

Session 9 The Ultimate 2-Fold Test Of Maturity (Song 5:2-16)

Additional Study Materials

ANSWERS TO THE FILL-IN THE BLANKS FOR THIS SESSION

The Bride prayed for both the north winds of **ADVERSITY** and the south winds of blessing to come to the garden of her heart so that the spices of grace or God's presence might flow from her to others.

Song 1-4 is focused on God's people as the Bride receiving **HER INHERITANCE** in God.

Song 5-8 is focused on God as the Bridegroom receiving **HIS INHERITANCE** in His people.

First, the King tested her by withdrawing the sense of **HIS PRESENCE** from her (5:6).

Next, He allowed the spiritual authorities to mistreat her and take her **MINISTRY AWAY** (5:7).

She sleeps or rests with confidence in the **KING'S LEADERSHIP**.

The Bride instantly arose in **OBEDIENCE** to the King (5:5).

He called her *My perfect one* (5:2) because of her obedience in arising to **OPEN HER HEART** to Him (5:5) as her heart **YEARNED** (5:4) and leapt (5:6), in being lovesick (5:8), and in magnifying His great beauty (5:10-16).

She responded in obedience by refusing to put on her own **ROBE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS** and by washing her feet in His grace and refusing to dirty them again (5:3).

The hand of God releases **GRACE** on the latch or lock of her heart to help her unlock her heart.

This speaks of grace to help her **EMBRACE THE DIFFICULTY** of the coming two-fold test.

This season of temporary **DIVINE SILENCE** was part of His training to cause her love to mature.

The leaders took away the Bride's ministry or her **PLACE OF FUNCTION** in the body (5:7).

The leaders taking away her veil speaks of removing her **SPIRITUAL COVERING** and therefore her place of function in the body (1 Cor. 11:10).

The Bride responded to the King **WITH LOVE** and to others with humility (5:8).

She was sick with love for the King instead of being **OFFENDED** at Him (Mt. 11:6).

The Bride answered the daughters' question by proclaiming the **KING'S BEAUTY** (5:10-16).

The Bride's answer in Song 5:10-16 caused the daughters to **CHANGE THEIR QUESTION** from "What is He?" (5:9), to "Where can we find Him?"

Additional Notes:

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

- A. The King enjoys His inheritance in His people as they live under His ownership. Nine times He says *My* to depict His ownership in Song 5:1. She now lives as one who fully belongs to Jesus.

¹I 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).

II. SUMMARY OF SONG 5:2-8

- A. The King revealed Himself to the Bride as the “Jesus of Gethsemane” (5:2). Then He asked her to open her heart *to Him* in order to experience new dimensions of intimacy with Him that come in context to the fellowship of His sufferings (Phil. 3:10).

¹⁰... that I may know Him...and the fellowship of His sufferings... (Phil. 3:10)

- B. There are several wrong ways in which God’s people approach suffering. Some see it as a way to earn God’s favor. Others receive all the suffering that comes their way, even when it is an attack of the enemy that should be resisted. Persecution for Jesus and righteousness’ sake is the main type of suffering that is described in the New Testament.

- C. The two-fold test in Song 5 is related to her two-fold life vision to experience more of His presence in an intimate relationship and to run with Him in ministry (1:4). She is tested on whether she will obey Him without *feeling His presence* and *when circumstances are difficult*.

⁴Draw me away [intimacy with God]! We will run after you [partnership in ministry]. (Song 1:4)

- D. Does she seek the King primarily for her spiritual comfort or will she obey Him for His sake? The Lord longs for a people who will obey Him regardless of what is happening in their lives. Jesus wants to be the *goal of our life*, and not just a stepping-stone to our agenda to be happy.

- E. The first test is that the Lord withdraws the sense of His presence from her (5:6). This affects her ability to experience intimacy with God. In Song 3:1-2, His manifest presence lifted from her related to her disobedience, but now it is related to her mature obedience. Some medieval Bible teachers called this “the dark night of the soul.”

- F. The second test is related to having her ministry rejected by the leaders (5:7). The watchmen or leaders strike and wound her, taking her veil (spiritual covering) so she can no longer function in ministry in the Body. How will she respond to Him after her ministry is taken from her?

III. THE CALL TO GREATER INTIMACY: THE FELLOWSHIP OF SUFFERING (5:2)

- A. ***I sleep***: Jesus knew the *rest of faith* as He slept in the storm (Mt. 8:23-27).

- B. ***The voice of my Beloved***: She heard His voice again as she did in Song 2:8. The voice of the Bridegroom empowered John the Baptist in His forerunner ministry.

²⁹*The friend of the Bridegroom...rejoices because of the Bridegroom's voice. (Jn. 3:29)*

IV. THE BRIDE RESPONDS TO JESUS IN FULL OBEDIENCE (5:3-5)

- A. The Bride instantly arose in obedience to the King (5:5). Earlier she had refused to arise and thus was disciplined by the Lord (2:13, 17).
- B. ***Taken off my robe:*** She responded in obedience by refusing to put on her own robe of righteousness and by washing her feet in His grace and refusing to dirty them again (5:3).
1. We are clothed with the robe of His righteousness (Isa. 61:10) since our righteousness is as filthy rags (Isa. 64:6). She took off her garments and put on His righteousness.
¹⁰*He clothed me with the garments of salvation...with the robe of righteousness... (Isa. 61:10)*
⁶*All our righteousness are like filthy rags... (Isa. 64:6)*
¹⁴*Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh... (Rom. 13:14)*
 2. Joshua stood before God and exchanged his filthy clothing for the garments of salvation.
³*Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the Angel. ⁴Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, "Take away the filthy garments from him." And to him He said, "See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes." ⁵...They put the clothes on him. (Zech. 3:3-5)*

V. FIRST TEST: THE KING WITHDREW HIS MANIFEST PRESENCE FROM HER (5:6)

- A. God sometimes hides His face from the obedient to draw out the yearning of their heart for Him in greater ways. This is not because of sin, nor is it an attack of the devil.
⁵*For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." (Heb. 13:5)*
- B. ***I sought Him:*** In the time of testing, our confession must remain constant, "His banner over me is love" (2:4).

VI. SECOND TEST: THE BRIDE LOST HER PLACE OF MINISTRY (5:7)

- A. ***Wounded me:*** A leader can wound someone with rejection because there is genuine relationship between them before the rejection took place. A stranger can publish accusation against you, but only a friend can wound you. Being wounded in the house of friends is part of God's pattern that even Jesus endured (Ps. 55:12-21).

VII. THE BRIDE'S RESPONSE: SHE IS LOVESICK INSTEAD OF OFFENDED (5:8)

- A. ***Daughters of Jerusalem:*** Those were believers less experienced in spiritual things than she was. Her humility is seen in her teachable spirit to the spiritually immature daughters of Jerusalem. She did not despise the people in the church after she was wounded by their leaders.

- B. How does one grow in lovesickness? By seeing what the Bride sees about Jesus (5:10-16). She focused on Jesus instead of being preoccupied with her test. We can overcome our self-focus by searching out Jesus' beauty (5:10-16).
- C. When I am in turmoil, I meditate on God's beauty by reading books on the attributes of God such as **The Existence & Attributes of God** (Steven Charnock), **Knowledge of the Holy** (AW Tozer), **Knowing God** (JI Packer), and **The Pleasures of God** (John Piper).

VIII. THE DAUGHTER'S FIRST QUESTION: WHY DO YOU LOVE HIM SO MUCH? (5:9)

- A. The spiritually immature daughters asked the Bride questions throughout the Song. They see that she is lovesick for the King in the midst of her troubles, instead of being offended and depressed.
⁹What 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)
- B. ***O fairest***: The "controversy" created by the watchman (5:7) did not cause the daughters to draw back from the Bride. They call her the "fairest" or "most beautiful" (5:9). They deeply respect her as they see her devotion and purity for the King.

IX. THE MAJESTIC SPLendor OF THE KING (5:10-16)

- A. We can contrast the ten attributes of Jesus (5:10-16) to the eight virtues of the Bride (4:1-5).
Dove's eyes: eyes of single-minded devotion and revelation
Hair like goats: dedication to God
Teeth like shorn sheep: chewing the meat of the Word
Lips like scarlet: speech that is redemptive
Kisses of the mouth: intimacy with God
Veiled temples (cheeks/countenance): emotions impacted by the grace of God
Neck like David's tower: setting our will to obey God
Breasts like fawns: the power to edify and nurture others
- B. ***Head***: Jesus' head speaks of His sovereign leadership over creation. It is like finest gold to her. Gold speaks of divine nature. Finest speaks of the highest degree of quality and excellence.
¹¹His head is like the finest gold... (Song 5:11)
- C. ***Locks***: Jesus' locks (hair, NIV) speak of His dedication to God and His people. The Nazirite vow forbade one to cut their hair, it being an outward sign of their dedication to God (Num. 6).
¹¹His locks [hair] are wavy, and black as a raven. (Song 5:11)
 - 1. ***Wavy and black***: His hair is wavy and black. That is, His dedication is as vigorous as one with youthful, energetic zeal. The wavy, 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. **Eyes:** Jesus' eyes speak of His ability to see or His omniscience (infinite knowledge and wisdom). The Spirit is pictured as a dove. His eyes being like doves speak of the supernatural dimension Jesus has in His perception of us. Having eyes being like doves also speaks of loyalty
¹²***His eyes are like doves by the rivers of waters washed with milk, and fitly set. (Song 5:12)***
- E. **Cheeks:** 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 the fragrance of His affections.
¹³***His cheeks are like a bed of spices, like banks of scented herbs. (Song 5:13)***
- F. **Lips:** Jesus' lips speak of His words—which are sweet and pure like lilies. Myrrh was a fragrant burial spice. It speaks of death to self. There is no such thing as liquid myrrh. To drip with myrrh means that He will speak to us about embracing death to self.
¹³***His lips are lilies, dripping with liquid myrrh. (Song 5:13)***
- G. **Hands:** Jesus' hands (or arms, NIV) refer to His works (in creation, redemption, and history, etc.). He has all power; therefore, He can accomplish anything that He wants. Rods of gold speak of God's divine character.
¹⁴***His hands are rods of gold set with beryl. (Song 5:14)***
- H. **Body:** Jesus' body (or belly, KJV) speaks of His tender compassion. The word translated in "my heart yearned," (5:4) is this same word that 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).
¹⁴***His body is carved ivory inlaid with sapphires. (Song 5:14)***
- I. **Legs:** Jesus' legs refer to His walk or the unfolding of His purposes in history. Legs provide the forward motion of one's body. The way Jesus fulfills His purposes is like pillars of marble. Pillars speak of strength, orderliness, and beauty. Marble was a strong, permanent type of building material. Jesus' ways are strong, lovely, permanent, established, and orderly. When we see the big picture of how He leads, we see the stability of His purposes.
¹⁵***His legs are pillars of marble set on bases of fine gold. (Song 5:15)***
- J. **Countenance:** God's countenance speaks of the 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 (4:8, 11, 15).
¹⁵***His countenance is like Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. (Song 5:15)***

- K. **Mouth:** The King’s mouth throughout this Song is associated with intimacy with God. In Song 1:2, the mouth was introduced in the Song in context to the kisses of His mouth, referring to intimacy with God. His mouth is distinct from His words as signified by His lips (5:13). The message here is that intimacy with God is most sweet because nothing delights our heart more.

¹⁶***His mouth is most sweet... (Song 5:16)***

- L. **Altogether lovely:** Her summary statement is that the King is altogether lovely. The One she loves is her friend. He is not only radiant in His majesty, but He humbled Himself to be our friend.

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

X. THE DAUGHTER’S SECOND QUESTION: WHERE IS HE? (6:1)

- A. **Your beloved:** The daughters referred to the King as *your* Beloved because He was not yet *their* Beloved. They are now willing to let go of their *other beloveds*. We all have *other beloveds* until we see Jesus’ splendor.

XI. THE BRIDE ANSWERS THE DAUGHTER’S SECOND QUESTION (6:2-3)

- A. **His garden:** The Bride taught them where they can find the King in a greater way. He dwells in His garden to *gather* and *feed* His people. His garden (singular) speaks of the worldwide Church, made up of millions of local churches or gardens (plural).

²***My Beloved has gone to His garden, to the beds of spices, to feed His flock in the gardens, and to gather lilies. ³*I am my Beloved’s, and my Beloved is mine. He feeds His flock among the lilies. (Song 6:2-3)****

1. **Beds of spices:** She declared, “My Beloved has gone to the beds of spices” (6:2). The beds (plural) are within His one garden (the Church singular). 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.
2. The King’s cheeks are like a bed of spices (5:13). The expressions of Jesus’ personality in the Church will come together in the New Jerusalem—the mountain of spices (8:14).
3. Jesus is in His Church and is building it (Mt. 16:18). Jesus loves the whole Church.

¹⁸***I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. (Mt. 16:18)***

- B. **Feeds His flock:** She is confident that He feeds His flock, even though she has just experienced a time of silence. She is confident that this will change because He is faithful to feed His people.

1. The daughters asked the same question that the Bride asked in Song 1:7, “Where does the King feed His flock?” In Song 1:8, the King gave her a 3-fold answer. When we compare Song 1:7-8 and 6:2-3, we find the same answer as to where the King feeds His people.

⁷***Tell me, O You whom I love, where You feed Your flock...? ⁸*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* (1:8c): to refuse unsanctified isolation from the church
 2. *Commitment to servant ministry* (1:8d): to refuse unsanctified idleness with our time
 3. *Commitment to leadership* (1:8e): to refuse unsanctified independence from authority
- C. ***Gather lilies***: Jesus' passion is to gather His lilies or to gather His people together in purity (6:2). Lilies speak of purity as well as of individual believers (2:1-2, 16; 5:3, 13; 6:2-3; cf. Hos. 14:5; Mt. 6:29). The Bride is called the lily (Song 2:1). Jesus feeds His people in the context to purity. Jesus longs to gather His lilies to Himself (Song 2:16; Mt. 9:38; 23:37; 24:31; Jn. 11:52). She knew that Jesus was always in His garden in the midst of her difficulties (Song 5:1).
- ²***My Beloved has gone to His garden...to gather lilies. I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine. He feeds His flock among the lilies.*** (Song 6:2-3)
- D. ***Among the lilies***: This speaks of individual believers who live in purity. The flock is fed among like-minded believers who together seek purity (lilies). Jesus feeds His flock in purity. This statement completes the Bride's answer to the question asked in Song 6:1.
- E. ***I am my Beloved's and He is mine***: She was saying, "I am His. I belong to Him. He owns me, and yet He still belongs to me. His concerns are what I care most about." She knew that she was her Beloved's. Here, her first emphasis was that she belonged to Jesus and was under His leadership. Now, her second interest is that He belongs to her. She has reversed the priority of her concern. His inheritance in her is first to her. Her inheritance in Him is vital, yet it is now second.
- ³***I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine.*** (Song 6:3)
- F. Notice the transition from a *self-centered* to a *God-centered* focus in the four inheritance statements (1:14; 2:16; 6:3; 7:10). In the beginning stages, her own enjoyment of Jesus is her central focus. She talks about what He is to her without much awareness of what she is to Him. In 2:16 and 6:3, and then finally 7:10, she uses this same language, but changes the order to express her concern about what she is to Jesus. Jesus is her inheritance.