

SongOfSolomon 20-01-30a

Good evening, this is Thursday the 30th of January 2020. We continue our study tonight in the Song of Solomon and there are some surprises in store, certainly surprised me working on it this past week, but I think it will be illuminating to say the least, challenging to say more. Let's take a study to go to the Lord in prayer, remembering that the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the delivery and the reception of the Word of God is all-important and very necessary for us to rightly divide the word of truth.

Shall we pray? Father, it is a privilege and a blessing each time we meet together to seek to understand your Word better, to find the truth of it so that your Holy Spirit can use it to enable us and empower us for the supernatural life to which we have been called. We know how easy it is to fall into human viewpoint and into the ways of the world, and it is only by your grace in illuminating our path and our hearts with your Word that we can rise above it and prepare ourselves not only for ministry function and opportunity in this life but also in the age to come. We pray that as we look at this portion of your Word together that the Holy Spirit will superintend, minister to each heart in a way that is meaningful and memorable as we look for its application in the time that remains to us in this life.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. I have often been impressed with Adam Clark, who was a Methodist minister in the late 1700s.

Over the course of over 40 years in his life, he assiduously, methodically, and very energetically applied himself to creating a commentary on the entire Bible. It is the Adam Clark commentary. It was published, I think, first in 1810 or 1811.

My particular copy is one from 1834, my hard copy, which I prize very much. It is quite aged on the outside, but the insights within it I find to be very valuable. And with some apology, I want to reiterate some of the things that he has said regarding the Song of Solomon.

He shares many of the conclusions that we've drawn. He's been labeled a Wesleyan and an Arminian, which is sort of a real death knell in terms of anybody who fancies themselves to be a Calvinist. The Arminians are the boogeyman under the bed.

They're the opposite. But in many cases, it is an exaggeration or caricature to label somebody that way. He did not emphasize Calvinism or sovereignty in his commentary.

Therefore, he's automatically an Arminian. So in his introduction to the Song of Solomon, he reviews many of the approaches that we have already looked at as far as historic approaches to the book. And in their usual happy fashion, Microsoft has chosen to reboot my laptop right in the middle of my presentation here.

So if you'll give me a second, I'll... And there's a little Beelzebub minion flying right in front of my

screen to top it off. But he had some commentary about the abuse of allegorical interpretation that is well worth reading. And maybe I'll get that to you after the break.

What I want to do, though, is I spent a lot of time this week once again looking at the book myself, surveying commentaries of various sorts. I bought a few and read them. And I have come to the conclusion that I was unhappy with all of them.

And Adam Clark makes a very good case for unhappiness at looking at the content of the book and not finding justification for most of the comments that have been made about it, both historically and all the way up to the present day. And context is always our interpretive recourse when there is a struggle of understanding, at least it is for me. And so in looking at the context, I have drawn some conclusions that were helpful to me and have convinced me that we need to take a slightly different tack than the one I began on, because the more I've looked at it, the less happy I was with it.

So forgive me if I say something different than what I've said in the past, but I think you'll see tonight that there is merit in the approach we are now going to take. I want to direct your attention to one particular comment that is made almost as an aside in this book, and it has to do with Solomon's situation when the book was written. So if you'll turn to chapter 6, verse 8, we're not anywhere near here yet, but this is a helpful circumstance and it was one of the clues that led me down, I think, a much better path.

This is the comment that Solomon is describing his beloved as a gal with hair like a flock of goats and teeth like a flock of sheep and one thing and another. But look at verse 8 of chapter 6. There are 60 queens and 80 concubines and virgins without number. Now what is the total of wives and concubines that we know Solomon eventually accumulated? Remember he had a thousand wives, 700 wives, 300 concubines.

If you total them up, you get a thousand women in the harem. But at this point, there are far fewer. This tells us that this episode took place in the earlier royal career of Solomon.

He's got 60 queens, not 700, and he's got 80 concubines, not 300. So it's a point to bear in mind that he is going to accumulate a lot more women in the harem after this particular snapshot is taken. What I'm going to suggest to you is what we've already discussed in this book.

A, it is, in fact, a story told from a woman's point of view. In fact, I would submit if there is any book of the Bible that you can more or less confidently claim was written by a woman, this would be my first candidate. I really don't, I think Solomon may have collected this.

I think he may have included it. I think he may have recognized its truth, but I don't think he wrote it. I think the Shulamite wrote it.

I think she wrote the thing. It is her words and quotations of people she talked with from

beginning to end. So in the superscription that says the song of songs, which is Solomon's in Hebrew, this is the preposition El or Lamed, La, two or four.

And I think this is a song that is about Solomon. I think it is dedicated to Solomon. I think it is probably something that was given to him.

I think it may have sparked some conviction in his soul, and I think he included it in the other collections of Proverbs and songs that eventually found their way into the canon. I do think it is inspired. I think it is canonical.

It'll be interesting to find out the lady's name, whose words it so largely preserves. So as I said in the last few weeks of our study, this is, if there was ever a woman's book, this is it. It is told from a woman's point of view.

It is her experience, her feelings, her ups and downs in this picture of married love. And that's our second point. As I've said before, this is a book about married love.

It is not dealing with fornication. It is not dealing with adultery. It is not dealing with physical relations outside of wedlock.

This story begins with a betrothal and marriage. And all of this takes place within the proper bounds of marriage. You remember in the Old Testament, there was not a proscription or prohibition of multiple wives.

It's not the ideal. Everybody you look at with multiple wives in the Old Testament has trouble. And it was not so from the beginning.

For this cause, it says in Genesis, right after the words of Adam, recognizing Eve, for this cause shall a man leave father and mother and cleave unto his wife, singular, and they too shall be one flesh. Jesus quotes that same scripture with approval in Mark 1.15. And he says, they are not two, but one. The two shall be one flesh.

Old Testament and New, God's ideal is a marriage union between one man, one woman, inseparably united. So that's what this book is about. Having said that, I'm going to back up a little bit because I told you at the inception that I feel it is a chiasm.

And I found an abundance of suggestions as to what those chiasms are. There've been at least three different structural chiasms suggested, and I don't agree with any of them. And so I'm going to give you the one and only chance that you'll ever hear for this chiasm, because it is the chiasm, which is mine.

It's kind of like the theory, which is mine, if those of you who know what I'm talking about. So in order to identify that, we need to re-divide this book into its sections. Sections.

There are, and I'm going to label them for purposes of convenience, A through G, and then we'll revert back out from G to F prime, E prime, D prime, C prime, B prime, and A prime. Now it sounds complex, but it's really not. This book is going to progress toward a center, and understanding this chiasm, in my humble opinion, is the key to understanding the book.

So much has been written, and I haven't even begun to express to you how much has been said, trying to figure out why is this book here? What is it for? Well, I will humbly suggest that I think we can see it once we identify this structure. So you're going to need, by some means, to mark either in your Bible or in your notes. It's going to be a lot easier in your Bible.

My Bible is liberally marked up, and I am thanking myself that I did it in pencil, because I had to modify it a few times. But I'm going to give you not only what the structure is, but why I think it is the structure. And the daughters of Jerusalem are one of the keys, and statements of location are another one of the keys.

And between those two, every one of these sections is very clearly marked. All of that stuff about 14 songs that I said before, that is one way of looking at it. You can find a plethora of ways to look at it.

This is my contribution to the plethora. If you don't find it helpful, feel free to just add it to the long list. But I think you will find it helpful, because I find it extremely helpful.

And if I find it helpful, so should you. That's my view. So let me begin by saying, the Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.

Okay, and this is to, for, and about Solomon. It's not any old lover. It's not any old guy.

We're not pretending to be royals so that we can put on airs about how profound our love is. It is the real, no-kidding Solomon. And there's a beautiful transition, and Hebrew is somewhat flexible in pronoun choice.

And we've seen before, looking at Psalms, if you watch pronouns and watch them change from first person to second person to third person and that. And you notice in verse 2, as we've seen in the past, she begins, let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. And then right in the mid-sentence, it says, your love is better than wine.

For your love is better than wine. And you think, well, who is him and who is you? And why does it change in the middle of the sentence? I'm going to submit to you that in order to get off the ground in this collection of scenes or songs, we need to understand that it is the Shulamite princess who is talking. And she is going to quote Solomon.

She's going to quote the daughters of Jerusalem. She's going to quote various people as she goes through. But this is what women do.

Those of you who are women know that you do this. Those of you who know women know that they do it. And it is a matter of sitting and reflecting back on conversations and things that people said.

I remember you said X. There's not a woman alive that hasn't had those words come out of her mouth. You said X. She said this. He said that.

They said this. And ruminating and meditating and reflecting on words that people have said. And of course, not that men don't do this, but it seems to be a more provocative and interesting pastime for ladies.

So she says, this is a song about Solomon. Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. Him is Solomon.

You can circle him, circle Solomon. Him is Solomon. There's no other antecedent that him can be.

It's Solomon's song. Let him, Solomon, kiss me because, and these are my suggestions. You can take them or leave them.

But she says, let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth because, quote, your love is better than wine. This is something Solomon said. She remembers him saying, your love is like wine.

And she's saying, well, if he likes tasting wine with his lips, let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. He has said, my love is better than wine. So instead of using his lips to drink wine, he ought to use them to kiss me.

That's the idea. And that's how this thing begins because Solomon initiated, and this is the biblical pattern that the man initiates and the woman responds. This is why proposals of marriage typically flow from the man to the woman and not the other way around.

This is why Christ initiates his love to the church. God initiates his love to Israel. And both of those are pictured in terms of husband and wife relationships.

And at the beginning of this book, and partly based on that pattern, I think she is quoting him. The you here can't be determined as feminine or masculine. But if you look at the footnote there, she says, your love is better than wine.

And they say here that this is a masculine singular. That is, the beloved's love is better than wine. Well, maybe so.

But she says, because of the fragrance of your good ointments, your name is ointment poured forth. Therefore, the virgins love you. Draw me away.

We will run after you. The second point I want to make here is not only does she quote Solomon

in the course of her reflections, but she and Solomon both are going to occasionally use the plural of majesty, the royal we. And this greatly simplifies the narrative because you don't have to keep introducing groups of people for no good reason.

And there's a wordplay that emerges once you realize that when she uses the plural, she means I, and when Solomon uses the plural, he means I. So my suggestion, if you're using a New King James like mine, right in the middle of verse four, for no apparent reason, it says the daughters of Jerusalem suddenly start speaking. Do you have that in your text? Right in the middle of verse four, it says the daughters of Jerusalem. My suggestion is line that out.

There's no hint that there are any daughters around. They haven't been mentioned yet. It would be strange and obscure to think that there's a group.

She is speaking in verse four and she says, draw me away. We will run after you. Now, why would she switch pronoun numbers in mid-sentence? Because she is going to engage in some playful mockery of Solomon.

Solomon, as monarchs have done for eons, will speak with the plural of majesty. You know, we are not amused and so on. And so she is, she's talking to Solomon and she's using the plural because when he talks to her, sometimes he slips and uses the plural.

Then you'll see this in the next, in his response. So she says, she's talking to Solomon and she says, because of the fragrance of your good ointments, your name is ointment poured forth. And these are, these are aromatic oils.

That's what the Hebrew word means. It's, it's balsams and other saps and, and things that they made perfume out of. And she says, because of the fragrance of your, of your aromatic oils, and this is a figure of speech that means his praises.

Fragrances like the prayers of the saints going up from the altar of incense contain praises and good complimentary and appreciative expressions. Right? So she's not just saying everybody loves you because you smell good. She says, your, your ability to compliment and make people feel good is as, is a part of your reputation.

So because of the fragrance of your good ointments, your name is associated. When people say Solomon, they say, oh, he's always so kind. He has such appreciative, you know, he finds what's good about somebody, especially somebody in the harem and, and talks up their good qualities.

And she says, you know, that's, that's synonymous with you because of that, the virgins love you. All of the ladies think you're great because you're just so complimentary and so appreciative. So she says to him, draw me away.

Now of the many different ways that this book has been understood, there's also the notion that it

speaks of seven days. And there is the idea that this is the week of celebration of a marriage. So the marriage begins, and then there is a week of festivity, a week of celebration.

And it's possible to see that in the depiction of nights and days. This is something Adam Clark points out. So as the Jewish marriages were celebrated for seven days, he says, it has often been observed that this song divides itself into seven periods and describes the transactions of each.

And then he goes in and says, the first chapter represents the bridegroom and bride as a shepherd and shepherdess. The bride asks her spouse where he takes his flock to preserve him from heat. As the first day and night succeed, it extends all the way through to chapter two, verse seven, and so on.

You can follow this through. Adam Clark does a great job of detailing everybody, noting that there seemed to be seven days in this. And then he tosses out and he says, I don't know what that's good for.

I don't like it. I don't think it's particularly helpful either. I just mentioned to you that if you want to see this idea of the Jewish wedding, the only reason I bring it up, you can look at Adam Clark.

The only reason I bring it up is I think there is a common recognition that they are married on day one and that these succeeding days and nights are their first week of wedded bliss. It's not leading up to a marriage in the middle, as many have suggested, and that there's a consummation in the middle. It starts the first night they're married.

And when he said, when he says to her, or she says to him, draw me away, we will run after you. We meaning I will run after you. Then the very next thing is, she says, the King has brought me into his chambers.

And this is a marker for this first section. This is the A section. She says, I'm talking about Solomon.

He's a wonderful guy. He's so enchanting. He's so charming.

All of the virgins love him because he's so kind. The things that he says are like perfume. His name itself just suggests this wonderful fragrance.

And so she says, draw me away. Let's start the honeymoon and we will hurry after you. Running has the idea of, I can't wait.

Let's get this show on the road. So then she says, and this is parenthetical. She says, all right.

And this is a, this is a scene marker. This begins the first scene. So the King has brought me into his chambers.

You can just put parentheses around that. She says, I just want you to know the setting here. So now he speaks and put quotes around this.

This is Solomon talking. It's not the daughters of Jerusalem. Solomon says, we will rejoice and be glad in you.

It's Solomon talking. She says, we will hurry after you. He says, we will rejoice and be glad in you.

And it's the two talking to each other in these, these Royal plurals. Good so far. And we will remember your love more than wine.

And this refers back up to verse two. You remember, your love is better than wine. And he says, we, this is I Solomon will remember your love more than wine.

So all of this ties together. And she responds, rightly do they love you. Rightly do the virgins love you.

This refers back to verse three. The virgins love you because you're, you're so charming and you say such wonderful, pleasant things. Rightly do they love you? So, this is the introduction and the opening scene.

They are married. She says, you're such a great guy. Everybody loves you.

Let's go be by ourselves. I will hurry after you. And he says, I will be glad and rejoice with you alone is the idea.

And we meaning the Royal personage will remember your love more than wine. So there is this tight interweaving of wine and love and so on. Now there is a an aside because who are they leaving? There's, he's already got all of these wives and concubines from that we saw over in chapter six, right? 60 Queens and 80 concubines, 140 ladies in the harem.

And so when she says, draw me away, she's thinking, well, who are we leaving behind? And this is the first night of our wedding. How am I going to stack up against these predecessors? So to speak. So she's a little bit insecure and anybody who has, has come in behind a previous relationship, dating or marriage or whatever knows that there are always these little lurking thoughts.

Well, I know you dated somebody before me, you were with somebody before me. And am I, am I going to fall short in some way? And so she addresses this in verse five and following, I am dark, but I am still attractive. But she says, you know, y'all have got these pale skins.

You're in the Royal harem and I come from, you know, the outdoors. So she addresses the daughters of Jerusalem that they are leaving to go be by themselves. And she's got a little bit of apprehension.

And so she's, this is a little bit of a self-confidence builder. I'm dark, but lovely. Solomon likes his curtains and I'm like the curtains of Solomon.

I'm dark. So that ought to be okay. And you can see the feminine mind at work here.

She's shoring up her confidence. She says, don't look upon me because I'm dark because the sun has tanned me. This wasn't my choice.

This is, was circumstantial. This, this was something that arose, uh, due to my mother's sons and, uh, being outdoors. And, uh, I wasn't keeping my own vineyard.

Uh, this, this was my brothers were keeping me out of circulation. You remember how David wasn't available to be anointed as King? Why? Where was he? Out in the fields working. We're going to find out in, in the chiasmic structure of this book, that there's going to be another allusion to these brothers at the end and their philosophy of how to treat their sister.

Keep your finger here and turn to the end of the book. Chapter eight. Um, look at chapter eight, verse eight.

We have a little sister and she has no breasts, i.e. she's not yet of marriageable age, right? What shall we do for our sister in the day when she does become of marriageable age? When someone decides to speak for her, you see this in eight, eight, if she is a wall, in other words, if she's not interested in a guy that wants to speak for her, well, we'll reinforce the wall. We'll second the notion. Not only does she doesn't like you, but we don't like you either.

If she is a door, she's open to the nuptial suggestion and to the, the offer of betrothal. We will board her up. We'll, we'll shut that door.

We don't want our sister getting married. We hope she says no, and we'll second it. But if she says yes, we'll board her up anyway.

We're not letting her out. We're not letting her go. This is the attitude of the brothers.

So what are they doing? They're putting her out in the fields, keeping the vineyards and doing stuff like that to prevent her from entertaining marriage. Solomon has somehow gotten around this and has betrothed and married her. But she says, you know, my appearance shows the effect of my brother's strategy to keep me from getting married.

They thought if I was tanned, nobody would want me. But Solomon likes dark things. He's got dark curtains and I am lovely, even though I've, I've got a dark complexion.

So that didn't, didn't stop him. But my own vineyard I have not kept. You might want to just put a little star about that because she says my own vineyard I have not kept.

When you get down there to chapter eight, verse 12, my own vineyard is before me. She now has her own vineyard. And this, this, this is part of what you're going to see in this chiasm, these corresponding ideas.

She said back when my brothers were sequestering me, I didn't have my own vineyard. Now in 812, I've got my own vineyard and she's going to have something to say about that that we'll see a bit later. So having said this, she now turns to Solomon and she says, tell me, O you whom I love, where do you feed your flock? Where do you make it rest at noon? Why should I be as one who veils herself, veils herself? There's an alternate reading in the Septuagint and the Vulgate and some other ones that say, why should I wander? And it's, it's just a slight difference in the way you read the Hebrew.

Why should I wander by the flocks of your companions? And so Solomon answers in verse eight and he says, if you do not know, O fairest among women, follow in the footsteps of the flock and feed your little goats beside the shepherd's tents. So this is the second time now that we have a little, a little romantic back and forth, a little teasing conversation. The first one we saw in verse three and four, this royal we back and forth.

Then there's this aside to the daughters of Jerusalem that is as much to herself as it is to them. Then we returned to the conversation between Solomon and the Shulamite and she addresses him. And there's, there's this talk about where, where are we going? We're leaving the group and there's this vast palace of Solomon's.

And so as they're going through, she says, well, you know, this is kind of like wandering the hillsides. Where, where, where are we going? Where you keep your flocks at noon. And he basically says, well, O fairest among women, if you don't know where we're headed, which is of course the, the honeymoon suite, then you can go inquire elsewhere.

But then he continues in verse nine and he says, I have compared you my love to my Philly among Pharaoh's chariots. Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments, your neck with chains. And you notice of gold is in italics there, but he, he compares her to a horse among chariots.

And, and there's evidence from the ancient world that they found mares to be better at pulling chariots and in battle than stallions and geldings. They were, they were more steady, more stable. They didn't spook and start.

And so they would often be mares that were used in the chariot army. And he says, you're a prize Philly among the, which is, is an awkward compliment. I mean, he's, he's saying you're really outstanding in your field, so to speak.

And he said, he goes on, he's still talking in verse 11. If you, in your New King James, if it says the daughters of Jerusalem, just mark it out. This is Solomon reverting, in my view, to the royal plural again.

And he says, he says, your, your cheeks are lovely with ornaments. Your neck is like chains. And he says, we will make you ornaments of gold with studs of silver.

We'll, we'll adorn your beauty even more. We being I, Solomon, the King. So she responds and says, while the King is at his table.

So this is a scene marker. At first she said, the King has brought me into his chambers. That's scene one, right? Now she says, while the King is at his table.

So this is a new scene. And she says, my spikenard sends forth its fragrance. A bundle of myrrh is my beloved to me, lies all night between my breasts.

My beloved is to me, a cluster of henna blooms in the vineyards of Engedi. When it says henna blooms, there's, there's a strong likelihood that that word translated henna actually refers to grapes from Cyprus. And these Cyprian grapes were greatly prized in the ancient world because they were plump and they made great wine.

And so they would export, they would transplant these vines to other places and try to get them to grow. And so in Engedi, they had really fertile soil and evidently they transplanted these grapes from Cyprus and they were just growing in great abundance. And so she says, my beloved is to me like a cluster of Cyprian grapes in the vineyards of Engedi.

It's, it's a little bit more meaningful. It's, it's everything you could hope for in a grape, everything that you could hope for in a husband. Now she is going to quote Solomon and Solomon, and I just put quotations around verse 15 in my Bible.

Behold, you are fair, my love. Behold, you are fair. You have dove's eyes.

She's remembering him saying this, or he's saying it, but, but see, he's at the table, he's busy eating and she's otherwise occupied. So she's sort of not necessarily daydreaming, but she's reflecting on things that he said in the past. And she's remembering these little exchanges like we saw earlier in the chapter.

So she remembers Solomon saying, behold, you are fair, my love. You are fair. You have dove's eyes.

And she says in reply, behold, you are handsome, my beloved and pleasant. And our bed is green. And I'm going to suggest that, that the chapter two interruption here is in the wrong place because now she's going to quote Solomon again.

This is, this is sort of, here's what Solomon says. Here's what I say. Solomon says, you're fair, my love.

You have dove's eyes. She says, you're handsome, my beloved and pleasant. Then she says,

also our bed is green.

He says, the beams of our houses are cedar and the rafters are fir. So Solomon has now gotten her to the, you know, inner sanctums of the palace. And he says, look at how well constructed this house is.

And it's made out of these big beefy trees of cedar and fir. She says in reply, I'm not interested in your rafters and your beams. I am the rose of Sharon.

I am the lily of the valleys. She's wanting to sound a more delicate and sensual note here. You know, you want to talk about rafters or do you want to talk about roses and lilies and, you know, get your mind off the architecture where, you know, this, this is our wedding night.

So now the third quote from Solomon in this section begins in verse two. And he says, you're like a lily among thorns, my love among the daughters. And he may have sensed that she's, you know, a little bit insecure with all these other queens and concubines around.

And so he says, listen, compared to you, all the rest of these are just thorns. And, uh, you among these daughters, you're, you're just this consummate lily. She says, I'm the lily of the valleys.

And he says, you absolutely are. You're right. So you can put quotations around verse two.

That's, that's talking. And then she responds and says like an apple tree among the trees of the woods. So is my beloved among the sons.

So see, he says, this is how you are among the daughters. She says, well, this is how you are among the sons. So these are the, the comments Solomon makes.

And then her response back and forth, back and forth. And this is all in the second scene that began while the King is at his table. And while he's busy, she's thinking about these comments that he's made.

And so like an apple tree among the trees of the woods, that's how my beloved is among the sons. I sat down in his shade with great delight and his fruit was sweet to my taste. Now you've got a note here, the Shulamite to the daughters of Jerusalem.

And this is a good note. He brought me to the banqueting house. His banner over me is love.

Sustain me with cakes and raisins. Refresh me with apples for I am lovesick. His left hand is under my head.

His right hand embraces me. I charge you, oh, daughters of Jerusalem by the gazelles or by the does of the field. Do not stir up nor awaken love until it pleases.

This is a a warning note. It's a warning note. The Shulamite is talking to the daughters of

Jerusalem and she says, sustain me with cakes of raisins.

Refresh me with apples for I am lovesick. We'll talk about this a little bit more after the break. His left hand is under my head.

His right hand embraces me, but I charge you, oh, daughters of Jerusalem by the gazelles or by the does of the field. Do not stir up or awaken love until it pleases. She, and you read the first chapter, has stirred up and awakened Solomon's love, but she's telling the daughters of Jerusalem, be careful when you do that.

She says, I am now needing sustenance. I need cakes of raisins and apples. If he's the apple tree among the sons of men, then why does she need apples? Why is she appealing to the daughters for apples? It's because something has happened.

This is a shadow of things to come. And it's not just, oh, I'm just exhausted with this wonderful love. She is no longer talking to him.

She's talking to the daughters of Jerusalem and giving them a warning note. That is the first two scenes. They are marked by location.

The king takes me to his chamber. The king is at his table. And it ends with this appeal to the daughters of Jerusalem.

That's the first section, section A and section B. It divides at chapter one, verse 12, while the king is at his table. So two scenes. And at the end of that, you have this coda, this admonition to the daughters of Jerusalem.

What is this all about? Well, if you had to stop and couldn't attend the rest of Bible class, so what? What is the application? This is a woman. She is looking intensely and intimately at married love. It is a wonderful, blissful thing.

She is looking to her husband who is initiating and she is responding. But there is a shadow that is cast. He brought me to the banqueting house and his banner over me is love.

But I need raisins and apples. Even though his left hand is under my head and his right hand embraces me, I charge you by the gazelles and by the does. What do gazelles and does do at the first sign of trouble? If you've ever seen the deer out here, if you get too close to the window, they are off like a shot.

They flee at the first intimation that all is not normal, right? And she says, you'd better be as ready to flee as a doe or as a gazelle. Do not stir up or awaken love until it pleases, until that love is really genuine. So it's a little bit of a discordant note.

Why does she turn to the daughters? Why doesn't she say, this is great. You should all get

married. You should all have a husband like Solomon.

She says, you see the does and the gazelles when love awakens, take a lesson. So we should be as harmless as does, but we should be as wise as we can be. Look to the guidance of God, be careful, be measured.

Anytime we're making a commitment, this is a commitment. She agreed to become Solomon's wife. She has entered into it with her eyes open, but she turns to the daughters and she says, I've got something to tell you.

And she's going to return to them in a refrain after every two scenes, she's going to talk to them and she's going to, they're going to start talking back in the last half of the book. And we'll see this as we unfold our chiasm. Once we see this chiasm and see what's at the center, this book unfolds like the Rose of Sharon.

But let's pause here and take our break. When we come back, we'll see more.