

## Song Of Solomon 1:1-17

“The song of songs, which *is* Solomon’s. 2 Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for my love *is* better than wine. 3 Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name *is* as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee. 4 Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee. 5 I *am* black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon. 6 Look not upon me, because I *am* black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother’s children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; *but* my own vineyard have I not kept. 7 Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest *thy* flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions? 8 If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds’ tents. 9 I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh’s chariots. 10 Thy cheeks are comely with rows *of* jewels, thy neck with chains *of* gold. 11 We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver. 12 While the king *sitteth* at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof. 13 A bundle of myrrh *is* my wellbeloved unto me; he shall lie all night betixt my breasts. 14 My beloved *is* unto me *as* a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of Engedi. 15 Behold, thou *art* fair, my love; behold, thou *art* fair; thou *hast* doves’ eyes. 16 Behold, thou *art* fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed *is* green. 17 The beams of our house *are* cedar, *and* our rafters of fir.”

*Introduction*

[Audio Version: <http://resources.ccphilly.org/WED879>]

“Solomon, wrote here the Song of Songs, it’s called Canticles in some of the translations...It is the hardest book in the Bible to teach for me. It is probably my favorite book in some ways, it was Spurgeon’s favorite book, it was Moody’s favorite book, it was John Gill’s favorite book, you go down the list of all of the scholars who say *‘There isn’t anything like this, there’s nothing like it in all of the Scriptures.’* There’s no mention of God, no mention of salvation, there’s no mention of theology. It’s never recorded in the New Testament, it’s never recorded [quoted] in the Old Testament, and yet every ancient Hebrew scholar placed it in the canon, right between Ecclesiastes and Isaiah, it’s right where it is. It has a revered place, the ancient rabbis held it in extremely high regard. Big controversy, I’m going to tell you the track that I’m going to follow as we go through this, don’t listen to me, I’m just going to tell you anyway. Because I’ve read all the scholars, who don’t know what the Book means. So, they all have different opinions. My track is going to be, it is a picture of the believer and his LORD. Solomon, I don’t put a second man in there, Solomon is the king, and the Shunamite, the woman, is the believer. Some see Christ and the Church, that’s fine, you can do that. I just love to read it personally, alone, it speaks to me. My favorite commentaries on it are probably Jesse Penn Louis. She had thought never to write on the Book until she was laid up with an illness, and laid in bed for several months, and God spoke to her so clearly, without commentary, without resource as she read through the Book. Another one I love is Watchman Nee, who was in prison for 20 years before he was killed, and he wrote his first treatise on it before he went to prison, but then in prison he wrote notes on it, and again, sitting there alone for 20 years, bringing out some of the beauty of his own relationship with the Lord, the prison doors were around him, but he was in heaven in his heart, the things that he saw. So, I would put it in the context, in that content. There is a controversy over the Book, both in content and intent. No doubt, there’s at least four major ways to interpret it. Isn’t this interesting, you could be out shopping, be in the middle of all this amazing information. Sadly, some interpret it strictly as a book of sexual intimacy, between a husband and a wife, and certainly there is a historical background to this. But some have gone so far with this, it’s become unclean, and the Church [Body of Christ] does not have a Kama Sutra, the Bible is not, it does not contain a book on tainted sex or Kama Sutra, so some have just ruined the beauty of this, making it so carnal it’s ridiculous. Some have

interpreted it completely allegorical, and the ancient rabbis did that. They saw it strictly as a picture of Israel and Jehovah, who was the wife of Jehovah [he was, as pointed out by Yahweh in Ezekiel and Jeremiah] and the ancient rabbis saw it that way. They said it was read on the Passover, interesting, the whole Book. They felt that a Jewish man should not read it till he was 30 years old, because of the intimacy and the depth that is spoken of in the Book, 8 chapters, 117 verses. There are 47 words not found anywhere else in the Old Testament, there are 97 words that are used less than 10 times in the rest of the Old Testament, and there are over 460 words in the 117 verses that describe some facet of intimacy or relationship, adjectives, words that draw pictures. So, remarkable, certainly in its insistence on intimacy as we go through. So the content makes it kind of controversial, so then the question is, well then what is the intent? Again, ancient rabbis had no problem saying this is Jehovah and Israel his wife. The Midrash says that, the Targums say that, the Talmud says it, all ancient rabbis concur. Joseph Ben Aqqaba, an ancient rabbi revered in Israel said this *"No day is equal to the day that God gave the Song of Songs to Israel. All of the writings [the Poetic books], all of the writings are holy, but the Song of Songs is the holy of holies."* Who is this Shunamite? Who is the king? Certainly it's a picture of Solomon and a woman he had a relationship with, it's hard to be dogmatic. We know there in 1<sup>st</sup> Kings, when David was on his deathbed, it says he couldn't get heat, he couldn't get warm, so they sought for a fair damsel throughout all the coast of Israel, and they found Abishag the Shunamite (I know you're going to be tortured thinking *'Is a Shunamite and a Shulamite the same thing?'* let me know if you figure it out, I'm not tortured by it). ***'They found Abishag the Shunamite, they brought her to the king, and the damsel was very fair, they looked for the most beautiful woman in the land. And she cherished the king and ministered to him, but the king knew her not,'*** there was never intimacy sexually with this woman. And then when David dies, we're told that then his son, who tried to usurp the throne, Adonijah, knowing that when Solomon was born, that ultimately he, Solomon would take the throne, it says ***'He came, Adonijah, and spoke to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, David's wife, 'I pray thee, go speak to Solomon,' he's saying to Bathsheba, 'the king, for he will not say no to you, that he may give me Abishag the Shunamite to be my wife.'*** And Solomon when he hears that, knows right away that Adonijah was ready to usurp his

position to be the king of Israel. But possibly that's the Shunamite in this Song, the most beautiful woman in all of Israel would be the first of Solomon's wives. Ah, no doubt he wrote the Book of Proverbs midlife, towards the end of his life, the wisdom that's recorded there. No doubt he wrote Ecclesiastes, the frustration in his life, towards the end of his life. It seems like this Book, the Song of Songs, that he wrote it before he fails with 700 marriages and 300 concubines. He has this one love in his life, and his heart is overwhelmed with it, and it seems that he wrote that early, and it may be this most beautiful woman in all of the land, this young girl, this Shunamite Abishag that is in the picture here with Solomon. It's hard to be dogmatic, we don't know that for sure. It certainly is a thought, and it's something to take into consideration, that it's the first love and everything, certainly Jesus challenges us about coming back to our first love, with this Book of intimacy, it says some amazing things. So, I think we have to understand there is historical reality here. There are things to learn about marriage. Guys, I would say this, if we go through you notice the king always encourages his bride or his bride to be, always speaks the right thing, he speaks gracious words. Men, that's a lesson for us with our wives. Write it down, January 1<sup>st</sup> is coming, you're going to make some New Year's resolutions, write down *'I'm going to say something gracious to my wife, every day.'* Don't look here, because we can learn from this Book, but we can't borrow from it, because things were different then. You would say something to your wife back here, you probably wouldn't say to her **'Thy navel is like a round goblet which wanteth not liquor.'** If you say that to your wife you're not going to get far. She'll know you stole it somewhere. How about this, **"thy belly is like a heap of wheat surrounded by lilies"**? You can try that if she's in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Trimester, you can say that to her. **"Thy two breasts are like two young gazelles and they are twins"** I guess there's a positive side to that. **"Thy neck is as the tower of ivory,"** not bad, I love this **"Your eyes are like the fish pools of Heshbon."** We'll talk about that when we get there. **"Your nose is as the tower of Lebanon which looketh towards the north."** [he laughs] you probably want to go easy on that one, *'Honey, your schnoz looks like the Tower of Lebanon.'* You can go through them, my point is, there are things for us to learn here, men, but not to borrow. It was a different culture and a different time, and some of those things must have been appreciated as they were said. But all of them give a picture to us as we go through. So intent and content

is there's great intimacy, intent for me, it is something to draw us to a more intimate place with our Saviour, it is something we read alone. It is something you find in your own heart, you find his heart. He struggles with the things he's saying to you, because of the wonder and the beauty he finds in you, and yet you struggle in and of yourself, and you don't see those things. You find great emotion here, the feelings here I'm sure you have towards the Lord sometimes when you sit alone with him. You'll find those things here. You come to the New Testament, chapter 5 of Ephesians tells us that the picture of the husband and the wife is the picture of Christ and the Church, so we do find those things. Revelation chapter 2, he says to the church in Ephesus there, **'You've left your first love,'** speaking of the love of espousal. He challenges Pergamos because they've committed spiritual harlotry and adultery. We find as we go through the New Testament, Paul wants to present the Corinthian church as a chaste virgin to Christ on the Wedding Day. Luke 24, when Jesus was talking to the two men on the Road to Emmaus, it says **'he opened to them the Scripture, he took them through all the Scripture and showed them the things concerning himself.'** That would have to include the Song also. Jesus would say **'Lo, in the volume of the Book it is written of me, I come to do thy will,'** which would have to include of course the Song of Solomon also. Quickly I'll read **Psalm 45** says, **"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with oil of gladness above thy fellows. All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad. Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir. Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy LORD; and worship thou him."** very much some of the same things we hear, and then the writer of the **Book of Hebrews** confirms as he writes to us, and he is giving us a picture of Christ, he says **'But unto the Son he saith, thy throne O God is forever,'** we just read that in Psalm 45, **'a sceptre of righteousness and the sceptre of thy kingdom, thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore O God, even God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows,'** and it goes on to talk about the daughter brought

into the cassia, the myrrh and the aloes, so certainly we're not wrong to see in the Song of Solomon, as did the Church fathers, a picture of Christ and the believers. Solomon wrote 3,000 proverbs, we don't have all of those, and it says he wrote, in 1<sup>st</sup> Kings it tells us he wrote 1,005 songs. This is the one we have. Some try to say that Psalm 72 and Psalm 127, it says these are songs for Solomon, and this is the only song we have of Solomon, if the translation of the Hebrew is these are the songs "of" Solomon then we have three remaining. But this is the Song of Songs, there is no song out of the thousand and five he wrote, that compares. You go through the Scripture, you have the King of kings, that's superlative, the Lord of lords, you have the Holy of Holies, and in the Book before this, he wrote about the "vanity of vanities," **'I tried everything, I tried wine, I tried this, I tried that, it's all emptiness, it's all vanity.'** Now finally he comes and says, **'Your kisses are better than wine.'** This is the Song of Songs, finally instead of wandering there's great rest here, his heart is established, the Book of Ecclesiastes has all of the frustration "under the sun," now we're way up "above the sun" in this Song, and it's a song of a king taking a bride to himself, which is the story of redemption. So which is the Song of Songs, no matter how you look at it, it's the whole story of Christ and the Church. Want to start?

*This Kiss Of Intimacy, 'Thy Love Is Better Than Wine'*

**"The song of songs, which is Solomon's." (verse 1)** nothing like it. Read at Passover, song of redemption in its love. Now, most of the time, when you start a novel, you start a song, you warm up, but the Holy Spirit jumps right in. **"Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine." (verse 2)** let's not beat around the bush, not a peck on the second date. So he jumps right into this, and it's interesting as we go through this Scripture, certainly there is the kiss, we'll find between Jacob and Esau when they come back together, which is a kiss of reconciliation, and there is a kiss of betrayal from Judas, **"betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?"** There's a kiss of worship in the house of Simon the Pharisee when the woman falls at Jesus' feet and weeps and wipes her hair and wipes the tears off of his feet and kisses his feet with the kiss of worship. And there is the kiss of forgiveness, the prodigal returns and the father runs

and embraces him and kisses him. This is different from all the other places you find in the Scripture, this is the kiss of intimacy. This is entering into a place with another human being that's not forgiveness, it's not reconciliation. You know, if your married, you know about the kiss of forgiveness, you know about the kiss of reconciliation, you know about all those other kisses. This is just the kiss of intimacy, and he says it's better than wine. Intimacy with you, Lord, is where I am with this, better than wine. He said in Ecclesiastes, ***'I've tried to fill me house with monkeys [I've done that too, they're human monkeys], peacocks, I had Rock Bands in my house, we had big blowouts with wine, and you know, and everybody's drinking Guinness Stout, and we were all pickled, the whole thing was empty, it was vanity of vanity,'*** and he says here now, in this Song of Songs in contrast he says ***'There's something that's better than all of that. It isn't drugs, better than alcohol, there's something that happens in salvation where light goes on, you come into an intimacy with God through Jesus Christ, and it's better than anything you were intoxicated with in the world.'*** Maybe alcohol was trying to take away guilt or take away pain, trying to anesthetize yourself, drugs, maybe it was social. I did all that, it just means you're empty, it leaves you with nothing. Here he says ***'the kiss of intimate intimacy, it was better than wine, it's better than anything that the world offers to intoxicate us.'*** I'm assuming we're all on the same page, we all agree with that. [Comment: I think, and Pastor Joe says we're free to interpret this as we believe, within limits, and I think the Song of Solomon portrays the love in marriage, ***pointing to and representing the love found in salvation through our relationship with God in and through Jesus Christ.***] Intimacy with Jesus is better than any of that. Everybody is shaking their heads ya. But if you blow it, you can get back to this song, alright? You get alone with it, and it'll draw you back in. It says ***"Let him kiss me with the kisses of the mouth: for thy love is better than wine."*** this is Abishag, this is the Bride, this is the believer speaking, ***"for thy love is better than wine."***

*The Sweet Fragrance Of Jesus*

**“Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.”** (verse 3) we’re going to find in this story, there is Solomon as the king, and there is his love, there are the virgins, there are others, and part of this story this girl seems to have brothers from the farm areas she was raised in...there are some other characters in the play. The virgins, you know the virgins here, of course Paul wants to present us a chaste virgin before Christ in that day. We get a picture no doubt of other believers, she says **“because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.”** *‘and it is because of that, the virgins, the others, they love you, the believers, those that have been brought into that place with you, they love you.’* “because of the savour” the idea is, the anointing, the perfume, the fragrance, the idea is, “of thy good ointment,” it’s just there’s nobody that smells like Jesus, there just isn’t. There just isn’t anybody that smells like that, you read in the Book of Exodus, when they were going to anoint the priest, here’s a bit of the formula of the different herbs that they crushed and made the anointing oil to anoint the priest. It is said, anybody who tries to copy that or imitate that shall be put to death. It was only the priest that’s supposed to smell like that, because he was a picture of Christ. And you should have been able to have been in a crowd in ancient Israel, *‘sniff, sniff, can you smell that? There’s a priest around here somewhere, I’m telling you, it’s that priest smell, I know what that is.’* And it says here, *‘That’s the way you are, your fragrance, there’s something about you, Lord, there’s something about you.’* I can talk about it, but it has to be in the context of my own relationship and your own relationship with him. He says **“thy name is as ointment” in its healing “poured forth,”** when you are with Jesus. We all love the name of Jehovah, El Elion, Adonai, but we have the fulfillment of it, Jehovah’s name Jesus, Yeshua, because he shall save his people from their sins. There isn’t a name like that. It’s like ointment, poured forth, look, I’ve been saved since ’72, I’ve been saved longer than I’ve been unsaved, over half my life. And I am still coming to realize what it means to sit alone and say *‘Jesus, I need you today Lord, there are things in my heart I can’t remove, I know they shouldn’t be there, I have no power to do this, I don’t even know Lord sometimes if I have the will, Jesus...I’m holding onto the hem of your garment and I’m not letting go Lord, you can do this.’* His name, there’s a fragrance to him,

there isn't any other thing that intoxicates us before we got saved that even compares. That's why it's so stupid to go back out there, because there ain't nothing new out there. There just ain't nothing new out there. We tried it all before we got here. There ain't nothing new out there. He's better than all that, his presence, his ministry in our lives is better, it weighs more, it heals more, there's a fragrance to it, there isn't anything like it, because the savour, now Christos, Christ rules your life, **'because of the savour thy good ointments, thy name, it's the ointment poured forth that is healing,' "therefore do the virgins love thee."**

*'Lord, Draw Me, Really Draw Me, Then We Will Run After Thee'*

And then this bride-to-be says **"Draw me, we will run after thee:"** isn't it interesting, it's singular, personal, **"Draw me, we will run after thee:"** then it goes plural, **"the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee."** (verse 4) your translations may say **"we'll love thee with an upright love."** this is not dating, this is commitment. She's been brought into his chamber, she says **"Draw me, we will run after thee."** Look, I am very cognizant of what's going on in the world, I watch it all the time. I hear from people, things that I can't say, that stirs me up to say, be sober, be vigilant. But if I don't come from that place, alone with him, I don't have anything to give to you guys. This isn't just an intellectual exercise, where I can say *'Lord, draw me, I'm filled with your Spirit, I'm born-again, I have your Word, I have your grace, the Spirit directs my life, your Word is a lamp unto my feet, a light unto my path, but subjectively I'm asking for something even higher than that Lord. Draw me. Because if I'm what I should be, it'll effect my life, and I'll be able to say Draw me, and we will run after thee.'* I don't have any desire, at 65 years old, to come to church and give a good Bible study, I want to speak life to you. I want to speak life, and I have no way to do that. We have people who have cancer, we have people going through divorce, people with broken hearts...I have no capacity, and I know that I can say to him *'Lord, if you'll draw me, if I can spend time alone with you, then at least we'll be somewhat richer,*

Lord, at least it will draw others, draw me, then we will run after thee.' It's why I like to sit alone and read this.

### *What It Means Being Brought Into His Chambers*

And in response it says **“the king hath brought me into his chambers:”** this is a place of intimacy, the prayer is being answered, ‘Lord, I need you, draw me Lord,’ and then she says **‘you know, he did,’** and you’re saying, ‘Are you kidding me, farm girl, you must be kidding me.’ It says **‘he responded, he brought me into his chambers, we will be glad, everybody, and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine, Lord Jesus, what you give to us and what you’ve done in our lives and how we can walk with you every day is better than everything we had in the world, the upright love thee.’** And now the response. **“I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.”** (verse 5) look there in verse 6, **“Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother’s children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept.”** she’s going to say **‘I am black because the sun hath looked upon me,’** the Hebrew says **“because the sun hath burned me,”** she’s going to say here, it says **“my mother’s children”** the Hebrew says **“my mother’s sons”** evidently she had a lot of brothers and sisters, you know if you’re the only girl in the house with a lot of brothers, that’s good and bad, because if any guy comes around and tries to date you they get beat up. But when it comes to dividing up the yard work, you got a piece just like everybody else, was the downside. She says **‘my mother’s sons were angry with me, they made me the keeper of the vineyards, and my own vineyard have I not kept.’** So what she’s saying here, **‘So I came into his chamber, the place of intimacy, the place where you’re disrobed.’** I get alone with the Lord, and in his presence, those times when I can feel him, I can smell him, it disrobes me, ‘Lord, I’m such a sinful man,’ you know, **Isaiah** in his presence said **‘Woe is me, I’m a man of unclean lips,’** **Daniel** said **‘All of my comeliness turned to ashes,’** John in Revelation fell down in front of him like a dead man. You think of marital love, the first time in the chamber, the first time in intimacy, the first time

disrobed, it's almost embarrassing, it's uncomfortable. And here, with the picture, you take this to Christ, when he takes us into the place of intimacy, when it's real, *'I need to pray about this, I need to pray about that,'* you know those earth-changing things, and you get alone with him and you start to pray, next thing you know, in a couple minutes, ten minutes, you're in his presence, then you're saying *'you're right, Lord, that does need to change,'* when all the earth-changing things have gone away, and all of a sudden you're being examined, you know. And that's the picture here, it's wonderful. And this woman who comes into his chamber, who comes into his presence, the cry is, look, **"I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon."** (verse 5) The tents of Kedar were woven out of the black goat hair, you see the Bedouin tents still in Israel today, if you've been there, and you see these black tents, those were the tents of Kedar, they were made out of this black goat hair. But in contrast to that, the curtains of Solomon were all white silk and linen, embroidered, the beauty was exquisite. This is what this believer's seeing, coming into the presence of the LORD, ***'Oh LORD, I'm black, I am black.'*** Now look, culturally, nobody went to tanning salons back then, tan was not cool in this day. White was cool. I'm not talking racially, I'm just saying amongst the Israelis. Remember when they took Esther, they oiled her up for six months with one kind of oil, then they oiled her up for another six months, for a year before she went before Xerxes, for a year they let her get pale, they kept her inside, they kept her out of the sun, they oiled her up, got her nice and soft and oily, smelling good and smooth. So she's coming and saying ***'in the natural, I'm black, burned with the sun, I'm a farm girl, I've worked outside, none of the natural things about me are things that are esteemed,'*** but the deeper picture is, ***'how do I do this, here I am Lord in your presence, and I'm black like the tents of Kedar, my heart is desperately wicked, it's incurable, and because of the work of Christ, at the same time, I'm like the curtains of Solomon, I'm schizophrenic here Lord, I'm only beautiful because of what you've done for me, I know I'm washed in the blood, I'm white and I'm brilliant, but this traitor lives inside. And Lord, it's never more evident than when I sit in your presence, when I'm drawn into the light, and I sit there before you, Lord. I get angry, I get lustful, I do stupid things, I'm selfish, there are things in my life that aren't Christlike, I'm black, the world's had an effect on me,***

*and at the same time I'm like the curtains of Solomon, embroidered, brilliant, beautiful.'* Just, the emotion that's being described, is being put before us. *'O ye daughters of Jerusalem, I'm like the tents of Kedar, I'm like the curtains of Solomon, look Lord upon me, I don't want my heart put up on the PowerPoint so everybody in church can see what I really am, I don't want none of that going on.'* "Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath burned me. My mother's sons were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept." (verse 6) look, "my own vineyard," singular, compared to the vineyards, plural, "have I not kept." This is the key here, *'I'm the way I am because I was out in the sun too long, ah, I'm the way I am because my family's messed up, and my brothers made me do all this stuff, I'm all jacked up because of other people, it's somebody else's fault,'* and then she finally says, *'But you know what the truth is? I've kept everybody else's vineyard but my own vineyard have I not kept.'* You can blame everybody else except your own vineyard. This is going to relate to this...

*'I Need To Be Fed, Lord, I Need To Be Nourished'*

"Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest *thy flock* to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" (verse 7) she says *'Look, I understand as I look at myself, my own blackness, my own, my own need, and as I draw close, what I realize, is I need to be fed, I need to be nourished, and I need rest,'* that's what she's saying here, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest," I need nourishment, I need to be fed, and where do you make your flocks to rest? At noon, this is when the sun's at it's zenith, in the Middle East. One of the most remarkable things, if you've ever been in that part of the world, is just how bright it is at noon. And you really had to take sheep somewhere in the shade, somewhere specific for them to rest at midday. She says, *'Tell me, whom my soul lovest, where thou feedest?'* *'I understand what's wrong with me, I'm black, I'm beautiful, I'm schizophrenic, I got both these things going on, there's this war inside, I need to be fed, I need to be rested, tell me where thou feedest, where*

***thou makest thy flock to rest at noon, at the hottest time. Why should I be next to someone else's flock, why should I do that?'***

*In Spite Of What She Knows She Is, The King Calls Her  
'Thou Fairest Among Women'*

Now in verse 8, the king starts to speak, in verse 8 it's wonderful, he now speaks to her. Now you guys, anybody beside me, in my delusional world been able to relate to this so far? Me and you, ok, you'll come back in two weeks. ***'There are struggles within, Lord, I need to be fed, look not upon me, I'm black, I'm imperfect, how can I be fed, how can I rest?'*** Look what he says in verse 8. He speaks to her now. ***"If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents."*** (verse 8) ***'you'll find a place, a feeding, nourishment, besides the shepherds' tents.'*** ***'If you don't know,'*** he says to her. He doesn't say *'I can't believe, you're asking this? This is like Christianity 101, what do you mean?'* You want to know how to be fed, you want to know how to rest? *Of course, you look in the Bible, what's wrong?'* he doesn't do any of that. He doesn't say *'You're black,'* he says ***"thou fairest among women,"*** imagine that. She sees herself so low, he says ***'you know, if you don't know, how to be nourished, how to find rest, thou fairest among women,'*** that's incredible to me. You know again, I think of Balaam and Balak, and Balak had hired Balaam to curse the children of Israel. And Balaam asked, you know they had come down into his territory and he wanted a curse placed upon them, and then they'd sacrifice sheep and Balaam would look at the children of Israel and said, it says he was filled with the Spirit and he says to Israel ***'There is no iniquity found in thee, how lovely are they tents O Jacob, there is no iniquity found in thee,'*** it says when the Holy Spirit came upon him, that's what he said, as he looked at the wife of Jehovah in the Old Testament. She had worshipped the golden calf, she had done all kinds of things in the Wilderness, done all kinds of things wrong. But the key is, when he [Balaam] was filled with the Spirit, same thing with the Church, the Bride of Christ, we look at each other, if we're filled with the Spirit and we look at each other, we see the Bride of Christ standing in the

righteousness he provided, not in her performance. You can never look at the Church [Body of Christ] in her performance, because the Church in her performance is the best dysfunctional family going. But you look at the Church in Christ, you say **'How lovely are your tents, there is no iniquity found in thee.'** If an enemy can say that when the Holy Spirit came upon him, how much should you and I see each other that way? We can easily be critical, here's the LORD himself, here's the King, **'If you don't know where to find those things, O thou fairest,'** she's not black to him, **'O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, you're not in this alone, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents, you'll find the place of feeding there.'** Follow the footsteps, many have gone before you in this pilgrimage and this journey, go there by those footsteps, feed there by the shepherds' tents. And he says **"I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots."** (verse 9) *'Boy, honey, thanks, I look like a company of horses.'* There's a difficult structure here in the language, and it really reads this way, it says **"To my mare, with Pharaoh's chariots, I have compared thee O my love."** What he's saying is, **'You're a Ferrari to me, O my mare.'** because you never put a mare on a chariot, those were male horses all the time there. **'O my mare, with Pharaoh's chariots I've compared thee, my love.'** ...and he had horses, and when you go to Israel, he had all those stables, he did what God told him not to do, he brought horses from Egypt and chariots, he had all of that. What he's saying to her is **'Look, babe, you're no fixer-upper, you're no junker, you're a Ferrari, you're a Ferrari to me, my mare.'** I'm trying to make that sound complimentary, just looking at it. And then he says **"Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold."** (verse 10) now they would wear the headdress there, you see them in the Middle East, sometimes have their headdress with rows of jewels. **"Thy cheeks are comely, beautiful, with rows of jewels," "thy neck with chains of gold."** interesting of course, how Christ enriches us. We come from this world, we come from drugs, we come from the abuse of the world, and he sees us, he's the God who calls things that are not as though they were, and he says to us, to the believer, **'you're justified, you're sanctified and you're glorified.'** That's because he's the one who was, is, and is to come, because he's the one who was, you're justified, the one who is, you're sanctified, and the one who is to come, you're glorified. Togi used to say *'And*

remember, that's not His, Is, Was, and Is to Come, that's our is, was, and is to come, because we're his, there is no is, was and is to come,' just wonderfully he could do that. The beauty that we have in Christ, it says **'Your cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, with a beautiful headdress, your neck, which used to be stiff-necked, it's not stiff anymore, it's beautiful now.'** You know before we came to Christ how stubborn you were. I had a friend, he comes here once in awhile, who in 1971 he used to witness to me, and I loved to argue with him. He went around with a couple other Christians, and I was under conviction, I didn't like what they were saying, it used to bug me, but I used to love it when I got him mad, because I figured if I could get him mad, it wasn't real what he had. So I was really happy when I could get under his skin, because I had a stiff neck, a stiff neck. You know Jesus tells the parable of the wheat and the tares. And they come to him and say *'Lord, should we try to separate the wheat from the tares, he said no, lest you uproot the wheat along with the tares, the darnel grass. He says wait until the harvest, because what happens is, when they grow, you can't tell them apart, the darnel grass and the wheat, but when the wheat comes full, the weight of it, the shock of grain at harvest, the wheat bows, you see wheat harvested, it bows on the staff, and the darnel grass is straight, stiff-necked. So he said at the harvest, that's when you separate the wheat from the tares.'* Here, he says your neck is beautiful, it used to be stiff, now you have jewels on your cheeks, and he says your neck, with chains of gold, royalty. And then look, **verse 11**, this is the LORD speaking, "We" can you imagine that. Who is "we"? **"We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver."** **"we" Genesis chapter 1, "Let us make man in our image and in our likeness."** Babylon, **"let us go down and see what they're doing."** It's very interesting, I've been to Israel over two dozen times, and you talk to some of the Hassidic Jews and rabbis at the wailing wall, you say 'What is this talking about in Genesis where it says "Let us make man in our image and likeness"? because they don't know what to do with it. And what they say is 'Well that's God speaking to the angels.' I'd say 'We're not made in the image and likeness of angels,' they don't like it, you know. They don't even want to think about those things. In the Book of Joshua, there was the Captain of the LORD's host, that says **'Take off your shoes,"** the same thing that the burning bush said, here the Trinity wonderfully, **'We will make thee beautifully, borders of gold and braids, three strands, we will make thee braids of**

**gold with studs of silver.'** The braids of gold, of course, beauty, and then silver, the metal of redemption in the Scripture. He finishes by saying **"We will make thee braids of gold with studs of silver."** (verse 11)

### *What Our King Is To Us*

She speaks again now, to us. **"While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof."** (verse 12) isn't it interesting here, I wonder if Mary of Bethany thought of this verse, who lived this verse out long afterwards. The King was sitting at her table there, at her home, the home of Mary and Martha. And she went and took that alabaster box of spikenard, which was worth a year's salary, 50 Grand. It was usually saved for your wedding day, it could be used as a dowry, it could be used when a loved one in your family died. Lazarus had died before that, he was resurrected. At the dinner she didn't break it open for Lazarus. But she broke it and poured it on the Lord's feet, and he said **'She's done this for my burial.'** And I wonder if she, reading through this, **"While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof."** Of course, his table, when we come together for communion, how wonderful to sit at his table, the fragrance of Redemption is there, and Mary at that supper, her house with that fragrance of Redemption is what broke forth, he said **'She's done it for my burial, wherever this is written, it's going to be told of her throughout the world, this thing that she'd done.'** Sitting at his table when we take communion, the smell of Redemption, spikenard, sends forth thereof. **"A bundle of myrrh is my wellbeloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts."** (verse 13) so, a bundle of myrrh, you guys know in the New Testament, Christ was on the cross, they gave him myrrh mingled with gall to drink. It was an anesthetizer, killed the pain. He tasted it, he wouldn't take any of it. You know that when the Wise Men [Parthian Magi] came, they brought him gold, frankincense and myrrh, he was a king, frankincense, he was a prophet, in the myrrh he was a Saviour. Myrrh was intimately involved with death and embalming. But it was also used at weddings, it's an interesting picture here. She had said before **'Where can I feed, where can I feed?'** now she's saying **'When I sit at the King's table, the fragrance of**

***Redemption is going forth, a bundle of myrrh is my wellbeloved, he died for me, the smell both of wedding and of Redemption in all of this, he shall lie all night between my breasts, salvation.***’ I don’t know about you guys, when I heard that at night, I usually go to bed in the living room on the sofa and then wake up and really go to bed, but I love just to lay there and think about him, and do business with him, *‘Lord, forgive me, tomorrow, in the day, help me Lord, help me Lord.’* In the Old Testament there was the morning and evening sacrifice, the day began with the blood of the Lamb, the day ended with the blood of the Lamb. And it does my heart good at the end of the day, he lieth all night on my breast, in my heart, it’s the smell of myrrh and Redemption. **“My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of Engedi.” (verse 14)** you’re already thinking of mothballs in your aunt’s house. This is not what this is talking about. **“My beloved is to me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of Engedi.”** Ah, your translation might say “cypris” that’s not the word either. The Hebrew is Henna, these white and gold flowers, you see them down in Engedi, I’ve been there many times. Engedi is down by the Dead Sea. You know, down there in the Spring, it’s cooler in the Spring, it’s 120 degrees. And right in the middle of all that Dead Sea, and Masada and Qumran, and all the dead, hot dry rot, was a waterfall that comes over the top there at Engedi, and there’s this green line that goes back into the mountains as you can walk to the foot of this waterfall, and there’s Ibex there, that’s where David hid with his men down there at Engedi. And there’s all these Henna flowers hanging over, you can sit under them and be cool in the heat of the day. What she’s saying here, she says to him, she says ***‘My beloved is to me as a cluster of Henna flowers, these white blossoms in the vineyards of Engedi, you’re like an oasis, in the midst of a crazy world, where people are getting killed by terrorists, the economy’s crumbling, and you don’t know whose going to be next President, when life is filled with uncertainty, in the middle of all of that, Jesus himself is an Oasis, he’s like a cluster of Henna blossoms that hang over us, when everything is dry and barren in every direction.’*** There’s this oasis, she says ***‘That’s what you are to me, that’s what you are to me, you’re like this cluster of Henna blossoms in the vineyards of Engedi, an oasis in the desert.’***

## *How The Lord Sees Us, His Bride*

Then he speaks to her, and says **“Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves eyes.” (verse 15)** she’s going to answer back in verse 16 and say “behold” to him, they’re beholding each other here. **“Behold, thou art fair,”** speaking to the one who said **‘I’m black, I’m a sinner,’** that’s all it takes to come to Christ is to own that ourselves. John says **‘If we say we have not sinned we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.’** If we say we have not sinned we make him a liar, John says, and he’s 90 years old when he says this. But it says, his view of the redeemed, **‘Behold, thou art fair,’** I can sit days on end with that, alone with him in the morning. You know, having kids, having raised kids, I have grandkids now, but raising two sons and two daughters, I remember for years thinking *‘Lord, if you love me more than I love Josh and Mike, I need to know that, forget about power, forget about healing, I want to know that love, more than anything else that’s what I want to know.’* And I think of mornings just sitting with him, the little kids, Josh would come and lean on me, they played soccer, that was wonderful, but when they sat and just leaned back on me, there wasn’t anything they did that compared to that in my life, to the intimacy that I had just to sit with them. They didn’t sit still, very often, either. And just what that was like, how remarkable it was, and I think sometimes to sit with him, and when this comes through from him, **‘behold, thou art fair.’** Because I spend a good deal of my time saying *‘Lord, let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, my Lord, I’m so thankful, my Redeemer,’* because most of the time the words of my mouth, except maybe when I’m driving alone and nobody’s there, I don’t use the bad ones, but I tell people what’s wrong with them when they drive...I don’t use bad words, but I’m honest with them, they can’t hear me, but, I think during the Millennium God’s going to give me a car that cuts off the front of other cars, when they just drive stupidly, in the Kingdom people are going to have to learn that, I should be the one that teaches them. Let the words of my mouth, let the meditation of my heart, think of the things that our heart can go after, she says **‘I am black, don’t look upon me.’** Now he’s looking at her, who has sat at his table, been cleansed by his blood, **‘Thou art fair,’** and he says **“Behold,”** which means “think about this.” If we forget everything else, all the information, all

this stuff, all the beauty, here's the one thing tonight, **'Behold'** when he looks at you, **thou art fair, my love.'** Hard to receive, isn't it? Hard to receive. Because our whole life, when anything is free, there are conditions, there's a hook. Free this, free that, until you get there and you find out what's free and what's not free. He gives freely, no strings attached. We come in faith, we turn away from our sin, we turn to him, he says **'behold, thou art fair.'** Sometimes I feel his delight, not just that he loves me, he likes me. Jesus tells us that in **John chapter 16**, he says **'The Father loveth thee,'** and he uses the word *phileo*, he's fond of you. I almost feel like God has to love me, he has to agape' me, he made the rules. But he actually likes me. Sometimes that blows my mind more than the bigger word, he likes me, I sit alone with him, he likes me, he likes me, he likes me. I feel like one of my sons when they were little, how I delighted in them, sometimes I sense his delight. I have to be alone when he does that, because the tears pour down my face. **"Behold, thou art fair"** not average, that's not what the word "fair" means, *'oh, he's fair, there are other Christian guys better than him, but he's fair,'* that's not what it means. It means "beautiful" it means "lovely" not average. **"Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes."** (verse 15) you impressed with that? You have doves eyes. It's not saying you have little black beads on your head, that's not the point. At least it's not saying you have Chiwawa eyes, those ugly weepy things that was the result of the fall. You study this, the thing about a dove is it can only look at one thing at a time. Owls, certainly the birds, they look a certain way, and a dove can only see one thing at a time. I think of what it's speaking of here, **'You're fair, you're lovely, you have doves' eyes, I know your focus is on me'** the King is saying. **'If you can only see one thing at a time, don't look at all that other stuff, look at me.'**

### *Christ's Bride Finds A Place Of Rest In An Everlasting Palace*

She then answers him, she says, **'No, no,' "Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed is green."** (verse 16) David will say **'He maketh me to lie down in green pastures.'** She had said **'I need to know, I know I'm sinful, where do you**

*feed, where can I be fed, where can I rest at noon,*' now she's realizing, she has sat at his table, now she's saying *'our bed is green,*' there's an answer to her request. She says **"The beams of our house are cedar, and our rafters of fir."** (verse 17) probably in real life she's referring to the Palace of Lebanon that he had built, *'the beams of our house are of cedar, and our rafters of fir.'* in that day these are two woods that never decay, they never rot. In fact, in Italy you go to Venice, and some of the foundations underwater there are over 1200 years old, 1500 years old, and they're cedar and cypris and they've been in saltwater for 1500 years and they're not rotted, they're still solid. So there's a beauty to this. But years ago, when I was a kid, it was during the Revolutionary War I think [he's joking], but I worked at the Navy Yard for a number of years, and I worked on the New Jersey there, the battleship, and the deck on a battleship is teak, it has a wooden deck, the boards are about this wide, they're all screwed down, the whole deck on a battleship is wood. When they fire the 16-inch guns they can't fire them, when the ship is going forward, you can't fire the guns forward [aiming them straight forward over the bow], it'll just rip up the deck, you can only fire the 16-inch guns, because the projectile weighs as much as a Volkswagen, it comes down somewhere 40, 50 miles away, makes a 40 foot hole in the ground, but when you fire those babies, you have to fire off starboard, or have to fire off to the side, so that the ship can rock when they fire, because if the ship doesn't rock it just rips the deck up there's so much power. You go on a ship, you think *'This has got a wooden deck,*' that's because teak is in the family of cypris and it will take saltwater for years and years and never wears out. That's just free information, I'm not sure how it fits in here. She finally found a place of rest, ***'Our bed is green, the beams of our house, they're substantial, they're structurally sound, Lord, what you've invited me into never wears out, Lord. The shelter you've given me stands the test of time, the beams of our house are cedar and our rafters are of cypris.'*** We have to stop there. I told the guys I was going to end early. Well, will some of you guys at least read ahead, because I just can't wait to dig into this as we move forward, and I encourage you, look, don't read in the commentaries, just when you sit alone, just read it, and let the Lord speak to you, just read it. That's the beautiful thing about all this color. And I'm talking about Hebrew guys, understand, I love to read Hebrew scholars, but they all argue with each other, it's like reading the Greek guys, they all argue with each other, they're

arguing with each other. And none of them know Greek, Koine Greek, as good as the 1<sup>st</sup> century, and all the Gnostics and Arians knew Greek better than them, and they all wanted to destroy the Church. So, language is wonderful, and it brings light, and tenses and moods, it's wonderful, and I love it. But if you just sit and read this in your Bible, it will blow your mind. If you will just read your Bible. Look over Christmas holiday, if you will just read the Song of Solomon, you're going to need to find some rest over these Christmas holidays, if you will just read it, he will speak to you. And we don't want a relationship with the Lord just to be servants, just to be Martha, we want it to be Mary. He's coming soon, get to know him, he's coming soon, sit alone with him. He promises those who love his appearing a crown of righteousness. Yes, there's crowns for service and being faithful, but there's a crown of righteousness for those who love his appearing, we're going to get to see our Saviour, we're going to get to see the one who stretched out his hands on a wooden cross and bled his life into the ground for us, we're going to get to see him. Let's stand, let's pray...[transcript of a connective expository sermon on the Song of Solomon 1:1-17, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]

Audio Version: <http://resources.ccphilly.org/WED879>