

Song of Solomon 4 – 6:1-3

Tonight we're going to visit the second section of Solomon's Love Song to his bride. Section one, which is from chapter 1 to the beginning of chapter 3, dealt with Solomon's invitation for his beloved to come with him and join him in marriage.

Chapters 3-5 will deal with the marriage ceremony itself which is introduced in verse 6.

Song of Solomon 3:6-11 ⁶ "What is this coming up from the wilderness Like columns of smoke, Perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, With all scented powders of the merchant? ⁷ "Behold, it is the *traveling* couch of Solomon; Sixty mighty men around it, Of the mighty men of Israel. ⁸ "All of them are wielders of the sword, Expert in war; Each man has his sword at his side, *Guarding* against the terrors of the night. ⁹ "King Solomon has made for himself a sedan chair From the timber of Lebanon. ¹⁰ "He made its posts of silver, Its back of gold *And* its seat of purple fabric, *With* its interior lovingly fitted out By the daughters of Jerusalem. ¹¹ "Go forth, O daughters of Zion, And gaze on King Solomon with the crown With which his mother has crowned him On the day of his wedding, And on the day of his gladness of heart."

As we saw last time the marriage of the bride and the bridegroom that is depicted in the Song of Solomon is a picture of the marriage supper that is described in Revelation.

Revelation 19:7-9 ⁷ "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." ⁸ It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright *and* clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. ⁹ Then he said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he said to me, "These are true words of God."

You and I in Christ have been invited to this marriage supper of the Lamb because we are the bride of Christ. When you and I think of marriage we think in terms of an intimate union between a man and a woman because this is the way God designed it for human beings from the beginning.

Mark 10:6-8 ⁶ "But from the beginning of creation, *God* MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE. ⁷ "FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, ⁸ AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH; so they are no longer two, but one flesh.

And so, marriage was always meant to be a one flesh approach to a couple that was united by covenant in response to what God instituted from the beginning of creation.

And by the way, as a side note, these are the very words of Jesus, and He Himself is acknowledging that man was created in the beginning. He didn't evolve over time as evolutionists or theistic evolutionists insist.

Christ is addressing man being created in the beginning as history, not a narrative about man's supposed scientific discoveries on how man evolved from non-living matter.

But back to the concept of marriage; it's a little harder to get our heads around how this concept applies to God and His people, or the bridegroom and the bride, as depicted in Revelation.

There are similarities but there are also differences. The apostle Paul deals with this in his letter to the Ephesians.

Ephesians 5:23-33 ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body. ²⁴ But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything. ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, ²⁶ so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. ²⁸ So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; ²⁹ for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also *does* the church, ³⁰ because we are members of His body. ³¹ FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. ³² This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. ³³ Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must *see to it* that she respects her husband.

This portion is meant to be instructive for both husbands and wives as to their roles in the marriage relationship. But what is often overlooked is what this portion is really all about, and it is really about Christ and His church. And so, human marriage doesn't define the marriage between Christ and His church, the marriage between humans is only a reflection of the heavenly marriage between Christ and His church.

If we quickly look back at Paul's words we see that he is speaking of specific things: heads in verse 23, subjection in verse 24, love in verse 25, sanctifying in verse 26 and ultimately glorifying in verse 27.

And then in verse 32 Paul equates the marriage as a mystery. He doesn't mean to suggest that marriage in itself is an unknowable mystery, but that the marriage between Christ and His bride is the mystery that Paul is really talking about.

Again, a mystery in the Scriptures does not necessarily mean that something is unknown, but only that it has deeper significance that is progressively being revealed.

Ephesians 6:19-20 ¹⁹ and *pray* on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in *proclaiming* it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Well, what would be the mystery of the gospel that Paul alludes to here?

Paul actually identifies the mystery earlier in this letter.

Ephesians 1:9-12 ⁹ He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him ¹⁰ with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him ¹¹ also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, ¹² to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.

So, the mystery of His will has to do with the administration suitable to the fullness of the times; that is the summing up of all things in Christ in the heavens and on the earth.

Well, if this mystery is summing up all things related to Christ then what does that infer prior to this time?

That there were things that were not fully understood, even though there was a general knowledge of this mystery.

Going back to the garden right after the fall of man what general knowledge was man given?

That the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent. This was language that couched the promise of a Savior. So, salvation was not a mystery, but the way in which this would be accomplished might be.

How might the birth of a child be mysterious in regards to redeeming sinful men if all men are born in sin?

Only a sinless Savior can redeem others who are sinful.

And over time God would reveal how this would be accomplished. He actually begins to reveal certain aspects of it immediately after the fall.

Genesis 3:21 ²¹ The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.

What part of the mystery of the marriage of the Lamb and His bride is God revealing here?

That the lamb must shed its blood for the bride.

But there were other parts of this general knowledge that would fall under the category of mystery that Paul brings out, especially in light of the times in which he lived and the people to whom he wrote. And a big part of this mystery had to do with the very people who would receive this good news.

Prior to Christ coming to this earth born of a woman, who were the people that were identified with the creator, God?

Israel.

So, what part of the mystery of the gospel did Paul reveal to the Gentiles?

Ephesians 3:1-7 ^{NAU} For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles-- ² if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you; ³ that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. ⁴ By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; ⁶ *to be specific*, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, ⁷ of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power.

Why do you suppose this was a mystery to the Gentiles?

Because the Jews were not willing to reveal what had been revealed to them about the Gentiles. Anyone remember the promise given to Abraham?

Genesis 17:4-8 ⁴ "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And you will be the father of a multitude of nations. ⁵ "No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I will make you the father of a multitude of nations. ⁶ "I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings will come forth from you. ⁷ "I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. ⁸ "I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

All nations will be part of this blessing. And what that means is that God's people will be taken from all nations, including the Jews. And this is seen clearly in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 7:9-10 ⁹ After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; ¹⁰ and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

And so, when we talk about the bride of Christ it must be understood that this mystery is about how people's from all nations

were chosen by God from before the creation of the world to be united to Him forever.

Ephesians 1:3-6 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

And of course, the Beloved is the bridegroom in the Song of Solomon and He too was chosen to receive His bride before the foundation of the world.

1 Peter 1:20-21 20 For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you 21 who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

And so, when we come to the fourth chapter of the Song of Solomon we see the way in which the bridegroom views His bride as He invites her to his side.

Song of Solomon 4:7-9 7 "You are altogether beautiful, my darling, And there is no blemish in you. 8 "Come with me from Lebanon, my bride, May you come with me from Lebanon. Journey down from the summit of Amana, From the summit of Senir and Hermon, From the dens of lions, From the mountains of leopards. 9 "You have made my heart beat faster, my sister, my bride; You have made my heart beat faster with a single glance of your eyes, With a single strand of your necklace.

You and I are precious in the sight of our Savior. We are, after all, His bride. And Peter alludes to this special position in his first epistle.

1 Peter 2:9 9 But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

As the bride is invited to come to the bridegroom in our text we see an interesting thing happen.

Song of Solomon 5:2 2 "I was asleep but my heart was awake. A voice! My beloved was knocking: 'Open to me, my sister, my darling, My dove, my perfect one! For my head is drenched with dew, My locks with the damp of the night.'

What is depicted here with the phrase, "I was asleep, but my heart was awake?"

The bride is dreaming. But in this dream it appears the bridegroom turns away from his bride.

Song of Solomon 5:6 6 "I opened to my beloved, But my beloved had turned away and had gone! My heart went out to him as he spoke. I searched for him but I did not find him; I called him but he did not answer me.

In what sense does the bride dream of her beloved and yet the beloved does not answer?

This is a picture of a future hope to be wed to the beloved. And yet, this relationship seems to be illusive for a time. And the next verse will help to put into perspective what happens during the interim.

Song of Solomon 5:7 7 "The watchmen who make the rounds in the city found me, They struck me and wounded me; The guardsmen of the walls took away my shawl from me.

Here in this dream the bride is wandering the streets looking for her beloved and in the process the watchmen strike and wound her.

What is inferred here?

While we are in the world the world will hate us because they hate our Savior. This wounding is the sharing in the sufferings of our Lord and Savior. Peter touches on this but also lays out the hope of that time in which we are united with our bridegroom.

1 Peter 4:13 13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.

The revelation of His glory will usher in the wedding feast of the Lamb.

But in the mean time we must dwell on our Lord and look to that time in which we come into His presence. And this is what is inferred in our text as the watchmen ask the bride a question, and note her response.

Song of Solomon 5:9 9 "What kind of beloved is your beloved, O most beautiful among women? What kind of beloved is your beloved, That thus you adjure us?"

Her answer is instructive because she answers in detail.

Song of Solomon 5:10-16 10 "My beloved is dazzling and ruddy, Outstanding among ten thousand. 11 "His head is *like* gold, pure gold; His locks are *like* clusters of dates *And* black as a raven. 12 "His eyes are like doves Beside streams of water, Bathed in milk, *And* reposed in *their* setting. 13 "His cheeks are like a bed of balsam, Banks of sweet-scented herbs; His lips are lilies Dripping with liquid myrrh. 14 "His hands are rods of gold Set with beryl; His abdomen is carved ivory Inlaid with sapphires. 15 "His legs are pillars of alabaster Set on pedestals of pure gold; His appearance is like Lebanon Choice as the cedars. 16 "His mouth is *full of* sweetness. And he is wholly desirable. This is my beloved and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem."

How is the bride today to understand and view her bridegroom?

To know the bridegroom we must seek the bridegroom and the things of the bridegroom.

Colossians 3:1-4 NAU Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand

of God. 2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

2 Peter 3:17-18 17 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness, 18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

There is a sense in which the bride lives in a dream, but it is not a dream from reality, but a dream of a hope and a future with our beloved in His presence forever when He comes to take us to Himself.

Song of Solomon 6:1-3 ^{NAU} "Where has your beloved gone, O most beautiful among women? Where has your beloved turned, That we may seek him with you?" ² "My beloved has gone down to his garden, To the beds of balsam, To pasture *his flock* in the gardens And gather lilies. ³ "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine, He who pastures *his flock* among the lilies."

We await our beloved who pastures His flock, but until He returns we know to whom we belong. I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine.