

29. Solomon and Love

Let's consider first the characters of the love poem called the Song of Songs. The Shulamite was a beautiful young African girl who had been selected to lie with David on his death bed to keep him warm. We do not know her actual name, just the title. Solomon, on the other hand, was a man who fancied himself a great 'lover,' and the Shulamite probably caught his eye well before his father died. As a king, Solomon 'loved' 'many' women.

The Reese Chronological Bible places the event at 20 years into Solomon's rule. The poem does allude to at least sixty wives at this time, but something seems off.

Let's set all that aside, however, as unimportant to our purpose.

Applying the Poem. God has this poem in His Word to show us the love relationship between Christ and His Church. These things do apply to us as individuals and must do so before they can apply to us together as the Church. Nonetheless, it is the Church, many together as one, that has caught the Heart of Jesus with passion.

We do see the Beloved as Solomon to understand the poem, but we see through Solomon to Jesus at every point. And we do see the Shulamite as ourselves, yes, but we see through the individual girl to the Church at every point.

Union with Christ is romance of the highest order.

A Romance of Two. And this is why I have always insisted that union with Christ is one and two and one: one in union, two in communion, and one in expression.

It would be hard for me to call any experience "union with Christ" if the heart of that experience is anything other than an ongoing and real romantic relationship between you and Jesus in Person. And it would be hard for me to call "union with Christ" anything that does not lead a person into a relationship of the same love with other believers in Jesus.

The Church, which is His [Bride], the fullness of Christ.

A Romantic Jesus. Jesus is in love with you. He is smitten, enamored, head-over-heels in love with you. This silly man thinks that there is nothing He would rather do than sit and listen to you talk, and to share every little mundane part of your life as if it is the most special thing in the world.

Now, these are words describing romance, and romance is very much part of this mix. But there is also full marriage, which includes many other expressions of love, not the least of which is carrying with you all your sorrows and griefs as His own. – Jesus.

Meanings and Songs. The poem begins with the silly back and forth of initial romance. All the metaphors being used are cultural to their day and have no immediate meaning to us.

The Spirit of God is free to place a spiritual meaning on these things according to the needs of the teacher, so long as it is Christ being conveyed by the teaching.

It is in Chapter 2 that the more serious “callings” of this relationship begin. And we have known many songs from these lines. – “He brought me to His banqueting house and His banner over me was love.”

A Public Proclamation. Now, the “banqueting house” is first, John 6 & 7, eating and drinking of Jesus. The banner of LOVE flies over this feast.

The banner is a public proclamation of love, waved by Jesus over you, personally, as you “KNOW Jesus Sent into you.” Yet it also is a public proclamation of love waved over the gathering together of the Church, all who believe into Jesus, as one Body and one Bride. For that reason, we also see it as a public proclamation of love over our “eating and drinking” as applied to knowing one another, that is, spending time delighting in each other.

Then – “Do not awaken Love until He pleases.”

Come Away with Me. This line, “Do not awaken Love,” spoken by the Shulamite, sets the beginning of tension in the story of this poem. That tension is a Church that has not believed in Jesus as her Life and Love, but rather, has imagined a mental image of a ‘Jesus’ faraway.

Then she says, “The voice of my Beloved! Behold He comes leaping upon the mountains...”

Then, Jesus stands outside her house and says to her, “Rise up, My love, My fair one, and come away with Me. Let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.”

Transubstantiation. To “come away” with Jesus is to leave the false imagination of a separated self far behind. Eating and drinking of Christ is transubstantiation, His flesh and His life having become your flesh and your life, all that you are in your humanity.

Then her brothers say, “Catch us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines.” These “foxes” are all the false words and false feelings that speak against our own personal union with Christ. They “eat” the fruit of the vine and spoil the harvest.

She responds with, “My Beloved is mine, and I am His.”

Honeymoon to Completion. The poem then proceeds through what we could call the “honeymoon” period of union with Christ, when everything is fresh and exciting. “When I found the one I love, I held Him and would not let Him go.” – as in Jacob wrestling with God.

There is, then, a line that is repeated more than once – “Until the day breaks and the shadows flee away.” That “day” is the day of resurrection, the turning of the ages, the outcome of this relationship of LOVE.

Keep that in mind as the end completion of this story, for this romance has great purpose.

It's Always Personal. Here is what Jesus says to you. – “You have ravished my heart, My sister, My spouse; you have ravished my heart with one look of your eyes.” If it ain't personal, that is Jesus in Person loving you, then it ain't the full reality of union with Christ.

Yes, Jesus has already entered into union with all who believe into Him. That union is complete and absolute. But that isn't life. Life is not “Jesus Sent into you,” per se; Life is KNOWING Jesus Sent into you.

And one of the clearest indications of this poem is that the level of “knowing” is entirely up to the Shulamite.

As Much as You Want. Every believer already lives in full union with Christ; Jesus shares all things with every individual who believes in Him. The extent to which each one knows that is entirely up to each, according to the desire or interest of each.

For us, this love union, this complete merging of spirit, soul, and body with the Lord Jesus Christ, sharing all things together, is without end. Our knowing grows forever. Indeed, I am beginning to know union with Christ as I have never known it before.

Yet what I sense and have always sensed is that every level of knowing union with Christ must STAND UPON FIRM.

Awakening Community. Then we have an interchange that I want to apply to the gathering of each local church.

First Jesus says, “A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.” And in that place, we respond, “Awake, O north wind, and come, O south! Blow upon my garden, that its spices may flow out. Let my Beloved come to His garden and eat its pleasant fruits.”

The north wind is fierce, the south wind is gentle. But Jesus “eating of” our shared life together comes only by our acceptance that He does. You see, “Come away with Me” is also a call into Christ Community.

An Inconvenient Moment. Then the moment of crisis comes. Jesus says to each one personally, “I have come. Open for Me, My love, My dove, My perfect one.” – Behold I stand at the door and knock, if anyone opens the door, I will come in and sup with him and he with me.

Again – eating and drinking means transubstantiation, everything of me become Him and everything of Him become me, AND it means entering into Community.

But she is not ready. She has other things pressing against her. He is come at a most inconvenient time. He has come to share life with her when she is at her worst.

Church History. Then, this next line is the description of 2000 years of church history.

I opened for my Jesus, but my Jesus had turned away and was gone. My heart leaped up when He spoke. I sought Him, but I could not find Him; I called Him, but He gave me no answer. The watchmen who went about the city found me. They struck me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took my veil away from me. I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my Jesus, that you tell Him I am lovesick!

This is how we could sing wondrous words of faith in the move and yet believe none of them.

Criminality. The ideas of a “faraway Jesus” taking place in the mind of the individual believer, and across the Church as a whole, are fiction, – imaginative, made-up nonsense. Does He not say, “I will never let go of you nor leave you behind” (Hebrews 12:5)? – And, “I am with you always?”

It is the watchmen and the keepers of the wall who commit the actual crime in Church history, the preachers, the theologians, and the Bible translators.

The desire of God's people to know Him has never diminished, yet they have been told, "He's not here." And then they have been beaten, "It's your fault, – Obey!"

Abuse. FULL union with Christ Jesus way, way beyond anything I know or have considered, happens in absolute totality the very moment the least one stands in a service and haltingly says, "Jesus, come into my heart."

And yet, they will spend the rest of their lives being told it ain't so, and being blamed for all their failings.

The Father is already sharing all their difficulties with them for the sake of others, yet they are told that their failings are proof that God is "far away from them." This is abuse of the very worst kind. In *Musings on Union* "[Double or One](#)," I share about that abuse in my own life.

Something NOT True. Here is what I wrote in great distress and tears.

"They lied to me. They lied to me. When they told me that You were far away from me in my distress, when they told me that my mistakes meant I was in trouble with You, they lied to me. And all those years of heartache came from something NOT TRUE. You are so close; You are my life and my breath. You are bound to me in perfect Covenant Bond forever. We walk together in all ways as one. Oh Father, I am so sorry for believing them, I didn't mean to. I didn't mean to."

Yes, as I know it now, that gulf placed between me and Father was the torment of my life. Yet it was not true.

Christian Community. After the crisis of Chapter 5, the poem turns to the sobriety of Christian Community in Chapter 6. Where has your beloved gone, O fairest among women? Where has your beloved turned aside, that we may seek him with you?

Then the Shulamite answers. My beloved has gone to his garden, to the beds of spices, to **feed his flock in the gardens, and to gather lilies. I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine.** He feeds his flock among the lilies.

The garden and the flock is the gathering of the local Church. Love must be love one another to be true love.

The Fruit of Christ. The description the Beloved gives in Chapter Six is a description of His Church, and the response of the Shulamite is the full embracing of Community. I went down to the garden of nuts to see the verdure of the valley, to see whether the vine had budded and the pomegranates had bloomed.

The fruit of Christ is the relationships among His own.

Then this line. – What would you see in the Shulamite—As it were, the dance of the two camps? In the move, this was considered as pointing to the two parts of the Church, one part in the heavens, the other upon the earth. I see no reason to think otherwise.

The Remnant. **But in the Beloved's description of the Church there is this line.** – There are sixty queens and eighty concubines, and virgins without number. My dove, my perfect one, is the only one, the only one of her mother.

In the move, this was thought to point to the many denominations and sects of Christianity, that Jesus has married so many **who do not satisfy Him, but then the “perfect one”** chosen by Him was the move of God. This came from Sam Fife, who was very sectarian.

Again, I see it the same way, except without the sectarianism. Rather, the “perfect dove” is a remnant across the earth, a woman clothed with the sun.

Defining the ‘One-Love.’ Chapter Seven continues with the expressions of Christ in Community. – Come, my Beloved, let us go forth to the field; let us lodge in the villages... There I will give you my love.

We love Jesus by loving one another; John makes this clear.

Then, in Chapter Eight, the question is asked – Who is this coming up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved? Again, in the move, we understood this to mean a Church coming out of great difficulty leaning utterly upon the Lord Jesus Christ. And this is the definition of the “perfect dove,” those who put Jesus upon all that they are.

Seals, Fire, and Water. In Chapter Eight, then, is the strongest expression of the poem, mysterious and important.

Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm; for love is as strong as death, ardor and zeal as stubborn as Sheol; its flames are flames of fire, the Flame of the Lord. Many waters cannot quench love, nor can the floods drown it. If a man would give for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly despised.

Brother Joe McCord preached for two hours on just these two verses; it was one of the most profound words I have ever heard. Yet he did not know as we know.

Victory over Death. The seal upon the heart is where we live, inside of Jesus, but the seal upon the arm is the salvation of God.

– Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him (Isaiah 56). And – Jesus is able to save into all salvation those approaching God through Him, always living into hitting the mark for them, for their sakes (Hebrews 7).

The remainder of the verse sets out the most important part of this salvation – the reason for our victory over death. Death is strong? – Love is far stronger. Sheol, the place of the dead, grabs

people and never lets them go? The zeal, the Pro-Determination of God, grabs hold of us far more.

My God Is a Consuming Fire. The emergeing of Love inside of us, transforming us, is a most vehement emergeing of Fire. As in *The Jesus Secret II* from Hebrews 12 & 13 – My God is a consuming Fire. Out from that Fire inside of me, I love my brothers and sisters forever.

You can't buy Love, for Love is not a human attribute. Love is God Himself and we know Him by faith or not at all. But when we together acknowledge God-Love as our only and our all, then nothing can quench or drown such love. Death cannot prevail against it.

Make haste, my Beloved – Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Reading for Next Time. The lesson next time is “Elijah and Decision.” To prepare for this lesson, please read 1 Kings 17-19, three chapters.

Elijah is the prophet of decision. – as Joel said, “Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision.” – **And Elijah came to all the people, and said, “How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.”** – And the God who answers by FIRE, He is God.

The word Sam Fife preached on this passage reverberates all through my consciousness to this day and shapes all that I know of a God of Fire coming through us.

Let's Pray Together. We will wait until next time for the Fire, however; here we return to calling the Church of Jesus Christ into the Garden of Love. No love exists except as our togetherness.

“Lord Jesus, we turn our hearts now towards that “perfect dove,” that one love that has caught Your heart in this present moment. Lord Jesus, we see that remnant scattered all across

the earth, those who are seeking to know You with all their hearts right now, as we are, those who are Your firstfruits in the gathering together of Love.

“Lord Jesus, we know that there must be the ‘few’ before there could ever be the ‘many.’ We know that this “perfect dove” is calling upon You right now.

Into the Garden. “Lord Jesus, we call Your firstfruits into Your garden of love, into Christ Community, the place where the aroma of spices flows out and where You feed among the lilies.

“Lord Jesus, we call ourselves into this garden, that we are already seized into You, that You make us to be Your expressions of Love inside Your Church. Lord Jesus, we call each one who reads these letters and who witnesses to this word into this gathering together into Christ as Your firstfruits in the earth.

“Lord Jesus, we call each one across the earth who is even now waiting upon You, that each would enter into Love.

God Among Us. “Lord Jesus, as we, Your firstfruits, Your perfect dove, gather together inside of You, as You partake of our love for one another, so let us be that strong anchor, that great Love, that fierce zeal, that Fire that burns, calling all who belong to Jesus into the same love, into all victory over death.

“And Lord Jesus, we call those specific individuals that You have chosen to walk together in Christ Community with us, that they would hear the call of Your Heart, that they would come, that place and provision would come, that we might know what it is to be “God-among-us.”

“Lord Jesus, You are always coming; You are always gathering us together into You.”