

## **FOREWARD**

The following booklet is based on a transcript of a series of messages by Ed Miller, taught in 2004 at a men's retreat held in Easton, MD and sponsored by Family Ministries of Bridgeville, DE.

The theme of these messages is the Love Union between Christ and His Church. It is a series of messages from the Song of Solomon.

Many thanks to Hannah Kanuchok for her service of love in transcribing the spoken word! This transcript has been partially edited for clarity. Some highly informal colloquialisms have been changed to the formal expression more suited for reading; burdensome contractions have been omitted; personal comments or local references only intelligible to those who were present were also dropped; the sentence fragments that were confusing were clarified. Some paragraph headings were added to provide the reader with the same information the audience had in the notes they had in hand. Several transitional sentences were added where clarity was required to keep the logical flow of thought. The limited editing of the transcript necessarily lacks literary polish since every attempt was made to preserve the spoken form. Efforts were made to include the spirit of the speaker and the audience in order to give the reader, as nearly as possible, the actual record of the teaching sessions.

We offer this modified transcript with the prayer that the message of the Lord may be received in the hearts of His hungry people. We ask you to read it with the patience necessary for reading any transcript of a spoken word, and that you prayerfully ponder what is presented here with the same caution you would give to any uninspired speaker or writer of God's truth.

## SONG OF SOLOMON: MESSAGE #01

### INTRODUCTION AND OPENING PRAYER

Good evening brothers. As we come to the study of God's Word, there is a principle of Bible study that is indispensable—absolutely indispensable. I need to be constantly reminded all the time of that principle. We do not want to take it for granted. We do not want to substitute that which is helpful for that which is indispensable. I am talking about our total reliance upon God's Holy Spirit. It is only as we come before Him as little children that God, who alone can reveal God, will make Himself known. Only God can reveal God. He delights to do it; He longs to show Himself to our hearts.

Now, the last time we gathered together in this place we were looking at the book of Malachi. I would like to begin with a verse from Malachi to act as a transition and also as an indispensable principle verse. I am going to ask you to turn please to Malachi chapter 3.

Malachi chapter 3 beginning in verse 1,

*“Behold, I am going to send my messenger and he will clear the way before me and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to His temple. And the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, He is coming says the Lord of hosts.”*

Once again, verse 1,

*“The Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to His temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold He is coming says the Lord.”*

Now for a moment, I want you to forget all that that verse has meant in terms of His first coming. There are many times He suddenly came to the temple. The record is clear. I counted 5 times He came to the temple in the New Testament. I am sure this verse has application to some of those comings. Also, I want you to forget for a moment all that that verse will mean in the future in terms of the second coming of the Lord Jesus. There is no doubt in my mind but it has a final application there. For our purposes this evening and this weekend I want to remind you of 1 Corinthians 6:19,

*“Do you not know that you are”... (finish quoting the verse) “the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you...”*

You are His temple. I am His temple. We are His temple. According to this promise, this is the present foretaste of that truth expressed in Malachi 3:1. For those who seek Him, and for those who delight in Him, He will suddenly come to His temple. Is that too much to expect of the Lord this weekend? Is it too much to expect that the

Lord, because we are seeking Him and delighting in Him, that He will suddenly come to His temple? I am talking about His coming in the sense of John 14:21,

*“He who has my commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me. He who loves me will be loved by the Father. I will love him and I will come and disclose Myself to him”.*

Isn't that a wonderful verse? *“I will come and disclose myself to him.”* So let us settle it right up front, brothers, before we open the word and look in the Song of Solomon. Let us seek Him and delight in Him, and then He will disclose Himself unto us.

The question this evening and this weekend is not, “Do you have the Lord?” I trust that has been settled a long time ago. It is not even, “Do you understand your portion in Him and have full assurance of that?” The question is this, “Is He disclosing Himself to you? Is He manifesting Himself to you?” Malachi 3:1 says, *“The Lord will suddenly come to His temple.”* In the context of Malachi, that is the introduction to the new covenant. The disclosing of Christ, the manifestation of the Lord, is one of the promises that is secured by the new covenant. So this is my prayer this weekend and I hope it is yours. I pray that we have come to so delight in Him and so seek Him that He will surprise us and suddenly come to His temple disclosing Himself to our hearts. So, with that as an introduction, I am going to ask you to bow with me please and let us commit this time to Him.

*Our Father, how glad we are for that everlasting proof, that age abiding principle, that those who seek, that those who delight, will be visited by You.. Lord, suddenly come to your temple. Surprise us. Meet us. Visit with us individually and corporately. We thank You for every part of your Bible, and in a special way this weekend we thank You for the marvelous Song of Solomon. Guide our meditations, we pray. Deliver every one of these brothers from that which is flesh and blood. Deliver us all from sermons. Give us a word from Heaven. We ask in Jesus' matchless name, Amen.*

#### **FOUR GENERAL OBSERVATIONS OF THE BOOK**

I will ask you to open please, to the book of Song of Solomon. We will be looking at the Song of Songs—Canticles, for those of you who like the Latin. I think it has been announced already that we will be meditating on this precious book. Now because of the nature of this book and the many different approaches to this book I would like to take this evening, and this introduction lesson, as an opportunity to just set it before you. I am not going to start in chapter 1 verse 1 and go through some kind of an outline. I have gone through the book in preparation, and what I would like to do is just lay before your heart what I think is the burden of God's heart. His burden has become the burden of my heart. If we can just get that much together this first evening then, Lord willing, tomorrow we will begin looking at the book itself.

Now God has given us analytical minds and, in one sense that is a disadvantage when you come to a book like Psalms because Psalms is a book of poetry. You lose much when you attempt to analyze poetry. It is difficult to take a song and then outline it. You do not want to do that. The Song of Solomon is exactly that. It is poetry. We do not want to lose the beauty of it by outlining it, but so that we are all together and so that everything is as clear as clear can be, here is what I would like to do tonight. I want to give four general observations. Very general! I will not share anything deep. Probably nothing you hear will be new to you. I just want to present four general observations about the book as a whole which I believe will help us as we get into the book to press our hearts to the heart of the Lord. That is what it is all about, after all.

I am sure the Song of Solomon means different things to different saints. Maybe some of you are like one of my relatives who confessed to me the other day, “I never read the book, I don’t care about Solomon and his girlfriend.” I do not know if you have attempted to read it, or if you have been discouraged by reading it. It could be that this book has been very meaningful to you. Different folks have appreciated it in different ways. Now, by looking at the observations I will make, I trust you will have a fresh taste for the book. I desire to call our hearts’ attention to great principles that will be true as we study the book together.

### **Observation one: The Song is A love Story of Two Worlds**

My first observation has to do with the distinctive theme of the book. What is it about? What is the message? What is common denominator about the book? Now, I was amazed when I started the study for this series, some time ago, how many different approaches there are for this wonderful Song of Solomon. It is because there are so many different approaches that I think it is important to find what is the common denominator position in all of the approaches and then home in, again, not on where we differ but on the things in which we agree. Let us look at what is common denominator. I think basically, there are two chief approaches. Let me set those before you and then try to give you what is common denominator.

#### The Historical Approach

There is that approach which is called the historical approach. In other words, it is claimed that the contents of this book is actual history. It really happened. It is not a make-believe story. There was a real man named Solomon. He was a king. Now, depending on which historical approach you take, either this king had a girlfriend, courted her and then later they got married, or they are married early and the book is a record of this love affair. It is a story of wedded bliss; an actual testimony of a real marriage. Of course it is told in poetry, but that doesn’t change the fact that it actually happened. Among those that say it actually happened there are two groups. Some say it actually happened, and this is how it happened. It is the story of a shepherd-king named Solomon. This wonderful king falls in love with a little country girl. This damsel is referred to as the Shulammitte. This Shulammitte maiden is courted, won over and finally

married. The record in the poem is the courtship and the marriage of the king and the little maiden. Some say that is what it is about.

There are others who have a little variation of that historical view. They admit that it is actual history but they teach that the lover is not Solomon. In fact, they say that Solomon is the villain of the Book. You see, according to this second view, there was another who was the shepherd in the story. This humble shepherd very much loved the Shulammitte maiden. Then Solomon came along with all of his kingly pomp and he tries to win her affection from the shepherd lover. For a while she is enticed by the king's advances, but in the end she goes back to her shepherd lover. You see, Solomon is the villain in that case. I noticed that Harry Ironside, in his interpretation of the book, had a little variation of this second view. He taught that there was shepherd lover, but it is the same person as the royal lover. So Solomon comes first to this woman as a humble shepherd. She does not know he is a king. He approaches her and woos her as a shepherd and then later she finds out that he is the king. They get married and live happily ever after.

Now why is that important? It is important because one's approach to this book will determine who is doing the talking. Who is doing the speaking? Is this Solomon the king? Is this the bride? Is this the speech of the daughters of Jerusalem? Do these words belong to the other shepherd? Who is doing the speaking? So your approach is going to make a difference in your understanding of this particular book.

### The Allegorical Approach

Not everyone however, believes that this is an actual historical record. There are some who teach that it is not historical at all. Song of Solomon, they say, is allegorical. It is not based on facts. It is a poetic device chosen to communicate a message. It is poetry picturing ideal love. There was just some poet that wrote this wonderful love song in order to portray ideal love. There is no plot, there are no historical characters. The Song of Songs is just somebody's made-up story told in an oriental setting amid the changing scenes and seasons. Sometimes it is in a garden. Sometimes it is in a palace. Sometimes love is described in the beauty of the spring time. Then the poet describes a summer scene, later, an autumn scene. Sometimes it is on the mountain, sometimes it is in the valley, sometimes it is in the wilderness. Sometimes it is in the house. Sometimes out in the streets of a busy city. It is a made-up story, not actual.

Now, even among those who hold the allegorical position, there are differences of interpretation.. Some teach that it is an allegorical story to present dispensational truth. To them, the record is all about God and it is about Israel. Others teach that it is allegorical, but it is not about God and Israel. It is larger than that. It is about God and His people. It is about God and the church as well as His people Israel. They agree on this: it did not actually happen. It is just a made-up story.

Now, so that we can avoid all of the controversy, let me give you what I believe is common denominator, and for certain it will be the common denominator for this

weekend. On this common ground, God helping us, we will study this marvelous book. I am convinced with the light I have—if it does not ring true scrap it—I am convinced that this is a love story of two worlds. It is a human love story and it illustrates a heavenly love story. Whether or not it is allegorical or historical is not going to greatly effect the spiritual interpretation of the book. The point is clearly that the Song of Songs is a love story of two worlds.

Some have pointed out that the word in chapter 6 and verse 13 translated as the damsel, the Shulammitte, has the same name as the groom. Did you know that the word Solomon means peace? Solomon is the masculine form of the word. Shulammitte is the feminine form of the name Solomon, it is the same name and it also means peace. The son of peace has married the daughter of peace. They have become one. I like to word it this way and say that on the low level of earth and in heaven's highest place that is true marriage. When the son of peace has married the daughter of peace and they become one, then there is a marriage after God's heart. Do not answer brothers, but does that describe anybody's marriage here? "Come to my house. Watch this son of peace as he relates to the daughter of peace." Can you say that? Can I say that?

It is a true earthly story; it is a true heavenly story, and I am convinced if all we get is the earthly side, we will have an incomplete view of the Song of Solomon. I am also convinced if all we get is the heavenly side, we will have an incomplete view of the Song of Solomon. Chapter 5 verse 10,

*"He is outstanding among ten thousand."*

We may speak those words of the Lord Jesus Christ, and indeed, they are true. It is also true on the level of Earth. Let me ask you this, "Are you the chiefest of ten thousand to your life partner?" You see, it also has application there. Exactly so! Without a doubt, chapter 5:16,

*"He is altogether lovely",*

has a special reference to the Lord Jesus. It is also true on the human level. Is that how your wife sees you? Chapter 7:10,

*"His desire is all towards her";*

Chapter 6:15,

*"This is my beloved, this is my friend."*

That is true upstairs on the heavenly level. Is your wife your best friend? Is there that precious union? His love toward us is so very exclusive. Chapter 8 verse 6 says that He loves us with a jealous love. Those of you who are married, will you pray that God will give you a jealous love for your wife? Ask Him for a love that is intolerant of rivalry; a love that is insisting on exclusive devotion. See, that is how God loves you. It is love on both levels. We need to see it on both levels.

One of the things I did, and I will not have time to do as we meet together because of abbreviated time to look at these eight chapters in our session, I will encourage you to do. Just go through the book and find characteristics of true love. Apply it on the human level and then multiply it by infinity and apply it to the Lord. I will not develop this in detail, but let me give you five characteristics of love that I find in this book. I am just throwing this out in a suggestive way.

True love, according to this book, **is always initiated by the man.** She is the responder. Trace that out. You cannot read this book and not know true love is by grace. **True love is also intimate.** This is a book of intimacy. **True love is exclusive.** Song of Songs also teaches us that **true love is intense.** The intensity of the love is seen all through the book, especially if you can get to chapter 8 and you read some of those descriptions of love. **True love is also unselfish.** Go through the book and study some of those characteristics.

Now here is an interesting fact brothers, this book is all about the heavenly Groom and how much He loves you and how much He loves me. Just for interest, does anybody know how many times the name of God is mentioned in Song of Solomon? It depends on which version you use. You may be surprised to learn that, in the King James version, the name of God is not mentioned at all. If you have some of the other versions, if you have Darby or the New American Standard or the American Standard, the name of God is mentioned only one time. The name of God is only mentioned one time in chapter 8 verse 6,

*“Put me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm.  
Love is as strong as death. Jealousy is severe as Sheol,  
its flashes are flashes of fire the very flame  
of the Lord (There it is “Lord”) of Jehovah.”*

Though His name is only mentioned one time in the book, the Lord is in every syllable of this book. As you watch the groom you are going to see your heavenly Lover.

So that is the first characteristic; the Song is a love story of two worlds.

Now don't answer this but let me ask you a question: How many of you married men, (I know there are a lot of single men here I will address you in a moment)—how many married men here pray to the Lord, maybe not in so many words, but it is your heart's prayer, that your earthly love affair will reflect your heavenly love affair? See, that is what this book is all about. That is what marriage is all about. That is why Satan hates a real marriage grounded in the word of God.

I could not believe what I read the other day. Somebody actually took out—he wanted to get a divorce, he could not afford the divorce, (talk about irony)—he took out a *home improvement* loan to finance his divorce. Home improvement? If my union with Lillian is what it ought to be people should be able to look at us as we relate to one another and say, “Now I know how much God loves me. God loves me as Ed loves his

wife Lillian.” They ought to be able to look at her and say, “Now I know what it means to surrender to the Lord. I can watch Lillian as she relates to Ed and I understand the truth of surrender.” That is one of the prayers that we are going to pray as we go through this book. This common denominator approach makes marriage a sacred thing to the nth degree. A very, very precious thing!

Now, because we only have limited time you know where my emphases will be, we are going upstairs. We are going to look at the Groom as He relates to the Church, as He relates to the bride. But I am also going to pray that God will help you translate that as you go home and as you relate to your life partner. It is a love story of two worlds.

Now some of you young men that are not yet married may be thinking, “What am I doing here at this conference studying Song of Solomon? This will not apply to me at all.” Do not think that way. This Book has every application to the single as well as to the married. It is one of the wonders of this book that it applies to all,

I love to relate this to Isaiah 54:5. Listen carefully you single men, (just for my interest—how many single men are there here?) Listen to this passage. Isaiah 54:5,

*“Your maker is your husband”*

Now reverse that. Since your maker is your husband, whether or not you are married to a women, if you are a Christian you are married to the Lord. That is what we are going to be talking about. Some say the prophet Daniel was never married. Yes he was. He trusted the Lord and Isaiah 54 teaches that one who trusts the Lord is wedded to his Maker. His Maker is his Husband. Every believer is married to the Lord. We talk so much about the new covenant and how we love the new covenant. If we get the background of the new covenant, we will see that it is a marriage covenant. It is a marriage covenant! Daniel was married to Christ while he lived on the earth. Daniel is married to Christ right now in heaven. Daniel will be married to Christ through all the ages of eternity. So in that sense, there is no such thing as an unmarried Christian. I know some people say that we should not read Song of Solomon until we are married. I say, we can never read it soon enough. Read it right away. Learn how much your heavenly Groom loves you. It applies to all of us. It is a love story of two worlds.

So what is the theme? Brothers, may God help us with this. We are not here to play games. If I were to tell you the theme of Song of Solomon is that God loves you, I would not be going far enough. That is not the theme. It is not the theme of Song of Solomon. It is true that God loves you, but that is not the theme of the book. To say that God loves you is true, but it understates the theme of the Song.

Now, only God can teach you this, but let me give you the theme. The theme of Song is not that God loves you, but that God is *in love* with you. That is not the same thing. God not only loves you, He is in love with you. He is in love with me. If we are going to enter into that, we need to see that common denominator approach. God chose the sweetest of all unions, marriage. He chose the sweetest of all affections, love. He



chose the most intimate side of the most intimate relationship on the planet Earth, the physical side. God chose the most profound expressions of the heart, poetry, in order to tell us that He is in love with us. This is a tremendous book! May God give us eyes to see it not only as it relates to us and the Lord but as it relates on the level of earth. Hold that please, for that is the first common denominator principle. Whatever your approach to the book, you can still hold that this is a love story of two worlds. It does not matter if you are taking the historical approach or if you are taking the allegorical approach. We are studying a love story of two worlds.

### **Observation two: Climax of the Redemptive Experience**

The second principle can be stated in these words, and every word in this statement is thought out, every word is important: The message of the Song of Solomon is the climax of the redemptive experience on the earth.

Let me talk about the climax and redemptive experience on the earth. The message of this book is a climax of the redemptive experience on the earth. Now what do I mean by that? Let me try to illustrate it for you several ways and then may God apply it to our hearts.

As you know, Solomon wrote three books in the Bible: Proverbs (or most of the Proverbs), Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. Some people attempt to figure out which book he wrote first, which books followed? Let me just say it right up front, Nobody knows. Nobody knows for certain. You have godly people on all sides of the question believing he wrote this book in early life, he wrote that in middle life, and then, in later life he concluded with this book. Others will switch the whole thing around. Nobody knows in which order he wrote those books.

Some get pretty hung up on the fact that God chose Solomon, of all people, to be the human author of one of the greatest love songs ever written. They say, “I don’t understand that. Solomon was guilty of so many illicit love affairs. If you ever had an unworthy instrument to write a book like this, Solomon was that person. Why didn’t God use the sweet Psalmist to write Song of Songs?” That would make more sense on the level of earth. 1 Kings 11 (you don’t need to turn to it, you can if you’d like) verses 1-8 informs us that Solomon had many (I won’t call them love affairs) *lust* affairs. He had seven hundred wives! According to the Bible, every one of them were princesses. They all came from royal families. All 700 of them! Three hundred—one called them—*porcupines* . Seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines! In the Bible, God warned the king to avoid three things:

*“Do not multiply wives, do not multiply horses, do not multiply gold and silver.”*

Solomon did all three. You know, we usually think about Solomon in terms of the temple. We say, “Solomon’s temple”—we use the singular form. But when you read 1 Kings 11 you are shocked to find out he built many temples. Not just the temple dedicated to the true and living God, but he also built temples for the false gods of these

many wives. There are many temples; there are many *Solomon's temples*. How can a man guilty of so many lust affairs write such a book as the Song of Songs? I know that God has used this book to purify the love affairs of God's people through the years. I am not sure I can give a satisfying answer to that question. One thing I know with conviction is that it certainly shows the sovereignty of God in the inspiration of Scripture to use an unworthy person like Solomon. I ask you, "Aren't you glad God uses unworthy instruments?" Oh my! Where would we be if God did not use unworthy instruments?

I read one commentary that claimed that Song was an impure book. Then, we must ask, "Why isn't it popular among impure people?" I do not see sinners reading Song of Solomon. If you go to some den of iniquity, they do not say, "Let's look at Song of Solomon." Why do those who have loved the Lord the most, why are they the ones that have loved this book? It is not an impure book; it is a very pure book. God has used an unworthy instrument to give us this pure book.

I believe that the Bible is providentially guided by God and all of the books are in their proper order. That He oversaw the canon of Scripture, and that every book is in its right place, seems clear to the servant of the Lord. I think He gave us Proverbs first, not chronologically but logically, as it is placed in our Bibles. It is a redemptive arrangement. In Proverbs, Solomon tells us that there are two ways to live. You can live wise or you can live foolish. Then He gives us Ecclesiastes and says, "If you live foolish that is what your life will look like." Then He gives us Songs and says, "If you live wise, this is what your life will look like." Song is a record of a supernatural life. Ecclesiastes is a record of a natural life; a life lived "under the sun." Under the sun means that everything is vanity apart from fellowship with God. Song of Songs describes life in the heavenlies; life lived "above the sun." It is a heavenly book and nothing is vanity in the Song of Songs; everything is satisfying.

When we study Songs we are studying poetry. How many poetical books are there? There is a section in the Bible called the poetry section. How many are poetical books in the Bible? The poetry section begins with Job. It includes the books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Songs. (Some also include the book of Lamentations as a 6<sup>th</sup> poetical book) These five poetical books follow the seventeen historical books. That is not an accident. That is how God does it. He gives us the history first and then he explains the history. He does exactly the same thing in the New Testament. He first gave us the gospels and Acts, that is the history, and then He gives us the epistles to explain that history. The difference is this, that the books of poetry in the Old Testament are the explanation of redemption in seed form; the epistles in the New Testament are the explanation of redemption in fully developed form. God chose to use poetry because it is the language of devotion. It expresses the heart, the inner spirit.

Song is not only 'one' of the poetical books; it is the last of them. It is the climax of the explanation section in seed form. It is the book that takes the redemptive experience as far as it can go on the earth. When you begin to see the message of the Song of Solomon, you begin to see the climax of the redemptive experience in Christ. It is not only the explanation of redemption, but it is the climactic explanation. It is the

exhaustive treatment of the message of redemption in seed form. Many think, “If I really enter into God’s redemption, then the climactic expression of that experience would be missions, soul winning, and evangelism. No! Missions is not the climax of redemption. Clearly, missions has a great place as an outworking of the climax of redemption, but it is not the climax. Neither is holiness. If I really enter into the true climax of redemption, then holiness will become a reality in my life. I will be transformed; I will become more like Him! What is the climax of the redemptive experience? Brothers, may God write this in our hearts: Your love affair with Jesus is the climax of the redemptive experience. My love affair with Jesus is the climax of the redemptive experience.

1 Kings 4:32 says of Solomon:

*“He spoke 3,000 proverbs and his songs were 1,005.”*

Solomon wrote 1,005 songs. Where are the 1,004 of those 1,005? We don’t have them. This book is called the Song of Songs because, of all the songs Solomon wrote, this is the superlative song. That is why it is called the Song of Songs. That’s the superlative form. We say there is a Holy of Holies. What do we mean when we say Holy of Holies? We mean, of all the holy places on earth, this is the holiest of all. We say that Jesus is the King of kings. What does that mean? It means, of all the kings on earth, He is the king of the kings. He is Lord of lords. What does that mean? It is the superlative. It means that of all the lords, He is the highest Lord. What does the expression vanity of vanities mean? It means, of all the emptinesses on the earth, there is no emptiness like walking on earth apart from fellowship with God. That is the vanity of vanities. The heaven of heavens cannot contain Him. What does that expression mean? The Heaven of heavens cannot contain Him? Once again, it is the superlative form. The expression refers to the highest heaven. Well, this is the song of songs; of all 1,005. This is the greatest.

It is better than that. The Song we will study is the greatest of all songs ever written by any person, not just the greatest of Solomon’s 1,005. This is the greatest song ever written. There are references to songs in the Bible. Remember the angels sang at creation? That is not like this song. You know Hannah sang 1 Samuel 2? That is not like this song. You know Deborah sang Judges 5? That is not like this song. You know Miriam and Moses’ sang a song recorded in Exodus after they crossed the Red Sea? That is not like this song. You know Luke chapters 1 and 2 records the five songs connected with the birth of Christ. The songs are the Ave Maria, the song of Elizabeth; the song of Mary known as the Magnificat; the song of Zacharias known as the Benedictus; the angels great song of praise, the Gloria in Excelsis and the song of Simeon, the Nunc Dimittis. Those were wonderful songs, but brothers, we will study the Song of Songs. Of all the songs ever written there is nothing like this book. It is the climax of the redemptive experience. It talks about God’s love affair with His people; He is in love with you and He sings out His love and joy as He explains it in the final book of poetry. This is the climax of the redemptive experience.

Now let me say a word about ‘experience’, because you know, we emphasize the importance of being so grounded in the things of God that we tremble when someone

says 'Experience'. We are apt to warn, "Now, let's not get subjective, and let's not get emotional. We don't want to get too emotional even though the word *beloved*, that is used sixty times in the book, means *to boil over*. That is the meaning of the Hebrew word experience. It is a redemptive experience. Now I know the book is full of poetic language, and to understand the heart of God, we have to get beyond the poetry. We are not used to speaking as freely in a wholesome way as some of the Orientals are, about love and love affairs and that kind of thing.

What is a high compliment to the oriental mind might come across even as an insult to the occidental mind. I do not suggest when I say, "Take some of these principles home to your wife that you quote them in the poetic language of the Song of Songs. I wouldn't tell my Lillian, "My darling, you remind me of the pharaoh's horse." I wouldn't do that. The bride in this book is beautiful. If you tell your wife that her hair is like a flock of goats or that her neck is like the tower of David or her nose like the tower of Lebanon you may be in a little trouble. I wouldn't suggest that you tell your life partner that her belly is like wheat and her bellybutton is like a goblet... Trust me! It is not wise! Don't do it!

We cannot throw out the subjective side of our union with the Lord. It is not enough to give assent and acknowledgment of positional truth. It is not enough to just have it by cold-blooded faith. "I believe all that, I have that truth positionally; I have that in the heavenly places." I'll tell you, I know the pain of seeing something positionally and having no vital experience of that in my heart. I know the despair and the hardness of heart that comes with thinking that it's all up there. Someone says, "Yes, but what about your life?" I say, "Yes! I know, but it's up there and I have it by faith and I believe it." That is a good creedal statement but it means little if in reality my heart is dead and my heart is cold and my heart is dark and my heart is weary. I know I have the fullness of truth and it is all positional but if there is emptiness in here?? What then? I'll tell you brothers, and may God help us with this, I have tasted that error; I know what it means to appeal with pathetic logic and to say that there is nothing wrong when everything is wrong. I know what it is to say, "Well, the Bible says it's all up there and you are in Christ and you are in the heavenly places and indeed that is so." But is that our experience? This is a redemptive experience God is calling us to. It is something that God wants us to enter into. I have known a little bit of the hardness and the cynicism that results to appeal from an empty heart to a perfect position. May God help us as we study this book. God does not tell us about our perfect position in Christ so we can have some kind of a spiritual excuse for a lack of joy in our hearts and a lack of a union and a relationship with Him. This is a book of experience. This is a book that we are supposed to enter into and not just say, "Well, I have learned all that wonderful truth and it is all mine in Christ Jesus up in the heavenlies." If I say that and then go out dry and dead and barren and hurt and weary, what good is that? May God help us! May God help me! I am convinced that God did not tell us about our glorious position in Christ Jesus so that we can announce that everything is right when it is not. The message of Song, I believe, breaks through that crust of excusing our real lack by bringing us into a union with Christ that is actual, that is real. That is the climax of the redemptive experience.

So that is my second observation. Do not be afraid of experience. May God deliver us this weekend from all pretense and all artificiality, and grant us a vital, climatic, redemptive experience. I trust, as we seek the Lord, and as we delight in Him, He may suddenly come to His temple. That is why we are here! Song is a glorious book! It is not just theory, and it is not just doctrine, and it is not just positional truth. It is real. It is experience. It is a love story of two worlds. It is the climax of the redemptive experience on earth. I add on earth, because you know our experience in Christ will not be consummated until He comes again. This however, is the climax of the experience on the earth.

### **Observation 3: The Groom keeps coming**

Here is my third observation. As you go through the Song of Solomon you are going to see that it is a book of the many comings and goings of the groom. He keeps on coming and he keeps on going. I introduced this lesson with Malachi 3:1,

*“ He will suddenly come to His temple.”*

The coming of Christ is the theme of all Bible prophecies. He has come; He will come; He keeps coming. Now there is a time in your life I know, there is a time in my life, when He came for the very first time. In that sense He will never come again, but I assure you, He is going to keep showing up. As we trace the romance through the Song, and we are going to look at the progress of the bride as she goes forward in union with the groom, we will notice that he keeps coming and coming. He manifests himself in a precious way, and next thing you know he is gone.

Follow these verses, or just glance at them as I read them.

*“The king brought me into his chambers.”* (Song 1:4)

Now that is one scene.

*“Listen. My beloved! Behold he is coming! Climbing on the mountains, leaping on the hill”* (Song 1:8)

Then go to 12: Well, now he is at the table.

*“On my bed night after night I sought him whom my soul loves. I sought him but did not find him”* (Song 3:1)

He’s gone. He’s there. He’s gone.

*“I must rise now and go about the city in the streets in the squares. I must seek him whom my soul loves. I sought him but did not find him.”* (Song 3:2)

*“Scarcely had I left them when I found him whom my soul loves.  
I held onto him, would not let him go.”*(Song 3:4)

*“What is this coming up from the wilderness?”* (Song 2:6)

Chapter 4 verse 8: Now where is he?

*“Come with me from Lebanon my bride. May you come with  
me from Lebanon, journey down from the summit of Amana,  
from the summit of Senir and Hermon,, from the dens of  
lions and the mountains of leopards.”*

*“ I have come into my garden my sister, my bride.”*(Song 4:1)

*“ I opened to my beloved, my beloved had turned away  
and had gone. My heart went out to him. As he spoke  
I searched for him, could not find him. I called him,  
he did not answer me”* (Song 5:6)

As one reads through the Song of Solomon, the groom appears, then he disappears; he’s there, he is not there. Oh! There he is! He is coming over the mountain. He’s gone again. Oh, look, now he is in the garden. Suddenly he is in the wilderness. Alright, here he comes. Where did he go? I will look on the street of the city, perhaps he has gone there. That is what the Song of Solomon is.

*“Where has your beloved gone most beautiful among women?  
Where has your beloved turned?”*(Song 6:1)

*“Come, my beloved. Let us go to the country, let us spend  
the night in the villages. Let us rise early, go  
to the vineyards”* (Song 7:11)

*“Who is this coming up out of the wilderness?”*(Song 8:5)

The book ends with the words,

*“Hurry my beloved, be like a gazelle or a young stag  
on the mountains of spices.”* (Song 8:14)

May I suggest from that observation that as I go forward in the Lord and as you go forward in the Lord, every forward step we take in union with Him is a fresh coming of the Groom. He comes; then after a while you look around, He’s gone. All of a sudden He shows up again, and again, and again. He shows up again, and that is the Christian life. Jesus keeps on showing up. The Christian experience is simply Jesus coming and

coming and coming again. He is always here and He is ever coming. Just when He arrives, He comes again. Marvelous book!

#### **Observation 4: Relationship with the Groom is progressive**

Let me give one more observation and then we will wrap it up. Not only is the common denominator principle of this book that it is a love story of two worlds; not only does this book present the climactic redemptive experience on this earth; not only is this book a record of the comings and goings of the groom; but this is also the story of the progress of the bride in her union with the groom. There is a progressive relationship between the bride and the heavenly lover of her soul.

Now when I say *bride*, that is a singular word. As a Christian you are used to thinking of the word bride in a collective way. It is a singular word describing a group. We say that the Church is the bride of Christ, and so we use the word bride as a collective word. A great company of people make up the bride. Yet, as you read the Song of Solomon you are struck with the fact that there is only the groom and the bride. Now, I am not saying that there are only two people in the Song of Solomon. No. I see that the church is there. Glance at these verses please.

In chapter 3 verse 4 we read about *the house*; in 8:2, *the mother and her house*; chapter 1:6, *the mother's sons*; chapter 8:8 *the bride's brothers and the bride's sister* chapter 1:7, is about *the groom's companions*; chapter 8:13, about *the bride's companions*; chapter 1:7, about *the flock*; chapter 1:3, about *the shepherds*. The most mentioned group of these is a group called *the daughters of Jerusalem*. I will mention those in another connection, we see the daughters of Jerusalem in 1:5; 2:7; 3:5; 5:8 and 8:4. In 3:3 we meet *the watchmen*. They are also mentioned in 5:7. In 6:8 there is a group called the *virgins*. In 8:11, we are introduced to *the caretakers of the vineyard*. I am just calling attention, as you go through the Song of Solomon, there is a lot about the group, about the church, about the body, about the mother's house, about the flock, the vineyard, the brothers, the sisters, the companions, the shepherds, the daughters of Jerusalem, the daughters of Zion, the virgins, the watchmen, the caretakers of the vineyard. It is all part of the body. As far as the message of the book is concerned, however, it is the bride that steals the whole show. I am not saying the church is not in there, I am just saying that the way the story is told it is as if there was nobody else.

I have an idea each one of those groups that are mentioned, the watchmen and the daughters of Jerusalem, etc., each represent a different branch in the body of Christ in terms of their maturity in the Lord. We do not have the time, nor do I have the ability to lay that before you. I do not even have time to give you the little bit I think I know about that. We will focus on this. It is all about the bride and it is all about the groom. The story is about the Groom's sister, his bride, his garden, his perfect one, his unique one, his darling, his lily among the thorns.

Let me illustrate this and then we will wrap it up. In 1 Kings chapter 4 we read about Solomon's table. He had a strange table. Listen to this.

*“Solomon's provision for one day was thirty cors of fine flour, sixty cors of meal, ten fat oxen, twenty pasture fed oxen, a hundred sheep, beside deer, gazelle, roe bucks and fatted fowl.” (1 Kings 4:22)*

That was the fare every day. That was the abundance at his table. 1 Kings 10 describes the queen of Sheba when she came and she saw his table.

*“When the queen of Sheba perceived all the wisdom of Solomon, the house he had built, the food of his table, the seating of his servants, the attendance of his waiters and their attire, his cupbearers, his stairway by which he went up into the house of the Lord, there was no more spirit in her.”*

One translation said that she fainted dead away. She saw that table with all of that food and her spirit fainted. We ask, “Who is at the table?” Is it only the bride and groom at the table with all of that provision? No, I tell that there were a lot of people at the table. First Kings 4:27 says,

*“Everybody who came to his table he fed.”*

There were many people at the table! Strangely, however, when you read the Song of Solomon, when you come to chapter 1 and you look at verses 12 to 14, although it is spread for everybody, it is told in such a way that you would think only the bride and groom are present at the table. The way the story is told it is just told in terms of her. The church is there but they are in the background. They are all around, especially these daughters of Jerusalem, they are everywhere, but it is about the bride and the groom. I think it was saint Augustine that said, “God loves you so much, if you were the only one that ever lived He would have come just for you.” Well, the Song of Solomon is written as if there is no group, there is no body. It is just you and Him.

Now listen carefully as I close this introduction lesson. We will be studying the Song of Solomon. We are a bunch of men who have come together this weekend, and we are serious about seeking the Lord, delighting in the Lord, with the longing that He would suddenly come to His temple. We are here on purpose. You paid good money to attend this Bible conference. We are here as a body, we are here as a group. Our brother read the scripture, and how precious it was. Isn't it wonderful for brothers to gather together to know the Lord? This weekend, may God help you, may God help me! You are the only one here. I am the only one here. It is just you and Jesus; It is just me and Jesus. That is what this book is about. If we do not study it that way we are going to miss the



message of the book; we are going to miss the heart of God. That is what it is about. It is about you; it is about the Lord.

*“Draw me and we will run after you.”(Song 1:4)*

There is the *we*. There is the plural. The word is “*draw me*”, but it is “*we*” that respond. Everything is so personal. It is just you and Jesus; it is just me and Jesus. It is a personal, “Draw me.” The pursuit is collective. If 400 people respond to Jesus, they did not come as a group. One person came 400 times. That is how He deals with us. It is always the individual. As we read this book, brothers, we are going to get into a lot of love talk. God talks to us, but He is talking to you; He is talking to me. You will notice that if you respond when He talks to you, you will notice that you are not alone. That is the glory of this thing. You respond as an individual and suddenly you are not alone. The very moment you start getting involved with Jesus, in that moment you start getting involved with those who are involved with Jesus. It is just the nature of the thing. It is a very, very personal book.

So those four observations brothers, I pray will prepare our hearts. This is a love story of two worlds. This is God inviting us to the very climax of the redemptive experience that we might know in experience and reality that He not only loves us but He is in love with us. We will see the progress as He keeps coming and going. We will trace it out; you will be able to see it in your life. Finally, if you are going to understand the book, you must realize that you are the only one at this conference, nobody else came. It is about you, and it is about Him. If God can dawn that on us I have an idea the Song of Solomon will make a major contribution to your life. May God help us,

Let us pray.

*Father thank you for this book. Not for what we think it is about but for all that you have inspired it to be. Prepare our hearts! Lord, we do seek Thee, we do delight in Thee. Suddenly come to your temple. We ask in Jesus’ name, Amen.*

## SONG OF SOLOMON #02

### STAGE #1 – REVELATION 1:1-3:5

#### **Introduction and Prayer**

Good morning brothers. I find it rather intimidating having my two sons-in-law sitting right here in front of me. They know me too well!

I'll ask you to open please to the book of the Song of Solomon. As we come to the study of God's word, and as we come to look at His precious truth, I remind myself as I remind you again, of that principle of Bible study that is absolutely indispensable. That is, total reliance upon God's Holy Spirit. We praise God for all of the academics that aids us in the study of this Book, and we must have it; we are responsible to do what is necessary to understand the human side of this book. We must look at the book as we would look at any book. Having done that, however, we must come to the Lord and say, "Now You must dawn Christ upon us. We need to see You! There is no amount of study, or labor, or research, or academic endeavor that will ever unveil Christ. Only God can reveal God. I would like to share an indispensable verse this morning from the book of Song itself. If you just glance at the passage, you will see that it is a little bit out of the context of Song, but it contains the principle. Glance, please, at Song chapter 5. We will look at verse 2:

*"I was asleep but my heart was awake. A voice, my beloved was knocking. Open to me my sister, my darling, my dove, my perfect one for my head is drenched with dew and my locks with the damp of the night."*

I pray this morning, as you have testified in prayer and in song, that your heart is awake. The Groom is at the door. Behold a voice. The groom was knocking. When you think of the voice you think of words, and may I just suggest here we have the voice of God, the Bible; that is His voice, and I believe you will find it true in the balance of Scripture, that every time He speaks, He knocks. Behold, a voice! The Groom is knocking. Every time He speaks, He seeks entrance. He seeks to come in; He desires to have a union with us. So as our heart is awake, as the Groom speaks, as the Groom knocks I just pray (and let us pray together) that we will have open hearts, receptive hearts, and invite Him in to do all His pleasure. So let us bow before Him.

*Father, once again we thank You that You have been so faithful to speak, to knock, to come to our hearts' door over and over again, seeking entrance, seeking to have the one that You have called your dove and your darling and your perfect one and your unique one, respond with an open heart towards You.. Lord, we are amazed at your estimation of your bride, but we praise You, and we ask that You would give us the grace to open the door wide this morning as You speak, as You knock. We request this in the all prevailing name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

I want to give just a little bit of review of what we looked at last night. I do see a couple of brothers that were not here last night, and we all want to be on the same page. Let me briefly do what I attempted to do last night, God assisting. I attempted to lay before you, the burden on my heart. I am quite convinced it is also the burden on the heart of the Lord. This burden is the revelation of Himself in this marvelous Song of Solomon. I called attention last evening to four general observations about the book as a whole.

My first observation was this: The Song of Solomon is the record of a love story of two worlds, human love illustrating heavenly love. As you know, our emphasis this weekend will be up there; it will be on the heavenly side. We want to look at the Groom as He draws the bride, and at the bride as she responds to the drawing of the Groom. Although the message of Songs is a love story, it is not enough to say, "The Groom loves me." That is true but it is not enough; it does not go far enough. He not only loves you; He is *in love* with you. That is what this book is about. The Groom is in love with His bride. This is a love story that can be applied on two levels.

Now, in my own Bible when I open to Song I do not see Song 1:1 as the first verse. I have put Hosea 6:3 as the first verse of Song and here is why, Hosea 6:3 says:

*"So let us know, let us follow on to know the Lord."*

That to me just summarizes the book. It is especially appropriate because the book of Hosea and the book Song of Solomon ought to be studied as sister books. They ought to be studied together because they present the same message. Song of Solomon gives the message on the positive side; Hosea gives the same truth on the negative side. Song of Solomon tells us how God's heart rejoices when we respond to Him as His bride. Hosea's message is the broken-hearted love of God expressed when we do not respond. It is the same message looked at another way. Hosea 6:3 then, in that context, said:

*"Let us know, let us press on to know the Lord."*

That word "know" in Hosea is used as it is used in the sense of Genesis 4:1:

*"Adam knew his wife and she conceived."*

It is talking about the intimacy of the marriage bond; the intimacies of relationship. Matthew chapter 1:25 says that:

*"Joseph knew her not until she had brought forth her firstborn son."*

So that word "know" is a very precious word and it talks about that intimacy of the marriage tie. Song is a love story of two worlds in which we are *to know and press on to know*, in all the intimacies that that union suggests. Let us then, brothers, know;

press on to know the Lord. So that is the first observation: It is a love story of two worlds.

The second observation is this. The Book of Song presents us with the climactic redemptive experience. It is climactic because it takes us as far as we can go in this world. Of course it is in seed form; it is in the language of poetry. The truth is sort of veiled, but it is all there. It is redemptive because it is a spiritual union; a union of faith that must be experienced. We called attention to that last night. It is not just theoretical; it is not just theological; it is not just holding some positional truth. He desires an actual, real, vital, and living union with Him. That is His heart.

The third general impression is terms of the many appearances of the Groom which you notice as you go through the Song. He keeps coming. Then he comes again and again. The Groom is ever coming in this book. Over and over again he comes. At times, the bride turns around, and to her dismay, he is gone; then he comes again; then he disappears; then he comes again. Sometimes he comes without leaving. He is just coming and coming and coming. Each coming, I perceive, is more personal and more intimate than the one before. That is the progress in this book. Every time he shows up something happens. Something happens in the life of the bride. That is also the progress in your life and mine. Every time he shows up something happens. That is what the Christian life is all about. That was our third observation.

Finally, when we closed last night, I was pointing out how personal this book is. The story is told in terms of the Groom and the bride. That emphasis does not deny corporate truth. Corporate truth can be seen all the way through the book. Anyone who studies the Song of Songs will behold the body. The Church appears under many different figures of speech—My mother's house, my brothers, my sisters, the groom's companions, the virgins, the shepherds, the daughters of Jerusalem, daughters of Zion, the keepers of the vineyard—all of these figures have some reference to the Church. It is all talking about the Church in one of its many forms, but the focus is on the Groom and the bride. The story is told as if there were only two people in the book. So as we study the book together, we want to look at it that way. I praise God we are all here as the body, but God has brought you here as an individual. It is about you and Him. It is about me and Him. The only way to bring the Church into this experience is to enter in yourself. The only way to bring the body in is as the individual enters in. That is why Song 1:4 says,

*“Draw me and we will run after You.”*

Sometimes we get so busy trying to bring everybody in, we forget that we have not entered in ourselves. May God have mercy on us.

### **The Plan of the Book**

Let me lay before you what I think is the plan of this book and then we will begin to look at some of the precious truths. Now do not put a lot of stock, please, on the

outline I am going to share, because as I said last night, the surest way to kill a love poem is to try to outline it. They say a good love letter is recognized when you do not know what it is going to say before you start writing it, and then after you have written it you do not know what you said. That is a good love letter. Well, when you see the Song of Solomon, it is a love poem and I do not want to ruin a good love poem by offering an outline. Having said that, yet I think it is important for our purposes that we have some kind of a break down of the poem, just so that we can follow it together.

I want you to note first of all chapter 1:2 The poem starts off on high ground. Very high ground!

*“May he kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. Your love is better than wine.”*

I think on other occasions when we have been together I suggested to you how beneficial it has been for me to have a year verse and to have a year book. I will use any excuse to get into the Word. I have I have just found it so helpful; I ask the Lord to give me a verse for the year, and on that verse I meditate throughout the year; just so with a year book. In fact, my wife and I share our year book together. We choose together the year book and then through the year we just study that book. Well, this year my year verse is right here. I chose Song chapter 1 verse 2, and this year my year book is Song of Solomon. This conference is a little early to share the full impact of my meditation. We should have met at the end of the year after the Lord dawns some more on my heart. We are only two verses deep and you have this express desire that the Lord might kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. Here we are told that His love is better than wine. Now wine represents the message in the book of Ecclesiastes. That is wine. That is the joy the earth gives; the joy that leaves a hangover. Wine represents natural joy. That is why it is in contrast to the Holy Spirit of God. That is why we read in Ephesians 5:18:

*“Do not get drunk with wine, that is dissipation. But be filled with the Spirit.”*

God holds the one over against the other. The world’s wine, to this bride, has already been found to be vanity. In contrast to that, *“Your love is better than wine.”* That is where the book begins.

A kiss is just about universally understood as the symbol of affection. It is His mouth that kisses. His mouth gives this expression of love and affection. Kisses is in the plural number; it is not singular. Kisses He gives, not one, but many. They are the kisses of his mouth. May He give me, is the desire. The King James Bible says,

*“Let him kiss me.”*

It is a sigh; it is a desire; it is a longing. So the book of Song, the second verse opens with this concept. It is the desire of the bride. She has already tasted the world’s wine; she has rejected the world’s wine. She has embraced the love of her groom and now her sigh is that he would express himself over and over and over again. She longed that her groom keep showing how much he loves her. That is how the book opens! That

is why I chose it as my year's verse because that is my prayer for this year. That my heavenly Bridegroom, the Lover of my soul, would continually express His love to me through the year, not once but many times with the kisses of His mouth for I have found this world's wine to be a vanity of vanities. I am beginning to find His love to be a Song of Christ. That is my prayer for this year.

I call attention to that because, wouldn't you think Song 1:2 should be Song 8:14? Now it is not going to help you to look at 8:14. That is the last verse. That is my point. Don't you think such a passage, such a desire to have somebody who has looked at this world's wine and said "no,"; looked at the Lord and His love and said "yes"; to greatly desire that He would continually express His love. Wouldn't that be a great goal for this book? That would be a nice place to end up! However, it is not the goal; it is the starting point. That is what I am calling attention to. If you went to a week of special meetings and those meetings were around this precious book and the lovely Lord Jesus, and then later I talked to you and we were fellowshiping together and I said, "How did it end up?" You might say, "What a conference we had. Many of God's people saw the vanity of this world and the wine of this world and turned it down; they saw the love of the Lord Jesus and embraced it. Now their hearts are panting; they just desire more and more that He would express Himself to them over and over again." I would say, "What a glorious place to end up. What a glorious goal! You had such a great conference!" That is not the Song of Solomon. To be constantly kissed with the kisses of His mouth is not where the book ends. Brothers, that is where the book begins. You are only two verses deep and you have this bride already having rejected this world and embraced the groom and desiring that he would express his love. This book is not about getting people to seek the Lord. It is not about that. It is about the progress of those who are *already seeking Him*. You have to note that. That is what I mean when I say that this poem starts on high ground. When you open the pages of this marvelous book you do not see a poor sinner in need of a glorious savior. It looks like that has already been settled by the time you open this book. You do not see a backslider in this book in need of restoration. She already desires Christ. This is not some worldly Christian who needs to be delivered from the wine of this world. She has already tasted both, and chosen one. She has rejected this world; she has chosen her groom. It starts on that high ground and then goes forward from there.

Somebody prayed this morning and mentioned anointing. Only God can teach this truth. I am going to share a few little principles, but only the Lord can communicate this. We are on high ground. There are no lows in this book. There are only low highs. It goes from mountain to mountain to mountain to mountain. Glory! Only God can communicate this message to our hearts. It starts with those who desire Christ and Christ alone. That is why we call it the climax of the redemptive experience. It begins with a seeker, and then teaches us how He will take that seeker forward. This is not a progression that leads to a seeking heart; it is a progression that begins from a seeking heart. Where do you go from here? How does God manifest and draw into a more intimate union, someone who has started in verse 2? God help us! That is what we want to look at.

## The Three Stages of Maturity

Now as I understand it with my present light, there are certain stages of this progress. The movements in this book center on these three passages and I think you have already received these verses, but let me look at them with you.

Chapter 2:16-17 please:

*My beloved is mine and I am his. He pastures his flock among the lilies until the cool of the day when the shadows flee away. Turn my beloved and be like a gazelle or like a young stag on the mountains of Bether.*

### Her interest in Him; His interest in Her (Song 2:16-17)

What I want you to notice, especially in verse 16, is the emphasis. The emphasis is on *her interest in him* and, oh yes, his interest in her is mentioned. But the interest is this, “He is mine! He is mine! Oh yes, I am his too, but he is mine!” You would expect stage one to be full of, “Let me tell you about my personal Savior.” That is stage one, that is the beginning, “He is mine.” It is my interest in Him.

### His interest in Her; Her interest in Him (Song 6:3)

The second verse is Song 6:3:

*“I am my beloved’s and he is mine.”*

Did you notice she flipped it over? Did you notice she turned it around? Now it is *his interest in her*. She does not say, “He is mine, and by the way, I am his too.” Now she says, “I am his, and he is still mine”, but the emphasis is now on his interest in her.

### His interest in Her (Song 7:10)

Then the final movement is in chapter 7:10:

*“I am my beloved’s and his desire is for me.”*

This time she has completely dropped her emphasis of her interest in him. All that takes up her heart and her affections is this, “I am his! I am his!” The other is still true, but it is not her life anymore. It starts off with “He is mine! I am his.” Then she goes on and she says, “I am his, and he is mine”; when the book ends up the sigh is only, “I am his and all his desire is for me.” I am suggesting that there is a progress to move from my interest in Him to His interest in me.

Brother Stephen Kaung noted those same divisions in his wonderful book and he called it, “The stages of love.” He called that first section, “initial love.” Then he calls

the second section, “growing love.” He calls the third section, “mature love.” Stephen was very careful not to give chapter and verse divisions to divide it up. He did not give the outline. He is wiser than I am. You see, some people do not think that the couple in this book got married until the end of the book. They say, “The first part is about a courtship and then about an engagement and finally it ends up in a marriage.” I have a big problem with that particular approach. I have a problem with the union that they are having and the relationship they are having if they are not married early in the book. That just bothers me. I think rather, it is a testimony of a woman as she described the episodes of love as she came to intimately know her bridegroom lover. I will give you the chapter and verse divisions that we will use this weekend. After this weekend, I would appreciate it if you would throw the outline away and do not tell anybody I gave it—especially Brother Stephen.

#### Stage #1: (1:1-3:5) “Revelation”

I believe that first stage, that experience of the seeker, is found in chapter 1:1 to 3:5 and if you are going to understand God’s heart I would suggest that you write down this key word – Revelation. Revelation! That is stage one.

#### Stage # 2 (3:6-6:10) “Surrender”

I think the second experience of the true seeker as she moves from her interest in him to his interest in her, is found in 3:6 to 6:10 and the key word is – Surrender, Submission!

#### Stage # 3 (6:11- 8:14) “Rest” and “Fruit”

I think the climactic stage of that redemptive experience, the climax of the union, when it is all his interest in her, is in chapters 6:11 right through to the end of the book. This time there are two key words – Rest and Fruit. With the light I presently have, that is my understanding of the progress. I think God will take the true seeker, the one who desires that He express Himself and reveal Himself, from revelation through surrender into rest and into fruit.

#### **We need to be drawn**

Right at the beginning of the book there is the express desire, not only to have Christ manifest Himself over and over, but the bride, right at the beginning, sees her need to be drawn into that union. Song 1:4: expresses her desire, “*Draw me.*” She wants to go forward in him. She wants him to express his love. She wants to experience intimacy, but she has the good sense to know it is not going to happen unless he draws her. “*Draw me and we will run after thee.*”

This is part of the discovery of our fallen hearts that we need to be drawn. It is an amazing truth of the Bible, brothers, that from sin we need to be restrained and to union with Christ we need to be drawn. What are we made of? We are so frail that we have to



be held back from sin and in order to know the Lord; we have to be drawn into it. Boy, does that tell us what we are. Hosea 11:4 says:

*They did not know that I drew them with bands of love.*

*“I have drawn them with lovingkindness.”*(Jeremiah 31:3)

*“No man comes unto the Father unless the Father draw him.”* (John 6:44)

*“Thy people will be willing in the day of thy power.”*(Psalm 110:3)

Exactly so! The bride wants to be drawn to the groom from height to height. She moves from one mountaintop to another because He is drawing her. He heard her prayer, “Kiss me with the kisses of your mouth. Let him kiss me. Draw me and we will run.” That desire will get us safely through all of these stages. The power to pursue the Lord, as much as I love Bible study, does not come from studying the Bible. The power to pursue the Lord, as much as I love it and enter in, is not generated by worship songs. Praise God for the worship songs, but that is not what draws us. The power to pursue the Lord is not created because we are involved in ministry or some service to the Lord. It is not because God in His grace has led us to a good fellowship. That is not what draws us to the Lord. Only He can draw us to Himself. It is a Person.

### **The Bride’s Testimony**

As you read the book, one thing strikes you—I was discussing this with Doug this morning—it is an amazing thing: the book is a testimony of the bride. If I did not know, (I speak as a fool) if I just read the book I would say, “I know who wrote that. It was written by the bride.” It looks like she wrote it. She is talking about her experiences: “I was in the bed, I was looking for him, I ran here, I asked them, help me I’m...” It is her testimony. It looks like the thing was written by the bride. We remember, however, that the bride did not write this book; the groom wrote the book. Solomon wrote the book. King Solomon wrote the Song of Songs.

This is not a book saying, “Look how I sought him and what I found.” this is a book on, “Look how *I drew her.*” He wrote the book. It is about how, in his relationship with his bride, he drew her into these intimate experiences with him. Now this is more easily understood on heavenly ground. Say that my heavenly groom has drawn me, I sing the song, but He wrote the song. Since this is, as I said, a love story of two worlds, do you married men realize the awesome responsibility God has given you as you reflect Him in your union with your wife? Brothers, you are writing her song. Your relationship with her is going to be the song that she will sing. May God help us to be like Jesus as we write the song our wives will have to sing. The love story on both levels requires that the groom write the song. He draws her and continually draws her as we should continually draw our own life partners.

## CHAPTER 1:1-3:5 REVELATION

Let us begin. God, help us please. Now once again we are going to look at this book in terms of the outline. We will begin with chapter 1:1 to 3:5. I suggested that the key word or a main word in this section is **revelation**. We must begin where the bride started. When, in my life, I begin where the book of Song begins, with a prayer that He would draw me into union with Himself—having already seen the vanity of this world and having already embraced Christ and now desiring that I would just know Him and His love—then I can expect God to draw me into a deeper intimacy with Himself. Draw me into that union Lord.

This first stage is marked in every place by revelation. Every experience she has, every turn in this discovery of him, he is answering her prayer, “Kiss me with the kisses of your lips”. Every time he kisses her, her eyes are opened wider and wider and wider. Every kiss is a new revelation, and she sees things that she has seen for the first time. Once you start seeking the Lord, He opens your eyes. You desire Him and He begins to kiss you and you see things in a fresh way.

Now in stage one, I do not know what to call it? I do not want to blame the wife and just say, “Now she embraces this as just theory and doctrine” but in a sense, she sees so much in stage one and clearly, she is not entering in. But she sees it. So if you were to sit down with the bride and say, “Let us discuss the revelation you have had.” You would find that there is a lot of light.” By the time we are at the end of stage one she could tell you some wonderful things; then you look at her life and you scratch your head and you say, “You know so much but you have not entered into that yet.” So we want to look a little bit at what happens when he kisses her.

Now I do not want you to think that stage 1:1 to 3:5, 6 happened all at once. Do not think that the bride desired the Groom and then, all of a sudden, boom! Revelation! No! This is gradual.

I am going to mention ten things. (not all this morning, relax) The bride’s eyes are opened and she begins to see this, then this, then the next thing. We are going to, the Lord assisting, go through these revelations as the book does. I do not want you to think that this happens all at once. Do not forget that this was written after the fact and she is looking back. The Holy Spirit guided Solomon to tell the bride’s story as it unfolded to her. This is how she experienced her groom.

From revelation one where her eyes are opened and she saw the first revelation, to revelation two when she saw the next, and so on through all of her insights, there might be a great passing of time. In fact, as I went through this I was much convicted because there are some things that she saw in stage one, and although I have known the Lord for 46 years, I am just beginning to see. We must remember that God is writing a Bible and

since He is giving us the climax of redemption in seed form, He records the *ideal* progress of the revelations. Little by little as He kisses His own, they respond,

*“Draw me, I will run after you. Kiss me with the kisses of your mouth.”*

He kisses her and her eyes open wide. So let us look at some of those revelations.

### **Revelation #1: First King, then Lover**

The first revelation is in Song 1:4. By the way, I also think these revelations are in the order that they occur in a person’s life. So we are going to mention ten things, and maybe some have more or less experienced some of them in groups rather than one at a time. No matter! As basic truth, I believe this is God’s order. If some of these can be grouped together as a single experience, well, you decide that.

*“Draw me after you, let us run together.”* (Song 1:4)

Here is where it begins,

*“The king has brought me into his chambers.”* (Song 1:4)

You say, “This is a love story. He is the heavenly bridegroom; He loves me; He is in love with me, and my desire is that He would bring me into that union so I would know that love.” Yes! but it does not start there. By the time you get to the end of the book he has loved her, but at the beginning of the book he calls attention to *his lordship*. He must first be Lord. First Lord then lover! So she sees him as king. That is her first revelation, “The king has brought me into his chambers.” At the first kiss her eyes are opened and all of a sudden she beholds him as king.

I think many Christians have tried to know the Lord as Lover and they have not known Him as Lord yet. They have not been into the King’s chambers. It has to begin there. Until we know Him as King and Sovereign, as Lord and Master, we cannot go forward in our knowledge of Him. Are you glad, brothers, that He drew you, rather than forced you, into the King’s chambers? Do you remember singing that song when you desired Him, and He kissed you, and in love you sought Him and He revealed who He was? That is where it all begins. Now the song does not develop it; it only reflects it. I can guess her experience from my own life, but I will attempt to avoid that. “The king has brought me into his chambers”, and then she adds,

*“we will rejoice in you and be glad.”*(Song 1:4)

We read that la, la, la, “We will rejoice in you.” The Hebrew word for this joy is so tremendous. It means “to spin around under violent emotion and to dance with pure delight”; that is the meaning of the Hebrew word. She saw him as king; she saw herself in his chambers and she began to spin around in violent emotion and dance with pure

delight. When the Lord unveils His royalty to our hearts, when we discover He is not who we thought He was but He is who He said He was—the King of kings and Lord of lords—then we have tasted the first revelation. The answer to her prayer, “Draw me” was that she beheld him as Lord.

### **Revelation #2: She sees Herself**

She not only sees him, but we read in Song 1:5,6,

*“I am black but lovely oh daughters of Jerusalem like the tents of Kedar,  
like the curtains of Solomon, do not stare at me because I am swarthy.”*

It is because of His great love that He does not let us go on being deceived. First He shows us who He is; (you know where we are going) then He shows us who we are. She began to see herself. She describes herself as the tents of Kedar. We read that they were made of black goat hair. One thing I noted in this first stage of love is that it is filled (and you will see it as you go through this first section) with self-depreciating remarks by the bride. Once she sees herself as she truly is, she keeps cutting herself down. She is contrasting her own experience with what she thinks a queen ought to be. She does not think she fits the bill. So in this early stage she keeps trying to make herself attractive so she can impress the groom. Her testimony is all about jewelry and the fragrances; she keeps trying to make herself beautiful because she has seen herself and she feels ugly and unworthy to be united to the king. She is self-conscious that the king has brought her into his chambers. You see, queens do not have dirty hands; queens are bathed in milk; queens have servants all around them; queens and kings live a life of luxury and ease. She knows who she is and where she has been. She has worked long hours in the vineyard. She is brown from exposure to nature's light. She does not feel like queen material. Her back is humped, her hands are callused, her skin is scarred, and she does not feel soft like a queen ought to feel soft. When you read of this stage, she sees who he is, and then she sees who she is and she begins to cut herself down, “Who am I? I am nobody. What did he see in me to be chosen and brought into his inner chambers?” For example, chapter 2 verse 1 she said,

*“I am the Rose of Sharon.”*

I know that there are many people apply this as if they were the words of the groom describing Himself. They say that he is the Rose of Sharon. I do not know if you are familiar with that chorus, “Sweet Rose of Sharon”—do you know that one?

*“Sweet rose of Sharon, blooming for me,  
Jesus it is the emblem of thee.  
Beautiful flower, fairest that grows,  
I'm glad I have found thee, Sweet Sharon's Rose”*

There are many choruses that present Christ is the Rose of Sharon, “Jesus Rose of Sharon, bloom within my heart” and so on. But as I read this I am not sure it is a

reference to the groom. I am inclined to think it is the bride speaking of herself in depreciating terms. Commentators tell us that that Rose of Sharon was not a very beautiful rose in the family of roses; it was sort of plain among the roses, just a rambling rose, and a desert flower. It would be like me saying, "I'm just a daisy; just a dandelion." Then the groom speaks in verse 2,

*"As a Lily among the thorns, so is my darling..."*

There are many examples of her gloomy opinion of herself. She just sees darkness as her environment; that is her tent; that is where she is living at this point.

She has seen both! First we see him. "I saw the Lord high and lifted up", then I said "I am undone." Isaiah, when he saw the Lord, he saw himself as a leper in a leper colony. He claimed unclean lips and that he lived among an unclean people.

That is the beginning of the first step, "Draw me in, I will run after you." When he begins to kiss her, she begins to enter into wonderful revelations. He kisses her once, and her eyes are opened. "He is the king; he has brought me into his chambers." He kisses her again, and she says, "Oh, look at me, I am just like the tents of Kedar. Oh yes, I know, I am like the curtains of Solomon too. I am dark, ah yes, but I am lovely." She sees both, but she is emphasizing the one. He kisses her again...

### **Revelation #3: Badly burned by works**

The third eye opener is the revelation of how badly she had been burned by all her activity in the vineyards. Do you remember, brothers, when you started seeking the Lord and you saw how badly you had been burned by all the activity of working in all the vineyards?

*"The sun has burned me. My mother's sons were angry with me, they made me caretaker of the vineyard but I have not taken care of my own vineyard. Tell me, oh you whom my soul loves, where do you pasture your flock? Where do you make it lie down at noon? Why should I be like one who veils herself beside the flocks of your companions?" (Song 1:6,7)*

I told you in the introduction lesson that there are many believers referred to in this book; the church is in this book. It includes more than the bride and the bridegroom, however, it is about the bride and the bridegroom. In chapter 1 verse 6 they are called "my mother's sons." In verse 7 they are called "the companions of the groom." Who are the groom's companions? Who are her mother's sons? You see, her mother's sons would be her brothers. It is family; it is family! They are related to the groom as friends. They are related to the groom; they are the groom's companions. If you read it carefully, there are those that are family; they have flocks, but they are not *his* flock. They are their flocks. These are the flocks of men and she has been in the flocks of the companions and

in those flocks she has been badly burned. She has been burned in the flocks of her own family. This is family; this is not the enemy. She is referring to family.

These brothers have been speaking with authority, “Get out and work.” “Get active.” “Get busy.” She has been working in the vineyards, in everybody else’s vineyard. She has neglected her own. They have not understood union. It is almost shocking, when He kisses you and your eyes are opened and you begin to realize this. It is almost shocking when you begin to see, “this place that I have been pasturing is so dry, and the encouragement I have been getting from my brothers to get out and work and work and work in everybody’s vineyard, it has done me such harm. I have been laboring under the sun; I have been so burdened and burned by it.”

All of a sudden, something happens that she had not noticed in a long time and she cries out in verse 7, “I’m hungry.” She was so busy working she did not even know she was hungry. “I’m tired.” She was so active in everybody’s vineyard she did not even know she needed rest and so she says, “Tell me, oh you whom my soul loves, where do you pasture your flock? I am so tired of being in the wrong flock, where do you pasture your flock, and where do you make your people lie down at noon? I am so hungry, I am so tired. I have been in the flocks of the companions so long and under the authority of the brothers so long, I wonder, is there another flock that is your flock where you feed where I could find refreshment and rest?” This is quite a shocking revelation, when God kisses you and you say, “He is the king.” When God kisses you again you say, “Who am I?” When God kisses you again and you say, “You know I have been so burned feeding in this desert place.” If I am serious in going forward in union with the Lord I think that God will show me these things in this very order. I think He kisses us and our eyes open and we see these things.

#### **Revelation # 4: Becoming Flock-conscious**

Let me mention the fourth revelation. “Draw me and we will run after you. Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth.” By the first kiss she sees who he is. The next kiss reveals who she is. The next kiss she looks back and she discovers “I have been doing it all wrong, I have been in the wrong place, I am so hungry, I am so tired, I need food, I need rest, and I am not finding it here.” She is not only shown the futility of all of that vineyard service apart from union with him, but now her eyes are opened to the true fold, to the real pasture, the true sheepfold. Now for the first time she becomes flock conscious. This is a very important revelation. She had tried man’s flock and it made her so hungry and so tired and now her heart cries out, “Where is the true flock?” In Song 1:8 he answers,

*“If you yourself do not know, most beautiful among women,  
go forth on the trail of the flock, and pasture by the young  
goats by the tents of the shepherds.”*

King James says:

*“Go forth by the footsteps of the flock. Feed thy kids  
beside the shepherd’s tent”.*

Do you mean there is another pasture? Do you mean there is another fold? Are there shepherds, not companions, but under-shepherds that are true shepherds? Is there a flock that is God’s flock, not man’s flock? Remember, I told you that the book is really “me and Jesus, you and Jesus” and though it is just me and Jesus, you and Jesus, I need this revelation. It is also us; it is the flock; it is the body. In the day of revelation God will open your eyes to see His flock and His fold and His under-shepherds. You will discover a place where you can find real food, where you can find refreshing rest. You say, “I am so tired of the companion’s fold; I am tired of being burned out by vineyard activity; I am tired of being hungry; I am tired of not having rest. Where do I go?” His answer is so beautiful. He said in effect, “My sheep leave footprints. Follow them.” Find someone who has learned to eat and learned to rest. They leave footprints; follow them. There is a path, and if you follow the path of those sheep you will end up in the shepherd’s fold.

Brothers, praise God for the pioneers. Men and women of God who were ahead of their generation; who were drawn out of the barren wilderness of the companion’s fold; who have found their way to the true fold, to the shepherd. Follow their footprints. You say, “Well, who are they?” Well, you know who they are. You know the one who has been satisfied and who is resting and who is in fellowship with the Lord. Some of them are alive and live among us. Follow their prints. Some of them have gone on, but they have left prints. In fact, they have left prints in print. Read their books. There are those who have found their way; follow the prints of those and you will find His flock.

The bride was not only told to follow the sheep but verse 8 says, “Make sure as you follow them that you bring the kids along. Bring your goats.” Do not go by yourself, because once you start to follow the prints of those who have found their way to the shepherd you will be making prints of your own and others will be following your prints as you go. God opened her eyes to the wonderful true flock of God. She saw those who were being cared for by godly under-shepherds, where there was food and where she could find her rest.

I must see Him as king; I must see who I am in and out of Christ; I must see how burned I have become with all of the vineyard activity under the authority of man in the companion’s fold; I must have my eyes opened to see that there is a true fellowship of believers and God will guide me to the true flock as I follow the fat sheep. I must follow those who have tasted, those who have gone before.

## **Revelation # 5: Liberty; Freedom**

Let me give one more revelation and then we will pick up the others tonight. Maybe we will never get out of stage one. Turn to chapter 2 verse 8 please. Remember, this is not yet her walk, it is only her revelation. Do not think this is her consistent experience. It is not. She just has it by revelation. She will sit down and discuss it with you. She has all the words, but at this point it is not in her life. This fifth principle is only a vision at this point; what I am about to show you has not yet happened. She has just seen the possibility of this.

*“Listen! My beloved! Behold, he is coming, climbing on the mountains, leaping on the hills! My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Behold, he is standing behind our wall, he is looking through the windows, he is peering through the lattice. My beloved responded and said to me, “Arise my darling, my beautiful one, and come along. For behold, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers have already appeared in the land; the time has arrived for the pruning of the vine and the voice of the turtledove is heard in the land. The fig tree has ripened its figs and the vines in blossom have given forth their fragrance. Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, come along! Oh my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the secret place of the steep pathway let me see your form, let me hear your voice, for Your voice is sweet and your form is lovely.” (Song 2:8-14)*

What is the fifth revelation? He kisses her and she sees him; He kisses her again and she sees herself; He kisses her again and she sees the futility and the vanity of a system of works; He kisses her again and she sees his flock, his pasture, his shepherds. Blessed revelation, that! He kisses her a fifth time and she sees a tremendous *freedom, a liberty*, that he is offering to her. This is a freedom that she has never known until he kissed her eyes open. If you ever had a picture of the Lord in His freedom you have it here in verse 8 and 9:

*“Climbing on the mountains, leaping on the hills! Like a gazelle or a young stag”*

I do not know what picture that conjures up in your mind but it is so graphic to me. The groom is as free as free can be. He is leaping over the mountains like a stag; he is just frolicking and gamboling; romping and skipping and hopping. The groom is free. From his point of view, there are no mountains between him and her. He just gallops over the mountains like they were not there, right into her life. “Who art thou oh great mountain, you shall come down with shoutings of grace, grace.” He is free and he comes running, springing over hill and dale. Over the mountains; they are no problem to him. By



leaping over the highest mountain he shows that he is coming in triumph and so he comes leaping. She is looking and she sees him, “Here he comes, leaping.” When he arrives, where is she? Chapter 2:9:

*Standing behind our wall, looking through our window, peering  
through the lattice fence.*

What a picture. There he is all free and running like a gazelle, and she is behind the wall of her own building. She is looking out through a lattice fence. Do you know what a distorted view you are going to get of somebody as you stare through a lattice fence? Did you ever try to fellowship with somebody who is standing on the other side of the wall? Did you ever try to call to somebody through a closed window? Did you ever try to gaze at somebody through a lattice fence? She, at this point, has this lattice vision of the Lord. It is distorted, uncertain, vague, and she is looking through this fog and she sees him. He is out there running and having a great time.

The bride then does what anyone would do when you see a glorious groom like that. You want to invite Him into your box. “Come on in Lord, I have been waiting for you.” He refuses! He will not come into your little box. Instead he makes a proposal to her, verse 10:

*“Arise my darling, my beautiful one, come along.”*

It is time to get out of that little box. He invites the bride to leave her winter conditions and to run freely with him in the glory of the spring. She is invited to dance with him on the mountain. He wants her to run away with him; to see him with an unobstructed view. This is an amazing revelation. God has not meant for us to be in this little confined enclosure. He wants to set us free and let us out to run with Him.

I remember those early days before God began to kiss my eyes open. I thought I had Him all charted out. I imagined that I could squeeze Him into my little system of theology. I had studied the great creedal statements and I made sure that God fit in all these creedal statements. I knew what I believed dogmatically; why I was right and everybody else was wrong. I knew all of that, but I was not enjoying Him. I did not know Him. Somehow you feel safe inside your little box, inside your little enclosure.

See, as she looked through that lattice, the world where he was seemed so radical, so reckless, and so large. Part of your heart is saying, “Wow, I would love to be out there and run free with Him” and another part says, “I am not sure I am supposed to do this. That does not sound evangelical. That does not sound like it is orthodox.” So, sadly, we squint through the lattice and we look at a distorted Groom.

What does He do? He winks through the window; stands out there so free. He says, “Arise my darling, come along.” Then he gallops away and like the bride in the story, we often stay in the box. However, her eyes have been opened and she has seen the possibility of a liberty she has never known. She has not that freedom yet, but she has

seen the possibility of a freedom that “He can take me out of this lattice look; out of this little enclosure; out of this narrow constricted view.”

He is beginning to answer her prayer. “Let him kiss me with the kisses of your mouth. Draw me and we will run after you.” So he kisses her eyes open. He kisses her and she sees him; she is kissed again and she sees herself; He kisses her a third time and she sees the futility of the system of works. He kisses her again and she sees the true flock, those who are being fed and nurtured by God’s under-shepherds. He kisses her again and she sees that there is a liberty that is possible if she would run with Him. Well, because He is gracious He comes galloping back and gets off His horse and He starts walking down the street within her reach. She gets all excited and she goes out and she grabs Him. We will close with this. Chapter 3 verse 4, this is how the section ends:

*Scarcely had I left them when I found him whom my soul loves.  
I held on to him and would not let him go.*

With the bride clinging to the groom, you say, “That is good; finally she has learned to cling.” No, that is not true. Now at the end of the book she is not clinging. At the end of the book she is leaning on her beloved. Coming up out of the wilderness, she is leaning on him. Leaning is better than clinging. At this early stage she is clinging, and do you know why she is clinging? Because that is stage one. That is her immaturity; her focus on her interest in him. “Our relationship, our union,” she thinks, “depends on my grip on him.” She is clinging because she thinks, “If I let go of him, he is gone.” She does not understand his love yet. She is beginning to see. He is beginning to open her eyes. She is going to have to enter into all this revelation in a practical way, but first he allows her see it. One thing after another she sees; we have hardly begun to touch these things. There are other things that God is going to make clear to her.

She has seen much. For the first time, “I see that He is Lord; I see who I am; I see that works is not going to make it; I see the true church; I see God’s real shepherds, and that I can be fed and enter into rest; I begin to see the freedom that is available.” As He draws her, she first sees it; then He will draw her so she might enter in. We will stop there. Let us bow before the Lord.

*Father, we thank you for this marvelous song. It is our song to sing, but You have written it. You have written this song and we have sung begun to sing it already; we have begun to see these things, and how thankful we are that You draw us to yourself. Help us as we continue to meditate on this precious book that we might truly, not only see what the bride has seen, but then continue to follow all the way through. Help us to press on to know the Lord in all the intimacies of the marriage union. Will you work this in our hearts? We ask in Jesus’ name, Amen.*

MESSAGE #3 Progressive Love: Submission 3:6-6:10

Introduction and Prayer

If you will open your Bibles please, to the wonderful Song of Solomon, the Song of Songs, we can begin.. As we come to look at God's word together, I mention again the indispensable principle of all Bible study and of life. That principle is total reliance upon God's Holy Spirit. We are coming to God's Book and, like the Lord Jesus is both human and divine, so this Book has a human and a divine side. We try by God's grace not to neglect the human side; we dare not neglect the divine side. God longs to show Himself to those who are called babes. He hides His truth from the sophisticated, from the wise, from the prudent, from the worldly. He reveals it to little babes. Let me share an indispensable principle Bible verse from Song, and then we will pray together and look in His Word. Chapter 2 please and verse 4:

*"He has brought me to his banquet hall."*

Well, that is where we are tonight.

*"And he has brought me to his banquet hall, his banner over me is love.  
Sustain me with raisin cakes, refresh me with apples, because I  
am lovesick. Let his left hand be under my head and his right  
hand embrace me."*

It is a great triumph of the Lord to be brought to the banquet hall. This is actually a military figure. One is marching under banners and His banner over us is love. That is the triumph that has brought us to the banquet hall; it is His victory and it is His triumph. According to the record here, even being triumphantly led to his banquet hall, I need to be supported so I can take it in. I am ready to faint; it is so much; it is too much.

Now I know commentators differ on what it means to have His left hand under you and so on. It may describe a lover holding and dipping his lover, if you look at it that way. I do not know if that is what he is talking about here. But it also describes the way a mother would hold a little baby when that baby is being fed. That little baby is underneath the left arm and, at least for tonight, that is what it is. He has brought us to His banquet hall and He has a lot to communicate to us. If He does not support us, we cannot take it all in. He has called us to come as little babies and His hand is under us. He wants to feed us. So with that attitude let us come before the Lord and trust Him to speak.

*Our Father how we thank You that by your grace you have brought us to your banquet hall. You have drawn us; You have answered our hearts cry. You are kissing us with the kisses of your mouth, expressing your love to us over and over again. Now this evening as we come to your banquet hall we would ask again by your grace that You would support us in order that we might be able to take it in. Feed us. We want to be like newborn babes desiring the sincere milk of the Word that we might grow by it. Will You minister to us tonight and dawn Christ upon us. You know our needs. You know who we are. You have drawn us here. Now meet us; show us yourself we pray, and we want to thank You in advance, because our Lord Jesus deserves it, it is done in His precious name, Amen.*

### Review

We have so much to look at in this book. I will confess to you right up front, most of what is taught in the Song of Solomon is beyond me; I do not have a clue; I do not understand many of these word pictures. It is just so much. That is one of the reasons we have chosen it, my wife and I, for our year book. So I will not be able to give you more than the little bit that I have begun to see. So let me just review a little bit and get us back into the flow and then we will pick up where we left off.

It is a love story, this Song of Songs; a love story of two worlds. I believe the way God has written it, earthly love is designed to reflect, to illustrate, heavenly love. So we have the love story here of both worlds. In our sessions together we are looking especially at the heavenly side. I hope God helps you apply the other side so that when you go home you can relate that to your life partner. The groom not only loves the bride in this book but the groom is in love with the bride. Does your wife know that you love her? Does she know that you are in love with her? May God help us. That is what this is all about. This describes our union with the Lord Jesus Christ in the tenderest of terms. He uses the most intimate of all relationships on the earth, marriage. And the most intimate side of the most intimate relationship on the earth to give us a passing glimpse of His heart toward us. It is a book, as we have suggested, of progressive love. Right from the very beginning the groom, in answer to the sigh and cry of the bride to be drawn that he might kiss her with the kisses of his mouth and express his love to her over and over again, has begun to do that. I have pointed out that there are other believers in the book but the book calls attention especially to the bride and groom.

Let us look again just to get it before us, at the three movements in the book.

*“My beloved is mine, and I am his; He pastures his flock  
among the lilies.” (Song 2:16)*

In this first stage, in this first experience of union with the groom it begins with the bride’s interest in the groom. It also includes his interest in her but the emphasis is, “He is mine.” It is about me. It is subjective. “He is mine. Oh yes, it is true, I am also

his”, but that is not the emphasis. Then he kisses her eyes open many times and she comes to this, chapter 6:3:

*I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine. He pastures  
his flock among the lilies.*

Here she expresses his interest first in her. She has not quite gotten away from her interest in him, but at least she begins in a new direction, “I am his, and oh yes, he is still mine.” Finally she is drawn by his love into the very climax of the redemptive experience, chapter 7:10:

*“I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me.”*

At this point all she can see is his interest in her. She does not mention the other side at all. It has not gone away; it is just that now this is taking up the whole landscape of her life. “I am his, and all his desire is toward me.” That is where the book draws to its close.

Now, although there are many other things in this superlative love song, we are trying just to trace the path that the bride has been drawn into by the groom's heart. If we can see the big things, then we can advance in the understanding of God's heart in this book. So in stage one where her interest is primarily in him I have tried to show you that the key idea in that section is revelation.

As we go through these verses, you see over and over again in chapters 1:1-3:5 how he kisses her eyes open. Every time he kisses her she gets a new revelation. She does not really enter into it right away, but it is a brand new world to her and she sees things that are—some of them—very shocking. It is almost too much to believe. But that is stage one. When somebody gets to verse 2 of chapter 1 and they have seen this world and turned it down; they have embraced the groom and breathed out a prayer, “Draw me now. Kiss me with the kisses of your mouth. Reveal your love to me.” When you begin there, then God begins. Life begins! He must show you these things. So he begins to show her many, many things. Remember, throughout this book, the groom is our dear Lord Jesus!

Then as we move from stage one to stage two—from discovery, from light, from insight, from illumination, from this revelation ( Chapter 3:6-6:10)—she begins to enter into those things. She begins now to experience some of these things that she has seen, that have been discovered to her. The key word in stage two is surrender, or submission. She surrenders; she resigns to the Lord.

Then finally, from chapter 6:11 to the end of the book, we see God makes very real the things she has discovered in the beginning of the book. Those things that she has seen and has not entered into now become hers in a wonderful way. The key words of this third section are rest, and fruit. Life now becomes intuitive. She is beginning to act out of a relationship and out of a union. So you see as you come to the end, as it comes

to its crescendo. I am not a musician, but I understand that every now and then in the music there are written some notes to the musician: the letter “F”, for example. They say that represents the Latin word forte, and so the musician sees the “F” and it means “play it louder” and so they play it louder. Sometimes there is the double “FF” This represents the word fortissimo, which means very loud. Then you pull out the stops and you begin to really play it. Well, as I understand this book, you see that it starts with pianissimo (very softly) but it ends with fortissimo. We are shouting at the end. She just begins to enter into rest and live by the fruit of that union. Well, by God’s grace we are tracing out that union.

Now let me mention the principles we have touched upon, by way of review and then we will move on to our new material. God has drawn the bride in the first section and He has kissed her eyes open. He has begun to answer her sigh and her prayer. I mentioned this morning five revelations that were discovered to her. I do not know what else to call them. They are five new things she discovers in her new world. The groom discovers Himself to her.

Chapter 1 verse 4: Her eyes were opened and she saw that the groom was not her lover first of all but the groom was the king. Her groom was the king. What a revelation to have.

Then he kisses her again and she not only sees who he is, (chapter 1:5, 6) she sees who she is. She sees herself out of him, she sees herself in him. She says, “I am dark oh, but I am lovely. I am like the tents of Kedar. Ah, but I am like the curtains of Solomon.” She sees both. She sees herself.

Then he opens her eyes again in chapter 1 verses 6 and 7 and she sees how badly she has been burned. That she has been in the wrong place. She has been in a flock but it has not been the Lord’s flock. She has been under shepherds but they are not the Lord’s shepherds, they are the companions of the shepherds. Her brothers have put her to work and all she has known is Christless activity. She has just worked and worked and worked, and finally she is so tired, she is so hungry. He had to show her that.

My wife is a worker and honestly, when she gets into a project you do not see her until the project is done. Now you Paul, can back me up on this—so can you Ben—when she gets into a project, (you might think I am exaggerating) she forgets to eat. What that means practically is that she forgets to feed me. She also forgets to sleep. It could be 3:00 in the morning and I will go downstairs, “Come on now, put it down. You can do it tomorrow.” She gets so busy, so gets so involved, she gets so occupied her life is consumed in her work. When she gets on a big project she always loses weight because she does not eat; she does not sleep. I tell you brothers, that happens on the level of earth; maybe you are like that or know somebody like that. When that happens spiritually, it is a terrible thing. I think the enemy uses that as one of his great ploys. He gets you so busy in vineyard work, so active, that you forget to eat. We get so involved we hardly notice that we are hungry. We hardly notice that we are tired.

Then, when it is all over we just faint; we are exhausted. So she cries out in verse 7:

*“Tell me, oh you whom my soul loves, where do you  
pasture your flock, where do they eat?”*

She discovered she was hungry.

*“And tell me where do you let them lie down at noon.”*

“I am so tired I need rest.” You know, over and over again you can tell where somebody is in their union with the Lord. God’s people are hungry and they need rest. We can tell almost where they are as God is kissing them alive. With that cry God opens her eyes for the fourth time. She saw first of all the king, who he was. Then she saw who she was. Then she saw the vanity of this endless labor and work.

Now God opens her eyes in verse 8. There is a true flock; there are those shepherds, under-shepherds who are the Lord’s shepherds. There is a pasture that is His pasture. She is told to go and follow those who have found that pasture and for the first time she becomes flock conscious. It is all about her and Jesus. It is all about you and Jesus. But as He reveals Himself to you I promise you He will lead you to His flock. You need the flock; I need the flock. You need the body.

Finally, (chapter 2:8-14) he kisses her again and with this kiss he shows her the freedom that is available in him. You remember, we ended with that. She was behind her little enclosure; her man made wall. She was behind the lattice and he was free and bounding over the hills and over the mountains. When he came he would not go into her little enclosure but instead he said, “Arise my darling, my beautiful one, and come along. The flowers have already appeared in the land. The rain is over and gone. The time has arrived. Arise my darling, my beautiful one and come along.” And she struggled with that. She had the revelation, but not the experience. So those are the revelations that we have looked at.

Now I know I run a risk of either neglecting some of the truth here. I guarantee it; I am going to neglect a lot of truth because I have not seen it yet. You know I can only give you as much as I have seen. So to spend more time here, if you really understand spiritual things, makes some sense because I am more experienced with stage one than with stage two. Quite honestly I have seen a few things but I don’t want to go beyond my light. I am going to spend a little more time here and I pray that God will help you get further than He has taken me so far.

These are things that we must see if we are truly seeking Him. When you are seeking Him, you have got to see that He is King; you have got to see who you are in Him and out of Him; you have got to see that system of works is vanity and futility; you have got to see that God has a flock; you have got to see that there is freedom out there if

by His grace you can come out of that lattice enclosure, and so on. These are things you have got to see, and so he kisses her again.

#### Four Additional Principles of Revelation

What I want to do is to mention four more revelations she had when He kissed her and opened her eyes. I need to get to stage two tonight also, so what I am going to do is just mention the revelations that she saw. Perhaps I will say a word or two about them, but I will leave you to develop them in your private time with the Lord.

#### Revelation # 6: A Revelation of the Daughters of Jerusalem

Let me just lay these verses before your hearts. Chapter 2:7:

*“I adjure you daughters of Jerusalem by the gazelles  
or the hinds of the field, you do not arouse or  
awaken my love until she pleases.”*

These daughters of Jerusalem are one group in the body that appears in Song more than any other group besides the bride and the groom. They are in the house and I have no doubt that they love the groom. Did you notice in chapter 3 verse 10 starting in verse 9:

*“King Solomon made himself a sedan chair from the timber  
of Lebanon. He made its posts of silver, its back of gold,  
its seat of purple fabric, with its interior lovingly  
fitted out by the daughters of Jerusalem.”*

Their ministry was to him. I tend to be hard on these daughters of Jerusalem, but they loved the king. I personally think that they are the legalists in the book. They are constantly an annoyance to the bride, but they love the Lord; they are ministering to the Lord and they are serving the Lord. Quite honestly, though they offer a loving service, they are strangers to the groom. It is amazing how much we can minister to the groom and yet, still have him as a stranger. Later on in the story, she is going to ask them for advice, “Help me find him.” Silly bride! Asking the daughters of Jerusalem for advice! They could not find their way to the bathroom. These daughters of Jerusalem, they are the wrong people to ask. The bottom line is this, every time they appear in the book with that one little exception where they have lovingly fitted out the purple fabric for the seat of the king’s chair, they are always trying to upset the rest that the bride is seeking.

Now, depending on which particular translation you use, you will find that there is some discrepancy in the grammar. What is the correct translation? Some translations make it “*her rest*. Do not disturb *her rest*.” Another translation says, “Do not disturb *his rest*.” Another says, “*The rest*; do not disturb *the rest*.” The common denominator truth



is this, that over and over again the daughters of Jerusalem are seeking to overturn rest and the groom says, “Let love alone; stop disturbing rest.”

Now we are accustomed to read that la, la, la... But I will tell you, it was an eye opener to me. After I began to taste a little bit of the rest in the Lord, those who opposed me most were the Christians; the believers were the disturbers of my rest; it was the family, not the world, that gave me the most trouble. The daughters of Jerusalem were all over me because it looked to them like I was a sluggard; they thought I quit vineyard work. The fact is I was delivered from that system of vineyard work where I was being so badly burned. They did not understand it and they kept trying to disturb my rest. I am just suggesting that if you are serious about following the Lord, do not be surprised when the daughters of Jerusalem come around and they disturb what you have from the Lord. You have his revelation; they are the ones who do not see. That is an eye opener and I will tell you, it is developed in the book.

#### Revelation # 7: A Need to be Pruned and Disciplined

Her eyes were also opened for further revelation. He kissed her again, and her eyes were opened to see her need to be pruned and disciplined. I told you that there is a lot of time between these revelations. It did not happen all at once, and as far as the record goes, the last thing she had heard was, “Follow the trail, follow the steps, the path of the fat sheep; those who have entered in who know where the pasture is. Follow them. Bring your kids, bring your goats, and follow them and then camp by the tents of the shepherds.” Well, it is implied there that she is camping there with her family and with those who are under her influence. How long did she camp there? What did she learn from the true shepherds? We are not told. All we have is the record. So what I know for sure is this: she camped there long enough to learn what she needed to learn and feed on the pasture that was given by true under-shepherds. She camped there long enough that the groom could say verse 9:

*“To me, my darling, you are like my mare among the chariots of Pharaoh.”*

Now he is not describing her physically at this point. Do not think that he is mocking her; that she is given of an insult, “My dear you look like a horse.” That is not what he is saying. This is a special horse. This is a horse that had to be highly trained. This is a horse that pulled the chariots of Pharaoh. See, a horse is a strong animal. A horse has power. A horse can run; a horse can buck; a horse can kick in a wall. A horse has a will of its own. So they trained the horse. It is a special horse that needs to be trained; has to be disciplined. At the end, the horse still had the power to kick the door down, but it had learned to put that power under the bridle and keep it under control. The strength of the horse was now at the beck and command of the king. This is the horse that pulled the chariots. 1 Kings 4:26 says:

*“Solomon had 40,000 stalls for the chariot horses, and 12,000 horsemen.”*

There was a special horse that was selected to pull the chariot of the Pharaoh. He looked at her and he said, “You have been at the right pasture under the right leadership and you have been feeding on what God’s under-shepherds have supplied. You have been trained; now you remind me of that trained horse who is under the command of a little pull, a little bridle, a little burr. You are responding to the will of the king. Your will has now learned to obey. So her eyes were opened to the need to be trained, and to be disciplined.

#### Revelation # 8: Worship born from A Vision of the Cross

Let me mention two more and we will move on to the new material. Verse 13:

*“My beloved is to me a pouch of myrrh which lies all night between my breasts.”*

Let me give it to you and then try to illustrate it. As the groom drew his bride in answer to her prayer; there had to be a time that her eyes were opened. She had seen the king; she had seen who she was; she had seen the system of works; she had seen the true church, the true body, the true fellowship. She had seen the freedom that was available to her in Christ Jesus. She had seen that not everybody approves of that freedom, and a group of people are constantly going to disturb your rest. She has seen the importance of discipline. It was now time for her to see the cross. She has to see the cross; the work of the cross.

Myrrh, as you trace it through the Scripture is constantly a picture of suffering. The Magi, you remember, (in Matthew chapter 2) brought myrrh to the infant Savior; it was myrrh that was offered up to Jesus when he was on the cross. Myrrh was used for embalming our Lord Jesus in John chapter 19. She is coming to know her groom and she says, “You know, there is a fragrance that comes from my groom and it is like myrrh. When I smell him it is like myrrh.” Then notice in Song 1:12-14 she adds:

*“While the king was at his table my perfume gave forth its fragrance.”*

King James says:

*“My spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.”*

It is the same nard in John 12 when Mary anointed our Lord Jesus. Spikenard from the bush, before it is processed, has been called the perfume of the poor. The bride was just a humble worker in the field; she did not have any money. What could she bring to the banquet table? She said, “I will bring a fragrance; that is all I have.” So we read that it was the custom to take the spikenard and put it down their blouse between their breasts; the heat of the body after a while would send forth the fragrance. Worship! So Mary offered that fragrance to worship. The only gift she had to bring to the table was this nard. Her eyes were opened to this, “When I smell him it is the cross; when he smells me it is worship.” Her eyes had to be opened to that great revelation that there has to be a time, a place, where the cross comes into your life. Every forward step in knowing Him is in terms of that. All she could bring to this banquet table was her worship. I think if we

get praise close enough to our hearts, brothers, it will warm up and bring a pleasing fragrance to the Lord. May God teach this. Her eyes were opened.

#### Revelation # 9: Union with the Groom leading to Fruit

One more thing! When she saw him she saw herself; she saw the system of works; she saw the church; she saw freedom in Christ; she saw those who are in the body, (but they are enemies of her rest); she saw the need for training and for discipline; she saw the cross and worship. Her eyes must be opened again.

Look once again in the Book of Song, 1:16,17

*“How handsome you are, my beloved, and so pleasant! Indeed our couch is luxuriant! The beams of our houses are cedars, our rafters, cypresses. “*

You read the same passage from Darby:

*“Behold thou art fair, my beloved, pleasant! Our bed is green. The beams of our house are cedar, our rafters are fir.”*

I told you that in stage one, (2:16) where her interest was in him, all the focus centered on her. All of a sudden now we see a change. Even if you were not a believer, and you are just reading this book as literature, you would note there is a change right here. If you count the verses to number how many times the bride spoke in section one, and contrast, how many times the groom spoke, you would be amazed. She cannot shut up. She spoke more than twice as much as the groom spoke. Now when the groom spoke in section one, most of the time he is correcting what she says. It is an amazing thing. The bride’s comments illustrate how subjective she was in section one. It is all about her. “I, my, mine!” Even the precious things she said are in terms of the personal pronoun, “Kiss *me*. Draw *me*. Look not at *me*. My own vineyard I have not kept. My beloved is to me. My spikenard went forth. Where can *I* eat? Where can *I* rest?”

The Lord is beginning to open her eyes now. As I understand the context of this passage, they are having an intimate moment. The bride, as she lays down with her groom, looks up toward the ceiling. A new concept grips her heart. She says, “Look at *our* rafters, and look at *our* cedars.” She proclaims, “*Our* bed is green.” It is alive. She is beginning to see, though she has not fully entered into it, her union with the groom. “I am his wife, I am his bride; he is the king.” All of a sudden, “What is his is also mine; all of these things are ours.” She is beginning to see her union; everything that he has belongs to her. She is realizing that he meant it when he said, “With all my worldly goods I thee endow.” Now to be sure, she is going to go forward in that truth in section two and three, but it looks like she sees it now for the first time and she has the boldness to say, “It is ours. Everything that is his is also mine.”

When I married Lillian in 1964 everything I had, including my debts, became hers. We are one. Our children are ours. They are *our* debts. It is *our* ministry that we have. It is *our* house. We don't have "his and her towels"; they are *our* towels. Just so, the bride had her eyes opened to her inheritance in the groom. As she laid there she just said, "You know, it is true. I am Mrs. Jesus! This is not is my house. Everything is ours! Look at our rafters; look at our beams; look at our house; our bed is green." I think that is a picture of becoming alive. Even our enemies are one. Everyone who dares to come against me must also come against Him. He has warned, "Do not touch the apple of My desire".

Let me tell you a little story, I will not take long on it, but... Do any of you go to a Chiropractor? There was a day I did not even know what that was. In 1964 I married dear Lillian; we went down to Columbia, SC because I was enrolled as a student at Columbia Bible College. We needed to rent a place and so we took some wedding money that we had saved to meet that need. We saw in the newspaper, a nice place nestled behind a main house. It was not elaborate; it was very small, but we could afford it. So I asked the owner to show us the rent. He obliged us and escorted us through the tiny building. I was there with my new bride and we were going to school and starting our life together. It was all wonderful to me. And as he walked in the door he put both hands on my wife's shoulders and said, "You could use an adjustment." He touched the apple of my eye. I grabbed him, (that was a long time ago; I blush now at the thought of it) and I held him up against a wall and I said, "I'll give you an adjustment." I did not know he was a Chiropractor; I didn't even know what a Chiropractor was! I only knew he touched the apple of my eye.

That is the Lord's passion. He protects His bride. We are one; we share everything! They are not my rafters, they are our rafters; they are our beams; it is our house; everything we have is ours. It is our enemies. You do not have an enemy that is your own; it is His enemy as well as yours.

The bride had been trying to produce fruit in the pastures of the companions. It was all flesh! It was all self-generated vineyard activity. She had been driven by the legalists who kept saying, "We need volunteers; we need workers; we need resources; we need special training; more straw! More bricks!" Now she began to see, for the very first time, that fruit was possible in union with the groom. "Our bed is green. Our bed is alive." She has been trying to produce so much apart from that living union with him. If it starts in the flesh, it must end in the flesh; that which is flesh is flesh. She is seeing now for the first time, the fruit of union. You know in the Hebrew society that was a big thing, to produce fruit; child bearing was coveted by the Hebrew women. And that is what she has in mind when she says, "Our bed is green." She saw where fruit comes from.

May I make a spiritual application of this wonderful principle? If there are any brothers here who has the opportunity to teach, let me give a little application of "our bed is green." Someday God is going to call you as He has called me so many times to be

privileged to present His Word. You will be called to bring a message; you have to share a word; give a ministry. May God deliver you from sermons, and may God deliver those who hear you, from sermons. Here is God's way; it is always "Our bed is green." It is the implanted work. Everything depends upon your union with Him. He will implant a word in your heart. Like a little baby, that word will begin to develop in you and to grow in you. There are times you do not even know what it is, but it is there and it is from the Lord. It is a fruit of your union with Him; it is growing and it is His word that is in you. I remember when Carri, my daughter, was ready to deliver her third child. She kept dictating to the baby when he was to be born. No, the baby tells you when it is time to be delivered. I have found when God implants a word in your heart—sometimes it is a year or more than a year that word will develop in your heart—that word will tell you when it is time to be delivered. God will tell you; that word will tell you, when it is time to be delivered. When such a word comes forth, everyone will see that "our bed is green." You have to learn as she had to learn that our labor must be the fruit of a union. God will determine when it is implanted; how it grows; when it is to be delivered. That is how she needs to learn how to live her entire life. True fruit must have the groom's name and nature written upon it.

Well, that is section one. She has seen all those things, now she needs to enter into them.

The Groom and His Garden: (Song 3:6-6:10)

She has moved from chapter 2 verse 16:

*"My beloved is mine and I am his"*

to chapter 6:3:

*"I am my beloveds and my beloved is mine."*

In stage one her eyes have been opened to a whole new world. She never dreamed that that world of revelation was even out there. Her experience of the new world was very subjective. I suggested that as we closed this morning that she was just clinging to him. I showed you why it was not a healthy clinging. It was the insecure kind of clinging that says "If I let go he is gone. Our union, our relationship depends on my holding him." The first section ends with her clinging desperately to him. Things will change radically now in this new division.

Rather than reading the entire section (Song 3:6 to chapter 6:10) let me just home in on what I think is the key story in this section. You will see in a moment why this is going to be my year book and maybe I will study the book beyond the year. When one studies this section under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, one discovers that there is far more than the story I am about to give you.

I went through this section and I saw 31 references to plants and animals. I have an idea they all mean something. In this section we read about the fragrance of Lebanon; the forest of Carmel; the pools of Hebron; the tents of Kedar; the mountains of Gilead; the beauty of Tizrah; the crown of Solomon, the royal bed of state. You see, I am jumping over all of that because I have nothing from the Lord to tell you. I do not know what it means. I imagine it is wonderful, under God's light. I know there is spiritual reality in all of that but there is one story that means very much to me.

The chief picture in stage two, without a doubt, is the story of the groom and his garden; let us look at that story together. Up until this time the bride has been very insecure. She has made many self-depreciating comments. She keeps cutting herself down. She thinks she has to make herself attractive in order to be accepted. She is constantly trying to beautify herself. She is always primping up; using the enticing fragrances; trying to make herself loveable.

The groom on the other hand, has been desperately trying to communicate his heart, "I love you as you are. You are already beautiful. You smell fine! You do not have to try to improve. I love you just like you are." But she had been so burned in the vineyards and she had such a low self image, that in her mind she thinks she has to do all of this work to make herself acceptable. What a shock when she heard these words:

*"A garden locked is my sister, my bride, a rock garden locked, a spring sealed up. Your shoots are an orchard of pomegranates with choice fruits, henna with nard plants, nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, with all the trees of frankincense, myrrh and aloes, along with all the finest spices. You are a garden spring, a well of fresh water, streams flowing from Lebanon." (Song 4:12-15)*

The groom just piles on the compliments. Up until this time, because of the vineyard work she had done, her view of herself is, "I am everybody's gardener." Then when he began to deliver her from the companions' flock and she tasted the Lord's flock she said, "Now I am not everybody's gardener; I am the Lord's gardener." What a shock for her to hear this, "You are not my gardener. You are my garden!" That is not the same thing. It is a different direction altogether. She was called a garden locked; a private garden; a rock garden locked; sealed up; a garden spring; a well of fresh water. It is as if the groom were telling her, and as if she heard it for the first time, "I am not requiring you to labor and to sweat and to work in the vineyards. You do not need to waste your energy under the hot sun. I just want to enjoy you. You are my garden! I want to enjoy you, I want to appreciate you. I love you." See, that was brand new to her. It made sense for her to think, "He satisfies me", but is it possible that I can satisfy Him?" That is hard to take in. Only grace, only a revelation from Heaven could cause us to enter into this.

Now the groom is blowing her mind. Remember, this is not flattery. Flattery is an insincere comment. This is not flattery; it is a complement, but it is true. In chapter 4 verse 9, here is what the groom said to the bride:

*“You have made my heart beat faster my sister, my bride,  
you have made my heart beat faster with a  
single glance of your eye.”*

Another translation says:

*You have ravished my heart.*

Brothers, I am asking you, and only God can help you to answer it, “Do you believe that you make God’s heart skip a beat when He looks at you?” See, that is what He is saying. This is not just poetry. He says, “I love you so much. Every time I look at you my heart skips a beat; my heart beats faster.” Chapter 6 verse 5 the groom says:

*“Turn your eyes away from me, they have confused me, they overcome me.”*

He said in effect, “I can hardly look at you. I get so excited.”

I have been married for forty years. I know all about Lillian, but I do not remember ever complementing my wife’s temple or her belly button. I can remember saying, “Your feet look great in sandals.” The groom in this love song loves her from head to toe. He knows every part of her. He loves her so much. He says, “Every time I look at you my heart skips a beat.” Do you believe that? The reality is that God does feel that way about you. The truth of this is what makes the song worth studying. The revelation that it is actually God who is saying all this, when it finally dawns on you, enables you to enter into all the light He gave you in stage one.

Are you familiar brothers, with the only passage in the Bible that presents God singing? There is one place that says, “God sings.” Are you familiar with that? It is in Zephaniah 3:17, and do you know what He is singing about? You! He is singing about His people. The only time God sings in the whole Bible He just sings about us. It takes your breath away. The revelation that she is a delight to him and that she can bring satisfaction to his heart, causes him to burst into song.

Surrender

All of a sudden it dawns on her, “Hey, you know, maybe it is not about me. Maybe I do not exist for myself. Maybe it is about *his happiness*, not mine; maybe it is about *his pleasure*, not mine; maybe it is about *his satisfaction*.” You know that wonderful verse in 1 Corinthians 6:13:

*“Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food.”*

What else are you going to do with a stomach? Think about it. If ever anything was made with a purpose, food is for the stomach. Then he adds,

*“So the body is for the Lord.”*

You are as much made for the Lord as the stomach is made for food and food for the stomach.

She is beginning to learn that now, and it dawns on her; she is lost in the wonder of it. “Are you kidding? I am your garden? You love me?” He had been trying to tell her that when she had been trying to make herself so beautiful. Now, all of a sudden, it hits her. “He really believes this stuff! He really thinks I am his garden!” When it dawned on her as a blessed reality, when that truth broke on her heart, she broke into a song. This song, I believe, is one of the finest expressions of total surrender anywhere in the Bible.

*“Awake, O north wind, and come, wind of the south; Make my garden breath out fragrance, let its spices be wafted abroad.  
May my beloved come into his garden and eat its choice fruits”  
(Song 4:14)!*

This is high ground indeed! She has accepted his view of her. He said, “You are my garden.” And she said, “If that is so, if that is true, in the light of that discovery, then I do not care anymore what happens. Awake north wind, come wind of the south. I do not care what comes into my life as long as it blows through this garden and brings a pleasing fragrance to the nostrils of the groom. That is all that matters anymore. I do not care about anything else.” Awake north wind! That represents as you know, the chilly wind, the frosty wind, the biting wind, affliction, trials, and hard times. What she is saying is this, “Let the north winds come, I don’t care what comes into my life. The only thing that matters is this – I am his garden and he wants to smell a sweet fragrance. If it takes the north wind to do that, so be it. It is not about me anymore. It is about him now.” So she says, “Let the north wind blow.” Then she adds this, “Let the south wind blow.” The south wind is the balmy wind, the warm wind, of blessing and prosperity and health, the wind that brings the soft rain. To the bride, at this point, it made no difference. It was absolutely incidental whether it was the harsh north wind or the pleasant south wind.

Do you see where this surrender has taken her? She is completely delivered from outward circumstances. “It does not matter anymore because it has finally dawned on me” she says, “He loves me so much; I make his heart skip a beat; He is overwhelmed, He is overcome; He looks at me; He breaks into song and I am his garden. If that is true, then let his garden breath out fragrance to him.” What a change in the bride. The only thing that once mattered to her was her interest in him; at that stage, everything depended upon favorable circumstances. When they were not favorable, she got all upset. Not anymore! Not from this point on! Now the bride can flourish in any condition.



Notice her prayer please, because when we say “surrender” we are used to what we see in the body as surrender. Many times it is not surrender at all; it is resignation. In other words, those who resign don’t have much of a choice. “God has brought this into my life and what am I supposed to do? Alright, I will give it to Him.” And that is labeled surrender.

That is not what this is! She is not just accepting any wind that blows! She is courting the wind! Did you see that? She said, “Awake north wind! You have been sleeping.” She invites the north wind to blow across her garden. It is not just that it has come into her life and she is finally resigned to it. She says, “I am his garden and I want these fragrances to flow. Whatever it takes! North wind come, come! Wake up! Blow into my garden and breath out a sweet fragrance unto the Lord.” I suggest that that is surrender. And I suggest it can only come—there is nothing you can do about it. Nothing I can do about it—when God makes His love so real to you that there can be no other response.

Do not answer, but do you believe that this is more than poetry and that God actually is in love with you? Do you really believe that you cause His heart to skip a beat? Has it gripped you that you confuse Him when He looks at you? (Of course that part is easy to believe) Do you believe that He sings over you? It is when it dawns on your heart, that all He ever wanted from you is not that you would try to be beautiful and attractive and pleasing to Him, but that you would just be who you are and let Him be who He is, that you will respond in such a surrender. You are His garden. When you learn that and believe with all of your heart, then the response can only be this, “Awake north wind, come. Blow! It does not matter if it be the south wind with its benediction and prosperity, or the north wind with its affliction and destruction. I do not care anymore!” Her lack of concern was because her heart was set on something else now. “All I care about is that *he is happy*. It is not my happiness anymore. That is incidental. It is now *his joy* and *his satisfaction* and *his pleasure* that matters to me.” She invites the winds, any wind, to blow. She desires it. Verse 16:

*“May my beloved come into his garden and eat its choice fruits!”*

Now let me tell you the sequel to this story in the time we have left because it carries a very spiritual truth. This reality, I pray God will help me to communicate. With this new revelation, with her newfound surrender, her new direction: “It is not about me, it is about him. I am my beloveds. Come north wind come south wind.” comes the next step in the progress of the love between the groom and his bride.

### Resting in Rest

The next scene of the poem finds the bride in bed, an apt symbol of rest. She has entered into a rest, a wonderful, wonderful rest. When you come to that place where you surrender as a by-product of the discovery of how much He is in love with you, and you respond in a total surrender, that brings you into a peaceful rest. You have come to the place where you realize outward circumstances do not really matter at all. It is about

Him; you have totally surrendered for his pleasure. Why, at that moment, you are going to enter into this glorious rest. Chapter 5:2:

*“I was asleep, my heart was awake.”*

A knock comes at her door. I think, by the way it is written, that when she heard the knock at the door, she got so excited about that rest that she began resting in her rest. It is very easy to rest in rest and to forget about the groom. The rest is so glorious, it consumes our attention. A knock comes to the door and it is her beloved who is wet with the dews of the night. The damp is outside. We read in verse three that she is already undressed; she is already in bed; she has already taken her shower. Perhaps in her thinking it was a strange time for him to come knocking just when she had entered into rest.”

Her last view of him was as he was walking in his garden and enjoying his garden. He had discovered to her heart that she was his garden and nothing else mattered anymore. That was that last view she had. Anyway, she is delayed by her many thoughts, and does not answer the door of her lover. The song does not tell us all the details. Maybe she fell back into stage one, “I’ll be right there! Let me get primped up; let me first get properly dressed; I will put on my fragrances...”

You know the story, verse 6 reads, whatever the reason might have been:

*“I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had turned away and he was gone.”*

He is gone! Every Christian has experienced the absence of the bridegroom lover and many times right after the most complete surrender. When you surrender to the Lord and say, “It does not matter as long as He is pleased”, then a strong temptation sweeps over us to rest in our rest rather than to stay focused on the groom-lover. In that moment, there is a loss; you lose not the Lord but the sensible presence of the Lord.

### Rediscovering the Groom

Then, begins the frantic search for him! We read about her desperate search. “He is gone! He is gone!” Chapter 5:6, 7 describes her running out into the street in the middle of the night. “I just have to find him! Have to find my beloved.” Song 5:7 records that she is mistaken for one of the women of the street by the watchman. She is treated harshly; she is beaten. They take her veil away; they misunderstand her wild search. She is just looking for Jesus. She is out in the street; she is looking for her groom. They do not understand, and I think once again these watchmen represent a certain portion of the body. They do not understand. “If He is gone, then you must be out of fellowship; you did something wrong; you messed up.” Then they beat you, as they did her. She is mistreated, persecuted, yet she continues her search.

She then makes a classic mistake. She finds the daughters of Jerusalem, verse 8:

*“I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved, as to what you will tell him: I am lovesick.”*

She asks the daughters of Jerusalem to help her find the beloved. They are in the family; they have lovingly worked for the groom; they can assist in the search. The fact is that they do not have a clue about where to find the groom. They are strangers to him! They once served him, but they did not really know him. They do not understand this relationship; they do not understand this union; and it is a great mistake to think they can help her find Christ. So they honestly ask (you have to give them that. It is an honest question) Verse 9:

*“What kind of beloved is your beloved, O most beautiful among women? What kind of beloved is your beloved, that thus you adjure us?”*

In other words, “Describe him for us.” It is because they do not know what he is like that they ask this question. They do not understand; they do not know the one she is looking for. They are totally baffled as to why this girl is out in the street in the middle of the night hunting madly trying to find this one who is so important to her. “Describe him for us”, they say. Then follows chapter 5:10-16, one of the greatest Christological passages in the Old Testament. It is a grand description of Christ! He is the one who has the whiteness of the lily and the redness of the rose; He is the chiefest of ten thousand; His head is gold; his hair is bushy and black as a raven; His eyes are pure and single like a doves eyes; His mouth is full of sweetness dripping with liquid myrrh; He is altogether lovely.

The bride begins to meditate on the description she has just given of him. “What is he like?” “Oh, let me tell you about him. He is this... and he is that...” And she gets so wrapped up in her description of Christ, in her meditation of the groom, it is almost like she was interrupted by another question. She is all involved, “He is this, and he is that, and he is wonderful, he is beautiful; you should see him; you should know my Lord; you should know my husband; he is great!”

Suddenly she is interrupted. She forgot completely that she was out in the street and all beaten. They ask another question (brilliant question this) chapter 6:1:

*“Where has your beloved gone, O most beautiful among women, where has your beloved turned?”*

“If I knew that do you think I would be out here in the street?” It is a brilliant question from the daughters of Jerusalem. “Where has he gone? Where is he? We will help you find him. Tell us where he is, we will help you find him.” Do you think if she knew the answer to that question she would be out there? But she does know! That is an amazing thing. “Where is he?” As she pondered the question posed to her, she

remembered the answer. “Ah! I remember! I remember where he is!” Chapter 6 verse 2:

*“My beloved has gone down to his garden.”*

Are you getting that, brothers?

*“To the bed of balsam, to pasture his flock in the gardens and gather the lilies.”*

And that ends this section!

*“I am my beloveds and he is mine.”*

He is in his garden, of course! That is where he always is. He never left the garden in the first place. But she had to learn that precious lesson because she was clinging like Mary Magdalene was clinging to her Savior. She was clinging in the wrong way to the flesh. She had to learn how to cling in the spirit and to cling by faith. He had not gone at all! She made a glorious discovery. “I know where he is. He is in his garden!”

May I suggest, brothers, as you move from your interest in Him to His interest in you; as you let God dawn on your heart the reality of how much He loves you, how He delights in you, how you turn Him on, how excited He is about you, how you cause His heart to skip a beat, how you cause His heart to flutter, how you overwhelm Him and how you make Him sing—when that dawns on your heart; when you learn that you are His garden—then you will have no other choice but to respond as she responds and say, “If that is true, if that is the case, awake north wind. It does not matter anymore about me. Come! Come on!. Any trial, any suffering, any affliction, anything at all! Come! Or let the south wind blow. Bring on prosperity or affliction. I do not care anymore what wind comes into my life as long as He is happy.” Then you will enter into rest.

Be careful, then, not to rest in your rest. Should you do that, even for a lonely moment, you would still have Him in His garden, but it would look like He has departed. Then you would be like the bride in the song; you would go out and look in desperation for your absent groom; people would not understand; they would beat you up; you would be judged severely.

Should that trying moment come into your life, try meditating on Him. Think of how beautiful and faithful he is; meditate on Him. And as you meditate on Him you will remember again, “He is in His garden; He is in His garden.” He has, in fact, never left you.

Well, I am suggesting that that is stage-two surrender. That is the surrender that comes as a by-product; as a fruit of learning, hearing, and knowing. It is not a matter of just hearing, but of hearing the voice of the groom. It is when God speaks, that these things become clear; He is the only one that can show you that!

Do you believe it brothers? One by one, do you believe it that He is in love with you and that you do affect Him that way? He loves you! He is in love with you! Pull out all the stops and may God help you to believe that with all of your heart. If you do, then, the experiences the bride in the song experienced will become your experience. I tell you a final time, if you ever take your eyes off him and begin to focus on something else, even if it is something as wonderful as the rest he gives, begin to meditate on Him. Ask, "What is He like?" Think about Him and you will soon know where He is. Let us pray.

*Father, thank you so much for the wonderful book of Song. Take its truth, its reality and make it real for us. We want to experience this great love. Thank you for drawing us; thank you for kissing us; thank you for opening our eyes; thank you for allowing us to enter in. Thank you for inspiring this marvelous book that we can study. Work it's message into our hearts, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*

## MESSAGE # 4 REST/FRUIT (SONG 6:10-8:14)

### **Indispensable Principle; Opening Prayer; Review**

Would you turn again please to the wonderful Song of Songs. Our prayer continues to be that the One that you seek and in whom you delight, that He will suddenly come to His temple. As we come to look again at the Word of God and trust Him to clinch in our hearts the burden that is on His heart, I remind you of that principle that we can never take for granted, and we cannot live without. Let me place before you once again, that indispensable principle of all Bible study: Helpless dependence, childlikeness, total reliance upon God's Holy Spirit.

This is His Bible, He inspired it; He breathed it; and now He desires to breathe on it again. He is as real in our hearts as He was when He breathed His Word into existence; He desires again to breathe on His Word and make it vital; make it live. So, once again we come as little children. All of the study notwithstanding, all of our meditation, all of the effort we have made to try to put things together; all of that is nothing if God Himself does not speak and unveil His Son. So we need to trust Him.

Let me give you a Bible verse from Song itself to introduce this principle. Now I am taking it out of the context of Song, but I am leaving it in the context of Scripture. In other words, by isolating it from this particular passage maybe I have done a little violence to the particular context of Song, but it remains true in the balance of Scripture. It is from chapter 5 and verse 6. Remember yesterday when we discussed the Groom knocking on the bride's door? Now, perhaps at that time she was resting more in her rest than in her Groom. Anyway, the Lord had revealed to her that she was His garden; He would never leave His garden and He was always there, but for a season she lost the sense of His presence. She learned later that she had not lost His presence, but only the sense of His presence. When she ran out in the dews and the damps to illustrate the fact that He was still there, He called out to her. Chapter 5 verse 6 shows that she is outside now; she is out seeking Him:

*“My heart went out to him as he spoke.”*

That expression, “My heart went out to Him as he spoke”, becomes our prayer this morning as we trust the Lord to clinch the message of His heart. We pray that our hearts would go out to Him as he speaks. And even though at that time she had lost the sense of His presence, He was still there, He was still speaking, He was still calling, and something was stirring in her heart. *“My heart went out to him as he spoke.”* So with that in mind, let us pray and ask God to make that so real in us.

*Our Father, we thank You so much for your Word and we have sensed so often how our heart goes out as You speak, so we would ask You to speak again. Continue to draw us. Suddenly come to Your temple in a life changing way. We desire once again to behold the beautiful face of our Groom. We ask You Lord, this morning, as we meditate again in Your Word, that You would clinch in our hearts the message that You have for us. We know if we see the Lord we will be like Him. So show us, we pray, that transforming vision of our Savior. We thank You we can count on You for that and we just pray as we touch on these wonderful verses in the third stage, verses that are so precious and that we know so little about, will You please speak? And we thank You, in Jesus' name, Amen.*

Alright brothers, I know we have been together session after session and it is not like I am in Newport and must give a big review. I am so used to meeting a once a week which makes review very important. That is a big part of my teaching. But I do think it is important to get back into the flow, and so, though you have heard it very recently, let me stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance. Let me just go over again, the thrust of what we have been looking at.

The Song of Songs is the final book in the poetry section of the Bible and it causes us, I believe, to experience God's heart on the climactic redemptive experience. This is where He wants us, each one of us. The climax of the redemptive experience is your love affair with Jesus; my love affair with Jesus. It is intimate union with the Bridegroom-lover of your soul. It is relationship to Him. That is what God is working in our hearts and that is where He is bringing us; in this marvelous book that is the climax of the experience.

As I suggested, this is a love story on two levels. It is a love story of two worlds. It is heavenly love illustrated by earthly love. Although we have been focusing on the heavenly side, I pray that God in His grace would allow us to embrace these great things on both levels. You are the groom in your relationship with your life partner. You are the initiator. You are the one that draws her. She is your garden. You are to enjoy her just as she is. In all of these wonderful truths God desires not only that they are true in our union with Him, but that they are true on the level of earth.

The Song begins with chapter 1 verse 2. It is that sigh, that desire, that longing of the bride,

*"May he kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: your love is better than wine."*

She experienced this great desire. She had tasted the world; she had tasted the love of the Lord, and she had chosen the love of the Lord. Now she just desires that He would continually express His love over and over again. She knew, in order to enter into that union she needed to be drawn by Him; it was not in her to come on her own. If she was to taste of that love she had to be drawn into it. Do you realize, brothers, that our running is contingent on His drawing? That is not just some pious phrase; that is a blessed reality.

What is my hope for a victorious Christian life and intimate union with Him? What is your hope for a victorious Christian life and intimate union with the Lord Jesus Christ? I think the answer is this: I have a wooing Savior. You have a wooing Savior. He is always wooing. He is always drawing. He never stops.

Don't you love a love affair on the level of earth where the husband never stops wooing his wife? Even as that marriage gets on in years and turns gray, even then, the husband is to draw and to woo the wife. At any moment in your life, at any moment in my life, when you feel like your love for the Lord is growing stale or growing cold, in that moment you can look into the face of your Groom and say, "Draw me and we will run after thee." He never stops wooing; He never stops drawing. The bride began to experience this.

Now in our look at this book I have tried to point out what many commentators have seen. This is not my bright idea. God's people through the years have seen these three stages. Chapter 2 verse 16:

*"My beloved is mine, and I am his."*

In the beginning of the drawing, as we enter into union, it seems to be so self-centered. Its focus is my interest in Him. She claims Him. She seeks Him. She finds Him. She clings to Him. She holds on to Him. She wants to eat in His pastures. She wants to rest. It seems like it is all about her, and because she is so centered on self, she is constantly cutting herself down. She has low thoughts of herself. She thought that she must be beautiful in order to be loved. She had to learn that it was the opposite of that; she had to be loved in order to be beautiful. It is not the same thing. God began to teach her as He drew her, this truth. That first characteristic, as I suggested in the first stage, is light; it is revelation; it is discovery; it is understanding; it is illumination. "Kiss me with the kisses of your mouth." Every time He kissed her, her eyes opened wider in amazement and her mouth opened wider in amazement; she found a world she had never dreamed was there. God kept showing her and showing her and showing her. He kept kissing her over and over again. We will not review the ten ways her eyes were opened.

A great change comes in stage two, chapter 6 verse 3. It is not now "He is mine, I am his." It is now,

*"I am his and he is mine."*

It is *His interest* in me. There is very little about her interest in Him. There is a little bit there, but now it is His interest in her. I am my Beloved's. As the revelation, insight, light was the characteristic of the first section, I tried to show you that I thought (with the light I have presently) that *surrender* was the great characteristic of stage two.



When we closed last evening we were looking at the chief story in this section, which is the Groom and His garden. Glance again at these verses in Song 4:12.

*“A garden locked is my sister, my bride, a  
rock garden locked, a spring sealed up.”*

Verse 15:

*“You are a garden spring, a well of fresh water,  
springs flowing from Lebanon”*

He calls her His garden; His private garden. “I have come into my garden my sister, my bride.” Before this, all through stage one, as her eyes were being opened, her thoughts seemed to be, “I am His gardener”, but now she discovers the reality because of His drawing and because of His wooing. He has turned her away from her need to try to make herself something acceptable and attractive; lovely and beautiful. She has finally learned, “I am not His gardener, I am His garden; that is the revelation in the record that changed her life. When that finally dawned on her, when God finally made that so real—it was not just something she knew in her mind—but it suddenly hit her, “I am His garden! He loves me, he really does!”

We recall the changes that took place in her heart. So she prays this wonderful prayer chapter 4:16:

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

She could only respond to such a revelation by this utter and total submission. Come north wind, come south wind, it does not matter anymore whatever wind blows into my life, as long as He is pleased; as long as He is happy.

When we closed last evening I was showing you how He had taken her to a new level. He wanted her to know that He was always present to faith. She had clung earlier by sight, but now He is teaching her, “I am there when it does not look like I am there.” And when she lost Him, (you remember the story I will not get into that) she began to meditate on Him; suddenly she recalled, “He is not lost at all, I know where He is. He is in His garden.” The New Testament expression of that is temple. That is why when Jesus, as a little boy, was missing, He was found in the Temple. Where do you find Him? He is in His temple. He is always in His temple. He is always in His garden.

It is the truth of chapter 6:1:

*“Where has your beloved gone, O most beautiful among women?”*

Verse 2:

*“My beloved has gone down to his garden.”*

I know where He is.

### **Mutual Fellowship**

Alright, that brings us then, brothers, to the last stage of this climactic redemptive experience. The final section covers chapter 6 verse 11 to the end of the book. The key verse is chapter 7 verse 10:

*“I am my beloved’s and his desire is toward me.”*

By the light I have at the present, I see this as the highest cry of the book. It is all about Him. It is all about His interest in her. “His desire is for me.” I told you when we began that this is a very personal book; it is about the bride and the Groom, but she is going to learn now in this section that the “me” is plural. Hold on to that thought, and we will develop it as we go along. She has seen afresh how little their union actually depended on her. All she is, He has made her. All she has come to see, He has shown her. All the beauty that He was commending in her, was His beauty; He had given her His beauty. Her running was because of His drawing. Her love toward Him; her grip on Him and her desire for Him all seem to fade away in stage three when she says, “I am my beloved’s, his desire is for me.”

In this third stage, I told you, there were two words that I thought summarized God’s heart. Just as in stage one the word was *revelation* and in stage two it was *surrender, submission*, I’m suggesting that in stage three there are these two words: *Rest* and *Fruit*. Let me see if we illustrate that for you.

The first section shows how her heart was set on her satisfaction in Him; the second section the emphasis was on His satisfaction in her. Now, when you come to section three, the emphasis is on mutual fellowship. They are so one in this section; it is almost impossible to see them apart. Glance at these verses please. We did not read this earlier because this experience follows all that has gone before.

*“Let us go into the country. Let us spend the night in the villages.”* (Song 7:11)

*“Let us rise early, let us see if the vine has budded.”* (Song 7:12)

*“We have a little sister, what shall we do for our sister?”* (Song 8:8)

*“We will build her a battlement of silver, we will barricade her.”* (Song 8:9)

In this section there is a wonderful security, the bride is at rest in the Groom and it is all “we” now. It is “our”; it is “we”; it is union.

### **Rest in Clinging**

Let me give an illustration of this, I mentioned it earlier in passing but let me pound it home now. The Bible says in Ecclesiastes that the preacher who preaches pure words must have goads; they must come home like well driven nails; they must be given by one Shepherd. That is how to teach. You have to make sure you have a point; you have to drive it home, and you have to make sure it comes from one Shepherd. Well let me drive it home. (I have a couple of nails here to drive home.) In Song 3:4 we read,

*“Scarcely had I left them when I found him whom my  
soul loves; I held on to him and would not let him  
go until I had brought him into my mother’s house,  
and into the room of her who conceived me.”*

I want to compare Song 3:4 with Song 8:5. In Song 3:4, we see the bride clinging to Him; I pointed out that that clinging was not necessarily all that healthy. It was a clinging of desperation. Now I know there is a right way to cling to the Lord and God created His people, according to Jeremiah, for clinging. There is a Bible passage on that. But she was certain at this point in her experience with the Groom that if she let go of Him He would run away. In other words their union depended on her grip. She was holding everything together. There is a right way to cling to the Lord but there is also a wrong way.

Have you ever said this, or have you ever heard this? “I have to have devotions every day or He will be gone. If I do not have devotions every day then my whole day is going to mess up and I am not going to have sweet union with the Lord.” That is clinging in the wrong way, because that is saying that your union with Him depends on your grip on Him; depends on your hold on Him. “I have to be faithful in my stewardship. If I fail to tithe or to be generous I might just be cold toward the Lord.” That is gripping in the wrong way. “I must not neglect the fellowship of the saints and the gathering together; I must not miss the bread breaking or the Sunday assembly or the midweek prayer meeting or any conference or any gathering of the saints or it will interfere with my relationship with Christ.” Am I speaking against morning devotions? Am I speaking against stewardship? Am I speaking against meeting together with the people of God, the body of Christ? I am not. I am only saying that those things do not secure our relationship with Him. My fellowship with Him does not depend on my hold on Him. It depends on His hold on me.

I remember hearing a wonderful illustration one time; I may have even passed it on. It was an illustration about swimming and it explained to me why I cannot swim and why I will probably never be a good swimmer. Now my son just bought me, because he

thinks I am getting fat, a membership into the YMCA so that I could keep in shape by swimming. So we go to the Y and we have been trying to swim. I cannot breathe properly when I am attempting to swim. I am trying to learn how to breathe; the lifeguard there is trying to teach me how natural it is and how easy it is. I am having an awful time swimming, and I will tell you the reason that is so. One of the main reasons for my problem in swimming is that I use a lot of strokes. I have strokes with my arms and I kick like crazy, but I am using my strokes to hold me up. They are not designed to hold me up. I am supposed to trust God's finished work of creation, the water, to hold me up. The water holds me up; the strokes are designed to take me forward. Unfortunately, I am using the strokes to hold me up. That is why I am drowning rather than swimming. I must not use my energy to hold my head above the water; I have to learn to trust the water to hold me up. And the illustration is just this, "Brothers, the finished work of Christ will hold you up." The strokes are designed to take you forward. Do not neglect devotions, but do not trust them to hold you up. May God use them to take you forward. Do not neglect the fellowship of God's people, but do not trust that to hold you up. The finished work of Christ holds you up. Trust that! May God help us use all of our strokes to take us forward in the Lord.

Well in this first section this first section the bride was clinging in an unhealthy way; she was causing the union she had with the Groom to depend on her grip. The end of the book is quite different. Chapter 8:5 shows the progress.

*"Who is this coming up from the wilderness leaning on her beloved?"*

Oh, what a picture that is, leaning on her Beloved. Leaning is better than clinging because she is not the least bit afraid anymore that He is going to slip away and be gone. She is at rest! She is just leaning on her beloved. She is at ease. I love the way it is worded:

*"Who is this coming up out of the wilderness leaning on her beloved."*

Now I would expect, ( I speak as a fool) if it said, "Who is this coming out of the palace?" or "Who is this coming out of the banquet hall?" or "Who is this coming out of the garden leaning on her beloved?", her to be leaning on her Beloved, but it does not say that. The passage says:

*"Who is this coming up out of the wilderness leaning on her beloved."*

I think it is one of the most beautiful sights in the world to see a believer who has been in the wilderness, and to watch that believer come out of that wilderness leaning on his Beloved. What a testimony that is! Sometimes you see a person coming out of the wilderness that has not yet entered stage three of love; they are still in stage one; they are connected to the beloved, but they are sort of hanging on His foot as He drags them out of the wilderness. That is probably how I would do it.

The Lord has shown you brothers at Family Ministries recently, I do not know about the rest of you and the assemblies that you represent, but I know at Family Ministries there have been some wilderness experiences, and you have seen this testimony to the glory of God. This is not just a poem in the book of Song. No! It is reality in life! You have seen it. You have seen the testimony of a brother, with tears running down the cheeks because of a painful loss, coming up out of the wilderness leaning on the Beloved. Sometimes entire families are called to go through what can only be called a wilderness experience. It is amazing to see what the Lord has done. Have you beheld the composure and the rest and as a whole family comes out of the wilderness leaning on the Beloved; through the furnace without the smell of smoke on them anywhere? Glorious testimony!

There is a dear brother in Newport that I have the privilege of meeting with many days for many months now. For thirty-seven years he has lived in agony because of a disease. How he trusts the Lord. I cannot tell you all that he and his family have meant in my life and in the life of our family as we have watched him come out of the wilderness leaning on His Beloved.

In what a glorious way this song ends. We behold in the bride a wonderful composure. There is safety and security; this is rest, and the bride is not anxious or fretting; she is not fearful. Everything seems to be okay and she is leaning on her Beloved. In Song 8:6, 7, she has learned, "I am His garden; He really loves me" she is able to experience this marvelous love.

### **Resting in Love**

Commentators love these verses because they talk about love. It describes love. This is the love she came to rest in.

*"Set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal on thy arm.  
Love is as strong as death, jealousy is as cruel  
as the grave; The coals are coals of fire, most  
vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love,  
neither can floods drown it; If a man would  
give all the substance of his house for love it  
would be utterly condemned" ( Song 8:6)*

The reference in verse 6 to the seal on the arm is sort of like our wedding band. This woman has said, "Thank you for the symbol of Your love. Not the ring that goes on the finger; rather, make me a ring. Place me not on Your finger, but on Your heart." It is a glorious picture of love here, and in verse 6 she remembers the day when she was clinging in desperation, "If I let go He will depart; He is out of here; He is gone." Now she thinks about His love and says, "Oh, now I know that You have a hold on me". What a strong illustration she uses, "as strong as death." Death will not let go. Once death has gripped its victim, it will not let go. She says, "His love is as strong as death and I know that there is no way I can ever be released."

*“Many waters cannot quench love.” (Song 8:7)*

You know how we use the expression, “Boy, they have been through some deep waters.” or “What a flood has come in to their lives.”? She finally realizes that *there are no deep waters, there is no flood that can disturb* the love that He has expressed to her; she just feels so safe. It is all about rest and trusting.

Now, remember brothers, I do not want to keep coming downstairs, but this is a love story of two worlds. Your bride needs to know that she is a seal on your heart. She needs to know that your hold on her is as strong as death. She needs to know that. You need to tell her that. She needs to know whatever floods may come, however deep those waters get, that will not change anything. Waters cannot overflow your love for her. It is not enough to think that she knows that. You must tell her! The Groom has to communicate these things. She needs to know that she is your one and only; you love her with a jealous love.

We know, on the level of earth, pictures always break down, don't they? I mean, we can only go so far on earth, but God's love is beyond that. There is no picture; there is no poetic expression, not even in this book of Songs that can accurately picture God's love for us. This is a record of the True Groom for His bride. The reason is, because human love, even at best, is finite. He loves you with an infinite love. There is nothing on earth that can picture that. So she tries to find the strongest expression, “As strong as death. Fires of jealousy.”, but all seem to fall short of the reality. Nothing can describe infinite love. Jesus loves me with an infinite love, and only infinity can measure the intensity of that love.

Take all the loves that you can think of on the earth and put them in a pile until you have a mountain of love. A husband loves his wife. Take all the loves that husbands have for wives; take all the love that wives have for husbands; take all love that parents have for children; take all the love that children have for parents; take all the love that brothers have for sisters; take all the love that sisters have for brothers; take all the love that neighbors have for neighbors; take all the love that Christians have for Christians. Find all the loves you can find and put them in one pile, and what kind of a love pile would that be!

God loves you more this moment than every human being has ever loved every other human being in all the ages of history that have come, and in all the ages of history that will follow, all added together. And I am sorry for not telling you the full truth. I had to use weak illustrations because they are, by nature, finite. He has an infinite love for you.

John 17:23 comes as close as anything I know, where He says that He loves you as much as God the Father loves God the Son. What a love! What a love! Doubtless, we will go forward in the intensity of His love, but the intensity of His love can never increase. It is an absolute intensity. What I mean by that is God can never love you any

more than He loves you this moment. Even when you get to Heaven and have been there for a billion years, He will not love you any more than He loves you right now. See, only God can communicate that. If you start believing that and you let God start dawning that on your heart and it will change you. Many waters cannot quench love, (I do not want to be presumptuous. I speak as a fool) but His love is so intense that you cannot mess it up even with your sin. I know that can be misunderstood, but it needs to be said. What amazing love He has for us!

Let me ask you this, brothers, can you lean on Him? With a love like that, can you trust Him? If He allows you to go through the wilderness, can you lean on Him coming out of the wilderness? I suggest that this is exactly the picture you have in the Song of Solomon. You may rest. She has settled in His love. Let me ask this, “Can your wife lean on you?” May God work it in us. May the bride ever be at rest; may she ever live in peace.

## **The Fruit of Union**

### **Spontaneous**

Look at how the third section begins please, chapter 6 verse 4. It is the garden conversation of the Groom and the bride after she discovered that He is in the garden He begins to talk to her. This is where He says that His heart flips over her and skips a beat and all that, He is just praising her and praising her and praising her, but something is recorded right in the middle of that praise. Chapter 6 verse 9:

*“My dove, my perfect one is unique. She is her mother’s only daughter; She is the pure child of the one who bore her. The maidens saw her and called her blessed. The queens and the concubines also and they praised her saying, “Who is this that grows like the dawn? As beautiful as the full moon, as pure as the sun, as awesome as an army with banners.” I went down to the orchard of nut trees to see the blossoms of the valley to see whether the vine had budded or the pomegranates had bloomed. Before I was aware, my soul set me over the chariots of my noble people. Come back, come back, O Shulammitte; Come back, come back, that we may gaze at you! Why should you gaze at the Shulammitte, as at the dance of the two companies?”*

In the middle of His praising her, “You are my garden. You are lovely, you are fair.” In the middle of that praising, all of a sudden people start looking at her and they take up the praise. The description begins in verse 9. The maidens begin to look at her; and the queens begin to look at her; all the concubines begin to look at her. She is a wonder to all. While He is praising her because she is His garden, everybody else begins

to praise her because she has been made beautiful by Him; everybody starts looking at her and their mouths drop open wide and their eyes get wide. Note please, she is not trying to witness. She is not trying to tell anybody to look at her. She is not trying to be a blessing. She is not trying to have an influence on anybody. This is what I mean when I call the key word of this section *fruit*.

When the Groom praises her and tells her she is beautiful, do not forget, this is not flattery. This is true. She is fair because she is fair. He is not saying to her, “I know you are ugly but I can endure it.” He is not saying that. He is not saying, “I know you are swarthy in sin’s stain but I can be gracious to you.” He is not saying that. He says, “You are beautiful.” And even though her beauty is a borrowed beauty, even though it is a reflected beauty, it is an actual beauty. It is real! This is how He beholds her.

What a rich parable you have in verse 10:

*“Who is this who grows as beautiful as the dawn, as beautiful as the full moon?”*

You know, the moon does not have its own light; it is reflected light; it is borrowed light; it is light from the sun. In and of itself the moon is just a wilderness; it is barren; it is nothing; it is cold. The Groom has transformed the bride. When the bride was describing the Groom, I jotted down for my heart’s instruction everything the bride said about the Groom, and I came to one conclusion. So many of the descriptions have to do with His face, it is so amazing. She could not have described Him that way if she had been not looking full in His beautiful face. You know where her focus is. That is why she has dove’s eyes. You have to read Watchman Nee on the dove’s eyes; that marvelous section he has in his commentary on this book.

The bride has been transformed. She is not hanging jewelry all over herself anymore; she is not being pierced in strange places or covering her flesh with fragrances. She is not doing that! She is just listening to the Groom when He says, “You are so beautiful, you are so fair, you are so lovely.” And everybody says, “Wow, look at her! She is really something!” And they start looking at her. Amazing!

### **Supernaturally Natural**

Now, what is she doing? Verse 11:

*“She went down to the orchard of nut trees.”*

I know there are different views of this. Frederick Krumacher, as much as I respect him as a commentator and enjoy his works, in my view, he missed the point of this. He thinks that is a bad thing; she is backsliding now, according to Mr. Krumacher. I think it is a normal thing. She is not doing anything especially spiritual.

I think, on the level of earth as we look at it, it is very unspiritual. If the record said, “She had been fasting for forty days and just finished her fast” or “She had spent



one night a week for three weeks in a row in an all night prayer meeting” or if the record had said, “She had just come back from her third missionary tour” or, “She just finished writing a devotional book” or, “She had been faithful for a year and a half in mentoring someone who needed mentoring.” Then I would say, “Let me gaze at you Shulammite; you are some person! Wow! What a spiritual person to be able to do all that.” But it does not say that. It says that she went down to gather nuts. It is such an every-day thing that she does; it is so natural; she is just living. It is supernaturally natural! Everybodies eyes are open wide and amazed at what they see. That is the very point. When I am living in union with the Groom, I do not have to be doing spiritual things to be attractive. Just living in union with Him is attractive!

*“Before I was aware” (Song 6:12)*

She was not even aware of it. She did not even know it. Everybody has their eyes open wide and are staring at her beauty, and she does not even know it.

*“Before I was aware my soul set me over the chariots of my noble people. Come back, come back, O Shulammite; Come back, come back, that we may gaze at you!”*

She is just living! She is just gathering nuts, and she becomes the center of attraction. They see her beauty as a reflected beauty; the beauty of the Groom. She is just entering into union with her Groom, and everybody is gazing at her. This is so beautiful. They see her as pure as the sun; she is like the full moon. There are no programs, no gimmicks, no how-to tapes, no how-to books, and no devices. Everything is spontaneous. She is just living and all of a sudden because of her union with the groom she has become attractive to everyone.

Now I believe it is on purpose that God has saved verse 13 until we arrived at stage three. You say, “Well, the Song of Solomon is about the king and the Shulammite woman.” This is the only time she is called the Shulammite. You do not find that in the early chapters. It is not until the end she is called Shulammite. And I told you that Shulammite is the feminine form for the same name. In chapter 1 verse 3, at the beginning of her experience with Him, she cried out for His name; His name was like oil poured out; she wanted His name. Now she has it and she has become like Him. She has His name and His nature; she has His character, and now she is “Solomon.” She has become like Him; she is like the moon, the full moon. There is no eclipse here where the earth gets in the way. This is the full moon.

## Divine

Glance please at chapter 6:13:

*“Come back, come back, O Shulammite; Come back, come back, that we may gaze at you!” Why should you gaze at the Shulammite as at the dance of the two companies?”*

What does that mean, “as at the dance of two companies”? I have a footnote in my Bible and it says (I can’t pronounce the word but) “Mahanaim” – do you have that in your Bible? Well, I am glad it is there because now I have a reference. I can go back in my Bible to Genesis 32. I will just tell you the story; I am sure that you will remember it. Jacob has run from the Lord and from his brother for many years. He is about to meet Esau on the next day. He sends his family away. He is going to be alone and while he is alone the Lord is going to wrestle him. Do you remember the story? Well, before the wrestling match with the Lord, he pitches his tent because he wants to be alone. And he opens his eyes and behold, there are tents all around him. He had camped smack-dab in the middle of another camp, and he cannot believe it; he rubs his eyes. There are angels, angels everywhere and all around him. He named the place Mahanaim, (or however it is pronounced) which means, “two camps.” There is the camp you can see with these eyes, and there is a spiritual camp as well.

*“Come back, come back, O Shulammite, let us gaze at you.”*

She is so human; she is so divine. There are two camps. They look at her and she is just another person, but they keep looking. There is something about you that is so different. It is a glorious thing, brothers, when you just live in such a union with the Lord that everybody begins to look at you and gaze at you and say, “There’s something about you that is as pure as the sun. You are like, I know it is borrowed light, but you are like the full moon.” And when somebody can look at you and when they have no other explanation for your life than God that is a spiritual testimony. There is something divine about you. That is what happened to her! She has done nothing but relate to the Groom and she has been changed; she has been transformed; she has become Shulammite; she has become Solomon; she has become him; she has become the moon; she has become reflected light, reflected beauty, reflected glory. Now everybody is attracted to her, and everybody is looking at the mystery. They see the two camps. They see the human side and they see a divine side.

This is the fruit of the third stage. You are in the garden; you are enjoying the garden; and all of a sudden you become an attraction. Before you are aware of it, without you knowing of it, unconsciously, you are on display. People are watching you. She is at rest, leaning on her Beloved coming out of the wilderness. She is so relaxed now. She is so beautiful now – with His beauty. She is not trying to put herself forward; she is out of the picture; it is all Him and His desire toward her. A testimony has been created, and it is as natural as breathing to attract the gaze of all.

## **The Burden for the Church**

I want you to hold those two thoughts, rest on one side and fruit on the other; being transformed into His likeness so that everybody is attracted. I want you to notice how the book comes to an end, and may God help us as we look at chapter 8. There is much in this chapter that I am not qualified to set before you. I am only beginning to see a few things here. But I am quite sure of this: The entire chapter is about the Church. The entire chapter is about the body. The entire chapter is about the whole body of Christians. Chapter 8 verse 1 she talks about:

*“...my mother. Like a brother to me...”*

Verse 2:

*“I would bring you to the house of my mother who used to instruct me.”*

She is so anxious. You know, I told you at the beginning that the mother’s house is just a picture of the Church; she is so anxious to bring the Groom to the mother’s house. This is not the first time she has mentioned it. She has enjoyed such a union with the Groom, she now desires that union for the whole body.

The sister book in the New Testament to Song of Solomon I believe is 1 John. The New Testament ends the same way with the redemptive experience; the climax; the book of fellowship; the book of union with the Lord. That same burden is expressed in 1 John 1:3:

*What we have seen and heard we declare unto  
you so that you may have fellowship with us.  
And truly our fellowship is with the Father and  
with His son Jesus Christ. These things I have  
written that our joy might be full.*

It is the person who is so united to the Lord who is burdened for the Church. He looks around and he says, “Oh, I wish everybody could experience this. That would be the fullness of my joy.”

The climax of the redemptive experience is not only the message of the book of Song, but the last chapter of the book of Song. This chapter brings the message to a climax. Evangelical commentators agree that the Church is very prominent in this last chapter. Probably even up to the very end where you have those vineyards where some are serving by duty and others by union. The bride has a vineyard all her own and she is serving out of a union, and so on.

But I want you to focus, please, on verses 8 and 9:

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

As the book, the poem, the song, the message of God draws to a close, we arrive in the mother’s house. We have traced the progress from the beginning. It started off with His drawing the bride in answer to her prayer; the relationship developed and the bride grew closer to the Lord. More and more she entered in, until at last she was found leaning upon Him. She had become a testimony by doing nothing except going down to the orchard of nuts. Now, the union must not stop with testimony.

She looks around and she says to the Groom, “You have to come to my mother’s house. You have to come to the Church. You have to come to the body. There is a little sister, she has no breasts.” She is not mature; she is not developed. She has not come to know what I have come to know.

Now, she is living in complete union with the Lord and she begins to get burdened for those all around her. Note that she does not say, “I have a little sister”, but she looks in the eyes of her Groom and says, “We have a little sister.” Her burden now is for those who have not entered in; who have not experienced what she has experienced. She wants to help and so she says to the Groom, “What can we do? I have tasted so much; I have seen so much; I have experienced so much! You have done such wonders for me; I am now clothed with Your beauty; I am radiating You. But, what about her? My sister? My brother? She has no breasts. She has not entered in; she is not developed; she is immature. What can we do Lord? How can we help?”

### **Protection for the Immature**

Now, no matter how you interpret the wall and the door, ( I am not going to get into that because godly men differ, and when godly men differ I do not know what to do. I try to find common denominator ground.) the only cure for immaturity is maturity. “If she is a wall, if she is a door”, some say that is a good thing. Others say that it is a bad thing. Godly men take both sides. Let us forget about the controversy because the answer is the same. However you look at “if she is a wall or if she is a door”, whether you take it to be good or bad, the question remains, what can we do for those who are immature? And I believe the answer is this: There is only one answer. You cannot make an immature person mature. A program is not going to help. You cannot set up another program. You cannot do what only growth can do. You cannot mature the immature. The cure for immaturity is maturity.

As the book closes, the bride who has come into intimate union, asks the Groom, “What can we do?” And He gives a double answer. I want us to look at the answer because that is how the book closes. This is the climax of the redemptive experience. So now, let us try to answer the question, “What can I do” (What can we do? I don’t mean “I”) “What can we do? The “we” is me and the Lord, you and the Lord, the Church and the Lord. What can we do for that sister that has no breasts?” And he gives a double answer.

The first answer is in verse 9:

*“If she is a wall, we will build on her a battlement of silver,  
if she is a door we will barricade her with planks of silver.”*

Now do not get lost in the word pictures. Do not try to figure out every little word. Get the principle. And I think what He is saying is this: The only thing one can do for an immature person is to protect them. Protect them. We can guard them. We can watch over them. We can surround them. We can set up stations; we can help them; we can guard them! Until they seek the Lord themselves it is not possible to help them; they are not going to get mature. That is the first part of the answer.

What is the second part of the answer? Verse 13 and 14:

*“Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions harken  
to thy voice – cause me to hear it! Make haste,  
my beloved, be thou like a roe or a young  
hart upon the mountain of spices.”*

### **The Testimony of a Life**

Brothers, we are coming right to the end now and I think this is God’s final answer. Please pray in your heart that God will communicate this to you. This is so fresh to my heart. Some of this is as fresh as this morning in my heart. Here is what I think it is saying. I know there are differences in those who say “Who is speaking?” Is it the Groom; is it the bride; is it partly the Groom, partly the bride? Everybody seems to guess at that, so I have a right to guess as well. I think the Groom speaks in verse 13. I think the bride speaks in verse 14. What does the Groom say in verse 13? Do not forget it is an answer to the question, “What shall we do for our little sister who has no breasts?” That is what he is answering. The first part of the answer is, “You have to support her, you have to protect her; you have to be there; you have to watch over her; you have to guard her.” That is the first part.

The second part is this. Now I am going to speak, and I pray that it will not dishonor the Lord, but I am going to speak as if I were the Lord. This is what I think He is saying. He is saying, “My dear bride. You made a discovery because I drew you into it. And you discovered that you were My garden. Do you remember that, dear bride?”

Well now, you must learn that even though that was personal and I said ‘you are My garden sealed; you are My garden; My private garden; My rock garden; My only garden; My unique garden; My one garden; My one and only garden’ I have to tell you something. I have many gardens.” Look at the text: *I have many gardens*. It is plural. “You long to bring me to the mother’s house. Alright, I will go to the mother’s house, in your person. You are My garden. You are concerned about those bad brothers who treated you so poorly and made you work in the vineyards; you are so concerned about those companion shepherds that were man-centered and they did not feed you; you are so concerned about those watchmen that misunderstood you and mistreated you and persecuted you; you are so concerned about those daughters of Jerusalem that kept disturbing your rest; you are so concerned about that little sister that has no breasts; you are so concerned about the caretakers of the vineyard who are working out of duty instead of out of union. You have a burden for the mother’s house and you are inviting Me, ‘come to the mother’s house, You have to come here, You have to help these people, some of them have not entered into this.’”

Well, I want you to know first of all, we have many titles in Song for the Church, Song speaks of the companions, and there are the shepherds, and there are the guardsmen, and there are the watchmen, and there are the caretakers, and there are the daughter of Jerusalem, and the daughters of Zion. There are so many names for God’s people. But the last name for God’s people in this book, the body, is *gardens*. “They are all My gardens, but they haven’t come to see it yet. They are **all** My gardens. And so, My garden, I am placing you in My gardens.” The Groom tells his bride, “Do you want to know how they can be helped? I am placing you in My gardens. That is their hope for maturity. That you are going to be there because you have become like Me; they are now attracted to you, and they see two companies, but they do not understand it. They are confused as they look at you; they know that it is human but they know it is divine, and you have become a radiant picture of Me; a reflection; you are as pure as the full moon. You are My representative in the gardens.”

Verse 13 the Groom says:

*“My companions are listening for your voice.”*

“Do you want to know what you can do? You have to protect them or they will self destruct. You have to watch over them. You cannot mature them. You cannot do what that little kid did with the flower when he pulled it out by the roots so it would grow faster. That is what we try to do. Sometimes I see some Christians and I want to shake them. I want to shake them and say, “What is wrong with you?! Start seeking the Lord!” But it does not work, so you have to protect them, you have to watch over them, you have to be there, you have to love them. Then he says, “You are My garden, and here is My solution. I will put My garden in My gardens. There you will stand as a radiant testimony and they will see two camps, two companies. You will be the attraction:

*“They are listening for your voice.”*

Then he says,

*“Let me hear it. Let me hear your voice as you talk to my gardens.”*

Then the bride speaks. Now I know some have looked at this last verse and said, “This is the verse that predicts the second coming of Christ:

*“Make haste, be like a gazelle on the mountain.”*

I do not have a problem with those who say that is the second coming. It would not surprise me if this book on the climactic redemptive experience ended with:

*“Even so, come Lord Jesus.”*

Maybe that is in there. As I read the context, I do not think that is what this is about. I think He says, “You have a burden for those who are not mature. Well, My solution is you, and your relationship with Me. I have made you radiant through union with Me, and that will be the testimony; I am going to put My garden in My gardens. And they are listening for your voice, and you can tell them how you got there.

Remember the path. Tell them how I convinced you that you were My garden. Tell them everything! I am listening for you to tell them!” Then she remembers, “I remember when I was in a box; I remember when I was in a lattice enclosure; I remember when I did not know I was Your garden. I remember what You did then. You came like a gazelle, leapt over the mountains, came up to my little box, made a proposal, ‘arise my darling my beautiful one.’ I remember those precious things!”

I think the bride is saying this, “I’ll do it. I will be Your garden in Your gardens. I know they are Your gardens. I have looked at them harshly. I have been so angry at the daughters of Jerusalem and the brothers that were angry at me. I was looking at them wrong. I never saw this motley crew as Your gardens. Forgive me, Lord! I know now that they are Your gardens; and I know how you reached me. I know they are listening for my voice and I will tell them whatever I can tell them. That, I know, will not bring maturity.

Make haste. Come my Beloved; come to them like You came to me.” I think that is how it ends. I think it ends with the bride having a great burden for the body that they would all come into this relationship. The Groom says, “I am going to leave you there as a living witness of what relationship can do.” And she says, “You do it. I will be there, listen for my voice, I will tell them. But, oh make haste. Come like a gazelle. Do for them what you have done for me.”

And as I understand it that is God’s heart in Song. Let us pray.

*Father, thank You for drawing us into union with You. We know the frustration in our hearts; we look around and just long that everybody would know You as You have been so gracious to allow us to know You. Thank You for putting us in Your gardens. Thank You that every individual Christian in Your mind and heart is Your garden. Make haste Beloved. Come as a gazelle; come swiftly; come surely. Draw them as You have drawn us. Draw me, and we will run after Thee. We pray in Jesus' name, Amen.*

Thank you brothers.