

## ***Session 4 An Overview of the Storyline of the Song of Songs***

### **I. SONG OF SOLOMON: THE DIVINE KISS AND THE BRIDE’S LIFE VISION (SONG 1:2-4)**

- A. The theme of the Song of Solomon is the Bride’s spiritual journey to be drawn near to Jesus in intimacy and then to run in deep partnership with Him in ministry. She matures in these two realities as she experiences the kisses of God’s word touching her heart.

<sup>2</sup>*Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth [Word]. For your love is better than wine...*  
<sup>4</sup>*Draw me away [intimacy]! We will run after you [ministry]. (Song 1:2-4)*

- B. The Song of Solomon has two main sections: Song 1-4 is focused on receiving our inheritance in God, and Song 5-8 is focused on God receiving His inheritance in us.

### **II. HER JOURNEY BEGINS WITH THE PARADOX OF GRACE (SONG 1:5-11)**

<sup>5</sup>*I am dark [in heart], but lovely [to God]...<sup>6</sup>my own vineyard [heart] I have not kept. (Song 1:5-6)*

- A. The paradox of our faith is that we are dark in our heart, yet we are lovely to God. Both truths must be held in tension to understand who we are before God. Some emphasize how sinful we are (darkness of our heart) and others emphasize how beautiful we are to God (lovely in Christ).

- B. We are lovely before God even in our weakness for four reasons.

1. God’s personality is filled with tender, loving emotions for His people. God sees us through His heart that is filled with tender love. Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder.

2. The gift of righteousness: We receive the beauty of Jesus’ righteousness as a free gift.

<sup>21</sup>*For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Cor. 5:21)*

3. The Spirit’s impartation of a sincere and willing spirit of obedience that cries for God.

<sup>15</sup>*You received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out...“Abba, Father.” (Rom. 8:15)*

4. Our eternal destiny as Jesus’ Bride. God sees the end from the beginning. He sees us in light of the billions of years in which we will be perfect in obedience.

- C. She has a desperate cry to have more of Jesus. She wants Him to personally feed her spirit.

<sup>7</sup>*Tell me, O you whom I love, where you feed your flock...For why should I be as one who veils herself by the flocks of your companions? (Song 1:7)*

- D. Jesus tenderly reveals His heart for her. Then He reaffirms her sincerity (1:8-11).

<sup>8</sup>*...O fairest [most beautiful] among women... (Song 1:8)*

### III. UNDERSTANDING HER IDENTITY IN GOD'S BEAUTY (SONG 1:12-2:7)

- A. She has an initial revelation of the beauty of Jesus and the pleasure of knowing Him (Ps. 27:4).  
*<sup>16</sup>Behold, you are handsome [beautiful], my beloved! Yes, pleasant! (Song 1:16)*
- B. She receives revelation of her identity in Christ as a beautiful rose in God's sight.  
*<sup>1</sup>I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys. (Song 2:1)*
- C. Jesus is sweet to her heart as she rests under the shade of the finished work of the cross. She experiences the superior pleasures of knowing God as she feeds at His table and lives under the banner of His excellent leadership. In this she becomes lovesick. The goal of her life is her own spiritual happiness. This happens best when she experiences God's presence. In the future, her goal will be to walk as His inheritance regardless of the cost.  
*<sup>3</sup>I sat down in his shade [resting in the finished work of the cross] with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. <sup>4</sup>He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner [leadership] over me was love. <sup>5</sup>Sustain me...refresh me...for I am lovesick. (Song 2:3-5)*

### IV. CHALLENGING THE COMFORT ZONE (SONG 2:8-17)

*<sup>8</sup>The voice of my beloved! Behold, he comes leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. <sup>9</sup>My beloved is like a gazelle...<sup>10</sup>My beloved spoke...“Rise up, my love...and come away...<sup>14</sup>...let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.”...<sup>17</sup>Until the day breaks and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved... (Song 2:8-17)*

- A. Jesus is pictured as effortlessly skipping and leaping over the mountains, or as working to fulfill the Great Commission. The mountains speak of obstacles (human, demonic). Jesus has power over all of them. She is accustomed to eating apples at His table, under the shade tree (2:3-5).
- B. She refuses Him, telling Him to turn and go to the mountain without her (2:17). Her painful compromise is due to her immaturity and fear, not rebellion. She fears that total obedience will be too difficult and costly. She loves Him, but does not think she has the strength to fully obey Him.

### V. SHE EXPERIENCES GOD'S LOVING DISCIPLINE (SONG 3:1-5)

*<sup>1</sup>By night on my bed I sought the one I love...but I did not find him. <sup>2</sup>“I will rise now...I will seek the one I love.”<sup>4</sup>...when I found the one I love. I held him and would not let him go... (Song 3:1-4)*

- A. She experiences the discipline of God as He hides His face from her. The sweetness of Song 2 is gone. He disciplines us out of His affection (Heb. 12:5-12). God's correction is not the same thing as His rejection. The Father promises to pry our fingers off what holds us in bondage. The Father loves us too much to allow us to come up short of partnering with Jesus as His Bride.
- B. She soon “arises” to obey the call to leave her comfort (3:2). Jesus' manifest presence returns in response to her obedience (3:4).

**VI. A FRESH REVELATION OF JESUS AS A “SAFE SAVIOR” (SONG 3:6-11)**

Jesus reveals Himself as one who is safe to obey 100 percent. She believes that 100 percent obedience is the only safe place in life. Walking with Jesus on the water is far safer than being in the boat without Him.

**VII. THE PROPHETIC HEART OF THE BRIDEGROOM GOD (SONG 4:1-8)**

<sup>1</sup>*Behold, you are fair [beautiful], my love! Behold, you are fair! (Song 4:1)*

- A. The King reveals how beautiful the maiden is to Him. He describes eight distinct virtues of her beauty that He sees emerging in her life (4:1-5). Jesus prophetically proclaims her “budding virtues.” He calls things that are not as though they were (Rom. 4:17). He sees the cry in her spirit, not just her failures. God defines us by the cries in our spirit, not by our struggles.
- B. A life of total commitment is foundational for all who are to be mature in ministry (4:6). Initially, she refused His call to come to the mountain (2:9-10). However, in this season she commits to go to the mountain. She is only in the initial stages of her obedience. Later she becomes mature.

<sup>6</sup>*I will go my way to the mountain of myrrh... (Song 4:6)*

**VIII. THE RAVISHED HEART OF THE BRIDEGROOM GOD (SONG 4:9-5:1)**

- A. The King is now revealed as a Bridegroom. His heart is ravished with desire for her. Jesus has passionate affection for His Bride. This revelation of His heart equips her to fully embrace the cross (Song 4:9). Jesus describes His pleasure over her character (4:10d-11).

<sup>9</sup>*You have ravished my heart...my spouse...with one look of your eyes...<sup>10</sup>*How fair [beautiful] is your love...How much better than wine is your love... (Song 4:9-10)**

- B. Jesus gives her a sevenfold description of her purity (4:12-15). A king’s garden was private, in contrast to a public one with defiled water. We can speak this to Jesus in our desire for purity.

<sup>12</sup>*A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. (Song 4:12)*

- C. Her garden speaks of her heart before God. She wants the fragrance of God’s spices to increase in her life. The north wind speaks of the cold, bitter winds of winter. The south wind speaks of the warm, refreshing winds of the summer. She is no longer afraid of the testings of God. She desires that Jesus receive His inheritance in her and cries, “Let my Beloved come to His garden.”

<sup>16</sup>*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. (Song 4:16)*

- D. In the first four chapters she was concerned with her inheritance (her garden). However, in the last four chapters, her focus is Jesus’ inheritance in her. Now, her heart is His garden, not hers, and she defines her life radically differently. Nine times He uses the ownership word “My.”

<sup>1</sup>*I have come to my garden, my sister, my spouse; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk. (Song 5:1).*

IX. THE ULTIMATE TWOFOLD TEST OF MATURITY (SONG 5:2-8)

<sup>2</sup>*...the voice of my beloved! He knocks, saying, “Open for me...my love...my perfect one; for my head is covered with dew, my locks with the drops of the night.” (Song 5:2)*

- A. Jesus embraced the cross in the long and lonely night in Gethsemane. Jesus comes to her as the man of sorrows in Gethsemane (5:2) and invites her to share His sufferings (Phil. 3:10).  
<sup>10</sup>*that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings... (Phil. 3:10)*
- B. Jesus asks her to open up that He may come to her as the Man of Gethsemane. He wants to be the goal of her life, not just the stepping stone to her agenda of success and happiness.
- C. She responds in obedience, saying she took off her dirty robes and washed her feet in His grace (5:3). She is not afraid of obeying Jesus and thus, asks for the bitter north winds (Song 4:16). She rises immediately with a heart yearning in love for Him. The locks of her heart have myrrh on them, which speak of her heart commitment to embrace death in her pursuit of Jesus.  
<sup>4</sup>*My heart yearned for him. <sup>5</sup>I arose to open for my beloved, and my hands dripped with myrrh...on the handles of the lock. (Song 5:4-5)*
- D. She experiences her first test as God withdraws His presence (5:6). This affects her ability to experience intimacy with God. In this passage, His presence leaves her for the second time in the Song (3:1). However, this time it is not related to disobedience (as in 3:1-2), but rather to her mature obedience. Some medieval teachers called this “the dark night of the soul.”  
<sup>6</sup>*I opened for my beloved, but my beloved had turned away and was gone. My heart leaped up when he spoke. I sought him, but I could not find him...he gave me no answer. (Song 5:6)*
- E. She experiences her second test as her ministry is rejected (5:7). The watchmen or the leaders strike and wound her taking her veil (spiritual covering) so she can no longer function in ministry in the Body. Her ministry is gone. How will she respond to Him now?  
<sup>7</sup>*The watchman...struck me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took my veil away from me. (Song 5:7)*
- F. The Lord is asking her, “Will you be Mine even if I withhold the things you deeply desire? Are you Mine when you cannot feel My presence? Will you still love and trust Me when you are disappointed by circumstances?” She responds, “I am Yours,” at the deepest level of love. She responds in humility by asking for help from the daughters of Jerusalem (who are less spiritual).  
<sup>8</sup>*O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved...tell him I am lovesick! (Song 5:8)*
- G. Summary: Jesus called her to join Him in Gethsemane. She responded in obedience. He gave her a twofold test related to her life vision to be drawn near Him and to run with Him (Song 1:2-4).  
<sup>2</sup>*Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth [Word]. For your love is better than wine...*  
<sup>4</sup>*Draw me away [intimacy]! We will run after you [ministry]. (Song 1:2, 4)*

**X. THE BRIDE’S RESPONSE TO THE TWOFOLD TEST (SONG 5:9-6:5)**

- A. The daughters of Jerusalem ask the Bride a question. In essence, they ask, “Why do you love Him so much that you charge us to go find Him? He has abandoned you. He took His presence away from you (v. 6) and let the elders wound you as they took their ministry from you (5:7).

*<sup>9</sup>What is your beloved more than another beloved, O fairest among women? (Song 5:9)*

- B. Her answer reveals her love for Jesus. She gives 10 descriptions of Jesus’ majestic beauty (5:10-16). This is one of the greatest proclamations on Jesus’ beauty in the Scripture.

*<sup>10</sup>My beloved is white and [dazzling, NASB]...chief among ten thousand. <sup>11</sup>His head is like the finest gold; His locks are wavy and black as a raven. <sup>12</sup>His eyes are like doves by the rivers of waters... <sup>13</sup>His cheeks are like a bed of spices...His lips are lilies, dripping liquid myrrh. <sup>14</sup>His hands are rods of gold set with beryl. His body is carved ivory inlaid with sapphires. <sup>15</sup>His legs are pillars of marble set on bases of fine gold. His countenance is like Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. <sup>16</sup>His mouth is most sweet, yes, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend... (Song 5:10-16)*

**XI. JESUS PRAISES HER AFTER THE SEASON OF TESTING (SONG 6:4-10)**

- A. Her twofold test is now over. Jesus breaks the silence as He lavishes affection on her and describes her beauty. He declares that she is as beautiful as **Tirzah** (became the capital city of the northern kingdom of Israel) and as lovely as **Jerusalem** (the capital of Israel, spiritually and politically). He proclaimed that she was as awesome as a victorious army with banners. When an army in the ancient world returned victorious from battle, they displayed their banners in a military procession. She defeated her greatest enemies, those found in her heart.

*<sup>4</sup>O my love, you are as beautiful as Tirzah, lovely as Jerusalem, awesome as an army with banners! (Song 6:4)*

- B. Jesus is “conquered” only by His Bride’s extravagant love. Our eyes of devotion deeply touch the King’s heart. All the armies in hell cannot conquer Jesus, but the eyes of His Bride “conquer” Him when they are true to Him in times of testing.

*<sup>5</sup>Turn your eyes away from me, for they have overcome me. (Song 6:5)*

- C. Jesus describes the Bride’s maturity and devotion (6:5c-7).

- D. Jesus describes the Bride’s preeminence in the King’s court. Jesus’ attendants around His heavenly court are seraphim, cherubim, archangels, and angels without number.

*<sup>8</sup>There are sixty queens and eighty concubines, and virgins without number. <sup>9</sup>My dove, my perfect one, is the...only one of her mother, the favorite of the one who bore her... (Song 6:8-9)*

- E. The Holy Spirit describes the Bride’s crown of glory (6:10).

*<sup>10</sup>Who is she who looks forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, awesome as an army with banners? (Song 6:10)*

**XII. THE VINDICATION OF THE PERSECUTED BRIDE (SONG 6:11-7:9A).**

- A. As the Bride walks in this revelation of who she is before the Lord, she is persecuted. Mature love and commitment to serve the whole church (6:11) overcomes her (6:12).
- B. She receives a sincere response from some in the church (6:13a,b), yet a hostile response from others (6:13c,d).

*<sup>13</sup>Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon you! What would you see in the Shulamite—as it were, the dance of the two camps? (Song 6:13)*

- C. The Bride is vindicated by discerning saints (7:1-5). The Bride is vindicated by Jesus (7:6-9a).

**XIII. THE BRIDE’S MATURE PARTNERSHIP WITH JESUS (SONG 7:9B-8:4).**

She walks out mature bridal partnership with Jesus, which is expressed in obedience (7:9b-10). She expresses Bridal partnership in her intercession for more power (7:11-13). She expresses partnership in her boldness in public ministry (8:1-2). She expresses Bridal partnership in their full union (8:3-4).

**XIV. THE BRIDAL SEAL OF MATURE LOVE (SONG 8:5-7)**

Jesus invites her to receive the seal of fire upon her heart and to walk with Him in holy, jealous love. God is a consuming fire and desires to impart His fire into our hearts. This is His supernatural love that seals our heart. It empowers us to live without the fire of our love being quenched.

**XV. THE BRIDE’S FINAL INTERCESSION AND REVELATION (SONG 8:8-14)**

- A. The Bride intercedes for the church (8:8-9) and for Jesus’ return (8:14). In Song 8:8-9, her apostolic passion for the church is seen.
- B. In Song 8:10, her threefold confidence is as a wall (selfless motives), as a tower (her supernatural abilities to nurture), and as one with peace (emotional hindrances are removed).
- C. In Song 8:11-12, she experiences the power and enjoyment of living before His eyes instead of before the eyes of men. Her sense of importance is rooted in eternity as she has revelation of giving account before God (8:11). The Bride has a revelation of her own spiritual maturity before God (8:12).
- D. Jesus’ final commission to the Bride (8:13-14). The Bride’s urgency is expressed in intercession.

*<sup>13</sup>You who dwell in the gardens [the Bride], the companions listen for your voice—let me [Jesus] hear it! <sup>14</sup>Make haste, my beloved [Jesus], and be like a gazelle or a young stag on the mountains of spices. (Song 8:13-14)*

*<sup>17</sup>The Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” (Rev. 22:17)*