

Session 11 The Bride's Vindication & Partnership with Jesus (Song 6:11-8:4)

Additional Study Materials

By understanding her value to the King (6:4-10), the Bride learned to see **THE VALUE** that others have to the King.

The Bride committed herself to minister to those who were **LESS** spiritually mature (6:11).

She valued the **BUDDING VIRTUES** in others just as the Lord once valued budding virtues in her (4:1-5).

A vine, vineyard, or garden speaks of **GOD'S PEOPLE** (Isa. 5; Jn. 15; 1 Cor. 3:9).

The Bride's heart to serve the young speaks of more than serving to find a place to be **RECOGNIZED** and feel better about ourselves.

The Bride was **OVERCOME WITH LOVE** for the King's people (6:12).

Jesus loves **THE WHOLE CHURCH**—He desires that every believer be helped to maturity (Col. 1:28).

Some **FULLY EMBRACED** her (6:13a), while others responded with sarcasm (6:13b).

A spiritual application—the Bride's **LIFESTYLE OF DEDICATION** is embraced by part of the Church (6:13a), while another part of the Church persecutes and rejects her (6:13b).

The first response was one of **RESPECT AND ADMIRATION**.

The second response was **SARCASTIC**, presumably from the jealous watchman who had recently struck and wounded her in Song 5:7.

This can speak of the **CONFLICT** between the daughters and the watchman related to how they viewed the Bride.

The daughters highlighted **TEN CHARACTERISTICS** of the Bride (7:1-5).

A thought life filled with **ROYAL THOUGHTS**—being crowned like Mount Carmel (Isa. 35:2).

This speaks of the heart of God being **HELD CAPTIVE** by His Bride's dedication.

The King gave her a **THREEFOLD COMMISSIONING** to ministry— to nurture others, to release the presence of the Spirit, and to maintain her intimacy with the King (7:8-9a).

The Bride expressed her enthusiasm **TO OBEY** the King saying, "The wine goes down smoothly."

Her obedience is empowered by seeing herself as belonging to and **DESIRED BY** the King (7:10).

Getting up early speaks of her faithfulness and **DILIGENCE** in the assignment that the Lord gave her.

Additional Notes

I. THE BRIDE'S COMMITMENT TO SERVE THE CHURCH AND MAKE DISCIPLES (6:11)

- A. A main theme in the Song is the Bride partnering with the King in a way that expresses love, unity, and value for others in His Church.
- B. **Budded:** Because the Brides sees the King's people as "His garden," she sets her heart to serve the immature ones whose fruitfulness was just beginning to bud and come forth. The budding vineyard speaks of the vines that do not yet have fruit. In other words, it speaks of the immature Church. She sees God's vineyard without much fruit, but He sees buds and blooms. She invests into the budding vines that have not yet matured, instead of being impatient with them
- C. **Went down:** The Bride went down to God's garden to serve the plants that were merely budding. Earlier she taught the daughters that the King is found in His garden feeding His people (6:2-3).
 - 1. The Bride said, "Yes!" to making disciples. We can "go down" to serve in our neighborhood. We do not have to get on a plane to serve in a far-away garden. In principle it speaks of leaving the comfort zone to embrace the difficulty of caring for and helping others.
 - 2. She went to His garden to partner with Him because she wanted to be with Him. The Lord releases greater grace to help His people serve those who are less spiritually mature. She went down to see if the vine had budded or to gain insight into God's work in His Church.
- D. **Walnuts:** This garden included a walnut grove. Walnut trees have dense shade, providing refuge from the summer heat as well as having economic value in producing food. Oil produced from walnuts was used to make soap, which speaks of cleansing. Its leaves were used medicinally to aid physical healing. The life hidden inside the walnut seed is not immediately observable, yet is there.
- E. **Verdure:** Verdure speaks of the fresh greenness of flourishing vegetation. The Bride went down to see the growth in God's garden. She sees God's flourishing garden in the midst of the valley of this fallen world.
- F. **Blossoming pomegranates:** They can speak symbolically of individual believers (4:13). Paul wanted to see each individual believer mature (Col. 1:28). Jesus has an inheritance in each one.

II. LOVE FOR GOD'S CHURCH OVERCOMES HER (6:12-13)

- A. **Chariot:** KJV translates "noble people," as "Ammi-Nadib" which is a prince's name.
¹²*Before I was even aware, my soul had made me as the chariots of my noble people.*
(Song 7:12)

- B. As she went down to see how the work of God was progressing, she was suddenly overcome with desire to help others. She was “beside herself” or is compelled by love (2 Cor. 5:11, 14).
- C. Her heart moved forward in this burden without any resistance, like a swiftly moving chariot.
- D. **Before I was aware:** She had new desires of enthusiasm to serve others. This is the work of the Spirit in our heart.
⁷...just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. ⁸So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you...our own lives, because you had become dear to us. (1 Thes. 2:7-8)

III. THE TWO RESPONSES OF THE CHURCH TO THE BRIDE (6:13)

- A. **Shulamite:** The Bride is called the Shulamite (6:13) because she grew up in the Israelite city of Shunem. This is the only time in the Song that she is called the Shulamite. Solomon and Shunem come from the same root word that means *peace*. Jesus and His Bride have the same name.
- B. **The dance of two camps:**
 - 1. *Mahanaim* in Hebrew may be translated as “two camps” or “two armies” and is the city where Jacob and Esau had a great conflict. Any of these three translations bring us to the same conclusion that this refers to a conflict.
 - 2. Mahanaim was known for the conflict between Jacob and Esau. Esau pursued Jacob with the intent of killing him because Jacob stole his birthright. At Mahanaim, Jacob divided his people into two camps so that Esau could only destroy one group if he caught them. Jacob saw angels at Mahanaim who intervened to help him in this great conflict.
¹So Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. ²When Jacob saw them, he said, “This is God’s camp.” And he called the name of that place Mahanaim. (Gen. 32:1-2)
- C. **The dance:** There is also a dance of spiritual warfare that involves the conflict between two realms in the spirit—the angelic and demonic.
- D. Paul’s ministry resulted in division as he called forth obedience to God and confronted disobedience (Acts 17:6).
⁶These who have turned the world upside down have come here too. (Acts 17:6)

IV. THE BRIDE IS VINDICATED BY SINCERE BELIEVERS (7:1-5)

- A. Sincere believers can often discern the same virtues that the King affirmed in the Bride (4:1-5). Here they spoke of ten virtues in the Bride as she had spoken of ten virtues of the King (5:10-16).

- B. It is helpful to compare the ten affirmations of the Bride in Song 7:1-5 with eight given to her in by the King in Song 4:1-5. I will point out four differences. In Song 4:1-5, the King began by describing her head (six affirmations) and then worked down her body. The daughters, in Song 7:1-5, started with her feet and described upward to her head. The virtues in Song 7 relate to her ministry, while Song 4 focuses on her character.
- C. These ten characteristics, practical definitions of godly character and fruitfulness, give insight into what the Lord delights in and wants to bring to maturity in us.
- D. It seems clear that the daughters spoke in Song 7:1-5, while the King spoke in Song 7:6. For example, the daughters called her “O prince’s daughter” (7:1), whereas the King called her “My love” or “My spouse” each time throughout the Song.
1. In Song 7:5, the King is referred to in the third person as “a King,” rather than Him speaking in the first person.
 2. In Song 7:8, the King spoke in the first person saying, “I will,” indicating a change of speakers in verses 6-9 from 1-5.
- E. ***How beautiful:*** The daughters encourage the Bride by declaring her beauty and calling her the prince’s daughter, pointing to her royal character or character befitting of royalty.
- ¹How beautiful are your feet in sandals, O prince’s daughter! (Song 7:1)***
- F. ***Feet:*** Her feet in sandals symbolize evangelism. The Bride’s success in evangelism is a sign of her beauty. Our feet are to be shod by the preparation of the Gospel (Eph. 6:15). How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news (Isa. 52:7). The places where our feet walk speak of our inheritance (Josh. 1:3). Shoes speak of prosperity and honor (Lk. 15:22). As the poor in the world often do not have shoes, bare feet speak symbolically of shame, poverty, and humiliation.
- G. ***Thighs:*** Her thighs or legs can speak of the strength behind her walk in God. The King’s legs are like pillars of marble (5:15). The curves of her thighs speak of the muscular definition in her legs giving her strength. This athletic feature was developed through much discipline. Thus, her strong walk is costly and esteemed as rare like the jewels worked on by a skillful workman.
- ¹The curves of your thighs are like jewels, the work of the hands of a skillful workman. (Song 7:1)***
- H. ***Navel:*** The navel speaks of the nourishment a child receives in their mother’s womb. This can refer to our formative years in the Lord as the time in which our inner life in God is developed. A rounded goblet speaks of a healthy navel; thus she was not malnourished. A goblet that lacks no beverage speaks of a full range of nourishment. She was healthy with a balanced diet with all the necessary nutrients for a strong life. This speaks of a good spiritual foundation in our life.
- ²Your navel is a rounded goblet; it lacks no blended beverage. (Song 7:2)***

- I. **Waist:** The daughters see the Bride as prepared for the coming harvest. A heap of wheat can speak of an abundance of wheat occurring only at harvest. Spiritually, she is pictured as pregnant (large waist) with an abundant harvest set about with lilies. The harvest that will come forth from her will be established in purity and holiness as depicted by the lilies.
²*Your waist is a heap of wheat set about with lilies. (Song 7:2)*
- J. **Breasts:** Breasts speak of the ability to nurture others. Babies are nurtured at the breast. She is ready to nurture the harvest. Her breasts are like youthful fawns (young deer under one year old), in contrast to being elderly, without the ability to nurture with milk. Twins of a gazelle speaks of a double portion in her ability to nurture.
³*Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle. (Song 7:3)*
- K. **Neck:** In Scripture, the neck speaks of the will that can be stiff-necked (resistant) or submissive. The Bride's will is like an ivory tower, rare and costly. Her choices were costly as an ivory tower, which protects. The rebellious neck also speaks of pride (Isa. 3:16).
⁴*Your neck is like an ivory tower... (Song 7:4)*
- L. **Eyes:** Eyes speak of our ability to receive understanding (Eph. 1:18). She had keen spiritual insight (1:15; 4:2, 9; 6:5). In Song 4:1, the King compared her eyes to dove's eyes, speaking of her purity and loyalty. Here, her eyes are like the pools in Heshbon. These pools were not muddy, but clean and easy to see through. The gate of Bath Rabbim was a resort area with clean water in the former royal city of Heshbon (Num. 21:25-26). To see clearly is our first priority because seeing is the doorway to growing spiritually (Phil 3:8-10). When we see differently, we feel differently.
⁴*Your eyes like the pools in Heshbon by the gate of Bath Rabbim. (Song 7:4)*
- M. **Nose:** The nose can speak of discernment. A tower provides protection. Her discernment was like a protective tower in Lebanon, a mountain range in the north of Israel, that looked toward Damascus, the capital of Syria, Israel's greatest enemy. She had discernment of her enemies.
⁴*Your nose is like the tower of Lebanon which looks toward Damascus. (Song 7:4)*
- N. **Head:** a thought life filled with royal thoughts—being crowned like Mount Carmel (Isa. 35:2).
⁵*Your head crowns you like Mount Carmel, and the hair of your head is like purple; a King is held captive by your tresses [hair]. (Song 7:5)*
- O. **Hair:** In Scripture, hair spoke of one's dedication to God. The hair of the Nazirite was an outward sign of their dedication to God (Num. 6). Her hair was like purple, symbolizing royalty. Her dedication was like the resolution of a king (NAS says "The King").
- P. **Held captive:** He possesses all authority, yet gives His heart to His Bride. God's love binds Him to His people. Note five intercessors who captured His heart—Daniel, Noah, Job, Moses and Samuel (Ezek. 14:14; Jer.15:1; Ex. 32:7-14).

V. THE BRIDE IS VINDICATED BY THE KING (7:6-9)

- A. The speaker changed in Song 7:6. The watchmen had asked, "Who is the Shulamite that anyone should pay attention to her?" First the daughters spoke, and now the King speaks about the Bride.
- ⁶How fair [beautiful] and how pleasant you are, O love, with your delights! ⁷This stature of yours is like a palm tree, and your breasts like its clusters. ⁸I said, "I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of its branches." Let now your breasts be like clusters of the vine, the fragrance of your breath like apples, ⁹and the roof of your mouth like the best wine. (Song 7:6-9)*
- B. Jesus sees His people as beautiful and pleasant. His fruit is sweet and pleasant to her (Song 1:16; 2:3). Her fruit is pleasant to Him (Song 4:16-5:1).
- C. **O Love, with your delights:** "O Love" expresses the passion in God's heart for His people. The Father loves us like He loves Jesus (Jn. 15:9; 17:23). Our love is greater to the King than wine (4:10). There is nothing more delightful to Jesus than the love of His people. Our voice is sweet, and our face is lovely to Him, even in our weakness and struggle (2:14).
- D. **Stature:** The King affirmed the stature of the Bride's spiritual maturity.
- ⁷This stature of yours is like a palm tree, and your breasts like its clusters. (Song 7:7)*
1. **Palm tree:** This is a sign of victory and conquest (Rev. 7:4) and a picture of maturity (Jer. 10:5). It thrives in a drought because its roots go deep, finding water far below the surface. It grows exceptionally high and straight. Strong winds cannot break a palm tree.
 2. **Breasts:** her ability to nurture is like the clusters of a palm tree that nourishes many.
- E. The Spirit helps us to maintain our love and spiritual intimacy with Jesus. It the best *wine* or that which brings the greatest joy to the King's heart (4:10). The *wine* speaks of the influences of the Spirit (Eph. 5:18).
- ¹⁰How fair is your love...how much better than wine is your love. (Song 4:10)*

VI. BRIDE'S MATURE PARTNERSHIP WITH JESUS (7:9-8:4)

- A. In response to the affirmation and vindication the Bride received from the King in Song 7:6-9a, she proclaimed her agreement with the three things she was commissioned to do in Song 7:8-9. In Song 7:9b-8:4, the Bride walked out the threefold commissioning given to her in Song 7:8-9a.
- B. The flow of thought changed significantly in the middle of Song 7:9. The King spoke in the first line of verse 9, and the Bride spoke after that. Through the Song, the Bride addresses the King as "my Beloved." He never refers to her this way, calling her "My love" or "My fair one."
- C. The Bride's obedience is empowered by seeing herself as belonging to the King and being desired by Him. Note that she is her Beloved's *because* His desire is for her.
- ¹⁰I am my Beloved's, and His desire is toward me. (7:10)*

- D. **His desire is for me:** The most prominent theme in the Song is the King's desire for His people. She grew strong by seeing His affection for and enjoyment of her. This was her motivation for obedience (4:9; 6:4-5; 7:6-10). We love Him because He first loves us (1 Jn. 4:19). Insight into God's desire for us strengthens us not to live by the opinions of others. We must speak the Word to the enemy, saying, "It is written: His desire is towards me, regardless if others reject me."
- E. We are defined most by the fact that God desires us. We confess our identity, "God loves me, and I love God; that is who I am and what I do." We live a life of sacrificial obedience because He already desires us (not because we are seeking to gain His love).
- F. **The fields:** The fields of service begin in our family, job, church, and neighborhood. It is where God places us today. We do not have to get on a plane to serve in the mission field.
¹¹Come, my Beloved, let us go forth to the field; let us lodge in the villages. ¹²Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine has budded, whether the grape blossoms are open, and the pomegranates are in bloom. There I will give You my love. (Song 7:11-12)
³⁵Behold...look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! (Jn. 4:35)
- G. **The villages:** These speak of the small, out-of-the-way areas where the King has an inheritance and desires to build His Kingdom. She sees God's value for unknown people and places, not just the big cities. She is willing to lodge or stay for a season, even in a remote village (7:11).
- H. **Let us go:**
⁹For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field... (1 Cor. 3:9)
- I. **Let us see:** She goes to invest into the budding vines that had not yet borne fruit. Why such diligence? Because she sees them as Jesus' inheritance, as *His garden*, she values and is patient with them.
- J. The Moravians lived in sacrifice that, "*the Lamb might receive the reward of His sufferings.*"

VII. THERE I WILL GIVE YOU MY LOVE (7:12)

- A. Paul labored in ministry more than all the other apostles and suffered great difficulties.
²³In labors more abundant...²⁷in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness... (2 Cor. 11:23, 27)
- B. The Bride wanted the King to enjoy the fruit of her labor in partnership with Him (7:13).
¹²There I will give you my love. ¹³The mandrakes give off a fragrance, and at our gates are pleasant fruits, all manner, new and old, which I have laid up for You, my Beloved. (Song 7:12-13)
- C. **Mandrakes:** The fragrance of the mandrake flowed as they labored together in the harvest. The mandrake fruit has a beautiful fragrance. Mandrakes symbolize intimacy with God.

1. Barren women in ancient times used the mandrake fruit to enhance their chances of bearing children. It became known as a fruit associated with love and fertility.
 2. This idea may have been associated with the story of Rachel and Leah who discussed using mandrakes while struggling with barrenness. The unspoken idea was that she might gain a higher chance of fertility (Gen. 30:1, 14-16). This is the only time outside of the Song that the mandrake is mentioned in Scripture.
 3. To this day in Jewish traditions the mandrake fruit is associated with love.
- D. **Pleasure fruits:** The impact of her ministry resulted in pleasant fruit. There is joy in knowing that the fruit of our ministry is pleasant to Jesus. Having *fruit at my gates* speaks of it being before me.
¹³*...at our gates are pleasant fruits, all manner, new and old, which I have laid up for You, my Beloved. (Song 7:12-13)*
- E. **New and old:** The Spirit anoints us to bear all manner of pleasant fruit, both new and old. Jesus spoke of drawing out of our treasury that which is old and new. This includes the proven truths from her past along with her former victories and experiences as well as the new and fresh ones.
⁵²*Every scribe instructed...brings out of his treasure things new and old. (Mt. 13:52)*

VIII. PARTNERSHIP IN BOLDNESS AND HUMILITY IN PUBLIC MINISTRY (8:1-2)

- A. The Bride valued showing her loyalty and partnership to the King with boldness (8:1-2).
¹*Oh, that You were like my brother, who nursed at my mother's breasts! If I should find You outside, I would kiss You; I would not be despised. ²I would lead You and bring You into the house of my mother, she who used to instruct me. I would cause You to drink of spiced wine, of the juice of my pomegranate. (Song 8:1-2)*
- B. **Like my brother:** She prayed, "O, that You, [Jesus] were like my brother." It was improper to express public affection to members of the opposite sex that were not in one's immediate family. She valued the boldness to relate publicly to the King with the liberty that she had with a brother. A woman at that time in history could be more familiar in public with her brother than her fiancé.
- C. Like the apostles, she wants continual boldness in her life as expressed in the apostolic prayers (Acts 4:29; Eph. 6:19). Boldness is more than a personality trait; it is an operation of the Spirit.
- D. A brother who nursed at her mother's breasts speaks of a full brother instead of a half-brother. Children from the same mother is meant as a contrast to children with one father but different mothers. In ancient times, men had several wives. Therefore, many siblings had the same father, but a different mother. They often were rivals as Absalom was with Amnon (2 Sam. 13).
- E. The Bride desired that, if she should find the King outside in a public place, she would be able to kiss Him without being despised. To kiss Jesus in public without being despised speaks of boldly ministering to others in public without the fear of men or being despised.

- F. She recognized the necessity to be restrained in public in certain aspects of her private life with the King. Paul described certain expressions of our life in God that are meant to be kept private. There are intimate expressions of prayer and worship that are not best suited for public settings.
- ¹²Since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel...¹⁹In the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding...than ten thousand words in a tongue. ²⁰Do not be children in understanding...²³If the whole church comes together...and all speak with tongues, and there come in those who are uninformed or unbelievers, will they not say that you are out of your mind? (1 Cor. 14:12, 19-20, 23)*
- G. We don't express in public everything that God gives us. We walk in love when we restrain our liberty on some occasions because of those who do not understand (Rom. 14:14-15:2; 1 Cor.14:20, 23-33, 6-19).
- H. Bridal partnership with the King is expressed in anointed ministry (8:2).
- ²I would lead You and bring You into the house of my mother, she who used to instruct me. I would cause You to drink of spiced wine, of the juice of my pomegranate. (Song 8:2)*
- I. The Lord gives His Bride the dignity of leading and bringing Him into places that honor Him. She prayed to be able to bring the King to places through her anointed ministry. She longs to "bring Him" without seeking to establish her own name and ministry.
- J. **Lead You:** She prayed, "I would lead You." In partnership, the Lord allows His people to make real decisions related to their life and ministry. He blesses some of what we decide in the outworking of His purposes. This reveals the dignity He has given us as co-heirs with Him (Rom. 8:17). A mature believer only desires to lead Jesus in a way that honors Him.
- K. **Mother:** The mother throughout the Song is a picture of the Church through history. God is our father, and the Church is spoken of as our mother. The redeemed from history are represented as a "mother" that gave birth to Jesus (manchild) and the believers that come after her (Rev. 12:5, 17).
- L. **Her mother's house:** This also speaks of those who instructed her, those with whom she has been in a long-term relationship. It is the people who initially taught her the things of God. Sometimes it is more difficult to minister to those with whom we are in a familiar relationship.
1. A prophet is often not received in his hometown (Mt. 13:57). It is easiest to hold back when we are with familiar people. She is willing to minister the truths of Jesus in the context of the people who knew her when she was just starting to walk with God.
 2. She wanted to return blessing to those who helped her in her early days out of gratitude for those who once taught her. She did not forget her roots in a time of blessing.
 3. We must honor the heritage the Lord sovereignly gave us. We must not be critical of those with whom we started if they don't grow into the deeper things of God.

- M. **Spiced wine:** The Bride longed to give her best to the King by praying, “I would cause You to drink of spiced wine, of the juices of my pomegranate (5:1). Sometimes people mixed wine with spices when hosting an honored guest because it makes a more pleasant drink.
1. It was much more expensive, but it was appropriate when seeking to honor a guest with the best. She longs to give her best to Jesus regardless of how much it costs her.
 2. In saying, “I would cause You to drink” she was promising to attend to His every desire as she served Him as her honored guest.
- N. **Juice of my pomegranate:** This can speak of the sweet things of grace that she experienced. The foundation of her ministry is what she experiences in the secret place with God.

IX. PARTNERSHIP EXPRESSED IN UNBROKEN UNION WITH JESUS (SONG 8:3-4)

- A. The King answered her prayer to be close (8:1) and fulfilled His promise to lay hold of her (7:8).
³His left hand is under my head, and His right hand embraces me. ⁴I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, do not stir up nor awaken love until it pleases. (Song 8:3-4)
- B. **Left hand of God:** This speaks of the activity of God that we cannot see with our natural eyes. The left hand is “under” her head and is therefore out of her view. The Lord does many things for us that we do not see. He withholds and releases many things to bless, provide, and protect us. He spares us from troubles of which we are not even aware in this age.
- C. **Right hand of God:** This speaks of the activity of God that we can see and easily discern. When the King stood in front of the Bride to embrace her, she could see and feel it. This speaks of the *sweet* manifest presence of God that can be felt and discerned.
- D. **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.
- E. **Do not stir up:** The Spirit charged other believers not to disrupt or disturb the Bride in this season with their opinions and judgments. The Spirit tells those who were insensitive to His ways not to disturb the Bride in this particular. In the phrase, *until it pleases*, the Hebrew can be translated as *it, he, or she*. The NASB accurately translates the phrase as “do not awaken love until *she* pleases.”
- F. The Spirit ordains strategic seasons in each one’s spiritual life (8:4). I see the Spirit as speaking in verse 4. There are seasons when He desires to establish us in new experiences and insights.