

## The Bride – My Hope

In the Song of Songs, which is noted as being Solomon's Song, is contained so much more than a simple love story. This book is a primer for growing in intimacy with Jesus that transcends by far the simple love story it might appear to be.

Isn't it interesting to note that this "book", this love story, this "song" is specifically identified as being Solomon's own. This is not his scribe's, this is not a generic song he sang whenever he was with each of his wives (yes he did indeed have many), but this song was reserved for just one – the one we today know only as "the Shullamite maiden."

He (Solomon) was so taken with her that he wrote an entire love song about his relationship with her. Have you ever thought about that? Why didn't he write about some of those other beautiful women he had? In the Song of Songs he tells her

“There are sixty queens  
and eighty concubines,  
and virgins without number.

My dove, (this means her,)  
my perfect one,  
is the only one....”  
SOS 6:8-9



What fills my heart with hope? This – my King’s heart of love for me. For surely we are all Shullamites. Surely we enter into relationship with Him having been brought near from a far place away. Surely we come to Him bent from having lived life up to that wonderful day. We come to Him broken, bent, not very lovely, unsure whether He can be trusted. We come to Him with this intermingled heart of hope and fear.

But what do we learn from the Song of all Songs? We learn that all along He has loved us. We learn that all along He has anticipated the day when we would fully trust Him and surrender ourselves to his every pleasure.

I think I could write forever of His love for this maiden, of His love for you and me. But let me just point out a little bit about her learning curve. Perhaps we could call it her “redemptive curve.” And please note as we think upon Father’s wonderful Word to us that this is EXACTLY His heart towards you – even as you read this now.

The story begins with them already in relationship. He has already brought her into His company, and she is stunned by His love and His kindness towards her. She says to Him early on, “Take me away with you. I will run after you.” Chap. 1:4

This is tantamount to saying “I’m all yours. Let’s elope. I want to be with you no matter where you go.” Wonderful words to speak, these are. Words of “Yeses” to the love of her life. But does she really mean it?

He plys her with kindness. He pours and pours and pours into her and over her. He takes her into His chambers (v. 4b). He takes her into His private dining area; He takes her to the royal Banqueting House (2.4). The literal translation of Banqueting House is House of Wine, a place for celebrating. A place for an engagement party complete with food, wine and friends! Oh He fills her up to overflowing.

After awhile she falls asleep. And He makes another move upon her. He comes to invite her to move a step upward in her relationship with Him. He comes to collect on that first declaration of surrender she made to Him in Chap. 1:4.

In 2:10, He says to her, “Arise, (get up) my love, my beautiful one, and come away with Me.” In Chap. 2:13, He asks her the same thing again. “Arise, my love, my beautiful one, and come away with Me.”

Her answer is staggering. If you study this passage carefully, you will see that her answer to Him is not “Yes!” Rather, it is a (sic) “not yet.” Oh how many times have I said that to the Lord. “Not yet.” I’d rather sit here under Your apple tree. Not yet. I’m comfortable where I am, Lord. Not yet. I’m tired. Not yet. I’m not holy enough. Not yet. I think that is too hard for me. Not yet.

And what does she tell Him beyond that? She not only says in effect “No,” but she tells Him to Turn (away from her) and go on ahead without her (to the hills of Bethel, which literally means “to the hills of Separation.”) 2:17

And what is His response to her? This is what fills me with so much hope. So very much hope. He loves her. Yes, He does leave. But only so she can taste the fruit of her “No” to Him. How costly are our “No’s!”

She repents of her decision in Chapter 3 and sets out to find Him no matter the cost. She presses beyond even the city watchmen (those charged with protecting the faithful), and He lets her find Him.

Does He yell? Does He scream? Does He put her in detention? No! No! Just the opposite!

Read Chapter 4, verses 1 through 5 and be amazed. What does He do but call her Beautiful! Not just once, but twice. Beautiful! Oh my goodness! He calls her “MY love!”

Oh, I could go on and on and on. But let’s stop here by this incredibly sweet pool of His character and personality. Let’s stop right here and think about our relationship with our Bridegroom King.

He has loved you, dear reader, with a love that has lasted for all eternity. He has never had a vengeful bone in His Divine self. He has and does love you. He loves you in your “Yesses,” He loves you in your “Not right nows,” and He loves you in your “No’s.”

He only has eyes for you. He already sees you as you are going to be. Because He knows what He has made possible for you, and he knows you are going to respond to His wooing. So despite what you see as devastating failings, as untenable compromise or maddening mediocrity, He is white hot in love with you.

Right now, would you stop thinking about yourself, your weaknesses, your failings, and would you just drink in the look of His face? You can't see it, you say? Lift your gaze to your Lord. Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full in His wonderful face.....” And receive the love of your King.