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*God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.*

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## Song of Solomon 5.

(2014)

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The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises

But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

***Teach it, don't demand it.***

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## Song of Solomon 5.

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**INTRODUCTION:** the following introduction is quite long, but it does help understand the Song of Solomon, for those who are only interested in the actual chapter skip this section and scroll down to Song of Solomon chapter one. According to the most common interpretation, the Song of Solomon is a collection of love poems. It is possible that Solomon (tenth century B.C.) is the author (1:1). However, this verse could mean that the Song was dedicated to Solomon or was written about him, so many scholars regard the book as anonymous nevertheless it is a very intimate and romantic story of a man's love for a woman and a woman's love for the man. The focus of the Song of Solomon is that love is the same whether it is between: -

- A man and a woman or a husband and wife.
- God and Israel or Christ and the church.

For this reason the Song of Solomon can be about: -

- Solomon and the woman he loved.
- The relationship between God and Israel.
- The relationship between Christ and the church.

**She:** could refer to a woman, Judah or the church.

**He:** could refer to Solomon, a king or Christ and God.

**The others:** could refer to, friends, Israel or the world.

**The daughters of Jerusalem:** normally refer to Judah or the holy and faithful ones.

The primary focus is an intimate love story between a king and a dark skinned Shulammitte woman, that is evident, but the king can also be seen as an echo of Christ's love for those who belong to him (the church) while the woman represents those who love Christ (the church) expressing their love for him. It is this aspect of the Song of Solomon that this study will focus on, but this is certainly not a dogmatic study or the only interpretation, but hopefully will inspire the reader to seek for even greater detail and their own insights. The following verses show the great love Christ has for the church: -

- Paul wrote: Christ loved the church and gave himself for it. (Ephes. 5:25).
- Jesus said: greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends. (John 15:13).
- Paul stated: for no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church. (Ephes. 5:29).

**The global church:** don't make the mistake of limiting the church to only the established religious institutions, denominations or church buildings. Certainly they are part of the body of Christ but they are not the only part. There are many individual Christians in all countries of the world who meet in coffee bars, social outings and mostly their own homes to give thanks to Christ and share their discoveries of God's word and their spiritual experiences with the Lord. Many of these people are helping others and simply manifesting the reality of their faith to the people that come into their lives.

God is not limited to any one pattern or religious organisation; He is far too creative for that. Jesus church is global and is manifested in a vast variety of ways across the face of the earth. Remember the word church does not embrace everyone simply because they confess to be Christians, when the Bible uses the word

church in its true sense it has in mind those who belong to Christ and who do the will of his Father. Jesus summed up the will of God in his command to all his followers in the words, "Love your neighbour as yourself," (Mark 12:31). James the brother of Jesus refers to this command as, the royal law (James 2:8). This is because it means do-good to others and not harm and because Jesus himself said, "All the law regarding mankind is summed up in the words love your neighbour as yourself," (Rom. 13:9) (Gal. 5:14).

Those who deliberately harm or use people, especially those who belong to Christ for their own selfish gain and greed, sexually, financially, verbally, emotionally, mentally or spiritually are referred to by Christ as workers of iniquity and will be cast out from the eternal Kingdom (Matt. 7:21-23).

Not everyone who confesses to know Christ is part of his church there are those in the Lord's present spiritual Kingdom who he calls wicked servants. They use his name and his Gospel for their own selfish gain and line their own greedy pockets with the wealth and riches of this world by making merchandise of those who do belong to him. Nevertheless Jesus knows those who are his and those who are not and will deny those who use his message of grace, mercy, compassion and love for their own selfish gain from entering his eternal Kingdom. Jesus said: -

- I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, but you do not believe because you are not part of my flock. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. (John 10:14) (John 10:26-27).

In the following study when the word, church is used in Scripture it not only applies to all the faithful members of a religious organisation and a local church building but also embraces all the faithful worldwide who Jesus loves and who he knows belongs to him and his global family. Before reading the Song of Solomon it is important to understand that many of the Old Testament prophecies regarding Israel include the New Testament Gentiles who accept Christ.

This is because under the New Testament covenant of grace God is creating one new nation in Christ called the church which is made up of Jews and Gentiles (Gentiles are everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew). All the promises to Israel are now in Christ which means they include both the Jews and the Gentiles. In this new nation God is creating in the Lord Jesus Christ Old Testament Israel is equal with the Gentiles.

The apostle Paul in his letters wrote: -

- Gentiles were separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus they have been brought to God by the blood of Christ. Jesus has made Jews and Gentiles both one by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances so that Jesus might create in himself one new man (nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles). In Jesus both Jews and Gentiles are being built together into a dwelling place called the church for God by the Spirit. (Ephesians. 2:1-22 abbreviated).

This means that all the future and eternal promises God made to Israel through the Old Testament prophets also apply to those who belong to Christ and in the beautifully written love story recorded in the Song of Solomon it means that the love the king has for the dark skinned Shulamite woman is the same love Christ has for those who faithfully follow him. The book of Revelation states: -

- When Christ returns everyone will see him (the Gentiles) and those who pierced him (the Jews). And tells us, Jesus the faithful witness and the ruler of kings on earth loves us (Jews and Gentiles), freed us from our sins by his blood and ransomed a people for God from every tribe (Jews) and language and people and nation (Gentiles) to be a kingdom and priests to God and they and will reign on the earth (Revelation 1:5-10).

**FOR INFORMATION:** concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

**The Gospel of Christ can be seen through this Chapter.**

Verse one is a continuation of the last part of the last verse of the previous chapter in which the woman said, "Let my beloved come to his garden, and eat its choicest fruits," and now the king is responding to her invite.

Song 5:1 ----- <sup>1</sup>I came to my garden, my sister, my bride, I gathered my myrrh with my spice, I ate my honeycomb with my honey, I drank my wine with my milk. Eat, friends, drink, and be drunk with love!

In a literal sense the Shulammitte woman may have been a distant half-sister of King Solomon which would explain the expression, "My sister my bride", but on a figurative level the word bride means to complete or make perfect, so in these verses a faint echo can be seen of those who are made complete by their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Whoever trusts in Christ belongs to the family of God and is therefore called Jesus brothers and sisters and when they are viewed collectively they are referred to as his bride which is the faithful church.

In the previous chapter the woman invited the king into her garden and he went. Now he is telling his friends to be merry because he has been to his lover's garden and it was beautiful. The symbolism is of Christ coming to the Jews and Gentiles (his garden) and they accepting him and fellowshiped with him and he with them, because of this he is full of joy and encourages his friends (the faithful) to enjoy the goodness of each-others company in love.

The woman speaks.

Song 5:2 ----- <sup>2</sup>I slept, but my heart was awake. A sound! My beloved (the king) is knocking. "Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my perfect one, for my head is wet with dew, my locks with the drops of the night."

The woman was lying awake in her bed when the king, soaking wet from riding all night arrived at her door and calls for her to open it. The symbolism is of a spiritual door being opened, the people of God were spiritually asleep, but their heart was ready to be made alive. Christ came in these spiritually dark and troublesome times, and the people responded. Then for three and a half years the Lord proclaimed the Good News of the Gospel as recorded throughout the New Testament.

The woman is still speaking.

Song 5:3 ----- <sup>3</sup>I had put off my garment; how could I put it on? I had bathed my feet; how could I soil them?

The woman had bathed and put off her dirty garment and did not want to put it back on. The symbolism is of repentance and water baptism. The Jews that heard the Gospel of grace and had forsaken the Old Testament ceremonial rites, holy days, feasts, sacrifices and all their religious customs and traditions and the Gentiles who accepted Christ and been water baptised feel spiritually clean and wonder how they can go back to their old life, habits and ways and get dirty again.

The woman is still speaking.

Song 5:4-5 ----- <sup>4</sup>My beloved put his hand to the latch, and my heart was thrilled within me. <sup>5</sup>I arose to open to my beloved, and my hands dripped with myrrh, my fingers with liquid myrrh, on the handles of the bolt.

The woman hears the king begin to open the door and she (covered with perfume) races to open the door with her heart overflowing with joy and great excitement and expectation in seeing her lover and king. The symbolism is of the faithful (Jews and Gentiles) in God's Kingdom being clothed with Christ's righteousness (the perfume) waiting with great expectation and excitement for Christ to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth.

The woman is still speaking.

Song 5:6 ----- <sup>6</sup>I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had turned and gone. My soul failed me when he spoke. I sought him, but found him not; I called him, but he gave no answer.

What a huge disappointment for the woman, she was devastated her excitement and expectations were crushed. The symbolism is of Christ taken and crucified and the hopes and expectations of the faithful church being shattered and completely crushed. They expected their King to establish his Kingdom, but he is gone and they are left devastated and confused and all their hopes for God's Kingdom being established on earth were utterly gone.

It is interesting to notice that in verse five the woman's hands are spoken of as being covered with liquid myrrh. Figuratively myrrh speaks of bitterness, the king had been telling the woman how valuable and beautiful she is to him and how much he loves her and now he is gone which of course echoes Christ intimately walking with the apostles and his disciples proclaiming the Good News of the Gospel and of God's love and then having to leave the ones he loves to be crucified.

The woman is still speaking.

Song 5:7 ----- <sup>7</sup>The watchmen found me as they went about the city; they beat me, bruised me, they took away my veil, those watchmen of the walls (of Jerusalem) (v8).

The guards of the city beat the woman, probably because they now considered her a loose woman because she had slept with her lover and now he was gone. The symbolism is of persecution, after Christ's crucifixion the religious leaders (the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes) in the city of Jerusalem aggressively set about to destroy the church (the woman) and anyone who confessed to follow Christ. They had the Roman soldiers who were under their authority beat them, tortured them and cast them into prisons.

The woman is still speaking.

Song 5:8 ----- <sup>8</sup>I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved, that you tell him I am sick with love.

The woman cries and pleads to her friends she asks them if they see her lover to tell him she is weak and full of grief and yearning with love. Daughters of Jerusalem refer to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and by extension all who belong to God and to Christ. The symbolism is of the apostles and disciples returning to their homes full of grief and shattered love, the King they had set their love and hope upon is gone.

The inhabitants of Jerusalem speak to the woman.

Song 5:9 ----- <sup>9</sup>What is your beloved more than another beloved, O most beautiful among women? What is your beloved more than another beloved, that you thus adjure us?

This woman is the most beautiful woman amongst woman, she could have any lover she desired she is so beautiful. The inhabitants of Jerusalem cannot understand what makes this lover of hers so special when she could have any lover she chose so they ask her, "Why does she so passionately plead for her lover, what makes him more valuable than any other lover?" The symbolism is of course the faithful church crying after Christ, for them there is no other, he is their only desire and their only King and Saviour.

The woman is now speaking.

Song 5:10-16 ----- <sup>10</sup>My beloved is radiant and ruddy, distinguished among ten thousand. <sup>11</sup>His head is the finest gold; his locks are wavy, black as a raven. <sup>12</sup>His eyes are like doves beside streams of water, bathed in milk, sitting beside a full pool. <sup>13</sup>His cheeks are like beds of spices, mounds of sweet-smelling herbs. His lips are lilies, dripping liquid myrrh. <sup>14</sup>His arms are

rods of gold, set with jewels. His body is polished ivory, bedecked with sapphires. <sup>15</sup>His legs are alabaster columns, set on bases of gold. His appearance is like Lebanon, choice as the cedars. <sup>16</sup>His mouth is most sweet, and he is altogether desirable. This is my beloved and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

The woman answers the inhabitants of Jerusalem question, "What makes her lover more valuable than any other?" By telling them that he is perfect in every way there is no other that can match his love and his beauty. The symbolism is of Christ the Son of God. For every faithful brother and sister in his global Kingdom there is no other King or Saviour that can match his glory and his love. Their confession is the same as the woman in this song, "This is my beloved and this is my friend."

Jesus said: -

- Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends. (John 15:13).

Jesus laid his life down that we might be called his friends, the faithful who belong to his global family are Jesus friends and he is their friend, they are also his brothers and sisters by adoption into God's Kingdom and when viewed collectively are referred to as his bride. This is why throughout this poetic song the king in different contexts refers to the woman he loves as his lover, his sister and his bride.

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End.