

That's what he says. It's lovely. It's really lovely.

That's poetry, and it's very picturesque. Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, thy speech is comely, thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate. Well, I think that's beautiful.

You know, the red of a pomegranate is different from other reds. Did you ever notice that? Next time you see a pomegranate, I don't know how to describe it, but I can just imagine her working out there in the sun, and these two, it just looks like a section of a pomegranate with that beautiful shade of red. I'd rather admire the color of a pomegranate than eat it.

I think it's beautiful, really beautiful, and that's what he's saying here. Thy neck is like the Tower of David, built it for an army. Well, you know, some of this sounds bizarre and grotesque to us, but you know, it means how fitting it is for necklaces around her neck.

For on their hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men. Thy two breasts are like young rose that are twins which feed among the lilies. And she says, she's impervious to it all.

I mean, she sheds it like a duck sheds water, she says, until the day breaks and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of Myrrh and to the hill of frankincense. She's back in the out of doors again, huh? He's not even touched by what he's saying to her. He says, Thou art all fair, my love, and there is no spot in thee.

That is, I think this is the shepherd speaking. Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon. Look from the top of a manor, from the top of Shinar and Hermon, from the lion's dens, from the mountains.

See, everything's out of doors, huh? Everything. He's a shepherd and he's been looking at all of these things, and as he looks at them, he sees how he can weave them into the tapestry of his love for her. And so, from verse 7 to verse 15, the shepherd lover is telling how very much she means to him.

And she says in verse 16, Awake, O north wind, and come thou so. Blow upon my garden that the spices that rub might flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden and eat his pleasant fruits.

What she's saying is, look, I'm all for you. Yeah, that's what she's saying. But the time hasn't come yet, that's all.

The time for them to get married hasn't come yet. How do you know? Because the rest of the book makes that clear. He says, I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse.

I've gathered my myrrh with my spice. I've eaten my honeycomb with my honey. I've drunk my wine with my milk.

Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved. Once again, in verse 2, let's see, down to verse 8, she's telling about a dream she had. And in this dream, she was just longing for her shepherd.

And she got up and she went out at night in the city. Well, that's not good, is it? I mean, that creates a false impression when a woman gets up and goes out and walks on the streets alone at night. And the watchmen see her.

And they think, well, this is not very good. And so it says in verse 7, that the watchmen that went about the city found me. They smoked me.

They wounded me. The keepers of the wall took away my veil from me. And then she says to the daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved, that you tell him that I am sick of love.

Not Solomon, not Solomon. She's deflected everything that Solomon has said to her. And her heart beats true for one, her one and only.

Well, by this time, the daughters of Jerusalem are getting interested, aren't they? They're saying, who is this paragon of beauty that you're all talking about, always talking about? You've only got one string in your violin, and you only play one note on that string. That's all you talk about, is your beloved. And that's good.

And I said, we were like that with the Lord Jesus. They said, what is thy beloved more than another beloved, although fairest among women? What is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us? And she says, in effect, thank you very much for the opportunity. I'd like to tell you what my beloved is like.

My beloved is quite and ruddy, the chiefest among 10,000. Boy, his head is as a most fine gold, his locks are bushy and black as a raven. His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of water, washed with milk and fitly set.

His cheeks are as a bed of spices and sweet flowers, his lips like lilies dropping sweet-smelling myrrh. Can't you see that both she and her lover are rural folks? And they've had their eyes open. They've studied God's creation in rural life, haven't they? And they can just reel it off about the flowers and the trees and the herbs and the spices and all the fragrances.

That's what she's doing here. His hands, verse 14, are as gold rings set with the barrel. His belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires.

His legs are as pillars of marble set upon sockets of fine gold. His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. His mouth is most sweet, yes.

He is altogether lovely. This is my beloved. This is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

Now, you know, that's beautiful when you take that and apply it to the Lord Jesus, isn't it? That's marvelous. Although when we think of the Lord Jesus, we don't think of his physical beauty so much, do we? We think of his spiritual, his spiritual glory and beauty. But his physical would be true as well.

When I think, for instance, of his head, I think of that head that was crowned with thorns. Did e'er such joy and sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a crown? His locks, they plucked his beard. They plucked out his beard.

His eyes, eyes filled with compassion, you know, for them. He looked on the multitude and had compassion upon them. And so you can go down.

His lips, never a man spoke like this man. His hands, nailed, pierced hands of Jesus. You go down the list, and you can make spiritual applications to it all.

Well, and once again, the daughters of Jerusalem come upon the scene in verse 1 of chapter 6, and they say, Whither is thy beloved? We're kind of interested in him. We'd like to see him, you know. Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? Whither is thy beloved turned aside, that we may seek him with thee? Her answer, I think, is kind of funny.

She said, My beloved has gone down to his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies. Kind of vague. Doesn't tell the street or the number, does it? She's kind of vague.

She said, You just keep out of it. I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine. You just keep a respectable distance.

That's what she's really saying to them. I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine. He feedeth his flock among the lilies.

But I don't know that they got enough information to be able to go and find him from there. Solomon speaks again, and once again, you'll find the background is altogether different. Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Terza.

Comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners. And a lot of what he says is repetition. I think he's running out of steam.

In verse 5, he says, Thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead. Thy teeth are as a flock of sheep which go up from the washing, whereof every one beareth twins, and there's not one barren among

them. Thy temples, it's we've had it all before, haven't we? My dove, my undefiled, is but one.

She is the only one of her mother. She's the choice one of her that bear her. The daughter saw her and blessed her.

Yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her. It will help you in understanding the transition between verse 9 and verse 10 if you supply the word saying. They praised her saying, Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.

She says in verses 11 and 12, I went down in the garden of nuts to see the fruits of the valley, to see whether the vine flourished and the pomegranates budded. Wherever I was aware, my soul made me like chariots of a Minidet. I want to tell you a lot of things in the book that really we don't understand.

This is a good example of it. I don't know what that means. I don't know what it means when she speaks about the chariots of a Minidet or, as it were, the company of two armies in verse 13.

There are things we don't understand. All I'm trying to give is kind of an overview of the whole book tonight. Solomon says to her in chapter 7 verse 1, How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O princess daughter.

Joints of thy thighs are like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning. And so he goes on and speaks to her, telling her all her beauty. But there's something very cute here, and you would never know it from the English, but from the original language of the Old Testament.

Verse 9, let me go back to verse 8, I said I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof. Now also thy breast shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy rose like heaven. And he says, And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved.

And you don't know it from the English, but she interrupted him there. After he said, For my beloved, she says, That goeth down sweetly, smoothly, for my beloved. Not for you, for my beloved.

I mean, he's a lavisher with all his praise and flattery and all the rest. And he says, The roof of your mouth is like the best wine that goeth down. She says, It goes down for my beloved, not for you.

Gliding through the lips of those that are asleep. And then she says to the shepherd, I am my beloved, and his desire is toward me. Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field, let us lodge in the villages, let us get up early to the vineyards, let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grapes appear, the pomegranates bud forth.

There will I give thee my love, the mandrakes give forth a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, oh my beloved. I can hear wedding bells as I read that, can't you? The time has come, the time has come for her to be released from the work with her brothers in the vineyard. And she's saying, Look, isn't it time for us to go now? Go where? Go back to our childish childhood home, that's where.

Say, How do you know? Because it says so in the next chapter. She says to him, Oh, that thou wert as my brother that sucked the breasts of my mother, when I should find thee without, I would kiss thee. Yea, I should not be despised.

I would lead thee and bring thee into my mother's house, who would instruct me. I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine, of the juice of my pomegranate. His left hand should be under my head, and his right hand should embrace me.

I charge you, oh daughters of Jerusalem, you stir not up your awakened love until it pleases. Now, in verse 5, you have the village folks talking. The folks are there in her home village, and they're looking down the road, and they see this little cloud of dust coming.

They say, Who's this that comes out of the wilderness, leaning her beloved, leaning on her beloved? Well, it's the Shulamite, leaning on her shepherd lover. That's who it is. Verse 5, the first part of the verse, Who is this that comes up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? And then as they walk along, he's talking, he's reminiscing with her.

I raised thee up under the apple tree, I awakened thee. I think that's where they had their first date, under the apple tree, their first date. There thy mother brought, oh, they're passing the house where she was born.

There thy mother brought thee forth. There she brought thee forth that bare thee. And she says to him, Set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thine arm.

For love is strong as death, jealousy as cruel as a grave, the colds thereof are colds of fire, which hath the most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench. Well, that's true.

That's true. All of Solomon's talk didn't quench her love for her beloved. I tell you, she was steadfast.

She was true. She was not like Israel, who ran after other gods, terrible gods, as a matter of fact, the gods of the heathen. It was just terrible.

If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would be utterly contemned. Now, in verse 8, it takes you back a little while to when she was a little girl, and the brothers were talking among themselves, and they say, What are we going to do for our sister when she becomes mature and eligible for marriage? What are we going to do for her? Well, she says, We have a little sister, and she has no breath. She wasn't mature yet.

She was still a child. What shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken of, spoken for? Well, they decided this. If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver.

What does that mean? It means if she was true, steadfast, unshakable in her love, we'll give her a tremendous dowry of silver. That's what it means. It says, If she be a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar.

You know, just swinging back and forth. Any guy that came along. That's what it means.

Just swinging in the breeze, as it were, open to any fellow that came along. She'll live the life of a nun. That's what it means.

We will enclose her with boards of cedar. Separate her from the rest of society. She answers, and she says, I'm a wall, and she can well say that, too.

Verse 10, I'm a wall in my breast like towers. I have reached my maturity. Then I was in his eyes as one that found favor.

Solomon had a vineyard at Baalhamon. He let out the vineyard unto keepers. Every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand pieces of silver.

My vineyard, which is mine, is before me. Her shepherd loved her. Thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand.

Well, you can say that again. And those that keep the fruit thereof, two hundred. The shepherd says, Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice.

Cause me to hear it. And she says, Make haste, my beloved. Be thou like a roe or a young heart upon the mountains of spices.

You know what that is? They get married. They exchange vows. That's what it is.

And they live happily ever after. And this is a rebuke to the nation of Israel for the fact that they so sought after other gods that God divorced them. He's going to take them back again.

Going to take the nation back again. But he divorced them. Jeremiah chapter 3 says that.

What a lesson for us. Let's be true to Jesus, though a thousand voices from the world may call. I often think of the story of Spurgeon.

You know, one night he came to a meeting. He went and got his girlfriend first. And they had a, you know, horse-drawn vehicle.

And they drove up to the front of this great tabernacle in London. And all Spurgeon could think of was the souls that needed Christ. And he was just absorbed with the message of the gospel he was going to preach.

And when the chariot, when the carriage stopped, he jumped out and went into the auditorium. He left her sitting there. And when he was up preaching, he looked around.

He couldn't see her. She wasn't there. And so after the meeting, he went home.

And he went to her home. And the parents said she was upstairs. And she didn't want to see him.

She was pouting. He said, I insist on seeing him. She finally came down and he said, well, look, I'm sorry for what happened tonight.

He said, I want to tell you something. If you and I are going to get married, you have to take second place in my life. Christ must have first place.

And she said at the end of his marvelous ministry, and it was a marvelous ministry too, she said at the end of his marvelous ministry, she learned a good lesson that night. In Charlie's life, there was someone who had precedence over her. And it was the Lord Jesus Christ.

Well, I hope this will be helpful to you. You'll hear other interpretations of the Song of Songs. This is just one, you know.

It may not be the right one. It may not be the right one. But consider it.

Read it over and see if the parts fit together.

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