

Session 7 God’s Loving Discipline and Safe Leadership (Song 3) ***Additional Study Materials***

ANSWERS TO THE FILL-IN THE BLANKS FOR THIS SESSION

Then He called her out of the **COMFORT ZONE** to join Him on the mountains of risk (2:10).

Her fear was an expression of her **SPIRITUAL IMMATURITY**, not of her rebellion towards God.

One key message in the Song is that God **ENJOYS HIS RELATIONSHIP** with us, even in our weakness.

The Lord can disapprove of an area in our life without being displeased with us **AS A PERSON**.

Jesus loves His people even as He **REBUKES** them and calls them **TO REPENT**.

He sometimes **WITHDRAWS A MEASURE** of His manifest presence from our heart if we neglect to respond, so that He might get our attention.

The Bride added **OBEDIENCE** to her prayer by arising as commanded in Song 2:10.

The watchmen and keepers of the walls speak of the **SPIRITUAL LEADERS** who guard the walls of God’s city to protect His people.

She had a new **RESOLUTION** to hold on to the King with a determination that resulted from her painful season of spiritual struggle.

King Jesus is revealed to the Bride as a “**safe Savior**.”

Jesus **CAME UP VICTORIOUS** out of the wilderness of this fallen age.

Myrrh **SPEAKS OF DEATH**.

Frankincense speaks of Jesus’ **INTERCESSION** (Heb. 7:25).

The merchant’s powders speak of Jesus’ **COMMITMENT** to us.

Solomon had sixty valiant men surrounding his couch **TO GUARD** or protect his bride from the enemy through the wilderness journey.

They were seasoned, **SKILLED WARRIORS** in contrast to being novices.

Additional Notes

I. GOD'S DISCIPLINE IS NOT THE SAME AS HIS REJECTION OF US

- A. To be disciplined by the Lord means that He has not given up on us. It is a terrible thing to “get away with” sin long-term because it means God has “given up” that person to their sin.
²⁴***God gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts... (Rom. 1:24)***
³²***When we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. (1 Cor. 11:32)***
- B. God has tender patience for a season with believers who do not repent. They must not confuse His patience with His approval. Jesus gave Jezebel and her disciples in Thyatira time to repent.
²¹***I gave her [Jezebel] time to repent of her immorality...²²I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent... (Rev. 2:21-22)***
- C. God is so patient with our sin as He shows us His goodness to lead us to repentance.
⁴***Do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? (Rom. 2:4)***

II. GOD'S MANIFEST PRESENCE IS WITHDRAWN (3:1-2)

- A. The Bride sought God, but did not find Him (3:1-2). This was a very new experience for her.
¹***By night on my bed I sought the One I love; I sought Him, but I did not find Him.***
²***I will rise now,*” I said, “and go about the city; in the streets and in the squares I will seek the One I love.” I sought Him, but I did not find Him. (Song 3:1-2)**
- B. ***By night I sought Him***: She continued to seek God with great perseverance through the night even as Jacob wrestled with God through the night (Gen. 32:24-30). Jacob refused to give up until he touched God. He is a picture of prayer that wrestles with God until the breakthrough comes. Hosea described Jacob as seeking God earnestly with tears (Hos. 12:2-6).
- C. ***I did not find Him***: She sought the Lord, but could not find Him after she refused Him (2:17). He withdraws His presence if we neglect to respond, so that He might get our attention. When the Spirit increases the light He gives us, He makes us responsible to respond to it.
1. She continued to seek God through prayer and meditation on the Word as she did in the past (2:3-5). She is now learning that prayer is no substitute for full obedience. The Lord sometimes withdraws His manifest presence on our heart to cause us to seek His face and to draw us out of fear, unbelief, and compromise. The Father loves us too much to allow us to come up short of being mature in love.
 2. The cost of obedience is high. However, *the cost of disobedience is higher*. To neglect to obey the Spirit's leadership is costly.

3. The Lord calls His people to stir themselves up to take hold of Him, even in seasons when He hides His face from them.

⁷***There is no one who calls on Your name, who stirs himself up to take hold of You; for You have hidden Your face from us, and have consumed us because of our iniquities. (Isa. 64:7)***

- D. ***The One I love***: Her heart was set on loving the King even in her struggles. She is not a hopeless hypocrite. We can continue to call Jesus *the One I love* even before we have the full victory in every area in our life. Our love for Jesus is still real during our struggle to arise to the mountain. She used the phrase, *the One I love*, four times to emphasize her love for Him (3:1, 2, 3, 4).

¹***By night on my bed I sought the One I love... (Song 3:1)***

- E. ***On my bed***: The maiden was not supposed to be on her bed. She had been called to arise and go to the mountains with the Lord (2:10).
- F. ***I will rise now***: The Bride added obedience to her prayer by arising as commanded in Song 2:10. The pain of losing a measure of His manifest presence on her heart motivated her to arise off her bed and leave the comfort zone. The King knows that we cannot live without enjoying His presence.
²***"I will rise now," I said, "and go about the city; in the streets and in the squares I will seek the One I love." (Song 3:2)***

III. THE BRIDE FOUND THE KING (3:3-4)

- A. ***The watchman***: The watchmen and keepers of the walls speak of the leaders who guard the walls of God's city to protect His people. They are those who go about the city watching over it.

1. The watchmen speak of the elders of the church who are to *watch over* the souls of believers (Heb. 13:17; cf. Ezek. 3:17).
2. Now she is obeying the exhortation of Song 1:8 to relate to the shepherds or leaders in the Body, instead of retreating in isolation. She recognizes their spiritual authority and her need for their help. She is seeking the King *beside* or *near the shepherd's tent* (1:8).

- B. Here, the Bride obeys the 3-fold mandate that the King gave her back in Song 1:7-8.

⁸***If you do not know, O fairest [most beautiful] among women, follow in the footsteps of the flock, and feed your little goats [flock] beside the shepherds' tents. (Song 1:8)***

1. She was to follow *in the footsteps of the flock*—in the life of the body, not in isolation.
2. She was to *feed her little flock*—to serve and take care of young believers.
3. She was to be *beside the shepherds' tent* —to relate properly to the leaders in the Body.

IV. THE HOLY SPIRIT GUARDS US IN STRATEGIC SPIRITUAL SEASONS (3:5)

⁵*I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles or by the does of the field, do not stir up [disturb] nor awaken love until it pleases. (Song 3:5)*

- A. **Daughters of Jerusalem:** they represent believers who lack discernment of the various operations of the Spirit and the different seasons in one’s spiritual life.
- B. **Gazelles or does:** The Spirit charged them by the gazelles or does of the field (3:5). Gazelles and does have a sensitive nature and can be easily startled. Gazelles or does speak of the importance of gentleness and sensitivity in relating to the young Bride. Many are easily distracted from the Word. We must have sensitivity in relating to others who are in different seasons.
- C. There are four different seasons in a year—spring, summer, autumn, and winter. In the spring season, the Lord sows exciting, new truths in our lives. In the summer season, we work in the hot sun to cultivate and grow in those truths. There is joy in seeing the growth of new things, but there is labor under the hot sun. In the autumn season, we enjoy the harvest. We all like the harvest. In the winter season, there is death. The cycle does not work without the winter season.

V. THE HOLY SPIRIT ASKS A SEARCHING QUESTION (3:6)

- A. **Like pillars of smoke:** Solomon’s couch went to and from Shunem (the bride’s city) through the wilderness to bring her to his palace in Jerusalem. The town’s people saw a cloud of dust as the royal procession approached. They had never seen such a procession with valiant soldiers.
 - 1. The pillars of smoke poetically spoke of God’s glory. John saw smoke from the glory of God (Rev. 15:8; cf. Ex. 19:18; Isa. 6:4; Rev 8:4). In the tabernacle, the fragrant smoke of the incense spoke of God’s presence.

⁸*The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God... (Rev. 15:8)*
 - 2. Speaking poetically in the Song, Jesus is pictured here as “coming up from the wilderness of this age” in the glory of God. This points to His resurrection and ascension.
- B. **Who is this:** In the spiritual interpretation, it may be the Holy Spirit as an “unnamed person,” representing Jesus, who on three occasions asks, “*who is this?*” (3:6; 6:10; 8:5). It is probable that the Spirit is asking the question in Song 6:10 and 8:5. Thus, it seems that it is also Him speaking in here in 3:6.
 - 1. It does not seem to be the Bride asking the question, because in Song 3:11, the speaker refers to “His” wedding. The Bride would refer to it as “our” wedding.
 - 2. The Spirit asked a question to point to Jesus’ crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. It is a question that provokes awe and wonder as it points to the majesty of the ascending Christ. This language describes Jesus in context to the Old Testament sacrificial system.

- C. Jesus suffered for us, so how much more will He care for and protect us? His incarnation and death (3:6) prove that He has our good in mind. During our journey in this wilderness, He protects us from our sin and Satan by His death (myrrh) and His intercession (frankincense). We can risk leaving the comfort zone because He is so committed to us as One like the merchant powders.

³¹If God is for us, who can be against us? ³²He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not...freely give us all things? (Rom. 8:31-32)

VI. THE HOLY SPIRIT’S MINISTRY OF PROTECTION (3:7-8)

- A. ***Of the valiant of Israel:*** The soldiers were “men of Israel” (native-born) in contrast to being mercenaries or foreign soldiers who might flee from danger because they only served for money. The men of Israel had loyal and courageous hearts in defending the king’s chariot.
- B. ***Sword on his thigh:*** Their sword was girded on their thigh, to be drawn at a moment’s notice. These were vigilant soldiers who were ready for action because of the dangers of the night, which speaks of the power of darkness or the attack of the enemy (Eph. 6:12).
- C. The Holy Spirit’s protection of God’s people is passionate, skillful, and diligent. He is able to keep us from quitting or backsliding. There is no sin too difficult for Him, if we give our hearts to God and stay within the simple boundaries of scriptural principles.

¹³God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. (1 Cor. 10:13)

VII. JESUS’ SALVATION PROVIDES US GREAT SAFETY (3:9-10)

- A. ***Silver and gold:*** The gospel couch was made of silver and gold. Silver speaks of redemption, and gold speaks of divine character. The pillars of silver were under the royal seat. The support system or the railings around the royal seat were made of gold. The word, *support*, in the Hebrew is the word *the railing*. Its support is of gold; that is, our protection is established on God’s infinite wisdom and great power. The Bride never need fear falling out of this glorious chair.
- B. ***Its seat of purple:*** The gospel seat is purple, which speaks of royalty and God’s authority. The gospel releases the authority of Jesus through our lives, even as the enemy seeks to harass us.
- C. ***Its interior paved with love:*** The inner lining or tapestry of the gospel chariot is paved or woven with God’s love. The gospel was motivated by God’s eternal love for us. His plans are all carried out through His love. All that Jesus does is paved in love. We are most safe when we understand God’s affections.
- D. ***Daughters of Jerusalem:*** The “gospel couch” is paved with love *for* the daughters of Jerusalem (instead of *by* them). The KJV translates this as *for* the daughters. In my opinion, this verse points to the King’s love *for* the daughters. In the Hebrew, there is no preposition—*for* or *by*. Therefore, it is a matter of personal interpretation in selecting *for* or *by* in this passage.

VIII. EXHORTED TO SEE THE KING AS CROWNED ON HIS WEDDING DAY (3:11)

A. When we see who He is and who we are to Him, it empowers us to live differently. We are to meditate on Jesus as a King crowned with our love. When we see that our obedience matters deeply to Him, it empowers us to ascend the mountains of obedience (2:8-13). When the daughters of Jerusalem see their destiny, then they live as the daughters of Zion.

B. Jesus has great gladness about His coming wedding day.

⁵*As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.* (Isa. 62:5)