

Song of Solomon

Progress of Love



By Rev. Tim Gibson

Lesson 1 – Introduction & Overview
Lesson 2 – Premature Love
Lesson 3 – Possessive Love
Lesson 4 – Painful Love

Lesson 5 – Powerful Love
Lesson 6 – Perfecting Love Pt.1
Lesson 7 – Where am I?
“The Wall Analysis”

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Click on the links or pictures below to go straight to the lesson or section you wish to see (If you're using this on the computer).

LESSON ONE: INTRODUCTION – METHOD OF INTERPRETATION AND OVERVIEW 1

- (1) Methods of Interpretation 1
 - (a) Different Methods of Interpretation..... 2
 - (b) Method of Interpretation Used 3
 - (c) How the songs divided..... 4
 - (d) The Different Characters 5
- (2) Overview of the Song 5
- (3) Application..... 7



..... 8

LESSON TWO: STAGE ONE – PREMATURE LOVE..... 8

- (a) Loving Jesus is the best thing (1:1-3)..... 9
- (b) Getting Our Priorities Right (1:4) 10
- (c) The Unkept Vineyard Syndrome (1:5-6)..... 10

- (d) The Hungry Cry (1:7-8)..... 11
- (e) His Most Beautiful Love (1:9-11) 12
- (f) Pouring Out Love & Receiving His (1:12-17)... 13
- (g) We Need A Grace Image (2:1-2) 15
- (h) Jesus Is Our Essential Source Of Delight (2:3-4) 15
- (i) Overcome By His Love – Lovesick! (2:5-7)..... 16



..... 18

LESSON THREE: STAGE TWO – POSSESSIVE LOVE..... 18

- (a) Calling Us Out Of Our Comfort Zones (2:8-9). 19
- (b) The Harvest Is Ready (2:10-13) 20
- (c) “You’ve heard my voice, let me hear yours” (2:14) –..... 21
- (d) Catch The Joy Robbers (2:15) 21
- (e) The Cry to be separated to Jesus (2:16-17) 22
- (f) The Fear of Losing Him (3:1-5) 23



..... 25

LESSON FOUR: STAGE THREE – PAINFUL LOVE..... 25

(a) Join in the Procession (3:6-11): 26

(i) Gloriously Changed 26

(ii) The End-Time Company of Believers (Army) . 26

(iii) A Carriage for The King 27

(iv) Crown Him! 28

(b) Jesus - Affirmer of the Brethren (4:1-5): 28

(c) Embracing the Cross (4:6):..... 30

(d) Equipping the Soul for the Tests Ahead (4:7-11): 30

(e) The Secret Garden (4:12-15): 31

(f) Submitting to His Dealings - The Desperate Cry (4:16-5:1)..... 32

(g) Resolving Indifference and Feelings of Being Unprepared (5:2-6): 33

(h) Enduring the Rejection of Other Believers (5:7-8): 35



..... 37

LESSON FIVE: STAGE FOUR – POWERFUL LOVE..... 37

(a) The Most Powerful Testimony (5:9-16): 38

The Ten-Fold Description Of Jesus 38

(b) Bringing Others into Intimacy (6:1): 40

(c) A Revelation of Where He is (6:2-3): 40

(d) The Bride Becomes an ARMY (6:4-13): 41

(1) A Unique Army..... 41

(2) An Army Shining Bright..... 42

(3) An Army On The Move 42

(4) A Swift Army 43

(5) A Delivering Army 43

(6) A Double Dancing Army..... 43

(e) Living For His Pleasure Alone (7:1-10):..... 44

The Twelve-Fold Description of the Militant Bride 45

(f) Co-Labourers With Him (7:11-13:) 46

(g) Bearing His reproach (8:1-4): 47



..... 49

LESSON SIX: STAGE FIVE – PERFECTING LOVE..... 49

(a) Leaning on Him (8:5a):..... 50

- (1) Up From The Wilderness 50
 - (i) The wilderness was associated with Israel’s 40-year period of 50
 - (ii) The wilderness was used as an image of God’s (cf. Jer 22:6; Joel 2:3). 50

(2) Lean On Me. 50

(b) Great Awakening (8:5b):..... 51

(c) The Strength of the Love of God (8:6-7): 51

(1) His Love SEALS us (v6a): “Set me as a seal upon your heart.... upon your arm;” (NKJV). 52

(2) His Love is STRONG (v6b-7a): “For love is as strong as death, a vehement flame.” (NKJV) 52

(3) His Love is very SPECIAL (v7b): “If a man give all his wealth it would be utterly despised.”(NKJV). 52

(d) The Call to Discipleship (8:8-9): 53

(i) WALL people: “If she is a wall, we will build upon her a battlement of silver.” 53

(ii) DOOR people:” If she is a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar.”..... 54

(e) The Call to Maturity (8:10): 54

Perfect Peace..... 55

(f) The Lord of the Harvest - Giving our All (8:11-12): 55

(g) The Cry For Him to Come (8:13-14):..... 56

LESSON SEVEN: THE WALL ANALYSIS – WHERE AM I? 58

(1) Introduction:..... 58

(2) ‘The Wall Analysis’ 59

(3) Looking at the Results: 62

(i) Creating your own Wall... 62

(ii) Reading the Wall:..... 63

(iii) Building Blocks For Each Level: 64

(iv) Final Words 65

Lesson One: Introduction – Method of Interpretation and Overview

"The Song of Solomon, the King's song to His bride, needs to be taught and sung with revelation and power. It will wash and restore the church, as it prophetically calls her forth to holy passion." - Mike Bickle.

The author has felt compelled by the Spirit to produce this material at such a time as this to convey a vital message to the Bride of Christ in this generation. The Song of Solomon has baffled many in their attempts to understand it. As a result many have neglected to seek the Lord for its proper interpretation, and many have been embarrassed to read it because of its sexual content. However, the author's belief is that the Song of Solomon can be interpreted in a relevant way by following very basic laws of Hermeneutics as will be outlined from the start.

ICON KEY	
	Observation
	Interpretation
	Application

The **Icons** to the left will be used throughout the lessons. The symbols for interpretation (a dove in this case) may change to represent different animals, scenes of nature etc.



(1) Methods of Interpretation

Throughout the ages there have been many different interpretations of this beautiful Jewish Love Song written probably by King Solomon himself. Some have a credible explanation, others are the product of an over imaginative mind! In this material the author has endeavored to interpret this song as accurately as possible following sound hermeneutics.

(a) Different Methods of Interpretation

(1) *An allegory.*

(2) *An extended type.*

(3) *A drama involving two or three main Characters.*

(4) *A collection of Syrian Wedding Songs.*

(5) *A collection of Pagan Fertility Cult Liturgies.*

(6) *An anthology of disconnected songs extolling human love.*

(7) *A Lyric Poem, which has both unity and logical expression.*

The best method combines all the above (except d. and e.) but following the 'literal sense' interpretation.

The Literal Sense - The usual, customary and socially accepted meaning conveyed by words or expressions in their particular contexts.

"If the literal sense makes common sense, seek no other sense or we shall end up with non-sense!" Anon.

The "*literal sense*" does not exclude the **figurative** where it is part of normal communication.

The "*literal sense*" does not exclude the **spiritual** meaning (not 'spiritualization').

The "*literal sense*" does not exclude **application**.

The '*literal sense*' does not exclude **Depth of Meaning**."

(b) Method of Interpretation Used



(a) Type of Literature.

Song of Songs is a *JEWISH LOVE SONG*. This means that in order to interpret the meaning of this book we need to understand two things...

(i) *The Jewish Mind.*

(ii) *Jewish Songs / Poetry.*

(i) **The differences between Jewish and Western thought,**



Jewish Mind

DYNAMIC Understanding.
Impressions. What something
or someone **DOES**
(functional)



Western Mind

STATIC Understanding.
Images. What something or
someone **IS**
(Descriptive)

Example of using Western Mind

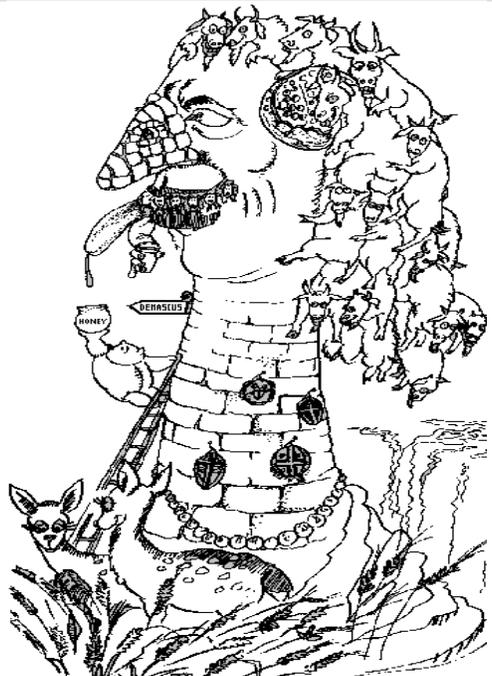
Song 4:1-54

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

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

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

4 Your neck is like the tower of David, built for an armory, on which hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.



(ii) The differences between Jewish and Western thought,

As this is a poetic song we must interpret the *'heart'* of the song, not simply taking it literally. We should interpret the meaning of the things mentioned (plants, animals, buildings) according to their function. The rest of scripture must also be used to determine the interpretations of frequently mentioned things (e.g. DOVE = HOLY SPIRIT) Where there is a place name etc. it is useful to look at the original meaning (e.g... SOLOMON = Prince of Peace).



(b) Levels of Interpretation

There is nothing unbiblical about interpreting the Song of Solomon on both the human marital relationship level and of God's husband-relationship with His people (God and Israel and Christ and the Church). The Apostle Paul saw the 'great mystery' of Christ and the Church through the husband-wife relationship (Ephesians 5:22-32) - at the same time Paul speaks of the marital relationship and Christ's relationship with the Church. For him there was no problem with using these two relationships interchangeably. Indeed he saw them as being intimately related to each other.

LEVEL 1: Actual Wedded Love (Literal Interpretation)

LEVEL 2: Love between God/Jesus and His People.

LAYER 1: GOD'S LOVE FOR ISRAEL AS HIS PEOPLE.

LAYER 2: JESUS' LOVE FOR HIS CHURCH (BODY OF CHRIST)

LAYER 3: THE MESSIAH'S LOVE OF THE INDIVIDUAL.

(c) How the song is divided.

The Song is divided into stages of love by a phrase that contains "I charge you" in all cases (2:7; 3:5; 5:8; 8:4 - five stages of love.)

STAGE 1: (1:1-2:7): Premature Love.

STAGE 2: (2:8-3:5): Possessive Love.

STAGE 3: (3:6-5:8): Painful Love.

STAGE 4: (5:9-8:4): Powerful Love.

STAGE 5: (8:5-8:14): Perfecting Love.

(d) The Different Characters

This song is the BEST of Solomon's 1005 (1 Kings 4:32, 33) and talks about his BEST Bride (possibly out of 140 at time of writing – 6:8 – and 700 wives, 300 concubines at end of his life).

Internal evidence shows us that Solomon is the Author (see 1:1,5; 3:7,9,11; 8:11-12) and that he is a king (1:4,12; 3:9,11; 7:5). The Shulamite was a simple Shepherdess / Vineyard worker from a humble area of Israel (6:13), and it may be derived from the town of Shunem which was southwest of the Sea of Galilee in the tribal area of Issachar.)

This means this song was written somewhere between 971-931 B.C (Solomon's reign).

This song alludes to 21 species of plants and 15 species of animals - Solomon had an intimate knowledge of the plant and animal world (1 Kings 4:33). The song also cites geographical locations in the north and south, indicating that they were still one kingdom as in the time of Solomon. (E.g. 6:4 mentions both Tirzah and Jerusalem, the northern and southern capitals in Solomon's time - Samaria became northern capital after Solomon.)

Type	Anti-Type
King Solomon - The Bridegroom. <i>(Name means 'Prince of Peace')</i>	Lord Jesus - Lover of His People <i>(Is THE Prince of Peace - Isa 9:6)</i>
The Shulamite Woman - Bride. <i>(Feminine form of the masculine Solomon- i.e.Princess of Peace.)</i>	God's People (Israel & Church) <i>(The Bride of Christ)</i>
The Daughters of Jerusalem. <i>(Term for the poor living outside the city walls).</i>	The Poor as seen in N.T - <i>(The unreached, poor in Spirit)</i>



(2) Overview of the Song

The following charts give an overview of the progression of different themes throughout the song, following the five stages as outlined already.

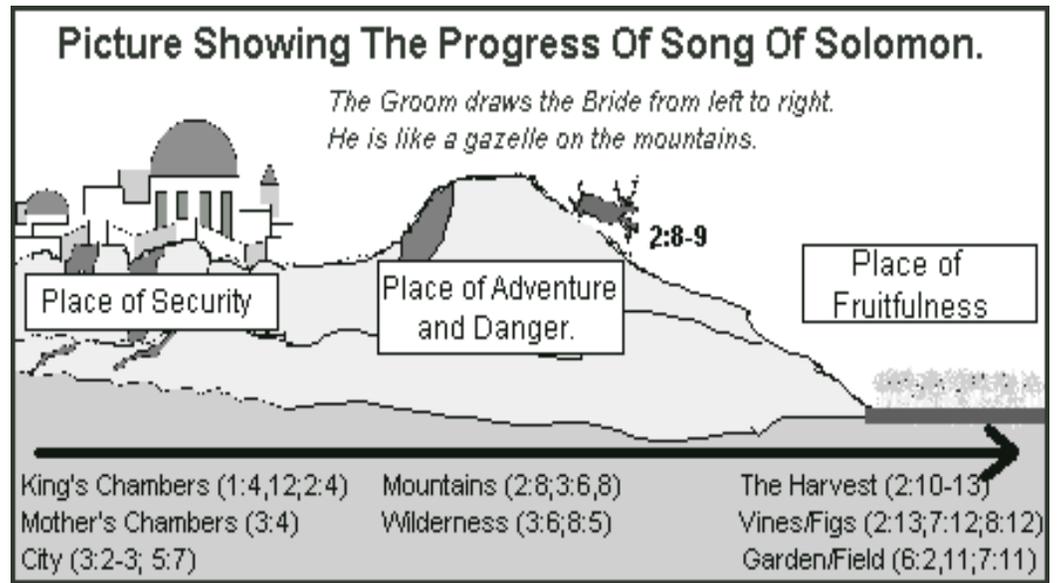
(a) Level 1 Overview: Love within human relationship (we will not look at this level in this material).

SONG OF SOLOMON - PROGRESS OF LOVE

(b) Level 2 Overview - Love between God and His people.

Stage of Love	Revelation of the Man (Jesus)	
	In a word	More Detail.....
(1) Premature Love (1:1-2:7)	Blesser	He is seen as the King who provides for, sustains and loves us (eg. 1:4;2:3-5)
(2) Possessive Love (2:8-3:5)	Draw-er	He is seen as the prophetic voice, leaping on high places, calling His Bride into the harvest, announcing that now is the time (See 2:8-13)
(3) Painful Love (3:6-5:8)	Warrior	He is seen as the anointed man of war and the bride's husband (entered into fulness of covenant relationship - 3:6-11).
(4) Powerful Love (5:9-8:4)	Partner	He is seen as the Bride's friend (5:16) and Co-Labourer (7:11-13)
(5) Perfecting Love (8:5-14)	Lean-on-er	He is seen as one to lean on 100% (8:5). Also He is seen as the Lord of the Harvest (8:11 - Baal Hamon = Lord of the Harvest).

Stage of Love	How We See Ourselves	How Jesus Sees Us
(1) Premature Love (1:1-2:7)	'Dark but lovely' (1:5) (Stained with sin)	'Fairest among women' (1:8,15) (He sees our potential).
(2) Possessive Love (2:8-3:5)	He 'is mine and I am His' (2:16;3:4). (Owning Jesus!)	'My love..fair one dove's eyes..sweet voice' etc... (He loves us even when we're possessive).
(3) Painful Love (3:6-5:8)	'I sleep but my heart is awake..' (5:2) (Unprepared)	Spotless (4:7). Ravishes His heart (4:9)
(4) Powerful Love (5:9-8:4)	'As the chariots of my people' (6:12) (Warrior)	'Awesome as an army banners'.(6:4,10) (Warrior)
(5) Perfecting Love (8:5-14)	A seal on His heart and arm (8:6) (How own us) '..a wall..' (8:10) (Strong).	A worthy vineyard keeper. (8:12). A fruitful woman. One whom others will be blessed by (8:13)



Summary

The Song of Solomon is a love song written by Solomon and abounding in metaphors and oriental imagery. Historically it depicts the wooing and wedding of a shepherdess/vineyard keeper by King Solomon, and the joys and heartaches of wedded love. Allegorically, it pictures Israel as God's espoused Bride (Hosea 2:19, 20) and the Church as the Bride of Christ. As human life finds its highest fulfillment in the love of man and woman, so spiritual life finds its highest fulfillment in the love of God for His covenant people (Israel), and Christ for His Church. It shows us five stages of Love we are to move through in our love relationship with Him.



(3) Application

Look back over this lesson, especially at the charts and ask the Lord to show you where you are on them. Pray for the Lord to take you deeper in your love relationship with Him as you go through this course. Write down your expectations for what you desire to see the Lord do in this course...



Lesson Two: Stage One – Premature Love

Our Life's Goal.

In the first four verses of this stage the maiden lays out the goal and theme of her life on earth. She desires an intimate relationship with him whose love is better to her than the best wine of the world. From verse five to the end of the song we can trace her unbroken journey in that progression of passion for her beloved. We should make this our life's goal

- Intimacy with Jesus!

The song starts off with an expression of fervent but immature love of the woman to the man. This love is not looked down upon, but is seen to be the foundation to the rest of the Song. This could be seen as the 'first love' referred to in Revelation 2:4.

Many Christians either lose this 'first love' after their initial 'lovesick' experience of first becoming a Christian and falling in love with Jesus, or they have never experienced such love at all! Jesus is drawing us back to this fervent love for Him by showing us how much He loves us!

It is interesting to note that in this stage there is little movement out of his and her immediate dwellings. Only in the next stage does it become apparent that He wants her to break out of her old security. The importance of this stage is that a correct foundation in intimacy will lead to a breaking out of false securities, and a freeing into His purposes!

ICON KEY



Observation



Interpretation



Application

The Icons to the left will be used throughout the lessons. The symbols for interpretation (a dove in this case) may change to represent different animals, scenes of nature etc.



(a) Loving Jesus is the best thing (1:1-3)

The song starts with an exuberant declaration and desire for the Beloved's love: *"Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth."* This is the cry for a deep intimate, fervent relationship. A kiss speaks of this close intimacy. The Greek word for worship is *'proskuneo'* which means *'to kiss towards'*. - He kisses us (Luke 15:20) and we are to kiss Him (Psalm 2:12). Let's kiss Jesus!



Look up the Hebrew word for *'kiss'* as used in the Song (use the separate comprehensive word list booklet that goes with this material).

It is also used for putting on armour in preparation for battle!

Our intimacy with Jesus prepares us for the spiritual warfare ahead. Without this desperate, intimate longing for Jesus we cannot effectively progress to the other stages of love. God wants firstly to restore a level of love that will be a strong foundation in our Christian walk.



To *'Kiss'* Him we must:

- (a) Spend time with Him.
- (b) Keep our mouths closed (silently wait for Him).
- (c) Allow Him to get very close (no secrets - be transparent).
- (d) Receive his *'kiss of life'* by releasing our emotions to Him.

"For your love is better (more delightful (NIV)) than wine." (NKJV) - Jesus' love is better than all the wine (joy, satisfaction, experience) of this world. Is this true in your life? Do you desire His intimate presence more than all other experiences in life?

*"Because of the fragrance of your good ointments,
your name is ointment poured forth;
therefore the virgins love you."* Song of Solomon 1:3

To interpret verse 3 it's important to note that *'name'* in scripture denotes the person's character and authority, *'fragrance'* speaks of the anointing of the Spirit). He pours out His very character (name) into our lives and it is a pleasing thing to behold, releasing His anointing in our lives! We must allow Him to do this by believing that His name is above every other name, every other experience pales in comparison with being with Him.

Because of this *'the virgins love'* him - who are they? Are you numbered in their company? The *'virgins'* are God's pure, holy people. By faith we are these people.



(b) Getting Our Priorities Right (1:4)

Caught up in ecstatic love for her Beloved she cries, “*Draw me and let us run after You (the Beloved).*” This sentence shows us beautifully the right order of things. We must be drawn into His presence before we can run together with Him in the company of others.



DRAW ME = Cry of INTIMACY

RUN TOGETHER = MINISTERING together with Him & others.



Read Matthew 22:37-40 and think about how this agrees with the above - as we love God we will serve others in ministry (love our neighbour).

The Hebrew word for 'draw' means to be 'scattered as seed' or 'stretched out' - she literally cries to be scattered as seed and stretched out beyond her limits. This should be our cry!

“The King has brought me into his chambers (intimate presence).” (The Woman)

“We will be glad and rejoice in you (the Shulamite)...” (Daughters of Jerusalem) (NKJV)

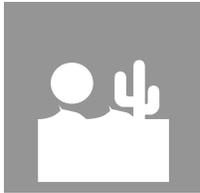
Here we see the same progression - Because we have drawn close to Jesus, we will minister to others, drawing them into the same intimate relationship (they will also see His love is better than wine!)



(c) The Unkept Vineyard Syndrome (1:5-6)

She has difficulty in being fully transparent before her beloved and even those around her, and says, “*Do not look upon me.*” - She feels ashamed because of her upbringing and the way life has treated her (the sun has been beating down on her making her complexion darker than normal).

See the Hebrew word for 'look' and you'll find that she literally says, “*Do not Shepherd me*”, she feels unworthy of his attention and care. Indeed, as she says this to the Daughters of Jerusalem, she feels unworthy to be shepherded at all by anyone. She goes on to explain why this is...



"I am dark" - She was aware of her SIN in his presence as we do on coming closer to God.

"But lovely (or beautiful)" – The interpretation of the Hebrew word for *'beautiful'* is that she feels at home in His presence. Her hope is only in Him.

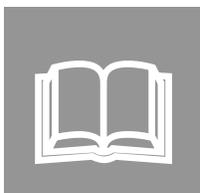
There is a mixture in her life - the *'Tents of Kedar (dark)'* speak of areas of BACKSLIDING in us and the *'Curtains of Solomon'* speak of the brokenness due to fears. She has been darkened (stained with sin) because she's been tending the wrong vineyard!

VINEYARD = either own life or area of MINISTRY (Church)

She has been living under the expectations of others (Mother's sons) and not tending her own vineyard (she eventually does in 8:12). Her siblings have forced her into an area of responsibility that is not her rightful one!



What does this speak to you? Can this happen in your Christian life? Take time to pray for the Lord to reveal any 'vineyards' you've been pressurized wrongly into working in. Pray for Him to reveal His vineyard for you to be throwing your life into.



(d) The Hungry Cry (1:7-8)

The feeling of insecurity in the woman aroused in her a desire for her lover's presence. There is a cry in her heart to be fed - this should be our cry. She wants to know where He feeds His flock (committed Christians) (Cf. Ps 23).



This is interesting because she has just declared that she feels unworthy to be shepherded - but the revelation of who she is in her Beloved's eyes has caused her to desire his nourishing, blessing presence. We too may feel unworthy to be shepherded by Jesus; indeed this is the entry point into His presence - a humble, bowed down posture of recognizing our own unworthiness before Him.

She wants to know where they find REST (siesta time at midday!). His answer is that she should follow in the footsteps of the more mature ('flocks of her companions' = those who love and obey Him) – This process is called DISCIPLESHIP.

Otherwise she will become as *'as one who veils herself'* (either like a Prostitute (Genesis 38:14-15) or one in mourning (Ezekiel 24:17)) - without proper nourishing fellowship, rest in the Lord and moving in His Will we will prostitute ourselves spiritually before the world (get involved in activities that grieve the

heart of God). We will have mourning spirits instead of joyful, pure, exalting spirits.



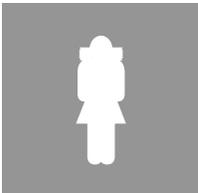
We need to be involved in discipleship, to be discipled and become a discipler, or we will miss out on God's best. Many Christians go to church and even attend home fellowships, but few are involved in active, intimate discipleship. Jesus is not looking for **converts**, but **disciples**. Pause now and pray that you would be a true disciple. Ask Him to lead you into this.



(e) His Most Beautiful Love (1:9-11)

"I have compared you, my love, to my filly among Pharaoh's chariots." (NKJV)

A filly is a female horse, but Pharaoh's chariots were pulled by stallions (males). He is telling her that she is as beautiful and sought after as if she were the only woman in a world full of men! That's how Jesus sees us (and what husband's should tell their wives!). We can be skipping for joy in our everyday walk with Him, knowing we are special in His sight. Just as Pharaoh's horses had a purpose in his army, so we too have a purpose in God's Kingdom and we are created to run swiftly in that.



Verse 10 is a further statement of her beauty (enhanced by jewelry) - Gold Chain = AUTHORITY, Cheeks = LOVE, Neck = STRENGTH, Gold = DIVINE nature.

Because of her desire to be blessed, led and fed by Him He sees her as one having authority, full of love and strength and with a pure, godly character. If we have this same burning desire then these statements will be true in our life too! Verse 11 shows that even others are forced to recognize her beauty. Those that probably laughed at her and looked down on her as she laboured shamefully in the wrong vineyard are now seeing a different woman! She has been restored to confidence, not in herself but in her Beloved. It is our confidence in Jesus that transforms us into a beautiful witness before others.

SUMMARY: She had felt so self-conscious about her appearance that the lover praised her physical beauty so that others would be forced to agree!



Have you been feeling self-conscious about how you look to others? Let Jesus speak His words of love over you are restore your confidence so that others will be startled by the change. How does He speak to you? Meditate on the words of the Beloved to the Shulamite & hear the same words spoken over you by Jesus!



**(f) Pouring Out Love & Receiving His Love
(1:12-17)**

“While the King was at his table, my spikenard sends forth its fragrance” (NKJV, v 12) - Compare with John 12:1-5.



She has come into his SURROUNDING presence (see the interpretation of *‘table’* in the accompanying booklet) and starts to pour out costly affections over him. Just like Mary pouring out the alabaster jar of Spikenard, so she now is extravagant in her adoration. We respond to his praising by pouring out our life to Him in love, worship and adoration. The spice releases a *‘fragrance’* –

This speaks of the Fruit of the Spirit (The Hebrew word *Reyach* is used from the root *Ruwach* - properly, to blow; breath and is used of the Holy Spirit).

INTERPRETING THE SPICES – noticing that Songs 4:13-14 corresponds with Galatians 5:22-23 we will use the following interpretation of the spices (see more in the accompanying booklet)...

Spice	Description	Corresponding Fruit of The Spirit	References
Pomegranates	A red fruit the size of an orange.	LOVE	Ex 28:33;39:24;1 Ki 7:18 Songs 4:13;6:11;7:12
Henna	Palestinian shrub / aromatic blossom.	JOY	Songs 1:14;4:13
Spikenard	Aromatic oil from roots of herb from India.	PEACE	Jn 12:1-5;Mk 14:3 Songs 1:12;4:13
Saffron	Plant of Crocus family / used in spices.	LONGSUFFERING	Songs 4:14
Calamus	Imported aromatic spice cane.	KINDNESS	Ex 30:23; Jer 6:20 Ezek 27:19;Isa 43:23 Songs 4:14
Cinnamon	Well-Known aromatic spice - from Sri Lanka.	GOODNESS	Ex 30:23;Prov 7:7 Rev 18:13;Songs 4:14
Frankincence	Vegitable resin, brittle, glittering, bitter.	FAITHFULNESS	Ex 30:23;Num 5:15 Mt 2:11;Rev 18:13 Songs 3:6; 4:6,14
Myrrh	Aromatic gum from bark of balsam.	MEEKNESS	Est 2:12;Prov 7:17 Songs 1:13;3:6;4:6,14 5:1,5,13
Aloes	Used to perfum royal robes.	SELF-CONTROL	Ps 45:8; Num 24:6 Jn 19:39;Songs 4:14

We see therefore that she sends forth a peaceful (Spikenard/nard), pleasing aroma as she pours out her costly expressions of love to her beloved.

We can let peace flow out of us because we have found peace with Him. Later we will see that this fragrance is released to the world, here it is only for the Beloved. Before we can touch the world for Him, we must have firstly spent time pouring out our affections in His intimate presence. Jesus said that what Mary

had poured out in His presence would be spoken of in the entire world as a testimony!

Verse 13: *“A bundle of Myrrh is my beloved to me that lies all night between my breasts.”* (NKJV) - In the times of Solomon women wore sachets of Myrrh on a chain round their neck, so the fragrance was always in her nostrils.

Jesus’ meek, gentle nature should always be on our thoughts. As we move in meekness we will nourish others who are taking baby steps in their faith.

Verse 14: Cluster = Joy (Isa 65:8); Henna = Joy; Vineyard = Joy (Church); En Gedi = Fountain of a Kid (Oasis off west coast of Dead Sea).

If we move out into God's purposes without having experienced God's unspeakable Joy, full of glory, then we will not be as effective as God wants us to be. This is a foundational experience we need - that of the unbridled joy of the Lord. It comes through regular devotional time with Him, pouring out our hearts in loving adoration. He will respond by pouring His joy into us - the Joy of the Lord which is our strength.



Verse 15: He returns her praise by commenting not only on her beauty but her tranquil character (God sees our HEART). Doves (2:12, 14; 4:1; 5:2, 12; 6:9) were noted for their purity and tranquility.

“According to Rabbinic teaching, a bride who has beautiful eyes possesses a beautiful character.”
(S.M Lehrman, “The Song of Songs”, in the Five Megilloth).

The Dove is also the symbol for the Holy Spirit, the eyes speaks of vision. What is Jesus prophetically saying here? He looks at us and speaks prophetically that we have the Spirit's vision.



Verses 16-17: He is probably referring to the green field where they first met and fell in love. It is a (**Green** field with **Cedars** and **Fir** Trees). This **field** has become their **bed**, their house under the beams and **rafters** of the trees - Looking at the interpretations of these words in the accompanying booklet we see that they have a place of intimacy that strengthens and protects her to wage a warfare so that she becomes as a tree of righteousness, a channel of blessing to those around her.

What does this speak to you?



She praises His physical appearance (handsome) and his character (pleasant). We must pour out our love to Jesus as He is always pouring out His to us. We must find that place of intimacy with him, that green field where He will impart into us the qualities that will propel us into successful ministry. Have you found such a place? Pause to pray that this foundation may be properly laid in your life - a strong devotional life that will sustain you until the end!



(g) We Need a Grace Image (2:1-2)

We need to see our self through His eyes. Earlier she had shown her self-consciousness and insecurity (1:5) - however, now she has received His praise and Love she has a better image of herself - and not too proud a one!



She now sees herself as **A ROSE OF SHARON** (Isaiah 35:1- also 'Crocus') - this was a common meadow flower! (NB. Jesus is NOT the Rose of Sharon). The Rose of Sharon is a picture of Christians (common but made beautiful in the Lord).

Also she sees herself as the **LILY OF THE VALLEY** (2:1-2,16; 4:5; 5:13;6:2-3;7:2) - a common flower. She sees herself as an ordinary person (speaks of Humility). He agrees that she is a lily, but not any lily - she is unique - a lily among thorns (other women). The Hebrew word for 'lily' is also the same word used for 'trumpet' which is symbolic of a prophetic voice. In Christ we are a prophetic people - declaring forth the good news of the Gospel.



The Biblical 'Grace Image' is to see that indeed we are insignificant; we are common, ordinary sinners that will wither and fade away like a crocus without Him. We cannot deny this side of our image that would be living in unreality. However, a 'Grace-Image' says 'I am nothing except He makes me anything'. And the truth is, as we come in humble repentance to Him, He does raise us up and make us kings and priests! Where is the boasting in this? Not in our own strength or comeliness, but in His redeeming, delivering nature.



(h) Jesus Is Our Essential Source of Delight (2:3-4)

She is seen as an ordinary plant, but she sees him as a delightful surprise, a rare find (i.e. an **Apple Tree** in a Forest). He is unique, sweet and fragrant. His **fruit** is wonderful to taste.



Apple tree = symbol for the DEVOTIONAL life.

Here we see three aspects of the blessings of delighting in Him –

1. *Protection (in his shade) and nourishment. She felt protected by Him and rested in that protection. When we delight in Him we will know His protection and nourishment.*

2. *They cultivated the kind of relationship that allowed them to know each other intimately. Taste= knowledge of someone through intimate personal experience - cf. Ps 34:8.*

3. *She appreciated the fact that he let others see his love for her. Banner = a military standard - easily seen by all the troops (the power of love).*



He is not ashamed of us, but delights in us. One way He shows us His love is by taking us to the banquet hall (*'house of wine'*) in the palace - this speaks of his EXHILARATING PRESENCE - (Place of great joy, celebration and feasting.)



The House of Wine is a public place of celebration. Previously she has been delighting in his presence alone, now he takes her into a public display of love. Before we can truly worship Jesus in a congregation of believers (Church service) we must have a powerful worship experience with Him in our own personal devotions. Is this true in your own life?

Ask the Lord to draw you deeper into this experience.



(i) Overcome By His Love – Lovesick! (2:5-7)

Because she experienced his expressions of love she became faint with love (lovesick). She then expressed her desire for his strengthening and his embrace. Physically weakened she needed stimulation from **raisin cake** and **apples** (feeding in his presence).

She asks to be sustained by these elements.



Looking up the Hebrew words used here and you will see that the raisin cakes represent the basics of Christian doctrine. The apples again represent a healthy devotional life. We are sustained (literally *'gotten a hold of'*) in our faith by initially having a proper understanding of the basic doctrines of our faith and having a regular, powerful devotional life. Many Christians go years without having these foundations in place and even end up in ministry they find wearying

and unsatisfying. If these two elements are present then we will not grow weary in doing good - we will be refreshed and sustained throughout our Christian lives.



Are you overcome by the love of Jesus? We love Him because He first loved us and gave His life to us. But how much of his 'giving Himself for us' is a revelation to us! We need to be overcome by His love...then we can really start our adventure with Jesus!

Conclusion

Our main priority, before anything else, should be to seek intimacy with God. He will reveal His love to us as we lavish love on Him. This cleanses us from insecurities and false expectations. As we cry out for Him alone to satisfy the deep longings of our heart He will overwhelm and overcome us with His presence.



Lesson Three: Stage Two – Possessive Love

The Song now continues with the Beloved (man) showing another aspect of His personality. He comes to draw her out of her familiar, secure surroundings and into His dangerous but exciting purposes (over the mountains to the harvest fields!).

He initially came to her as her BLESSER, now he comes as her DRAW-ER.

Many Christians don't mind Jesus being their blesser, but when He starts to draw them into His risky, dangerous but exciting purposes, they draw back!

In this section we see the woman being possessive of her beloved, dictating to Him where He should be, rather than following Him (see 3:4).

All of us will go through this stage, where we cry, *"My Beloved is mine, and I am His"* (2:16). This should change to the cry in 6:3 and 7:10...

6:3 – *"I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine."*

7:10 – *"I am my Beloved's, and his desire is towards me".*

She moves from being more possessive to less possessive of Him.

But the fact is that Jesus still loves us even in this possessive stage, and will continue to draw us into His passionate presence and purposes!

ICON KEY



Observation



Interpretation



Application

The Icons to the left will be used throughout the lessons. The symbols for interpretation (a dove in this case) may change to represent different animals, scenes of nature etc.



(a) Calling Us Out Of Our Comfort Zones (2:8-9)

“The voice (call) of my Beloved...” (NKJV, v8a) -

There is a time, during our fervent time of loving Him, that we will hear His CALL. If we don't respond we will feel distanced from Him. All of us are called but not all are chosen by Him due to our lack of responding to His love.

Verse 8b-9a: Here the Beloved is seen as a graceful, strong, agile and beautiful Gazelle or Young Stag, leaping and skipping on the mountains.

Before, He has only been seen as passive, now He is seen as dynamic. He's excited (leaping and skipping) and wants to draw His Bride-To-Be into the MOUNTAINS and HILLS (the obstacles we have to face to accomplish His will). This is how Jesus comes to us to draw us out of our comfort zones.



Verse 9b: *“Behold, he stands behind our WALL; he is looking through the WINDOWS; gazing (Heb. ‘blooming’) through the LATTICE.”* (Look up interpretations)

Wall and Lattice = Barriers to intimacy.

Window = Glimpses of God's glory.

The Lattice represents the sin that so easily entangles us. For the Shulamite this was the feeling of inferiority and unworthiness that comes because of the way her siblings and mother have treated her. The Beloved knows this and draws her lovingly away in wisdom of action. Think about what he does to help her overcome this sin (Hebrews 12:1-2).

As the flowers in the fields are blooming, beckoning lovers out of their comfortable resting places, so He is seen to be 'blooming' - calling her forth from her childhood home. Through the lattice her vision is impaired and blurred. Even her beloved cannot be fully seen as she beholds him from her comfort zone.



Jesus calls us away from negative patterns we cling onto which can be traced back to our childhood. He calls us out of our **COMFORT ZONES** by helping us overcome the sin that so easily entangles. Is there a Comfort Zone He's calling you out of right now? What is the sin that so easily entangles you and keeps you from launching forth into His purposes? Pray about it!



(b) The Harvest Is Ready (2:10-13)

He tells her that the time of harvest has come and shows her the signs that confirm this – this is to draw her out of her comfort zone and into his will.

Verse 10 - *“Rise Up, my Love, my fair one, and come away.”* –

We must be stirred up and come away, out of our Comfort Zones, through the barriers (walls/lattices) that hinder us from following Him into His purposes (look up interpretation of ‘rise’).



Verse 11: A new season has come - in their relationship and in the world!

WINTER = Cold outside / Stay inside the comfort of the house (hidden), protected by loved ones. (Here refers to cloudy season of March/April) – Dark period spiritually.

SPRING = Time to go out. Spiritual harvest time (was particularly the time for the grape harvest -look up interpretations of ‘grape’ and ‘harvest’).

The signs of the times are (v12-13).....

- (1) **Flowers appear** = People shining for Jesus all over the earth. We are seeing this as in no other time. (The Hebrew word for ‘flower’=‘*nitstsan*’ = ‘to shine’.)
- (2) **Voice of Dove is heard** = the prophetic voice of God’s **Spirit** (Revelation 2:7). The Prophetic ministry has only recently been recognized widely once more - this indicates that a great harvest is near. The Holy Spirit speaks to the church through anointed prophetic vessels that trumpet forth specific messages for our generation that must be heard and acted upon.
- (3) **Fig tree puts for early fruit** = The Fig Tree is a symbol of Israel (Hosea 9:10; Matthew 21:19). Fig Trees often put forth early figs (reason why Jesus looked for it in Mark 11:13) before the main harvest. This indicated summer was near (see Luke 21:29-30). Looking at Israel today we can see that ‘summer’ is very near! God has been restoring Israel (1948 became a nation) and she has been flourishing ever since (not without opposition though!).
- (4) **The Vine with tender Grapes** = The Vine in Scripture represents the Church (the Body of Christ the ‘*True Vine*’). What ever happens in Israel is paralleled by the Church (Figs and Vines are mostly seen together in Scripture). A renewal of Joy in the Church indicates that a big harvest is near! The vines “*give a good smell*” -this speaks of being full of anointing which can be discerned by all around (to some the smell of life, to others the smell of death - 2 Corinthians 2:16).



The season of harvest is here now in the World - we must arise and follow Jesus! No more are we to hide away in our comfort zones as the time of singing (Spring time - would be much singing and celebration on stringed instruments due to the harvest) has come. It's a season of praise. Pray for yourself to be stirred into action!



**(c) “You’ve heard my voice, let me hear yours”
(2:14) –**

Doves hide in rock crevices, reluctant to leave. The Beloved likens His Lover to such a Dove, hesitant to join Him in the mountains. So again (cf. 2:10, 13) He urges her to leave her home and join Him so He could enjoy her sweet voice & lovely face.



It is interesting that she is hiding like a dove in the cleft of the rock (Look at the definitions of these words). This speaks of us being hidden in Christ - but even in this position we can make fearful excuses about why we should not venture from that position into the hurting world!

She is also seen as hiding in the '*secret place*' (lit. covering, disguise) of the cliff (steps). This give us the image of a dove hiding away on the inaccessible ledge of a cliff-face, blending in with the cliff and appearing disguised and hidden. It speaks of a stage in our spiritual life where we are staying in one place (ledge) and not willing (due to fear, insecurity etc.) to step out and step up.



Jesus speaks prophetically to us, calling us away with Him. He also wants to hear us echoing His prophetic words back to Him and the World - our countenance '*blooming*' or shining with His glory. We must speak out His calling on our life to Him and to others and then we will shine for Him!

Jesus longs to hear your voice and see your face. He longs for you to step out with Him into His purposes and shine forth His light into the nations. Are you willing to step out of your comfort zones, even as a Christian hid in Christ, and follow Him into His purposes?



(d) Catch The Joy Robbers (2:15)

Foxes (or Jackals) would often break the walls of Vineyards down to steal the tender grapes (if the walls are not protected and strong enough). These foxes have been stealing grapes from the Shulamite's vines.



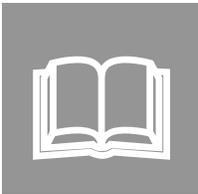
Grapes = Joy, Foxes = Enemies who steal our joy. (See Lamentations 5:18, Luke 13:32, Ezekiel 13:4) - Ultimately these '*little foxes*' are demonic powers, serving the big fox (Satan) (Ephesians 6:12). They come to wear out the saints and drain them of the Joy of the Lord.

The foxes come in at the time of weakness. The grapes are '*tender*' and easily spoiled. The enemy will attack us in our weakness and people under our care will be attacked at the most '*tender*' moment! We must ask the Lord to erect strong walls of salvation around our ministries and us and stand on watch constantly to make sure the 'foxes' stay out.

Notice that she asks Him to take the initiative in solving their relationship difficulty. We must ask Jesus help us catch these foxes both in our relationship with Him and our loved ones. There must be a willingness to solve these problems.



To stop the '*foxes*' stealing joy we must have a **STRONG PROTECTIVE WALL** and a good **WATCHTOWER** (Isaiah 5:2) - What do these speak of to you in a spiritual sense? What strong spiritual walls can we ask the Lord to build around us? (60:18 states we are to have '*walls of Salvation*'). Pray for such strong walls.



(e) The Cry to be separated to Jesus (2:16-17)

Verse 16: Even though she is possessive of Him (Cf. 2:16 with 6:3, 7:10 and note the word order) she still cries out for intimacy and to be cleaved to her beloved. In 1:7 she asked Him where He feeds His flock - now she knows from experience that He '*feeds His flock among the Lilies*' - This is among ordinary people who are made prophetic '*trumpets*' because they have been saved by Jesus - i.e. in the fellowship of the saints.

Verse 17: She's conscious of a '*new day dawning*' and that she needs a change of direction (move away from self). She's in a time of darkness (just before the break of day). She is also conscious of 'shadows' in her life (gray areas).



Mountains of Bether = SEPARATION/CLEAVING TO

She cries out for His presence in this time of separation - she cries literally for an '*awakening*' where He would come as a '*gazelle*' or '*hart*' on the mountains she finds herself in - look up the definitions of these words and see what characteristics of Jesus she is asking for.



When we realize our selfishly possessive nature we must cry out to Jesus to separate us to Himself. The son of righteousness will arise with healing in His wings! He will take you through 'dark' times, where you are so aware of your selfishness. During these times, press on in, crying out to Him to be separated and you will see the sun rise in your life and your relationship with Him.



(f) The Fear of Losing Him (3:1-5)

Because she feared losing Him and His love more than she feared what lay beyond her secure dwelling, she ventured forth to find Him. He had deliberately distanced Himself from her to draw her out of her comfort zones. What do we learn from this in our relationship with Jesus? Have you sensed the Lord withdrawing His presence from you in order to draw you out?



Verse 1: She has gone back to her own bed and is wallowing in self-pity. We can do this when Jesus is testing us concerning our possession of him (shutting ourselves off from brothers and sisters - seeking Him alone). This is a 'night' (dark) time in her life where she seeks Him but doesn't find Him. This is true in our lives where we wallow in self-pity but seem to be cut off from His presence.

The reason is that He wants to draw us outside the boundaries we have confined ourselves in.

The 'bed' represents the place of spiritual slumber (here the Hebrew word has the emphasis on 'sleep' - with Jesus this can represent His intimate presence, but He has withdrawn Himself here). We can seek Him in such a state but will not find Him, as we must first arise from our state of spiritual lethargy and take positive steps to find His intimate presence once again.



Verse 2: 'The City of God' = God's people, the Church (see Hebrews 10:25). We can cut ourselves off from the Church as we feel far away from God. The truth is we need to have fellowship with other believers, as this will help us come closer to God.

Look at the words for **rise**, **streets**, **square** and **city** and ask God to reveal something to you.

Verse 3: It was only after she asked the 'Watchmen' (particularly mature and watchful leaders) that she found Him. What can we learn from this? Notice that they found her as she was desperately searching for Him in the City (Church). We too must be so desperate that we spend much time searching for Him in Church related activities - we will definitely be 'found' by Church leaders if we do this.



Verse 4: However, on finding Him, instead of going on His terms into the mountains, she held Him close and pulled Him into her *'Mother's Chambers'* on her terms! What do we learn from this? How can we be like her in our Christian lives? (NB. *'Mother's Chambers'* = negative patterns from childhood we feel *'comfortable'* clinging to).



Our own upbringing and *'soul ties'* to our mother and father can hinder us from being released into the harvest fields Jesus is drawing us into. Pause for a moment to ask God to show you if there are any *'Mother's Chambers'* you are hiding in!

Again this section ends in the charge of verse 5, that others would not step in and try to force the process of awakening in love.

Conclusion

After the initial outpouring of love and blessing by the Beloved, He now distances Himself in order to draw her out of her comfort zones.

There is seen to be a 'barrier' separating them (her selfishness), but He diligently comes to speak prophetically to her that the time of spring, the time of Joy and harvest is here. It's time for her to rise up into His purposes! She does arise to find Him because of her fear of losing Him, but on finding Him she doesn't follow Him but pulls Him into her comfort zone! Likewise, we see Jesus will come highlighting how selfish we are as He comes to draw us out of our hiding places. But we see our selfish nature runs deep - Jesus just keeps on coming to us and loving us, even when we fail Him time and time again. He keeps speaking to us through his Word, through His servants etc. about the readiness of the harvest - we can see the signs all around us that now is the time for us, the Church, to rise up from our comfort zones and follow Him into the harvest.

"Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest." John 4:35



Lesson Four: Stage Three – Painful Love

Having been mightily blessed and deeply loved, and then had her selfishness exposed, the Beloved comes to her as a Mighty Warrior to take her deeper into Covenant relationship with Him (this is where they have their Espousals (Marriage) and we see the Wedding Procession). This time she actually ventures forth further and receives painful blows from those who have helped her before. But she seems willing to endure pain just to break forth out of her comfort zones to follow the one she loves.

This section speaks of a time in our relationship with Jesus where we make the decision to step out with Him, following Him no matter what the cost. He will fight on our behalf and give us all the affirmation we need just to open us up to Him and to the World.

Also this section shows the need for ‘*adjustment*’ for newlyweds. The man must help the woman leave behind her childhood home and cleave to him (see Genesis 2:24). Also the man is seen to be a strong lead and an example (Warrior) for her to follow in the painful time of adjusting to a new life. Much affirmation of her physical beauty and personality is needed at this time (Songs 4:1-11).

ICON KEY



Observation



Interpretation



Application

The Icons to the left will be used throughout the lessons. The symbols for interpretation (a dove in this case) may change to represent different animals, scenes of nature etc.



(a) Join in the Procession (3:6-11):

A central feature of a Jewish Wedding ceremony was a joyful procession to the Bride's home led by the Groom, who then escorted her back to their new residence. This section talks of the part where the Bride and Groom are together heading towards their new home - the Bride has finally given her life to the Groom and left her old comfort zones ('Mother's Chambers')



We must leave our comfort zones (especially securities we have built up from Childhood and negative 'soul ties' to our parents etc.) and go to the Bridegroom's house – entering into our full covenant relationship with Him. What are some covenant responsibilities we have as Christians?



(i) Gloriously Changed

Verse 6: "Who is this coming out of the wilderness?"(NKJV).

This is probably a question the Daughters of Jerusalem ask. They know her, and yet she is different! (Like we sometimes cannot recognize the Bride on the Wedding day).

When we decide to follow Jesus and enter fully into covenant relationship no matter what the cost, others will ask 'Who is this?' - We change from glory to glory.

'The Wilderness' = uncultivated seasonal grasslands = speaks of coming out of a spiritually dry period in her life (Stage 2).

'Like pillars of smoke' (NKJV) - Pillars of Smoke (cloud) denotes the MANIFEST PRESENCE OF GOD (see Exodus 13:21, 22) to lead in His Way according to His Will.

'Perfumed with Myrrh and Frankincense with all the Merchant's fragrant powders....' - Based on what we've previously learnt about perfumes and spices we can interpret this to say that We will enter deeper into our covenant relationship with Jesus, to be anointed in meekness and faithfulness, by the prayers of intercessors



(ii) The End-Time Company of Believers (Army)

Verses 7-8: Solomon's Chariot (actually a portable eating and sleeping mode of transport) is surrounded by a company of VALIANT men - we must be such people - their characteristics are....

(i) 'Sixty.' - 6(MAN) X 10 (LAW) = Company of people fulfilling the LAW of God. Or 3(GOD) X 20(MATURITY) = Company of people with the nature of God in them.

(ii) 'Valiant men.' – Powerful / mighty (in the Spirit).

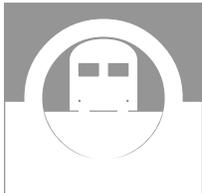
(iii) 'Around it (the chariot).' - Jesus' presence is central in the company.

(iv) 'All hold Swords.' - The Sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17-18) - The Word of God is used effectively by this company - (we use the 'sword' by praying always in the Spirit).

(v) 'Being experts in War.' - Well prepared and trained in spiritual warfare (prepared due to intimacy with the Lord).

(vi) 'Sword on his thigh.' - Ready for action. The Word on our lips!

'Because of fear in the night.'(NKJV) - In the End Time the powers of darkness increase (as will the anointing). Because of this we must rise up to be God's end-time army as described here.



(iii) A Carriage for The King

The Carriage (chariot) may be seen as His will and purpose going to His destiny. Just as the Bride is 'trapped in' with Solomon in the Carriage, so we should be 'trapped into' His Will and purposes.

The Bride would have been well protected in the dangerous 'wilderness' (where many bandits and robbers were), in the Carriage with her lover-warrior, surrounded by His valiant men. The Will of God is the **SAFEST PLACE** we can ever be!

Verses 9-10: The King made Himself a Carriage (see Ephesians 2:10 - We may see ourselves like the Carriage...being created by God for His Will and pleasure).

It was made of the Wood of Lebanon. Interpreting we get: God uses us in our humanity when we come to Him with a pure heart.

This wood was covered over with Silver and Gold. Silver = 'redemption' and Gold = 'Divine Nature' (purity). It is significant that the pillars were made of silver (redemption keeps His purposes strong, just as pillars would keep the carriage strong) and the foundations were made of Gold (only if we found all we do upon the Divine nature manifest in us (Christ's image) will we move in His purposes).

The seat of the carriage is purple which speaks of **royalty**. We're training up to be Kings and Priests (Revelation 5:10) (Seat = Place of Ruling).

'Its interior paved with Love' (NKJV) - Love must be revealed in us as we follow His Will - Jesus must be seen in our life. This love is 'for the Daughters (lit. apples of His eye) of Jerusalem' (from Hebrew text) - We are to live lives of Love for the sake of those who are called - the apple of His eye!



(iv) Crown Him!

Verse 11: In the procession the Groom wore a 'crown'. This was not a royal crown denoting his authority and power (although for Solomon this could also have been the case), but his Wedding crown or wreath (Isaiah 61:10) which Bath Sheba (*'daughter of an oath'*) his Mother gave him - this crown speaks of happiness and joy - He is exceedingly joyful when we step more fully into covenant relationship with Him for LIFE (Crown = an emblem of glory).

Notice that the daughters of Zion (not Jerusalem) are told to go forth and see the King with His crown. Zion represents God's people as a sign to the nations – it's used here as the End-time army of believers with King Jesus as the head will be a witness to all nations.

See Proverbs 12:4 - *"An excellent wife ('woman of valour') is the crown of her husband."* - we are like a crown to Jesus if we follow Him and do His will out of love for Him. Then He says to us, like Paul said to his disciples, *'you are my joy and crown'*.



Pause and reflect on how much you have entered a covenant relationship with Jesus – *'if you love me, keep my commandments'* – this is reflected in the Marriage covenant. Keeping this covenant means we will become part of His end-time army. Think on what this means and pray for yourself.



(b) Jesus - Affirmer of the Brethren (4:1-5):

Satan is the **ACCUSER** of the brethren, Jesus is our **AFFIRMER!**

"Now wedded and united with her love, the maiden's bridegroom exclaims, 'How beautiful you are, my darling. How beautiful you are.' Then he speaks specific prophetic affirmations, wooing his bride to come forth.

In the same way, Jesus, our glorious Bridegroom, speaks prophetically over us as we timidly arise and take baby steps forward, purposing to leave the comfort zone and progress into more maturity. Instead, He calls things that are not as though they were, because He sees those things in seed form in our hearts (Rom 4:17).....He says, 'I love you! I have passionate affections for you! I will transform a fervent, immature maiden into My reigning, mature bride.'" Mike Bickle, "Passion for Jesus", p114.



Before you see the chart below to look at the interpretations of the words of affirmation read verses 1-5 and look up the interpretations of each noun mentioned.

Part Of Body	Function	Compared to	Function	Interpretation
(1) EYES (v1) (behind veil)	VISION (Eph 1:18) windows of soul	DOVE	Peaceful, Symbol of Holy Spirit	Her spiritual vision is in accordance with the Holy Spirit (her character is full of peace/tranquil)
(2) HAIR (v1)	COVERING Submission 1 Cor 11:15	FLOCKS OF GOATS Gilead=Strong	Beautiful scene Micah 7:14	Her submission to Him is beautiful to behold a and is her strength.
(3) TEETH (v2)	CHEWING (meditation) Num 11:33	FLOCK OF Shorn Sheep come up from washing and bearing twins	Pure/white - done away with wool - - Fruitful.	Her meditation is on that which is pure and strips off that which is not needed and bears much fruit.
(4) LIPS (v3)	SPEAKING words of life (Prov16:13)	Strand of Scarlet	Redemption (Josh 2:17- 21)-blood	Her speech brings forth redemption.
(5) TEMPLES (v3)	THOUGHTS (Mind).	Piece of Pomegranate	Love (See spice chart)	Her thoughts are full of love to Him & others.
(6) KNECK (v4)	STRENGTH (gives direction)	Tower of David with small shields on.	The shields show all the victories won	She has strong direction based on the victory won by Christ.
(7) BREASTS (v5)	NURTURE (feed babies)	Two fawns, twins of Gaz. feeding among lilies.	New Life - bring to birth	She brings forth new life (new believers) in Church (lily = other believers- see 2:1)



Look at the chart and ask yourself if these qualities are found in your life. Pray for the Lord to develop those qualities that are weak. Also ask yourself which part of the body you feel your main ministry can be represented by.

(c) Embracing the Cross (4:6):



Verse 6 is probably sung by the Bride (cf. 2:17) - she states confidently now, "I will go **my way** to the mountains of myrrh and to the hills of frankincense". In chapter 2 she said no to the hills and mountains, but now she is ready to go!

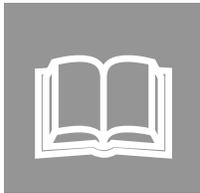


Myrrh, used in preparing a body for burial (fruit of meekness) and frankincense, which does not give forth its fragrance until it is burned (fruit of faithfulness) - both were given to Jesus at His birth. These gifts spoke prophetically of His suffering and death on the cross. Here the Bride is speaking figuratively of the suffering and death of her Beloved.

She is saying what you and I must say if we are to experience greater maturity in the Lord - *'I want only to be like You. I will embrace the Cross. I will not refuse you again. I will arise and go the way of the Cross!'* (See Luke 9:23). The fact she says it's 'MY WAY' shows that we all have our own 'way of the cross'- we shouldn't go someone else's way! She is willing to go this Way because she has a vision of the dawn when the shadow of death will flee away (*'until the day breaks and the shadows flee away'*) - this speaks of the second coming of Christ to receive the spotless bride to Himself.



We must have a vision of the glorious future inheritance that awaits us - this will sustain us as it did Abraham (he saw the day of Christ in his spirit and had strength to endure much barrenness and suffering). Ask the Lord to give you a fresh vision of the 'dawn' (His second coming in power and glory) and to give you strength to go the way of the Cross He has prepared for you.



(d) Equipping the Soul for the Tests Ahead (4:7-11):

Now the Beloved shows the Bride how she can be equipped to do His will (go to the mountain of Myrrh and hill of frankincense) - these are principles we must grasp as we desire to follow Jesus and go the way of the Cross.



(i) **Seeing ourselves through His eyes as THE SPOTLESS BRIDE (v 7)** - See Eph 5:27 and Jude 23.

(ii) **Engaging in higher levels of spiritual warfare requiring greater steps of SACRIFICE and SERVANTHOOD (v 8)** - As we step out into His purposes (mountains and hills) the lions and leopards will be out to get us! Lions and leopards are devouring enemies and speak of Satan's powers and principalities - see 1 Peter 5:8 - also of Spirit of Antichrist - See Revelation 13:2).

Looking up the word meanings we see that these mountains speak of the place of overcoming intense spiritual opposition due to being in the midst of His purposes. This will lead you into His permanent (Amana) call on your life, a place where you are to be a light of the world (Senir), consecrated (Hermon) to Him with a pure heart (Lebanon).

(iii) Seeing the RAVISHED heart of God (v 9-10) - Earlier we saw how the maiden had been overwhelmed by the love of the man. Now, however, we see the Groom's ravished heart!

'To Ravish' means 'to seize and take away by violence; to overcome with emotions of joy or delight; pleasing or striking.' The Bride has captured His heart, filling it with ecstasy and delight. One look from her eyes and one glimpse of her necklace had seized His heart and carried it away. Even though we're not mature, when we show a desire to follow Jesus, no matter what the cost, we ravish the heart of Jesus!

He now calls her His sister and spouse - looking at the definitions of these words we see that what He is saying is that she is now a true disciple, part of the Bride of Christ.

Notice how **verse 10** echoes her words of Chapter 1 verses 2 to 3 - He is returning her passion! Sometimes we fail to see that He has passion for us. Grasping this will see us through many trials to come and will ignite more holy passion in us.

(iv) Seeing ourselves as ANOINTED ABLE MINISTERS (v 11)- see 1 John 2:20. In the light of the meanings of the words used we can interpret this to mean that when we make a quality decision to break out of our comfort zones Jesus sees us as having anointed SPEECH (lips & tongue), full of the PROMISES from His word (honey and milk). Our speech is with great AUTHORITY from Him which COVERS all our inadequacy (garments), and our PRAYER and WORSHIP is pleasing to Him (fragrance). This all comes from a pure HEART (Lebanon). This is how He sees us in such times - we must claim this by faith so it can become a reality in our Christian life.



Close your eyes now and hear the Lord speak these words into your spirit. Go over each point and do this – Read out the song and make it personal, hear the Lord speak each part to you personally.



(e) The Secret Garden (4:12-15):

The Beloved now compares His Bride to *'a garden enclosed... a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.'* (4:12, NKJV) - This garden is a private garden reserved for the King (most were open to all). The King's garden was a special place of pleasure and rest.

"The Lord is asking you and me to be His locked garden. His personal place of beauty and delight. The heart of the bride was not open to the polluting spirit of the world. Her garden was locked up and sealed for only her beloved himself...there was no 'For Sale' sign posted. She continually said no to immorality, pride and greed. Her gifts and anointing were not to be sold or prostituted. They were used only for the pleasure of her beloved." Mike Bickle, 'Passion for Jesus', p126.



'Spring', 'Fountain', 'Living waters' all talk of the infilling of the Holy Spirit (See John 7:38, John 4:10-14) - this infilling is to be used only for the pleasure of the King (Jesus) - not for our own glory!

"With all the chief spices" (v 14) means that the 9 Fruit of the Spirit (as we have seen the 9 spices refer to) are only a selection, not an exhaustive list! Looking up the Hebrew word used for 'plants' we see that those who bear much fruit are as missiles of attack against the enemy.

Verse 15 - 'A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.' - looking at the interpretations of these words we see that her area of calling (garden) is full of the Holy Spirit's presence and dynamic working. This all comes out of a pure heart - out of a character that is developing in all areas of the fruit of the Spirit.



Pause to pray. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the spices (Fruit of the Spirit) that are most lacking in your life and ministry. Ask Him to develop these areas.



(f) Submitting to His Dealings - The Desperate Cry (4:16-5:1)

As the Beloved lavishes His love upon her, the Bride cries out for the **WINDS** (Holy Spirit - see Acts 2:2) to awaken and to blow on her and release her fragrance to bless the world outside her garden (*that its spices may flow out*). The cry is also that her Beloved may come to the garden and partake of its fruit (i.e. come into every area of her life and eat with pleasure the fruit of her life and ministry).

When He finally partakes of her fruit (5:1a), the cry is for others to be blessed also (5:1b - *'Eat, O friends. Drink, yes, drink deeply'*)- In the same way, as we let Jesus come and partake of every area of our life, we will bless others in those areas also.



NORTH WIND = Cold, bitter wind of winter = TESTING of the Holy Spirit.

SOUTH WIND = Warm, refreshing wind of summer = REFRESHING of the Holy Spirit.

Note the order of the winds. What is your interpretation of this passage (4:16)? She actually cries out for the bitter, cold winds to blow upon her first! How many of us cry out for God to send His harsh dealings into our lives before His warm touch? Yet this is what she does and we too must do if we really want our lives to count for His Kingdom.

Based on what we have already said about Myrrh, Spices, honey, milk and wine we can say that when Jesus comes into partake of our lives or the Church He longs to be blessed by our faithfulness to His promises and the Joy we have in His presence. He is satisfied when the basic foundations of the faith are strong in us and our Church.



When Jesus comes to partake of your fruit what do you have to offer Him? Can He gather meekness (Myrrh) and the sweet working of His Word (Honey / Honeycomb) in your life? Can he find real joy (Wine) and a strong foundation of the basic doctrines of the faith (Milk)? Or will He only find bitterness and hurt - strife and envy? That's why we need the South Winds (the testing of the Holy Spirit) - to blow away all the unwanted rotten fruit from our lives.

Pray for the South Winds now if you dare! Cry out for His testing so that all the rotten fruit may be blown out of your life and Jesus can come in fully to your life. He stands at the door and knocks, longing to come in and partake of the fruit in your life - do you have any to offer?



(g) Resolving Indifference and Feelings of Being Unprepared (5:2-6):

However, even though she's been crying out to follow Him (even through great cost and sacrifice), she finds her flesh gets in the way!

Verse 2: *'I (flesh / self) sleep but my heart (spirit) is awake.'*(NKJV) - God speaks to our spirits. Our spirits get excited before our flesh has time to come under submission! The way of the Cross is not easy! Romans 7:15 is a painful reality. Romans 8 is the only way out of this - walking according to His Spirit, empowered by His Spirit.

"It is the voice of my Beloved" ... His prophetic call once again comes to her (see 2:8,12) - previously it was a *'calling out of'* and now it's a *'calling into'* the harvest. For the rest of verse 2 we see the Beloved continues to affirm the Bride in her pain at seeing her indifference and apathy. Again He calls her *'my dove'* (saying that she has the Spirit in her), *'my perfect (mature) one'*. This is how Jesus treats us in our indifference and apathy as we struggle to follow Him.



'Open for me my Sister.....for my head is covered with dew, My locks with the drops of the night.' –

Dew = Anointing- (see Ps 133:3),

'Drops of the night'= anointing in dark times (end time anointing).

During these dark times of indifference and apathy, Jesus comes to us with great anointing (*'the anointing breaks the yoke'* - Isa 10:27) and authority ('head'). If we're desperate for Him, He will come with anointing into our lives to empower us for the job ahead (Acts 1:8).

Verse 3: She feels she's **NOT READY** (sounds familiar!). - We can grow cold to His advances (He continually comes to knock on the doors of our life for us to open to Him).

Taken robe off = Ready for bed (sleep) - not prepared to go out.

Robe = One's authority in service.

Washed my feet = Not willing to dirty her feet by going out to work! (Beautiful feet are dirty feet! - Romans 10:15).

We can make these same excuses...

- (a) I'm not ready.
- (b) I have no authority and covering.
- (c) I'm not ready to take the Gospel of peace to others.



Verse 4: He does not accept her excuses and keeps knocking!! Jesus loves us too much and is very persistent. Our hearts will continue to yearn for Him only if we soon make steps to follow Him, or else our heart will grow cold and will fall asleep alongside our self! The *'door'* here speaks of the entrance into His purposes - God will place doors before us - only we can open them and go through - He will never pull or force the door open - it's up to us. He will knock (draw our attention to the fact that it's time to open a particular door of opportunity) but we must go through!

Look up the meanings of hand, latch and heart and comment on their meanings.

Verse 5: *'I AROSE....'* - Hallelujah! Finally she does it! What He's been asking her to do all this time...ARISE! It's no use having a heart burning with God's purposes and not being prepared to take practical steps to follow Him and let Him accomplish His will in your life (Eph 2:10).



It's interesting that as she arose to open the door (due to her longing for Him alone above His purposes) her hands (ministry for Him) drips with anointing (Myrrh = 'Meekness' and was used in anointing oil). Only as we step out on what we feel He's saying to us will the anointing come! Her fingers (her grasp on the will of God) drip with liquid myrrh (great anointing).

She is now turning the **handles** of the **lock** - looking at the interpretations of these words and stringing them together with we see that as we fight the flesh and follow Him through His doors of opportunity we will have an anointed grasp (understanding) on His Will. We must go forth with humility and that will open the door and see all bondages broken as we step out into His purposes.

Verse 6: She opens the door.... is He there to congratulate her? No.

If He was there she probably would have pulled Him in the house with her (cf. 3:4) - He again separates Himself to draw her out even further.

NB. This is the second time her Beloved has left her. The first time was to **draw her into obedience**, this time it is to **test her (because of her obedience and desire for Him)**.



Is He asking you to open any doors and walk though into His will? Is your flesh rejecting the idea? Pray to Him for greater clarity as to the doors He's asking you to go through and ask Him for the power of the Spirit to overcome the flesh that is stopping you from doing this.



(h) Enduring the Rejection of Other Believers (5:7-8):

While she is enduring the first test (withdrawal of His presence) suddenly it is time for the second, and it is equally severe.

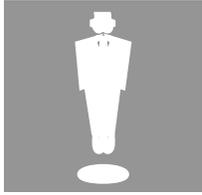
Test One: The withdrawal of His presence.

Test Two: Misunderstanding and rejection of other believers.

When we partake of Christ's sufferings and abandon all to Him, we will endure the misunderstanding and rejection of other believers. This time the Watchmen of the city find the maiden, strike and wound her, and take her covering (veil).

Look at what happens to her...the watchmen (Christian leaders) who watch over the city (Church) found her. They see she is desperate for her beloved but misunderstand her motives and they mistreat her. Maybe she is out after 'curfew' time - her desperation is causing her to break with 'tradition' and do what one is

not supposed to do. Sometimes Church leaders wound us by disciplining us for being desperate for Jesus in a radical way. They may misunderstand our zeal and pour cold water on our exuberant display of desire for Him.



The keepers of the **walls** took away her **veil** - looking up these words and piece together the interpretation we see that **this** speaks of Church leaders who will reject us and take away our spiritual covering due to misunderstandings. She does not lash out at the Watchmen, but becomes more determined in her resolve to be with her Beloved - this should be our response in such situations.



Pause to pray. If you have experienced such treatment, release forgiveness to these leaders now and ask the Lord to show you His purposes in it.

She charges the Daughters of Jerusalem, *'If you find my Beloved that you tell him I am lovesick'* (v8, NKJV).

She was indifferent to Him earlier, but we see now she is anxious for Him alone. This should be the cry of our hearts for Jesus, especially in such painful times of separation and rejection by others. She does not lash out at the Watchmen, but becomes more determined in her resolve to be with her Beloved - what do we learn from this?

Conclusion

We can see in this section that the only way out of selfishness in our relationship with Jesus (and our spouse) is to go the way of the Cross - to keep His covenant through a painful decision to follow Him no matter what the cost. This will lead to feeling distanced from Him and rejection by others, but in the long run will lead us into POWERFUL LOVE (see next section)!



Lesson Five: Stage Four – Powerful Love

This stage of Powerful Love is born in the Bride's heart after she has endured much pain and has made a decision to sacrifice all just to follow her Beloved. He has withdrawn his presence and those who should have helped her have hurt her! But we see her saying to the Daughters of Jerusalem (those not awakened to fervency) in effect :

“If you find my beloved, tell him I’m not angry. I’m not offended because he withdrew and let all this happen to me. I love him. I’m lovesick, not angry!”
(Songs 5:8)

It is this quality of Powerful Love in the Bride that causes the Beloved to call her ‘Awesome as an Army with Banners’(6:4,10), and she sees that her desire for Him has placed her on His war chariots (6:12) in a mighty company! - She is seen (by Him, by herself and by others) as a **WARRIOR**.

Also, we see in this stage that her main desire is to do her beloved's will. She herself goes to the harvest field (6:11) and even calls Him to come with her (7:11-13), which is an amazing turn around in her heart. Powerful love has exploded in her life, which only grows stronger. But this Powerful Love is born out of much pain and trials. It's the same in our lives.

ICON KEY



Observation



Interpretation



Application

The Icons to the left will be used throughout the lessons. The symbols for interpretation (a dove in this case) may change to represent different animals



(a) The Most Powerful Testimony (5:9-16):

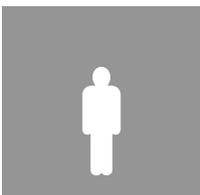
The Bride's response attracts the attention of the Daughters of Jerusalem (either the responsive unsaved or Christians not awakened to fervency).

"What is your beloved more than any other beloved, O Fairest among women?" (NKJV 5:9) they ask. Because her response is so un-natural (she's not angry at Him for withdrawing His presence and allowing her to suffer at the hands of others), they are amazed. Her response is supernatural.

This is the kind of testimony we should have - talking about the beauty and greatness of Jesus even in the darkest times! Even when it seems like He has been so unfair to us and allowed us to suffer so much. She is seen to have matured to the place of wise acceptance of the Beloved's ways. Have you got to that place where you can shine forth even in those times where you have been harshly treated by others and seemingly been abandoned by the Lord?

"Verses 10 through 16 of the fifth chapter of the Song of Solomon comprise the most outstanding statement of love in the Word of God. The maiden stands stripped and wounded before her accusers and answers, 'My beloved is dazzling and ruddy, outstanding among ten thousand.' (Songs 5:10). The maiden then proceeds to describe some of the precious attributes of her beloved. She praises the excellence of who he is, the infinite loveliness of all he does. 'He's dazzling... This is my beloved and this is my friend', she cries (Songs 5:10, 16).

She focuses on the reality of his majestic personality. It is the knowledge of her beloved that stabilizes her. She is overflowing with worship as she declares the splendour of his personhood through these ten attributes. Her response is not one of offense with him for withdrawing his presence and allowing rejection from others. Rather, she magnifies his greatness." Mike Bickle



The Ten-Fold Description Of Jesus

Let us look in more detail at her description of the Beloved and interpret this as it relates to Jesus. Notice that in 5:10 and 5:16 we see an overview of this description - All of Him is desirable - He is Fair (lit. radiant, bright) and ruddy (from 'adam' - perfect humanity), chief (lit. 'fish') among 10,000. Above all, He is now her **FRIEND**.

When all these descriptions of Jesus become a reality in our own experience with Him then we have truly entered the **POWERFUL LOVE** stage in our pilgrimage of love. Look at the following chart that gives the interpretation of each of the 10 descriptions of the Beloved...

SONG OF SOLOMON - PROGRESS OF LOVE

Part of Body	Function	Compared With	Function	Interpretation
(1) HEAD (v11)	AUTHORITY (leadership) Eph 4:15 1 Cor 11:3	Finest refined gold.	The Divine nature. (Pure)	The authority & leadership of Jesus is Godly and pure.
(2) HAIR (v11) (locks)	SUBMISSION 1 Cor 11:1-16	Bushy and black as a Raven.	Beautiful & vibrant. The Raven is a shrewd bird	The submission of Jesus to the Father is shrewd and beautiful.
(3) EYES (v12)	VISION (good eye = generosity)	Like doves of silence by rivers of water, washed with milk & fitly set.	Dove = H.S -Singlar purpose & pure/peace. River=H.S Milk=Word	His vision is of the Spirit, one purpose to bless others according to the Word (cleansing them)
(4) CHEEKS (v13)	LOVE (lit.'soft')	Bed of spices banks of scented herbs.	Pleasing - (anointing oil made)	His love is full & pleasing to & anoints others.
(5) LIPS (v13)	WORDS (speech/kiss)	Lilies dripping liquid Myrrh. Myrrh=Meekness	Lily also is Trumpet in Hebrew.	His words are prophetic & from a meek spirit.
(6) HANDS (v14)- Yad = Open hand.	POWER and DIRECTION	Rings of gold set with beryl-comes from root 'refining Pot'.	Ring=Seal of Authority Gold=Divine Beryl=test	He moves in great authority with godliness to test & refine
(7) BODY(v14) (Heb.implies HEART or ABDOMEN)	A heart of SYMPATHY (fig. abdomen in Jewish thought).	Carved (or bright) Ivory inlaid with sapphires.	Sharp & bright - on cutting edge Sapphire = bright.	He is full of sympathy that is on cutting edge & shining forth purity.
(8) LEGS (v15)	MINISTRY (running)	Pillars of Marble set on bases of gold(divine nature)	Pillar= strength, Marble = Purity	His ministry is strong & lasting based on divine ,pure nature.
(9) COUNTENANCE (v15)	PRESENCE (Appearance)	Lebanon, cedars (Heb.'Firmness')	Lebanon = Pure heart	His presence is pure & enduring.
(10) MOUTH (lit.Palate, taste)	EXPERIENCE of life.	Most Sweet	Pleasurable	His experience of life is full, sweet and pleasurable.



Look at the above chart and descriptions and write down in your own words what aspects of Jesus we should be testifying of to others, and we should be experiencing the reality of. How do you measure up? Which of these characteristics can you truly testify of to others because you have experienced them in your own walk with Him? Take time to pray over these areas.



(b) Bringing Others into Intimacy (6:1):

Those that witness her testifying in such a way say, *'Where has your beloved gone, O most beautiful among women? Where has your beloved gone that we may seek him with you?'* (Songs 6:1).



The response of others when they see you and me standing utterly resolute in our commitment and unwavering in our affection for Jesus even in the midst of suffering, rejection and persecution should be the same. Scoffers and accusers stop sneering, *'Where is your beloved now?'* and start crying, *'We want Him too!'*



As the holy Spirit reveals more and more of the personality of Jesus to our hearts, our commitment will deepen, and an ever-increasing number of passionate believers will result.....God is raising up a company of believers whose impassioned devotion to Him will inspire the rest of the body of Christ and prepare it for a great incoming harvest of souls. Are you one of them?



(c) A Revelation of Where He is (6:2-3):

He is always with us (omnipresent) but we are not always with Him (where He manifests His presence in a very tangible way).

Jesus' greatest manifest presence is amongst the HARVEST. He said, *'Lo, I will be with you always'* (Matt 28:20) in the context of us GOING into the nations, into His purposes first. He is with us in great measure as we follow Him into His will and purposes. Here the Shulamite has a revelation of where the Beloved's presence is greatest...we can interpret to see where Jesus' presence will be greatest...



In verse 2 we see where his presence is strongest..

- (a) In *'His garden'* = Anointed Church gatherings.
- (b) In *'the bed of spices'* = Anointed prayer times.
- (c) When *'feeding his flocks'* = Anointed preaching and teaching.
- (d) When *'gathering lilies'* = Evangelism and Discipleship.



Are you involved in these areas? How much you are (with a right motive) will determine how much of God's manifest presence will be seen in and through you!

Verse 3: *'I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine'* - She has now reversed her previous possessive statement (Songs 2:16) as she realizes she belongs to Him, to go on His terms! As Jesus becomes BIGGER in our thinking and lives, we too will have this revelation of belonging to Him that will spur us on to do His will.

(d) The Bride Becomes an ARMY (6:4-13):



Because of her revelation of Him and the pain she has endured to follow Him completely, she is seen by HIM (6:4, 10), HERSELF (6:12) and OTHERS (6:13) as a mighty ARMY, a mighty **WARRIOR**.

What Can Subdue The Heart of God? The only one thing can conquer God's heart is the affectionate love of His people who say YES to Him.



Verse 4: Looking up the interpretations of each word we see how Jesus sees the Church as an army. From these description we see that she is now an army that terrifies the enemy (*'awesome'*) - this delights His heart (*'Tirzah'*) as she is now possessing His peace (*'Jerusalem'*) and is showing to the world and to the enemy that she is owned by Him (*'Banner' – mark of ownership*).

The main characteristics of this end-time ARMY of believers are *'beautiful'* and *'glorious'*.

Verse 5b-7: This is the same description as Songs 4:1-3 except that this time her eyes are not veiled (the use of veil in verse 7 is not accurate, it should be *'locks'*), but are fully revealed and dazzling - they overcome Him - what do we learn from this? She is not ashamed to look upon and be looked upon by Him. Her spiritual vision is now clear.

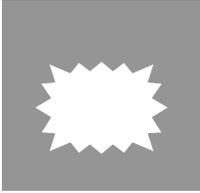
This shows that His love and appreciation for her has not diminished since the wedding night! In fact His love and appreciation for her has grown since then. This is true of our relationship with Jesus and should be true of a husband's love for his wife.



(1) A Unique Army

Verses 8-9: He assures her that she is totally **UNIQUE** as His dove (cf. 5:2), an opinion shared by her mother and also the other women (this passage may refer to Solomon's other wives (Queens) and concubines at that time).

It is significant that there are 60 queens - the same number of valiant men in 3:7. Queens represent the overcoming saints - they become the *'valiant men'*! These are the end-time group of saints that are the most intimate with King Jesus and have the most authority with Him. We become part of their company when we go through what the Shulamite has been through in this song!



(2) An Army Shining Bright

Verse 10: What a transformation! She is now seen as clear, fresh and anointed (cf. 2 Samuel 23:4) - the result of all that has gone before. The description is of a cloudless, bright morning, which speaks of clarity and shining forth with purity (no clouds, no grey areas). This is the quality of God's End-Time Army (Glorious).

There is a greater degree of glory in her now (cf. 2 Cor 3:18). She '*looks forth as the morning*' - the Hebrew word for 'looks forth' gives the picture of one leaning fully out of a window and gazing with unhindered vision. Where there had been lattices blocking and blurring her vision before (the sin that so easily entangles) there is only clarity of unblocked vision before her. She has emerged as an Overcomer, having overcome the sin that had so easily entangled her before (insecurity, unworthiness etc..). We must ask the Lord to bring us to this place - we must pay the price and go through the painful process of separation to emerge as the Shulamite does here...a bright, shining, powerful testimony of God's love!

Look up the Hebrew meanings of Morning (Dawn), Moon and Sun and think about the image she shines forth now.

Again he calls her '*awesome as an army with banners*'.



(3) An Army On The Move

Verse 11: Her response to her Beloved's words of validation (in the face of ridicule from others) is to go (this is the first time she takes the initiative) to '*the garden of nuts!*' - This probably refers to a walnut tree garden, which grew most luxuriantly around the Lake of Gennesareth ('harp') and speaks spiritually of the Harvest fields of this world (where on the outside the people look 'hard' but on the inside they are 'ripe unto harvest'). She becomes an army moving out to where He is working. We see that she goes to the garden with three burdens...

(i) To Look at the 'Verdure' (NKJV) or 'New growth' (NIV) in the Valley. She goes to look for the first signs of spring (new growth) - the first signs of renewal and revival (see 2:11-13). Interpreting this in terms of the End-Time Army (looking at the Hebrew word used for 'valley' also - it speaks of our inheritance) we see we are to look for signs of spiritual renewal and/or revival in our area of inheritance. We are to work on these growth areas.

(ii) To See Whether the Vine has Budded (or '*is flourishing*').

Vine = The Church in abiding relationship with Jesus - her burden is to see renewal and revival in the Church (grapes = joy - to see a release of joy).

(iii) To See if the Pomegranates have Bloomed.

Pomegranates = Love - Has love bloomed in the Church? Is the Church reaching out in love to a lost world? (Evangelism & Mission).

This Army's burden is to see renewal and revival in the areas that have no Church, and in the existing Churches for evangelism with love to be a consuming purpose. We are to seek God for which areas He is giving to us as an inheritance wait for His time to launch forth to do the above activities.



(4) A Swift Army

Verse 12: The best translation of this verse is *'Before I realized it, my desire set me among the royal chariots of my people (chariots of Aminadab)'*. She is now truly *'seated as a ruler'*. The word *'chariot'* here specifically represents the Christian's place of *'sitting in heavenly places with Christ'*, in a place of overcoming rulership. The previous words for *'Chariots'* have slightly different meanings - take a look at the words used for *'Chariot'*.

Chariots of Aminadab = 'Noble Princely People'- these were known for their swiftness and moved quickly at the bidding of their master!

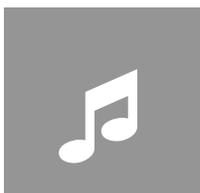
It is our desire to follow Him that makes us a swift, powerful army. Previously she had been slow and hesitant in following Him, but now she swiftly goes where He goes.

'Before I was even aware' - with her mind she as not aware that she had become such a noble, fast-moving army in a place of power and authority. We will be transformed and move in this anointing even before we fully realize it!



(5) A Delivering Army

Verse 13a: The Daughters of Jerusalem cry four times for her to return to them so that they may see her beauty (her freedom and liberty). The World cries out for the salvation that the End-Time Army will bring in the earth. (See Isaiah 26:17-18; Isaiah 66:7-8; Revelation 12:1-6: The *'Male Child'* here is a mature Son (fully grown), and could refer to the End-Time company of people that the Church will birth to accomplish deliverance in this generation!).



(6) A Double Dancing Army

Verse 13b: What is seen in the Bride's life? - A company of two armies is evident. In Hebrew the word *'mahanaim'* (used here) means *'double camp'* or *'double army'*. It can be seen originally

from Genesis 32:2 where Jacob became a natural and spiritual camp (his people make up the natural, the angels make up the spiritual).

This *'double camp'* is having a celebratory *'dance'*. The word used for *'dance'* is interesting as it also means *'to weave together'* - this shows that the natural and spiritual armies (human and angelic) are woven together in a united, beautifully choreographed dance - the Holy Spirit is the Choreographer and the dance is one of victory.

We are not alone! Jesus is the Captain of the Hosts (Josh 5:13-15) - both of the Church and the angelic host. These are both dancing (i.e. 'victorious') armies. As we launch forth into God's inheritance for us we must wait until we are in the place of authority where we realize that we will be moving with the very hosts of heaven in our ministry to the lost and unreached. The Church must reach the unreached in God's strength, understanding that as she launches forth into the nations she must believe she is a *'double-camp'* and be living in that reality.



Look up the Hebrew word used here for *'army'* and comment...what must happen to the church today in order to be seen in this light?

Pray for yourself and your church in the light of the above. What must happen in your life for you to be part of this end-time army?



(e) Living For His Pleasure Alone (7:1-10):

Now comes the description of the Bride, who is now the Army of the Lord. Throughout this description we see that no longer is she living for her own pleasure, but for His pleasure alone.... (see verse 6 particularly)



Look at the chart on the next page to see the interpretations of each of the twelve descriptions of the Bride...

The Twelve-Fold Description of the Militant Bride

Part of Body	Function	Compared With	Function	Interpretation
(1) FEET IN SANDALS (v1a)	SIGN OF SONSHIP (of being prepared to take Father's Good News to the unreached)	Military sandals are referred to in Eph 6:15 (see Rom 10:15)	Prepared for warfare & to take news.	She is prepared to enter into her inheritance in the nations (to fight for freedom of captives).
(2) CURVES or JOINTS of THIGHS (v1b) (Helps give birth)	MOVING TOGETHER AS ONE- all in place (Eph 4:16)	Jewels made by skillful workman. (Ex 31:3)	Jewels = Costly Holy Spirit is the skillful workman	She is flowing in unity, all gifts of Spirit manifesting and bearing fruit.
(3) NAVEL (v2b) (Belly Button)	CENTRAL PART OF BODY new life source	Round goblet full of wine.	Filled and overflowing with joy.	Right to the core she is full of joy due to new life.
(4) WAIST / BELLY (v2b)	Describing a PREGNANT lady about to give birth.	Heap of wheat set about with lilies.	Wheat = fruitfulness. Lily= a prophetic people	She is about to birth a great harvest of souls (prophetic people)
(5) BREASTS (v3 & 7b-8) wants to take hold of her)	To NOURISH that which is birthed.	Two fawns, twins of a Gazelle. Cluster of grapes.	Fawn=Graceful Twins=double Grapes = Joy	Birthing a people with double port'n of anointing who move in grace/joy
(6) NECK (v4a)	STRENGTH (gives direction)	Ivory Tower	Ivory=Sharp & pure. Tower = strength.	She has strong purpose; puts her on cutting edge.
(7) EYES (v4b)	VISION	Pools of Heshbon by gates of Bath Rabbir (Heb'.daughter of a multitude (city)')	Heshbon = 'intelligent' Pools were pure	Her vision is pure based on truth & is of multitudes who will be saved
(8) NOSE (v4c)	DISCERNMENT	Tower of Lebanon looking towards Damascus.	Tower=Strong Lebanon= pure heart. Damascus = fertile place.	She has strong discernment from a pure heart that senses where the harvest is.
(9) HEAD (v5a)	AUTHORITY	Mount Carmel	Carmel=Fruitful field.	She has authority to be fruitful.
(10) HAIR (v5b)	SUBMISSION	Purple (Holds king captive by her hair)	Purple=Royalty	Her submission is as a queen to a captivated king.
(11) STATURE (v7a)	STANDING (Uprightness)	Palm Tree	Righteousness (Isa 61:3;Ps 92)	She is completely righteous/upright.
(12) MOUTH / PALATE (Taste)	EXPERIENCE of life 'Taste and see that the Lord is good.'	Best wine (left 'til last - end times)	Drunk in the the Spirit - joy and satisfaction. This causes others to awaken.	She experiences great joy and satisfaction. This causes an end time awakening.



Look at the above interpretations of the characteristics of the militant bride. How do you measure up? Ask the Lord to draw you more into all of these areas.

Verse 10: *'I am my beloveds and His desire is toward me'* - This verse shows us that she is no longer possessive of Him, but is living completely for His pleasure because she knows that His desire is towards her. This should be the cry of our hearts!

How much does He possess your life? Pray now and ask forgiveness for times when you have tried to possess Him and get Him to go on your terms...speak out to Him your desire to be possessed by Him.



(f) Co-Labourers with Him (7:11-13 :)

Previously she went forth on her own initiative just to *'SEE'* (6:11-13), now she goes forth to demonstrate her love (to *'DO'*). She actually says, *'Come my beloved, let us go forth....'* - her heart has become His heart. Our hearts must become Jesus' heart, which is the Father's heart - a MISSIONS heart!



Firstly, we see the world through His eyes, we see in faith what He's calling us to, and then we zealously launch out as Co-labourers with Him into the *'fields'* (the world's end-time harvest) and *'villages'* (not just towns and cities!). The term *'villages'* speaks of the harvest field God is calling us to where there will be atonement for the lost.

Again, her burden is to see if the vine has budded and the Pomegranate is in bloom. Do you remember the interpretation of these? (See 6:11) – We should long to see new vineyards of believers planted in new, previously unreached areas that show forth the joy and love of the Lord.

Our calling must be focused down to *'villages'* and we must go with a united purpose to see communities living in abiding relationship with Jesus, demonstrating His love in the society.



Here she experiences the fullness of love with Him (*'there I will give you my love.'*) - It's at this stage that we will experience greater depths of His love (obedience is proof of our love to Him (John 14:21) and leads us to greater love (Exodus 19:5-6).

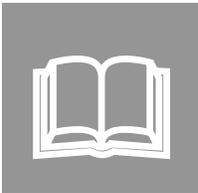
NB. **Mandrake** = 'Love-Plant' (Round, red, apple-like fruit) - used as an aphrodisiac! This speaks of the deeper love they now have which will lead to many lives being *'born'* into His purposes.

Verse 13: *'At our gates are pleasant fruits....'* - 'gates' speak of channels of blessing in our life for a flow of blessing to come from inside us, flowing out to bless many (gates are doorways - entrances and exits to places). The *'pleasant fruit'* talks of the fruit of the Spirit in our lives, which will be a powerful witness to others ('feeding' them).

'All manner old and new' - see Matt 13:52 - within us is treasure (old and new) - He's laid up for us things to experience, old things (already experienced) and also new pleasant things (laid up for us before time (Isa 64:4)). What we have learnt before (old) must remain and be the foundation upon which the new experiences God takes us through can be build upon. Then we will have abundance, a wealth of 'fruit' to pour out into others.



Look at what it means to be a co-labourer with Him and ask yourself how close you are to that goal. Pray for your hear to be awakened to His Missions heart that you may become a channel of blessings to the nations.



(g) Bearing His reproach (8:1-4):

Verse 1: She says, *'I wish you were my little baby brother'*. Why?



In those days it was the duty of the oldest girl in the family to look after her little baby brother. This was totally acceptable by others and much affection could freely be displayed. Others were despising her due to her relationship with Solomon and she cries out because of this. There is a certain restraint that is necessary (she cannot *'kiss'* in public!!) We will get to a point where we have unbridled affection for Jesus. In public we must be wise - we must show forth this affection but not be *'over the top'* so as to stumble the weaker in conscience, but enough to challenge the religious spirits out there!

See Hebrews 13:13 and think about how it helps understand the above.

As we fall deeply in love with Jesus and start to be expressive of this love in the presence of others we will find some *'religious'* people will be offended. They will start to point the finger and try to quench this love. But the quality of love displayed now is unquenchable (as we shall see). We will be as outcasts *'outside the camp'* but this is God's leading, so we can be a powerful testimony outside the confines of the Church (a church without walls).

Verse 2: She longs to be big sister to him (*'lead you into the house of my mother'*) so they can be freer in their affection for each other - to experience

more joy (wine) and love (pomegranates) together. In short, she longs to be **MORE INTIMATE** with him no matter what others are saying! Is this our desire with Jesus (or with our spouse)?

Verse 3: This section ends with them embracing each other tightly - let us cry for a deeper embrace from our lover - Jesus. As married couples, let us become more intimate, longing to embrace each other rather than embarrass one another!

The image of an embrace can be linked to 'embracing His will'.

Verse 4 again has the charge not to stir up love until it is time. This forms the break into the next section.



How much have you embraced His will? How desperate are you for greater intimacy with Him?

Take time to pray and ask the Lord to take you deeper in your love relationship with Him.

Conclusion

When we endure pain and rejection for His sake, even speaking to others of His love and beauty in desperate times, totally committed to Him, we step into the ranks of the end-time army! We willingly go into the harvest field, to accomplish His purposes not because we have to, but because we want to. We live for His pleasure alone, bearing His reproach!

As we labour with Him to reap the harvest, other believers across the nations of the world will come to love Jesus as we do - this leads us into the next chapter.....



Lesson Six: Stage Five – Perfecting Love

This final stage of love shows the Bride coming into full maturity in her love relationship with her Beloved. It reveals the true nature of agape (self-sacrificing) love, both in our relationship with Jesus and in a Godly marriage.

Now the Shulamite woman leans 100% on her Beloved and is totally his. The love they have is so strong that nothing can tear them apart.

Here we see a beautiful picture of what quality of people God is looking for in His Church and what should constitute a mature, godly marriage. He looks for people who lean totally on Jesus and who long to bring others into this quality of relationship with Him - those who give their lives to do His will and who look towards His glorious second coming!

ICON KEY



Observation



Interpretation



Application

The Icons to the left will be used throughout the lessons. The symbols for interpretation (a dove in this case) may change to represent different animals



(a) Leaning on Him (8:5a):

This is the second time that others ask *'Who is this?'* in relation to the couple. The first time (3:6) was particularly in reference to Solomon and his strong army. The Shulamite was simply 'in for the ride' (the wedding procession). However, this time they are seen as **'ONE'** ('two shall become one') coming out of the wilderness. Again this question shows that there has been a dramatic change in the Bride, so much so that even people close to her (this was a relative or a friend) cannot fully recognize her. As we get closer to Jesus we change dramatically. As a married couple grows in love they too mature and change so that others can clearly see.



(1) Up from The Wilderness

'..coming up from the wilderness..' implies a change in the quality of their relationship. *'Wilderness'* has two specific implications in the Old Testament...

(i) The wilderness was associated with Israel's 40-year period of TRIAL.

In their love, the couple has overcome trials, which threatened their relationship (e.g. insecurity of the Bride, the foxes, her indifference, the beating of the watchmen etc.). However, now they come **'UP'** (not *'down!'*) from the wilderness into the Promised Land! Having become a powerful army, she is ready to move into the Promised Land with her Beloved and claim her inheritance!

As we take place in God's End-Time Army and go on to trust Him 100%, we too will storm the Promised Land - the years of wilderness will be over! This is the stage where the Bride now is moving in her own inheritance, owning her own vineyard, bearing much fruit.

(ii) The wilderness was used as an image of God's CURSE (cf. Jeremiah 22:6; Joel 2:3).

The couple's coming up out of the wilderness suggests that in a certain sense they have overcome the curse of disharmony pronounced on Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:16b) - it speaks of coming out from being under curses - both in our relationship with Jesus and in a marriage relationship.

(2) Lean On Me.

"..leaning on her beloved.." - see Proverbs 3:5 and think about its meaning in the light of this verse.

'Leaning on' implies 3 things....

- (1) Total TRUST in the one leaned on (to support).
- (2) If the one you lean on MOVES, you will move with him!
- (3) The STRENGTH of the one leaned on is all-important (not your own strength).



Relate these three points to your relationship with Jesus and also to a marriage relationship. Can you think of any other points implied by the term '*leaning on*'? How much are you leaning on Jesus? Are there other things you're leaning on? (E.g. money)...pray that you may lean more fully on Him.



(b) Great Awakening (8:5b):

The image of a wilderness gives way to the image of the Apple Tree (the symbol of the devotional life - used as a symbol of love and romance in the ancient world). This is first seen in 2:3 and was the place where the Beloved '*awakened*' His Bride to love. The '*awakening*' is a metaphor for new life or rather a new way of perceiving life, which his love brought to her.



Much as she was a product of her parent's love ('*There your mother brought you forth.*') and was brought into the world by physical birth, the Bride has now received a second '*birth*' or '*awakening*' through the love of her Beloved. As we spend time in His presence, having a stronger devotional life (under the apple tree), then we will experience an '*awakening*'!



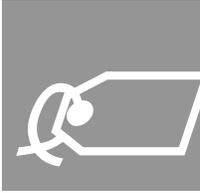
Our 'spiritual mother' (Discipler) begets us again in Christ in the place of devotion - awakening comes through this kind of nourishing discipleship. Have you experienced such an Awakening? Pray now for the Lord to lead you into this experience.



(c) The Strength of the Love of God (8:6-7):

This passage shows us three aspects of the LOVE being described in the Song of Solomon.....

- (1) It SEALS us (v6a).
- (2) It is STRONG (v6b-7a).
- (3) It is very SPECIAL (v7b).

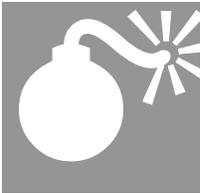


(1) His Love SEALS us (v6a): “Set me as a seal upon your heart.... upon your arm;” (NKJV).

This is the cry of the Bride. In Old Testament times a seal was used to indicate ownership of a person’s valued possessions (a mark of ownership). So the Bride asked to be her Beloved’s most valued possession, both internally (heart) and externally (arm), both in their personal unseen times together and also in the times when all can see. Also the seal bears the image of the one who owns us. His image must be in our heart (centre of our being) and our arm (all we do).

‘Heart’ also speaks about His will and purposes of love (Heart of God).

‘Arm’ also speaks about His actions and strength/power to do those actions.



(2) His Love is STRONG (v6b-7a): “For love is as strong as death, a vehement flame.” (NKJV)

“These verses sum up the nature and power of the love depicted in this Song. It is as universal and irresistible as death, exclusive and possessive (in the sense of being genuinely concerned for the one loved) as the grave, passionate (as a blazing fire) and as invincible and persevering as many waters and rivers. And all this is true because the Creator who possesses all power supports love. The words ‘like a mighty flame’ are, literally, ‘the very flame of the Lord.’ John F.Walvoord, Roy B. Zuck, ‘The Bible Knowledge commentary’ - O.T.,p1024.

See Romans 8:35-39 - what can separate us from the Love of Christ? Only ourselves.



(3) His Love is very SPECIAL (v7b): “If a man give all his wealth it would be utterly despised.”(NKJV)

The final statement about this love depicted in the Song of Solomon shows how priceless and special it is. All of one’s wealth would be totally inadequate to purchase such love. In fact, such material possessions would be despised because His Love cannot be bought. Any attempt to do so would depersonalize it.

“If love is priceless, how then can it be obtained? The answer is that it must be given. And ultimately love is a gift from God.” John F.Walvoord, Roy B.Zuck, ‘The Bible Knowledge Commentary - O.T.’, p1024.

We receive love as a gift from God and in turn we are to give this gift to others...



Think about how strong His love is in your life. Go through the three characteristics of His love as seen here and pray over each one asking the Lord to increase this aspect of His love in your life.



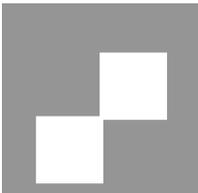
(d) The Call to Discipleship (8:8-9):

In Matt 28:19 Jesus commands us to make disciples of the nations. So far the Bride has gone into the fields to proclaim who He is (evangelism) and tend the vine (Church ministry). However, here she is recalling the process of discipleship she has undergone herself and now longs to bring others into.

This is a quality of Perfecting Love; it desires to perfect (mature) others, even to a point where they out shine us. How much is this desire present in your life?

She grew up in a home where her elder brothers made definite plans to prepare for her marriage (*“the day she is spoken for”*). We too are called to help prepare disciples for a deeper relationship with Jesus (discipleship in the N.T is described in close ‘family’ terms of nurturing young converts). There are two basic types of people mentioned here.....

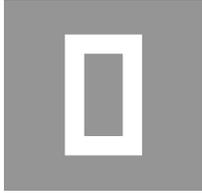
WALL people and DOOR people.



(i) WALL people: “If she is a wall, we will build upon her a battlement of silver.”

A strong wall has good foundations and speaks of a person who displays good character (strong and solid) and judgment, and resists temptations (puts up ‘boundaries’ of protection). This kind of character should be built upon - i.e. allowed a large measure of freedom and room for growth (not overly restricted).

Also this type of person should be freely rewarded - ‘*Towers of Silver*’ (NIV) or ‘*Battlements of Silver*’ (NKJV) may be translated ‘*a turret (sing.) of silver*’, referring to a beautiful, much valued head ornament, or it may simply refer figuratively to their adorning her as people adorned defence towers with silver (silver is symbolic of Redemption). - In the light of the above we can say that a person of good character should be encouraged and allowed freedom to grow and build up others. They should be freely rewarded with recognition and resources and given greater authority (head covering) to do God’s work (i.e. promoted in Christian leadership).



(ii) DOOR people: “If she is a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar.”

A door speaks of a person who is open to outside influences (in relation to a spouse-to-be it could refer to one who is open to the advances of others - prone to immorality) - one who is reckless and easily overcome by temptations. This kind of person should be restricted of their freedom (figuratively spoken of as enclosing her with cedar panels, like barricading a door with planks).



Are you a wall or a door? If you are discipling people, are they walls or doors? How should you disciple them? Discuss further characteristics implied by the images of door and wall....

In the Church there are many 'teachers' but few spiritual 'fathers' and 'mothers' who selflessly pour out their lives for their spiritual children as the Apostle Paul did. These people cannot simply be produced overnight as a result of a structured discipleship training programme, but they are raised up by God and have been through the process of love that the Shulamite has been through so far in this song! Let us pray for the revelation of these mature believers in these end times.



(e) The Call to Maturity (8:10):

“I am a wall...” - her testimony is that she is a WALL person - a chaste woman, built on a firm foundation and standing strong against temptations and outside influences.

We are called to be such mature believers, with such a deep passionate relationship with Jesus that we can be walls to others. The diagram below shows how she has been built up a strong WALL (relating to the five stages in this Song).

THE WALL OF FAITH (Songs 8:10)

FULLY MATURE WALL
STAGE FIVE: Trusting Him 100% - Fully in His Will.
STAGE FOUR: Taking right place in His end-time Army.
STAGE THREE: The Way of the Cross/ Trials, suffering
STAGE TWO: Overcoming SELF / Hearing His Call
STAGE ONE: Fervent love / Intimacy with Him.

Looking at the 'WALL OF FAITH' above we can see the various building blocks that make us a strong wall...How much have you been built up? We will be referring back to this 'WALL OF FAITH' in the next section.



"My breasts like towers." - Earlier her breasts are described as fawns (4:5, 7:3 - Immature) and clusters of grapes (8:8 - Mature yet tender). But now they are like TOWERS (Strong / unmovable). She is saying that now her ability to NOURISH others is very strong. As we reach this stage of love we will be a great strength to others as we disciple them and nourish them in the faith.



Perfect Peace

A sign of a mature Christian is that they live in great 'PEACE'. Notice that it is not peace in the world's eyes, or in our own eyes, but in His eyes!! It is His definition of peace - nothing less! The word used for 'peace' in Hebrew is 'Shalom' which appears 237 times in the Bible and is clearly depicted as a satisfied condition, an unconcerned state of peacefulness, a harmonious state of soul and mind, both externally and internally (Psalm 4:8) - It could also be translated as health, security, tranquility, welfare, good condition, success, comfort etc. It is much more than the word 'peace' implies today.



How much of His 'shalom' do you have in your life? Cry out for more! The amount you have is linked to how much you are discipling and nourishing others. Pray for the Lord to increase your capacity to disciple others.



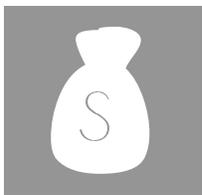
(f) The Lord of the Harvest - Giving our All (8:11-12):

As already mentioned, 'Baal Hamon' can mean 'Lord of The Harvest' - See Matthew 9:38 and note what our relationship with the Lord of the Harvest should be like.

We are to be co-labourers with the Lord of the Harvest - Jesus. As we mature in our love relationship with Him we will have a revelation of Him as the Lord of the Harvest (a MISSIONS God).



"He leased out his vineyard to keepers" - This shows us that we are stewards of what God calls us to tend, be it one disciple, a cell group, a teaching group, a Church (all are His vineyard!). It doesn't belong to us! What is the difference in seeing ourselves as stewards rather than owners?



This passage shows us that all his vineyard keepers were to grow enough grapes (symbol of Joy - Church is to be a place of Joy) to make 1000 pieces of silver (Shekel). They would give these 1000 pieces of silver to the landowner and in turn receive 200 pieces of silver for their work.

The amazing thing is that now she is able to say *'my own vineyard is before me!'* Earlier she was working in the wrong vineyard, the wrong place, due to the expectations of others (1:6) but now, due to her maturing in the love relationship with her Beloved, she has found her place. We too must find our place in the Lord of the Harvest's purposes - Ask yourself and the lord, *"What and where is my own vineyard?"*

She not only has found her place, she also is involved in giving of the fruit of her ministry - giving out of everything that He had given her (*'You, O Solomon, may have a thousand (pieces of silver)'*). All that we own is given to us by Him - we must be *'givers'* not *'takers'* - givers of our time, money, gifts, resources etc..

Notice that the owner gets 100%, the keepers receive 20%. What can we learn from this? What is the level of our giving?



Do you know what area of ministry you are a steward over? Pray for greater clarity in this and ask the Lord to expand your heart so you can be a greater giver in that area of ministry.



(g) The Cry for Him to Come (8:13-14):

The words we see here of the two lovers recall early passionate requests from their courtship days which show that their love has not lost its intensity, but rather is now fervent and mature (compare with 2:14,17). We must go through His testing first before our love can reach this kind of maturity.



Verse 13: The Beloved (Jesus) asks to hear the voices of those *'who dwell in the gardens'* (i.e. all who, like the Shulamite, are working for Him out of love - the End-Time Company of Believers). Previously he had wanted to hear her voice in terms of her speaking forth her calling into the harvest (2:14). Now, He longs to hear a deeper cry. This is the cry Jesus looks for in His Bride - the cry for Him to COME AGIAN in His glory!

Verse 14: This is the cry of the Bride that He longs to hear: *'Make haste (hurry, lit. flee suddenly), my beloved and be like a gazelle or a young stag on the mountains of spices.'*

Previously she had made a similar plea in 2:17. However, this earlier cry, as we have seen, was to be separated to Him (Bethel = 'separation') to do His will. Now that she is in the centre of His will her cry becomes a deeper one! This cry is the same as is referred to in Revelation 22:17, 20-21 - look this up and think about what it means to you.

Before we sincerely cry out for Jesus to come back we must be in the place where we truly know we are living in such a way that will hasten His coming! If this cry is merely based on the desire to escape all our problems then we are not ready to make this cry. It is a desire that is born from the reality that we are fully involved in His end-time purposes and seeing the fruit of that in our lives. Before we get to this stage of 'perfecting love', where we are successfully involved in discipleship in the fullness of His will for us, our cry should be 'Lord, separate me to Yourself more than I can do all I'm here to do'.



'Mountains of Spices' literally means 'that which looms up (mountain) and is fragrant and pleasing (balsam spices)'. This could refer spiritually to Christ's Millennial Kingdom when He comes to rule and reign (and us with Him) on earth for 1000 years. This is what we cry for him to come and establish. He will come suddenly as a thief in the night - as strong, agile and full of grace as a gazelle or young stag.

Are you ready for Him to come again? Is this your fervent cry, for Him to come quickly?

Conclusion

Here, in this section of Perfecting Love, we see the quality of love relationship Jesus is looking for in us, His End-Time Army! As the End-Time company of believers come to a point of leaning completely on Him, sealed and protected by His strong love, reaching out in mature discipleship in the nations, each member finding their place in the harvest and all (with the Spirit) crying "COME!" - Then the scene is set for the spotless Bride to be once and for all presented to her Beloved - Jesus (Eph 5:27), when He comes again in glory and splendour.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

Lesson Seven: The Wall

Analysis – Where am I?

(1) Introduction:

'The Wall' analysis is a questionnaire that I have developed based on Songs 8:10 where the Bride says, *'I am a wall!'* As we saw, as we progress in the stages of love seen in the Song of Solomon, then we are built up into a strong wall. The diagram to the right summarizes these stages.

THE WALL OF FAITH (Songs 8:10)



We must have strong foundations in one stage before the next stage can be built (or else the wall will collapse!)

The following 40 questions are a mixture of questions - each one particularly relevant to a certain stage of love. As you go through the questions answer with honesty. It is best not to dwell too long on each question (usually your first feeling of what the answer is will be the best!).

After you have answered all the questions you will be shown how to add up the totals for each stage. You should end up with a total for each stage of love (five in all) that will show you how big your 'building block' is for that stage. Then you should be able to draw a picture of your 'WALL' - seeing immediately your strengths and weaknesses. This process will be described in more detail when we get there!

(2) 'The Wall Analysis'

For the following statements, choose the response that is most correct for you out of the four choices..

0 = hardly at all

1 = little

2 = sometimes

3 = much

Put a tick in the number column for each statement that best describes your response to that statement (e.g. If you feel the statement is not at all true for you then put a tick in the '0' column').

Statement	0	1	2	3
(1) I long for greater intimacy with Jesus (for Him to draw closer) and I actively pursue that.				
(2) I have sensed a definite call on my life where the Lord has been leading me in a particular direction.				
(3) The Lord has given me a strong vision of His victory and that I am an Overcomer because of His resurrection.				
(4) I have endured rejection and hurt from others (especially close Christian friends) with patience and still have remained much in love with Jesus, sharing about Him with others.				
(5) I trust Jesus 100% (in every area of my life - finances etc.)				
(6) I have had wonderful devotional times where He seems so close to me.				
(7) The Lord has challenged me to come out of specific comfort zones in my life.				
(8) I have made 'quality decisions' to follow the Lord no matter what the cost.				
(9) A strong burden of my heart is to share Jesus with others, even in painful, traumatic times - and I have been actively doing this.				
(10) There has been a 'great awakening' in my life - a significant renewal (not conversion).				

(11) In my worship times I literally feel His close, intimate presence, and, even if I don't, I worship with great fervency.

(12) My spirit is stirred up due to seeing the signs and realizing we are truly in the End Times.

(13) The Vision of God's End-Time Army is very real to me.

(14) I know what I should be doing and where I should be going to sense His Presence in a powerful way and I am actively doing this.

(15) I belong completely to Jesus and do whatever He says.

(16) My desire is to read His Word to be strengthened by Him through it - and I am actively doing this.

(17) The cry of my heart is to be separated to Jesus to do His Will - I am actively pursuing this is my life.

(18) God speaks very real words of affirmation and encouragement to my spirit, which I clearly hear.

(19) I meet with God's people to pray and intercede for the lost and enjoy it.

(20) All curses are broken in my life and all dryness and barrenness is gone (and I'm living in the reality of this).

(21) I know God loves me and speaks words of affection over me.

(22) The Lord has prompted me to give up certain practices/lifestyles / activities which are not helpful to my love relationship with Him.

(23) I am involved in very real Spiritual Warfare.

(24) I know I am an important part of God's End-Time Army, and am actively taking my place.

(25) I am involved in discipling/nurturing others in the faith.

(26) I have great Joy when in my Christian life.

(27) I realize that literal Israel is important in God's purposes and the Lord has challenged me to pray for the modern day

country of Israel - I am actively doing this.

(28) My life is locked up and sealed for only my Beloved, Jesus. I continually say 'no' to immorality, pride, greed and so forth.

(29) I walk in His victory in my life.

(30) I know my own God-given ministry and am actively involved in it now.

(31) There are times when I literally feel the Lord's embrace.

(32) The Lord has given me vision, not just for a few countries, but also for a lost world.

(33) I cry out for the Holy Spirit to move in my life - even if it means taking me through painful, bitter experiences.

(34) My burden (not negative criticism) is to see renewal and revival in the world and a release of Love and Joy in the Church (I actively pray for this).

(35) A strong cry of my heart is for Jesus to come back because I know I'm at the center of His Will.

(36) I long to go to meetings, Bible studies, and people where I know my relationship with Jesus will grow stronger and I'll be strengthened spiritually.

(37) The Lord seems to be giving me a particular 'burden' or message so that I can share it with others to build them up and challenge them.

(38) I have broken through indifference and the feeling of being unprepared and stepped out to do what I believe He has called me to do, and I felt much anointing.

(39) I am involved in Evangelism/Mission and am ready to go wherever He wants me to.

(40) I give equal to or more than 80% of what I receive financially/ materially into the work of the Lord.

Go back over the questionnaire and make sure all entries are correct and then you can go to the next page to tabulate the results...

(3) Looking at the Results:

After having completed the previous questionnaire add up the totals of the following groups of statements (use the numbers under the response given - e.g. much= 3, sometimes = 2 etc. to put in the brackets). You should arrive at a total for each of the five groups that will be used in drawing your wall.

Group No.	Add up statement numbers (put scores in brackets)	Total
1	1()+6()+11()+16()+21()+26()+31()+36()	
2	2()+7()+12()+17()+22()+27()+32()+37()	
3	3()+8()+13()+18()+23()+28()+33()+38()	
4	4()+9()+14()+19()+24()+29()+34()+39()	
5	5()+10()+15()+20()+25()+30()+35()+40()	

(i) Creating your own Wall...

To the right you will see the outline of a wall (in lines). Each level of the Wall represents (from the bottom up) the successive stages of love in the Song of Solomon. Also each level corresponds to the group number you have added together the totals for. What you must do is fill in (as a block for each level) the total score.

Use your results from the forty questions as you have been directed and you will be able to see your own personal wall that will reveal where you are in terms of your progress of love. Everyone will have their own unique wall, some more stable than others. It is important to read the wall correctly and take the necessary steps to make sure your wall is built properly.

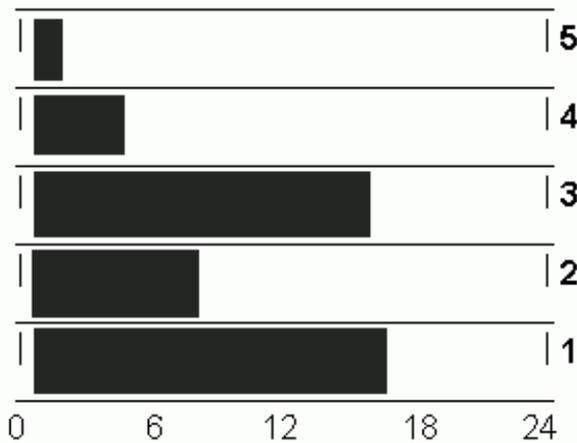
YOUR PERSONAL WALL			(Stage No.)
			5
			4
			3
			2
			1
6	12	18	24
(Score Totals)			

It is possible to have a **'false wall'**, which is not really representative of your love relationship with Jesus (due to not being totally honest in answering the questions or not fully knowing your own heart).

(ii) Reading the Wall:

Having drawn your own 'WALL' it is important to 'read' it - i.e. work out what it tells you. If you imagine each level is a 'building block'. Obviously, if a lower level is smaller than a higher level, the higher level will fall. This means your wall is unstable and the lower levels need to be developed more before concentrating on the higher. For example.....

An Example of a faulty wall.



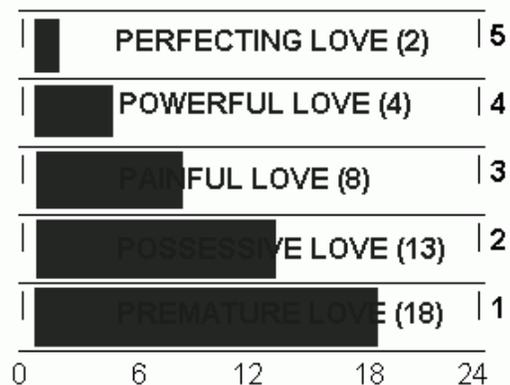
In the 'wall' to the left, the 3rd level (Painful Love) is obviously unstable. The first and second levels (Premature and Possessive) need to be concentrated on first before building the third! It is possible that this person is concentrating on suffering, going the way of the cross (Stage 3) but without having really overcome their self nature (stage 2) or understood His call on their life.

If the higher levels are bigger than some lower ones it means that a proper foundation has not been laid for the stage they seem to be at - they are 'living a lie' and deluding themselves into thinking they are spiritually more advanced than is a reality in their life.

The wall to the right is a well-balanced wall. The person has been through all stages to some degree, and no one stage is out of balance. He must continue to make sure the foundations get stronger so that the higher levels can expand.

A healthy 'wall' will look like steps going upwards and each block will easily support the one above it. This is the way each of us should be built up in our love relationship with Jesus.

An Example Wall (Complete)



When you have pinpointed which level needs concentrating on, or needs to be cut down in order to concentrate on lower levels, you can study in more detail the notes on that level. Also look up the statements relating to that level in this analysis and do what is necessary in prayer. The 'building blocks chart' below will help you in pinpointing the major areas that need to be worked on....

(iii) Building Blocks For Each Level:

To help you further, the following chart shows the various 'building blocks' that make up each level (in summary form), which we have been through in this course. From your 'wall' you should now know which level you need to concentrate on or to 'unbuild' (i.e. cut back). The following chart summarizes the main things for each level....

LEVEL	The main 'building blocks' involved.
(1) Premature Love	Intimacy with Jesus. Prayer. Worship. Love for Word. Hearing the Lord and Sensing His presence. Joy. Thirsty for Him.
(2) Possessive Love	Hearing God's Call. Coming out of Comfort Zones. Seeing the Signs of the Times. Separating yourself to Him. World Vision. Burden for the Lost.
(3) Painful Love	Vision of His Victory. Quality decisions to follow Him no matter what the cost. Deeply involved in Spiritual Warfare. Saying 'no' to the World, 'yes' to the Cross.
(4) Powerful Love	Endure suffering with patience. Moving in His Calling/Will. Actively involved in reaching the Lost. Burden to see renewal /revival in the land. Take place in God's Army. Walking in victory and power.
(5) Perfecting Love	Leaning 100% on Jesus. Great awakening. Completely free from dryness/curses. Center of God's Will. Cry for Him to return. Giving much for His work. Spiritual Mother/Father

Use all the above prayerfully and carefully. Remember; be as open and honest as you possibly can as this is for your own benefit. You are not in competition with others around you...but with yourself! (Except to 'outdo one another in love!').

(iv) Final Words

In this course we have not looked particularly at how the Song of Songs depicts Yahweh's everlasting Love for natural Israel. God has not finished with Israel! The Church is not the spiritual Israel in the sense that it replaces Israel. Scripture clearly shows that God still has His purposes for natural Israel and the Jews. But we don't have time to explore Song of Solomon's rich insights about God's wooing and drawing of natural Israel. Perhaps another time!

What we have concentrated on is the relationship of Christians with Jesus, both corporately (The Church as the Bride as Christ) and as individuals as part of his Church.

"Let me encourage you to take the Song of Solomon and turn its verses into devotional meditation. This beautiful song of divine love is breathtaking when we begin to understand the prophetic nature of its words. They are life changing when we realize our beloved is also speaking them over us, affirming and drawing forth qualities not yet fully developed in our lives.

Oh, that God would give us new eyes to see His affectionate, yearning heart for us while we're still growing, still failing, still weak in so many ways. Never allow the truths in God's beautiful love song to be forgotten and fade away in your heart. Cherish the message of His love for you. Jesus enjoys you and continually affirms you even in your imperfection and immaturity.

Knowing He is enchanted with your beauty fills your heart with new courage and confidence. Understanding the affectionate personalities of God equips you to wage war against the enemy and to demolish the lying, accusing strongholds he has erected in your mind. Resting in the sure and certain knowledge of God's ravished heart and overflowing, unwavering love will enable you to stand unoffended, unshaken and mature in times of trouble or persecution. Understanding that the powerful passions in the heart of God Himself are the source of holy passion in your own life ensures the continuing progression of your passion for Him.

As you have seen in the Song of Solomon, God pursues you with a relentless, infinite love. Do not let this truth grow cold in your heart. God is not some mystical, nebulous force that loves the masses but not individuals, whose love is focused on vast populations but not on a single person. You serve a deeply loving, passionate God whose heart is ravished by the beauty of your sincere, devoted heart. You are so beautiful to Him that you take His breath away!

*I believe that in the years to come the Lord will release more revelation of Himself through the Song of Songs, the ravished song of the Beloved for His bride.”
M.Bickle, "Passion for Jesus."pp133-134*

Conclusion

In conclusion, we can see that, contrary to what many Christians think; Song of Solomon is a highly practical and understandable book of the Bible. Its message is timeless, both in relating the importance of pure love in a marriage relationship and in prophetically speaking of our own love relationship with Jesus and Israel's with Yahweh.

What I have laid out in this material is just ‘the tip of the iceberg’. Please don’t leave it at where this material has ended. Instead, take the truths learnt here to delve deeper and deeper into this beautiful song of love. There are so many more wonderful truths that the lord can highlight to your Spirit as you prayer fully meditate on this magnificent melody of marvelous love!

May this song be ever fresh upon your lips and in your heart, and may the lord take you deeper into His presence and lead you on in His will through your pilgrimage of Love as revealed in the Song of Songs!

Even so, COME!