

July 15

Scriptures: Read Song of Solomon 1, 2 & 3

Key Verse: “My beloved is mine, and I am his.” (Song of Solomon 2:16a)

Overview

The Shulamite praises her lover, expressing that his love is better than wine; it is more refreshing and makes the heart more glad (cf. Ps. 104:15). Likewise, the love of our Lord Jesus is more satisfying than any other source of enjoyment.

Throughout the book, all the expressions of affection should be understood in the sense of true and pure love, and not in the sensuous, erotic love of the world. Her beloved's name is pictured as a costly and precious perfume. This depicts his good, noble, and honourable character, for which he is naturally loved and respected by all the maidens (the pure and undefiled virgins, 1:2-3). The Name of Jesus is the sweet smelling desire of our souls (Isa. 26:8-9; Ps. 45:8). There is salvation in His Name (Acts 4:12) and His Name is wonderful (Isa. 9:6; Jud. 13:17-18).

The Shulamite is overjoyed to be the object of his special love and attention. She is thrilled to be ushered into the presence of the king, that she may draw close to Him (cf. Jer. 31:3; John 6:44). She is a humble country maiden who confesses that her skin is tanned, like the Bedouin's skin tents that darken in the hot sun, but she adds that her loveliness, like beautiful royal curtains, makes her worthy of Solomon's affections.

For some unexplained reason, her brothers were displeased with her and had sent her to work outside tending their vineyards, and so she was unable to properly look after her own vineyard, referring to herself (1:5-6). Before she met her bridegroom, she was in a sad and miserable situation, but now she longed to be with him always, for there she found protection and joy. He was not only her king and bridegroom, he was also her shepherd. In like manner, Jesus, our wonderful Bridegroom, the King of kings and the gentle Shepherd lifts us out of the mire and gives us protection.

As the bridegroom and bride are exchanging words of love and compliments, the bridegroom compares his bride to his most beautiful filly (1:9). Solomon imported horses and chariots from Egypt (cf. 1 Kings 10:28-29), and horses were praised for their strength and beauty and were often beautifully ornamented; so in that day it would have been a compliment.

In the Shulamite woman's response, she expresses the delight and pleasure she finds in her beloved by using the comparison of myrrh and henna, which were special herbs and spices (1:12-14). Myrrh was often hung around the neck to give a good fragrance. Her love for the bridegroom is so great that she desires to always have him as close to her as possible. The more they communicated together and the closer she drew to her bridegroom, the greater her happiness and delight in his words and presence. Likewise, the Church finds encouragement in giving words of praise to Jesus, who in turn reveals Himself more to us, invites us to His banqueting table, and claims us as His own by putting His banner of love over us; He sustains and refreshes us at His table, and all the while, He holds us close to Him with His strong right arm (2:4-6; Ps.

63:8); By having communion with Christ, the Church enjoys His presence and grows in love, faith, and loyalty to Him.

The Shulamite comments on her beloved's youthful vigor and swiftness, like a gazelle. His gentle voice speaks tender words, calling her to come away with him so he might enjoy her beauty and hear her sweet voice (2:8-14). Who speaks words that are lovelier than those of Jesus? Those who love Him desire to hear from Him, and through His Holy Word, Jesus tells us of His love for us. Like the bridegroom, Jesus desires to be with us in the secret place where we have our time of fellowship with Him, that He might hear our words of praise and prayer to Him which ascend as sweet incense.

With beautiful expressions of devotion, the Shulamite woman is convinced that she and her bridegroom belong together and to each other: "My beloved is mine, and I am his" (2:16). She has the utmost faith in his love for her and is confident that when his work among the sheep is finished for the day, he will return to her (2:16-17). The thought of losing him and being separated from him gave her bad dreams (3:1-4; 5:2-7), but here in chapter three her dream ended happily, for she found him and held him tightly, not wanting to let go. Her devotion to her beloved bridegroom is typical of the devotion that a believer must have for the Lord. Separation from Him should likewise be viewed with horror, for truly separation from God is a living nightmare.

Prayer

Dear Lord, thank You for Your great love for us. We, as Your Bride, renew our commitment to love and serve You. We long to draw closer to You each day.