

SongOfSolomon 20-02-27a

This is Thursday, the 27th of February 2020, which is not a big surprise. Going to spend one more night on Song of Solomon. I ran myself out of time last week and didn't get to cover the last couple of verses, and to make some final points and thoughts that should bring our study to a fruitful conclusion.

There is another document on the audio archives page for Song of Solomon. You will see the original one called Song, which is the outline that was posted a few weeks ago. There's a second one called Song 2, which is the document containing the full text of the book.

It is a different translation. It is the ESV translation, the English Standard Version, which I shamelessly copied and pasted. That's okay in copyright law if you look it up, as long as you don't make too many copies and don't sell anything.

We're doing neither. But it's the full text in the ESV, which I think is a more helpful translation for our purposes. I have made a few annotations in there, but it is a two-column document.

The column on the left has the straight text. I have color-coded the seven sections. I didn't break it down into 14 sections.

Too complicated. So A and B are one section. C and D are one section.

E and F are one section. G is a section. And then it comes back out.

So the color-coded text, that'll give you an idea of the seven major sections of the book. And on the right-hand column, I have put some of the chiasmic material that is mirrored and that is reflected in the second half of the book. It's not a perfectly chiasmic reference in the sense that there are thematic echoes that are not always perfectly symmetrical, but they're important.

And as I tried to make a diagram that would have little bracket lines and all the rest of it, I thought, you know, this is way too complex. And I couldn't fit it on one page. And so this is a 10-page document.

So if you're at home and can share, I would suggest printing one. If you've got a nice, fast color printer and want to print more, why power be unto you? But it is there. It's a PDF.

You can view it. I'm just going to, and really we're only looking at the first half of the text because as we look at the first half, we'll see the second half with its pertinent thematic elements coming into play over in the preface. Let's prepare for our concluding study in the Song of Solomon.

And we'll do that by asking God's blessing as we go to the Lord in prayer. Father, we are blessed even as we are challenged and encouraged in the study of your word. It is always gratifying when we seek as for silver and search as for hidden treasure.

And then we find disclosed to us the wisdom that you have for us, both to prepare us for this life and the ages to come. We pray that as we look at this portion of your word this evening, that your Holy Spirit will make it real and relate to each one of us, whether we are anticipating romance, continuing our relationships, or looking at the wider scope of application involved in covenant, in integrity, and in acting in accordance with what we say. We pray that as we review this tonight, that the Lord Jesus will be glorified both in our receiving and in our taking away the applicational truths that will help us to shine as lights in the midst of our generation.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. I first want to turn back a little bit and provide once again, as we did at the beginning, some of the context for this setting.

You have the account in 2 Chronicles of Solomon's reign. He comes to the throne. He asks for wisdom.

It is granted. He builds the temple. He blesses the people.

He praises God. He dedicates the temple in 2 Chronicles chapter 7. In chapter 7 verse 12 of 2 Chronicles, this is where we are picking up. This is the Solomon of subjective attention in the Song of Solomon.

He is the subject and object of this young lady's attention. Picking up in 2 Chronicles chapter 7 verse 12, the Lord appeared to Solomon by night and said to him, I have heard your prayer. I have chosen this place for myself as a house of sacrifice.

And he goes on to make promises. Verse 14, if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land. Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to prayer made in this place.

I have chosen and sanctified this house that my name may be there forever and my eyes and my heart will be there perpetually. Notice just in passing the use of the term forever. We know that the second temple gets knocked down in about 500 years after this statement by the Lord that his name would be there forever.

Forever can be a conditional situation. It can be a conditional promise. It can be a conditional truth.

And of course, you have to look at that context to understand. Um, as for you, verse 17, here's where we want to pay close attention. Verse 17, second chronicle seven, as for you, Solomon, if you walk before me as your father, David walked and do according to all that I have commanded you.

And if you keep my statutes and my judgments, then I will establish the throne of your kingdom.

As I covenanted with David, your father saying, you shall not fail to have a man as ruler in Israel. But verse 19, if you turn away and forsake my statutes and my commandments, which I have set before you and go and serve other gods and worship them, then I will uproot them from my land, which I have given them.

And this house, which I have sanctified for my name, I will cast out of my sight and I will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples. And as for this house, which is exalted, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and say, why has the Lord done this to this land and this house? They will answer because they forsook the Lord God of their fathers who brought them out of the land of Egypt and embraced other gods and worship them and serve them. Therefore, he has brought all this calamity on them.

One of the great signal glorious days in Israel, the last time that God's glory cloud would fill the dwelling place that he had established in the midst of his people. And on that day, God issues this stern and solemn warning. You get the idea that at weddings, the preacher ought to stop and preach a real hellfire and brimstone sermon right before he says, do you so-and-so take this woman to be your lawfully wedded wife, etc.

This is kind of what God does. Israel is entered into covenant relationship with God. God compares that to a marriage later on in the prophets.

So you have in chapter eight here, Solomon's additional achievements and. The visit of the Queen of Sheba in chapter nine, and you have the. The end of his reign there all the way up through his death at the end of chapter nine.

So you think, well, this is a wonderful thing. He's a great guy. He has built the Lord's temple.

He has brought about this tremendous seeming revival. God's glory has come. The people are praising.

There is a place for prayer. There's a place for appeal. There is a place for the.

Worship of God, and it just looks like a mountaintop experience and Chronicles just leaves you thinking, wow, what a great start. And then almost unaccountably and inexplicably, the kingdom divides and things go downhill. Well, I wanted to look at Chronicles specifically for God's response to Solomon's prayer and his dedication of the temple.

But turn back now some pages to First Kings chapter 11. You have the Queen of Sheba, just as you do in Chronicles in chapter 10. You have Solomon's great wealth in the last half of chapter 10, just as you have over in Second Chronicles.

But look at First Kings chapter 11, verse one. But King Solomon loved many foreign women as well as the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, the Ammonites, the Edomites, the Sidonians, and the Hittites from the nations of whom the Lord had said to the children of Israel,

you shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods.

Solomon clung to these in Ahava, in love. Solomon clung to these in love. And he had 700 wives, princesses, and 300 concubines, and his wives turned away his heart.

For it was so when Solomon was old that his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not loyal to the Lord his God, as was the heart of his father David. Solomon went after Ashereth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites. Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and did not fully follow the Lord as did his father David.

Solomon built a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, on the hill that is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the people of Ammon. Can you imagine? King Solomon, David's son, built a temple for Molech. This is the one that they burned their children in his big brass belly in Canaan, when Joshua had to go in and exterminate them, men, women, children, animals, total extermination, because they were so hopelessly corrupt.

He did likewise for all his foreign wives, verse 8, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods. So the Lord became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the Lord God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods. But he did not keep what the Lord had commanded.

Calvinists, take note. God himself can appear personally to someone and give them a stern command, and free will can choose another way. So, background.

Turn back now to the Song of Solomon, and if you have had a chance to get a hold of this document I've got here, which is sort of an extended printing of the text with space out to the side for notes. I figure you might not have enough room in the margin of your Bible, so you can mark this up. And I've made some notes there, but I want to show the symmetry.

I have only put comments in the first half of the book. So of the seven sections, the first and last sections are highlighted in yellow. The text is highlighted in yellow.

The second section is green. The third section is blue, and the center critical middle of the chiasm is purple. It's in honor of my daughter's alma mater.

She likes purple, so I put the most important part in purple. After that it's going to come back out, and you'll see blue, green, and then yellow. Make sense? So you can hopefully draw some additional connections.

I do not have time, space, opportunity, or need to show all of the parallels. I just want to show enough to establish that our interpretation of the book is a valid one, is a solid one, and is a meaningful one. So what we're going to do is see that in the second half of the book, the

Shulamite princess wakes up, and that purple section in the middle, when she goes out looking for Solomon, and he is not to be found, and she is slapped around and abused by the watchman, and she issues her warning to the daughters of Jerusalem.

I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved, you tell him I am sick from love. This is going to be bracketed by and surrounded by these warnings to the daughters of Jerusalem to not stir up or awaken love to the point that it makes a purpose out of you. You can allure, you can entice, you can make yourself an objective, and we've seen this over the course of our study.

But I want to point out the contrast in the second half of the book that is largely symmetrical. So when you look at the left-hand side there, and this is chapter one, verse two and three, if you only have your Bible, you can still see this, only your Bible, Bible is more than sufficient. But chapter one, verses two and three, let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for your love, masculine singular, that's Solomon, is better than wine.

Your anointing oils are fragrant. Your name is oil poured out. Therefore virgins love you.

Draw me after you, let us run. This is her initial invitation to Solomon as she comes in and the king brings her into his chambers there in verse four. And the king says, we will exalt and rejoice in you.

We will extol your love more than wine. She says, rightly do the virgins love you that she mentioned up in verse three. And then she goes on to say, I'm dark, but lovely O daughters of Jerusalem.

But look over on the right-hand side. This is from chapter eight, make haste and a good literal translation of the verb that's translated, make haste. This is the very last verse in the book.

This is the one I didn't cover last time. And I heard about it. So I want to be sure and and get it fully covered here tonight.

This is the last thing she says, make haste my beloved and be like a gazelle or a young stag on the mountains of spices. And this sounds like, oh, come on, Solomon, you know, have your way with me. That's not what she's saying consistently throughout the book.

When she is talking about herself and when Solomon is talking about her, the metaphors and the descriptions of in noun choices, I'm not saying there aren't some plurals, but they are largely singular. We've talked about this many times. She's the lily of the valley.

She's the rose of Sharon. She has a garden singular. Watch that as we go through, because she says, let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth.

This is one-on-one man, leaving father and mother and cleaving to his wife. And the two are one

flesh. Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth.

The kiss is symbolic of the union of one man and one woman. She's a girl. He's a guy.

Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. That's the ideal. That's how the book begins.

Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. That's the way it should be. How does the book conclude? Flee my beloved and be like a gazelle or a young stag on the mountains of spices.

We're going to see consistently through the book that when Solomon ought to be in the house, he ought to be in the bedchamber. He ought to be spending good quality alone time with his wife, with the Shulamite. He is instead in the wilderness.

He is in the mountains. He is outside the house. He is in the gardens, plural.

He is in the plurality of places. We just read in 1 Kings, Solomon's woman problem. He just keeps multiplying them.

So the king brought me singular verse four into his chambers. We will exalt and rejoice in you singular. We will extol your love more than wine.

This is Solomon's talk. You're my O A O. You're my one and only. But look at verse 13 of chapter eight.

He says, Oh, you, this is Solomon talking. Oh, you feminine singular who dwell in the gardens with companions listening for your voice. Let me hear it.

By the end of the book, she's not in the chamber. She's not in the palace. She's not looking for Solomon anymore.

Now she's dwelling in the gardens and she has found other companionship, other companions who will listen to her voice. And Solomon says, why don't I hear your voice anymore? Let me hear your voice. Well, Solomon's missed his chance.

That's why she has gone to the gardens and her companions. She's she has found solace in in the company of others. This isn't physical solace.

She's not she's not stepping out on him, but she has now cultivated a circle of good friends because Solomon isn't there for companionship, for intimacy. Some of the symmetry that you see in the book, as you go down to verse six and she says, oh, you daughters of Jerusalem, don't be staring at me because I'm not lovely because the son has looked upon me. My mother's sons were angry with me.

If they're her mother's sons, what are they to her? Brothers. And she is to them sister. Very important.

Sister. She says they made me keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard I have not kept. I was I was employed.

I was used by my it's like David taking care of the sheep for his father and his brothers. It's like Joseph, who went out to take care of his brothers and take them cheese and such from his father. Take them food.

David does this. Joseph does this. Both of them are foreshadowing of Christ.

And notice in 811 in the right hand column, Solomon had a vineyard. He let out the vineyard to keepers. So Solomon has a vineyard.

Others are hired to be keepers of it. She is an experienced vineyard keeper. You see it in chapter one.

And so she says at the end of the book in 811 and 12, my vineyard, my very own is before me. Initially, she didn't have a vineyard of her own to keep. Now she does have one to keep by the end of the book.

Vineyard is the place where the grapes grow. This is metaphorical for the personal sweetness and enjoyment that an individual has. You can be a male and have a vineyard.

You can be a female and have a vineyard. This is where enjoyment is had and shared. God is going to talk about Israel as his vineyard that he hedges about and keeps it for his own.

And there is supposed to be covenant love exchanged in the vineyard. What happens when that is compromised? You end up having grapes of wrath and the grapes are going to be crushed. You have the vineyard being trampled down and destroyed through lack of faithfulness.

So Solomon has a vineyard representative of his capacity for sharing and enjoyment and intimate relationship, covenant relationship with the Shulamite. But he has let out this vineyard to keepers. It's he's not tending it himself and he isn't sharing it with the Shulamite.

She says, I've got a vineyard verse 12 of chapter eight of my own and I'm keeping it. I am not any longer going to share my intimacy and my covenant loyalty with Solomon. You see the contrast here in chapter one and chapter eight.

And notice he says in verse eight, if you do not know, oh, most beautiful among women following the tracks of the flock, he says, she says, where you who my soul loves, where do you pasture your flock? Where do you make it lie down at noon? Why should I be like one who veils herself besides the flocks of your companions? Where are you with your flock? It's it's another metaphor similar to the vineyard. Why should I have to go veil myself and sit around with your companions to share conversation, to hear the news, to to have converse? Where are you and your flocks? And he says, well, if you don't know, follow in the tracks of the flock and pasture your young goats

beside the shepherd's tents. And he goes on and he says, well, if you want to if you want to spend time with me and intimacy with me, you've got to go out in the field.

You've got to go out where the flocks are. And this is the first hint of trouble. Because it is the house, it is the household, it is the chambers, it is the dining chamber, it is the inner chamber, it is the bed chamber where this intimate relationship is to be cultivated, to be nurtured.

This is quality time spent with each other. Instead, he says, well, if you want to spend time around my flocks, follow the track of the flocks, because I'm out with all of the others who are out in the fields wandering, looking for grazing and so on. It's an outdoor thing.

It's a it's a wandering thing. I'm not stuck in the house. I'm out and about.

And he doesn't say you who my soul loves. Where do you pasture your flock? And he says, you don't need to know that because I'll come back. I'll come in.

I'll I will find you. I will be there for you. He says, well, you'll just have to follow the tracks and see where I am.

Then you can be with me is the idea. And you'll notice that I've put out beside that chapter eight, verses eight through 10. We have a little sister and she has no breasts.

What shall we do for our sister on the day when she is spoken for? If she is a wall, we will build on her a battlement of silver. If she is a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar. She goes on to say, I was a wall and my breasts are like towers.

I was in his eyes as one who finds peace. Notice the contrast. She in the whole first part of the book is in the palace.

She's in the chambers. She is looking out the windows. She's waiting in bed for him.

He is always outside. And she says, look, I'm not a wanderer. The Shulamite in this entire eight chapter book is never pictured wandering the hills.

He invites her. He says, oh, come with me. Let's go see what's happening.

Let's let's see what's what's out beyond the horizon. She's ready for a marriage that is stable and is centered in the home. So you have the contrast of this.

It's one thing about a wall and a city that's inside a wall. It doesn't move around. It's not like pastors and flocks and tents.

It's stable. Solomon is already showing up as movable and transient. So that's why I've got that contrast there.

And you see her stability in chapter eight, her fixedness, her defenses, vis-a-vis Solomon, who is out with the flocks and the other shepherds. Well, that's your first page. That's chapter one.

Notice my beloved is to me in verse 14, a cluster of blossoms in the vineyards of Engedi. But chapter eight, verse 12, my vineyard, my very own is before me. You owe Solomon.

Keep your thousand coins and the keepers of your vineyards. You and your vineyard keepers can basically take your money and go, is what she says. You see the contrast.

She was hoping that he was going to be her vineyard and she was going to be his vineyard. But already. Well, at the end, you can clearly see that she's given up on that hope.

So at the beginning, my beloved is a cluster of blossoms in the vineyard at the end. Now I've got my own vineyard, Solomon, you and your vineyard keepers can head on out at the beginning. She is in the palace.

And you remember, she says the king has brought me into his chambers back in verse four and now in the chambers for 16 and 17. Solomon says, oh, you're beautiful, my beloved. Our couch is green.

The beams of our house are cedar. Our rafters are our pine or whatever kind of wood you think that is. But notice in chapter eight, verse 13, she's not dwelling in that house anymore.

She's not going to sit there alone waiting for a Solomon who never comes. Nor is she going to head anymore out into the streets and look for him and get slapped around. So where does she dwell in verse 13 when Solomon calls to her chapter eight, verse 13 to the right there on your second page? Oh, you who dwell in the gardens.

She's got a garden. A cottage that she's moved out to, you know, Solomon's. Palatial estate was huge and filled with all kinds of things.

But but by chapter eight, she has moved out of the palace and she's got a cottage in the gardens and it's her own place and she's got her own separate establishment. She has basically separated from Solomon by chapter eight, verse 13. She says, Solomon, you got vineyards, you got keepers.

Have at it. I'm in the garden. And he says, you who are, quote, or parentheses now dwelling in the gardens, let me hear your voice.

I came home and you weren't here patiently waiting, even though I was gone all these weeks and months. Well, chapter two, verse one again, we've noted this and I put singular in the right hand column there on your page to she says, I am a rose, the rose of Sharon. I am a lily singular of the valley.

He says, that's right. You're a lily among brambles. So is my love among you.

There's nobody like you. Well. There's nobody like her until the next one comes along, and you can see to the right a little ways down there, chapter eight, verse five, who is that coming up from the wilderness leaning on her beloved under the apple tree.

I awakened you there. Your mother was in labor with you there. She who bore you brought you forth was in labor.

Chapter eight, verse five. And that apple tree notice over in chapter two, verse three, as an apple tree among the trees of the forest. So as my beloved among the young men with great delight, I sat in his shadow and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

But notice, and I put it in red because chapter eight, verse five reinforces what's at the center of the chiasm and what is repeatedly given as a warning to the daughters of Jerusalem. Do not awaken love until it makes you its purpose, its objective. And she says to Solomon, you know what? I awakened you under the apple tree.

There was desire. There was pleasure. I awakened you.

That's where your mother was in labor with you. That's where she who bore you was in labor. And this, of course, is Bathsheba.

And that whole episode comes back. That's what Bathsheba is famous for is, however, inadvertently awakening love in David until he made her his purpose. And that purpose involved a lot of bad behavior.

And so she says, I adjure you, daughters of Jerusalem, do not stir up or awaken love until it makes you a hapets, until it develops a purpose. And you see that parallel to seven. His left hand is under my head.

His right hand embraces me. Same thing in eight, three and four. And following eight, four, you have that eight, five.

I made the mistake of awakening you. Now, why should she have known that was a mistake? We already know that there are 60 queens and 80 concubines, right? Turn with me. Well, actually, I'm going to pause here and take our break.

But there are warning signs. This phase of Solomon's departure from the Lord had already started. And when he has an evil heart departing from the Lord, we know what that leads to.

Vertical relationship diminishes, weakens and gets sidetracked. So do horizontal. Our love for one another, our commitments and our covenant obligations in the horizontal plane are no stronger than all of those things between ourselves and the Lord.

You cannot be truly faithful and truly a blessing and a constant stable. Fixture in the life of someone with whom you have a covenant relationship or an organization that for which you work or any other association, a church, a ministry, the vertical faithfulness and obedience to God has to come first. Solomon's waned.

And that's the reason his horizontal relationships began to multiply and deteriorate. Remember it said when Solomon was old at the beginning, he just married these women who came from places that he and he wasn't supposed to marry them, but he ended up building temples for their gods in his old age. And it was a decline.

It was a descent. It was a downward spiral. And the older he got, the worse it got.

Well, the same thing happens because he did not return to the Lord. David made many grievous mistakes, including Bathsheba, but he repented. He was a man after God's own heart.

And he was, he was after it in the sense that he pursued after God's heart and he kept returning and kept repenting and kept trying to be the man that he was at first. And he did not, even after his catastrophic mistakes, he didn't go into a downward spiral. Solomon does.

So this is something that if the Shulamite had not been so dazzled and so flattered, she could have and should have taken it into account. And she says as much in this book, daughters don't stir this thing up and it makes you a purpose. The unspoken portion of that is you need to be looking at a couple of key things before you enter into this type of relationship.

And we're going to see what those are. When we come back from the break, we're going to be actually looking at a, at a contrasting situation in the book of the Bible that is directly related to this book in a kind of a unique way. So let's pause here and take our break.

When we come back, we're going to see the second half of this and wrap up our study.