

## **Session 19 The Bride's Response to the Twofold Test (Song 5:8-6:5)**

### **I. REVIEW: THE BRIDE'S CRY FOR THE INCREASE OF GOD'S PRESENCE IN HER LIFE**

- A. The Bride prayed for both the north winds of adversity and the south winds of blessing to come to the garden of her heart, that the spices of grace and God's presence might flow in her life.  
*<sup>15</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)*
- B. This is one of the greatest prayers for mature love and dedication in Scripture. The prayer is that God would do whatever it takes to cause our spices to come forth or for love for God and others to grow.
- C. This is the turning point in the Song. The Song of Solomon has two main sections. First, Song 1-4 is focused on receiving **our inheritance** in God. Second, Song 5-8 is focused on God receiving **His inheritance** in us. The answer to the prayer for the **north winds** comes in Song 5:3-7.
- D. The Lord calls the Bride to intimacy by coming to her as "Jesus of Gethsemane" (Song 5:2) and asking her to open her heart "for Him" to experience new depths of intimacy with Him.
1. She responds in obedience (Song 5:3-5), which is followed by a twofold test. First, Jesus tests her by withdrawing His presence from her (Song 5:6). Second, He allows the spiritual authorities to mistreat her (Song 5:7).
  2. She responds with deep love for Jesus (Song 5:8). We must go through the door of Song 5:2-9 to grow in love (Song 5:9-6:13) and fruitful ministry (Song 7:1-8:4).
- E. Will we seek God if He withholds the things we deeply desire? Will we be His when we cannot feel His presence? Will we love and trust Him when we are disappointed by circumstances? We must work our "faith muscle" as the way to realign our heart so as to grow in love in difficulty.
- F. When we do not feel His presence, or when circumstances are difficult, our first tendency is to be depressed or to complain. In the process of prayer we ask the question, "why we feel this way?" In this, we realign our hearts with the truth that we are His inheritance and are in it for love.

### **II. OVERVIEW OF SONG 5:8-6:5**

- A. In difficulty, the Bride expresses her love for Jesus (Song 5:8-16). She is lovesick instead of offended at God. We confess, Jesus, I am in it for love because You are beautiful (Song 5:8-10).  
*<sup>8</sup>O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved...tell him I am lovesick! (Song 5:8)*
- B. She responds to God in love and to others in humility by asking for help from the daughters of Jerusalem who are less spiritual (She does not despise the church that wounded her).

- C. The immature daughters ask her two questions. First, “Why do you love Him so much?” (Song 5:9). He took His presence from you (v. 6) and let the leaders wound you (v. 7). After hearing her answer they ask the second question, “How can we know Him like you?” (Song 6:1).
- D. Jesus responds to the Bride with extravagant love by revealing what He thought about her during her struggle (Song 6:4-10).

**III. FIRST QUESTION: WHAT IS IT ABOUT HIM THAT MAKES YOU LOVE HIM? (SONG 5:9)**

***<sup>9</sup>What is your beloved more than another beloved, O fairest [most beautiful] among women?  
What is your beloved more than another beloved, that you so charge us? (Song 5:9)***

- A. The spiritually immature daughters ask the Bride questions throughout the Song. They see that she is lovesick for Jesus in the midst of her difficulties instead of being filled with complaints and depression. Her deep love for Jesus provokes them more than her wisdom or giftedness. We are made beautiful to others by our love more than by our wisdom or power (1 Pet. 3:3-4).
- B. The “controversy” created by the watchman (Song 5:7) does not cause the daughters to draw back from the Bride. They call her the “fairest” or “most beautiful” (Song 5:9). They deeply respect her as they see her devotion and purity. This is in contrast to how the Saul-type leaders (watchmen) evaluated her. Saul could not see the spiritual beauty in David.
- C. “What is your beloved more than another?” They saw that Jesus has the power to awaken love in the Bride in the midst of severe trials. “Why are you so loyal to Him? What do you know about Him, that we don't know?” The daughters do not understand this kind of dedication.
- D. The daughters had “other beloveds” that were more important to them than Jesus. The other loves in the lives of believers include people, friends, ministry, money, leisure, pleasure, power, prominence, and comfort, etc. Many born-again people love these things more than Jesus.
- E. The definition of spiritual maturity is when Jesus becomes the first Beloved of our soul. The Holy Spirit is restoring the first commandment to first place in the Body of Christ worldwide.
- F. The same question is repeated for emphasis. It expresses their earnest desire to know the answer. We see the sincerity of their question in Song 6:1 because they ask a follow-up question.
- G. The most important question is the one Jesus asked, “Who do you say that I am?” (Mt. 16:15). Pharaoh asked Moses this question, “Who is the Lord that I should obey Him?” (Ex. 5:2).
- H. Passion for Jesus is the most powerful dimension of any ministry (2 Cor. 2:14-17). Do people seek you out to show them how to walk in the devotion that they see in you? This can be part of your life vision to show forth devotion to Jesus in difficulty so that people want to know what you know and how you carry your heart.

**IV. THE BRIDE'S ANSWER: THE MAJESTIC SPLendor OF JESUS (SONG 5:10-16)**

- A. The Bride answers the question by proclaiming Jesus' beauty. The Spirit uses metaphors of the human body to convey 10 attributes of God's personality. Each attribute has two descriptions.
- B. Song 5:10-16 is one of the most powerful revelations of Jesus in Scripture. She starts with a general statement of His beauty, develops ten attributes, and then gives a summary statement.
- <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... <sup>12</sup>His eyes are like doves... <sup>13</sup>His cheeks are like a bed of spices... His lips are lilies... <sup>14</sup>His hands are rods of gold... His body is carved ivory... <sup>15</sup>His legs are pillars of marble... His countenance is like Lebanon... <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)*
1. His head: His sovereign leadership over all
  2. His locks: His dedication to God and the Church
  3. His eyes: His infinite knowledge, wisdom, understanding, discernment
  4. His cheeks: His diverse emotional makeup
  5. His lips: His Word
  6. His hands: His divine activity
  7. His body: His tender compassion
  8. His legs: His walk and administration of His purposes
  9. His countenance: His impartation to His people
  10. His mouth: Intimacy with Him
  11. He's altogether lovely: His comprehensive beauty
  12. He is my Beloved and my Friend
- C. She is lovesick because she focuses on Jesus instead of being preoccupied with her twofold test. She overcomes her self-focus by going deep in searching out Jesus' beauty. Revelation of these attributes will bring stability to our heart when we go through the storms of life.
- D. When I am in turmoil, I read books on the attributes of God, such as: *The Existence and Attributes of God* (Steven Charnock), *Knowledge of the Holy* (A. W. Tozer), *Knowing God* (J. I. Packer) and *The Pleasures of God* (John Piper). I wrote several books on the personality of God (*Passion for Jesus, The Pleasures of Loving God, After God's Own Heart*).

**V. THE MAJESTIC BEAUTY OF JESUS (SONG 5:10-16)**

- A. She starts by making a general statement about Jesus' beauty (Song 5:10). In her difficulty, she refers to Jesus as her Beloved (the one she loves). The NIV translates "is white" as "is radiant." He is ruddy (red). This is a reference to His humanity. Jesus as chief among ten thousand is a metaphor denoting that Jesus is incomparably superior to all others.

<sup>10</sup> *My Beloved is white and ruddy, chief among ten thousand. (Song 5:10)*

- B. Jesus' head speaks of His sovereign headship over all creation (Eph. 1:21). It is like the finest gold to her. Gold speaks of divine nature. Finest speaks of the highest degree of quality and excellence.

<sup>11</sup> *His head is like the finest gold... (Song 5:11)*

- C. Jesus' locks (hair, NIV) speaks of His dedication to God and His people. The Nazarite's vow forbid one to cut their hair because it was an outward sign of their dedication to God (Num. 6).

<sup>11</sup> *His locks [hair] are wavy, and black as a raven. (Song 5:11)*

1. His hair is "wavy and black as a raven," or his dedication is as vigorous as one with youthful, energetic zeal. The wavy hair and black hair of a young man in the prime of life is in contrast to an old man whose thinning and graying hair has lost its vitality and fullness. In other words, Jesus' consecration to God and His people is eternally vigorous.

2. Hair also speaks of the beauty of submission to God. Paul spoke of a woman's hair as showing forth her glory and dedication to God's authority (1 Cor. 11:5, 6, 15).

- D. Jesus' eyes speak of His ability to see or His omniscience (infinite knowledge, wisdom, and discernment). His eyes being like doves speak of singleness of vision (Song 1:15; 4:1).

<sup>12</sup> *His eyes are like doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set. (Song 5:12)*

- E. Jesus' cheeks reveal His emotional makeup, including His passions and pleasures. Our emotions are expressed in our cheeks. They are windows into one's emotions enabling us to discern if a person has joy, sadness, or anger. Jesus' emotional life is like a bed of spices. Banks of scented herbs speaks of the extravagant amount and diversity of fragrance of His affections.

<sup>13</sup> *His cheeks are like a bed of spices, banks of scented herbs. (Song 5:13)*

- F. Jesus' lips speak of His words that are sweet and pure like lilies. They contain myrrh, which refers to exhortations to embrace death to self.

<sup>13</sup> *His lips are lilies, dripping with liquid myrrh. (Song 5:13)*

- G. Jesus' hands (or arms, NIV) refer to His works and activities. He has all power (omnipotent), so He can accomplish anything He pleases. Rods of gold speak of divine character.

<sup>14</sup> *His hands are rods of gold set with beryl. (Song 5:14)*

- H. Jesus' body (or belly, KJV) speaks of His tender compassion. In Song 5:4 she says, "My heart yearned," and it is translated here as body. It speaks of deep feelings or tender compassions. Jesus' compassion is rare like ivory (and requires skill like carved ivory).

***<sup>14</sup>His body is carved ivory inlaid with sapphires. (Song 5:14)***

- I. Jesus' legs refer to His walk or the administration of His purposes. The legs provide the forward motion of the body. The way Jesus fulfills His purposes and proceeds in His plans are like pillars of marble. Pillars speak of strength, orderliness, and beauty. Marble was a strong and permanent type of building material. Jesus' ways are strong, lovely, permanent, established, and orderly.

***<sup>15</sup>His legs are pillars of marble set on bases of fine gold. (Song 5:15)***

- J. Jesus' countenance speaks of His impartation of glory to His people. David prayed, "Lord lift up the light of your countenance on us." This was a prayer for manifestations of God to come to His people. Lebanon is symbolic of that which is stately and honorable (Song 4:8, 11, 15).

***<sup>15</sup>His countenance is like Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. (Song 5:15)***

- K. Jesus' mouth is associated with intimacy with His people throughout the Song. In Song 1:2, the mouth was introduced in the Song in context to the kisses of His mouth, which refers to intimacy with God. His mouth is distinct from His words as signified by His lips (Song 5:13). Intimacy with God is most sweet because nothing delights her heart more than this.

***<sup>16</sup>His mouth is most sweet... (Song 5:16)***

- L. Jesus is altogether lovely. This is a summary statement. The One she loves is the One she calls her friend. He is not only radiant in His majesty but He humbled Himself to be our friend.

***<sup>16</sup>Yes, He is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem! (Song 5:16)***

**VI. SECOND QUESTION: WHERE IS HE THAT WE MAY SEEK HIM WITH YOU? (SONG 6:1)**

***<sup>1</sup>Where has your beloved gone, O fairest among women? Where has your beloved turned aside, that we may seek him with you? (Song 6:1)***

- A. The conversation that began between the Bride and the daughters in Song 5:8 is continuing. Here the daughters see the Bride's intimacy with Jesus and conclude that she knows something about Jesus that they do not know. Therefore, they ask a second question, "Where is your Beloved that we may seek Him like you do?" We want to know Him like you do. We want what you have.
- B. The Bride's answer in Song 5:10-16, cause the daughters to change the question from "What is He?" to "Where can we find Him?" They are no longer content to serve Jesus at a distance. They ask the same question the Bride asked in Song 1:7, "Where does Jesus feed His flock?"
- C. The daughters refer to Jesus as "your Beloved" because He is not yet *their* Beloved. They continue to see her as a godly person filled with God's presence: "O fairest among women?"

- D. The daughters of Jerusalem want to seek Jesus with the Bride (Song 6:1d). The Bride's proclamation of Jesus' beauty stirs them to seek after Jesus with passion. They are now willing to let go of their "other beloveds." We all have "other beloveds" until we see Jesus' splendor.
- E. The Bride's testing results in the lives of others being dramatically changed. We never know who is watching us as we love Jesus in our difficulties. The Holy Spirit is raising up lovesick messengers who know Jesus in a way that will change the expression of Christianity in the whole earth and prepare the Bride to be strong in love in the end-time pressures (Rev. 15:2-4).

**VII. THE BRIDE ANSWERS THE SECOND QUESTION (SONG 6:2-3)**

***<sup>2</sup>My beloved has gone to his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed his flock in the gardens, and to gather lilies. <sup>3</sup>I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine. He feeds his flock among the lilies. (Song 6:2-3)***

- A. Jesus is in His Church and is building it. The Bride teaches them where they can find Jesus in an intimate way. Jesus dwells in His garden to gather and feed His people. His garden (singular) speaks of the worldwide Church, which is made up of local churches or the gardens (plural).  
***<sup>18</sup>"I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." (Mt. 16:18)***
- B. The Bride declares, "My Beloved has gone to the beds of spices" (Song 6:2). The beds (plural) are within His one garden (the Church). There is one Church in the earth, but there are many diverse beds of spices. Spices speak of manifestations of grace. Each ministry is a unique spice. Each "spice bed" in the garden has a rich fragrance of Christ. Jesus loves the whole Church.
- C. Jesus' cheeks are like a bed of spices (Song 5:13). The different reflections of Jesus' personality in the Church will all meet together in the New Jerusalem, the mountain of spices (Song 8:14).
- D. When we compare Song 1:7-8 to Song 6:2-3, we see that the Bride gives the same answer that Jesus gave her (see session 10). She asked Jesus, "Tell me, where do you feed Your flock?" In Song 1:8, Jesus gave her a threefold instruction as to where He feeds His flock.

***<sup>7</sup>Tell me, O you whom I love, where you feed Your flock...<sup>8</sup>O fairest among women, follow in the footsteps of the flock, and feed your little goats beside the shepherds' tents. (Song 1:7-8)***

1. Commitment to Body life (v. 8c): Refuse unsanctified isolation
2. Commitment to servant ministry (v. 8d): Refuse unsanctified idleness
3. Commitment to spiritual authority (v. 8e): Refuse unsanctified independence

- E. In our next session: Jesus breaks the silence as He lavishes affection on her. He proclaims that she is as awesome as a victorious army with banners. Jesus is "conquered" only by His Bride's extravagant love. Our eyes of devotion deeply touch His heart. All the armies in hell cannot conquer Jesus, but the eyes of His Bride "conquer" Him when they are true to Him in testing.

***<sup>4</sup>O my love, you are as beautiful as Tirzah, lovely as Jerusalem, awesome as an army with banners! <sup>5</sup>Turn your eyes away from me, for they have overcome me. (Song 6:4-5)***