**Typology in the Song of Songs,**

***Song 1:1 ¶ The song of songs, which is Solomon's.***

*1Ki 4:32 And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five.*

*2Sa 12:24 And David comforted Bathsheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon: and the LORD loved him.*

After David's adultery with Bathsheba and murder of her husband Uriah the Hittite, King David married Bathsheba, Solomon was born who was to inherit the throne of Israel.

*2Sa 12:24 And David comforted Bathsheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon: and the LORD loved him. 25 And he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet; and he called his name Jedidiah, because of the LORD.*

Sh@lomoh, shel-o-mo' (peaceful)

Y@diyd@yah, yed-ee-deh-yaw' beloved of Jah {Jedidiah: that is, Beloved of the LORD}

Solomon's accession to the throne, his prayer to God for wisdom, his great wealth, his building of the temple, his prayer of dedication of the temple, and God's response, his reknown, as well as his later falling away---are recorded in (I Kings 3:5-15) I Kings 1-11 and 2 Chronicles 1-9.   
 *1Ki 4:29 ¶ And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore. 30 And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. 31 For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about. 32 And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. 33 And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. 34 And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.*

***Song 1:1 ¶ The song of songs, which is Solomon's.***

1. The Song of Solomon is the Revelation of Christ and His Bride revealed by the Holy Ghost.

God loves His only Son and has called out, and is preparing for him, a beautiful, virgin bride, "without spot or wrinkle," (Ephesians 5:23-32). This type is illustrated in Genesis 24. Abraham's servant (type of the Holy Spirit) was sent by Abraham (type of the Father), into the far country to secure Rebekah as wife for his beloved Son, Isaac, (type of Christ). (Jn. 17:22-24)

In the Gospels discipleship is pictured as preparation and training by which the disciples learn from the Lord.

The New Testament gives us thorough instruction of discipleship.

How we are to walk with God.

Discipleship in the New Testament is "discipline"---we learn and are trained by those more experienced and more mature than we are, we sharpen one another.

*Pr 27:17 ¶ Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.*

We hold one another accountable. There is emphasis on attitude, motives, emotions and behavior.

*Song 1:8 If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents.*

*Song 3:4 It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.*  
The Song of Solomon gives us an "interior," experiential, view of discipleship. Here we have the story of an intimate relationship. Love is all important (1 Corinthians 13) The Church at Ephesus was warned by the Lord to return to the first principles of love. Rev.2:1-7

In the Song emotions are very important, motives are of prime concern, absence of guile, and purity of heart means everything. At every phrase our "sanctified heart" allows us to bring to mind various scriptures that reflect the growth of the relationship between the overcoming believer and the Lord.

*2Co 11:2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.*  
 Understanding the meaning is given by the same Holy Spirit who inspired the rest of the Bible.

*2Ti 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:*

The name of God is not mentioned in the Song. The principal characters are Solomon, the King in Jerusalem, the Shulamite maiden, and the Daughters of Jerusalem, ladies of the royal court.

It is not always clear from the English whether Solomon or Shulamite is speaking, but this can be determined by looking up the Hebrew pronouns and by studying many of the Hebrew words by means of a Lexicon or Bible dictionary.

**Chapter One**

**The Shulamite speaking:**

***Song 1:2 ¶ Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine.*  
  
O that he would kiss me with the kisses of his mouth!**

**"kiss" here means intimacy. Compare other uses of** [**"kiss"**](http://ldolphin.org/ssong.shtml#anchorx) **in Scripture. The story begin with the Shulamite maiden seeking a more intimate relationship with Solomon who she knows at this point only from afar. This corresponds to the first step of a believer who finds himself or herself discontented with a nominal Christian life and begins to long for deeper communion with the Lord.**

**For your love is better than wine,**

1. A Song of Love

This is a Love Song of Christ and His Bride

Divine The Bridegroom is Jesus and He is expressing Himself.

Maiden The Bride is in love with Jesus and His Word and she responds with true expressions.

1. A Love Song--(deep expression- true love-real love)

The words of the Bridegroom are revealed by the Spirit.

2. The response of the young maiden.

* 1. Let **Him** Kiss me

“Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth:”

The Bride never mentions the name of the Bridegroom but describes Him as

O thou whom my soul loveth

Her Beloved and the King

1). Let Him

She has a singleness of eye

kiss- The seal of a Close Relationship single eye- can’t see any one else

True Love has a single eye- she is totally separated from the world

Vs.2 “ Let him”

1:2 “for thy love”

1:7 “Whom my soul loveth” *embraced by only Him*

She has one love and there is no other that has her attention.

She is totally committed to Him.

*Note: He will not embrace you while you embrace the world.*

God is a jealous God and He wants you for Himself.

### Talk about the one you love

God is looking for an expression from her that He is it.

The first-The last-and He is the only one.

b. Let Him kiss **me**

her lover is absent and she has an inner longing for Him

The great love of the maiden and the expression of her desire.

The cry of the soul:

## Oh to be in His presence

To be near Him

To feel His embrace in your soul

## Though Jesus is absent from us yet He is near at hand

Ps. 110:1; Acts 2:33; 7:55-56; Eph. 1:20; Col.3:1

Mark 16

19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the **right hand** of God.

Hebrews 1

3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the **right hand** of the Majesty on high;

Hebrews 8

1 Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the **right hand** of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

Hebrews 10

12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the **right hand** of God;

Hebrews 12

2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the **right hand** of the throne of God.

The touch of His presence totally satisfies our needs.

Burdens? Trial?

Pressure? Torment?

Problems?

He kisses away all our troubles and our problems.

Get closer to Him.

3. The kisses of His mouth

a. Let Him **kiss** me

The love, in the song of her lover, expressed to her, in the fact that she so desired His kisses.

Psalms 2

12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Do you know what the kisses mean in the bible?

1.) The kiss of Reconciliation

Those that were separated from their family setting, when they came back they received a kiss and restores us into fellowship.

2 Samuel 14

33 So Joab came to the king, and told him: and when he had called for Absalom, he came to the king, and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king: and the king **kissed** Absalom.

Lu 15:20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and **kissed** him.

Lu 15:24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

2.) Kiss of Acceptance

He accepts us as we accept Him.

3) Kiss of an Expression of Real Love.

The Spirit of God touching our lives, the Graces of God being made manifest in our hearts.

* 1. Song 1:2 ¶ Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth:

The expression of real love, real intimate feelings.

Living and moving with Him in the Spirit.- a relm most do not understand.

1.) Demands a close relationship to Him.

To receive the kisses of the Lord you have got to be close.

Nothing demands our attention as much as Jesus.

Re 2:4 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

An expression among foreigners ---to kiss their own hand.

**IT’S NOT** THE BRIDE IT IS THE **BRIDEGROOM**

## The Song of Deep love.

#### Song 1:2 ¶ Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: --- for thy love is better than wine.

1. The Tokens of His love --- better than wine

The Wine is a Type of prosperity and of all desirable things

1. The many things that He shares
2. The many things that He gives.

Php 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

## The expression reveals the Excellence of His Love.

In wine we have the expression of **joy**

Acts 2:18

Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

Eph 5:18

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

a. His love brings Joy

His love cheers us.

His love strengthens us for coming trials and as His Bride.

His love excels all Joy.

Ne 8:10 Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength.

b. His love brings Pleasure

Ps 16:11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

1. His love brings Strength.
2. The Purpose of His Love.

a. It is necessary for us to have His love that we may Express real love.

1Jo 4:19 We love him, because he first loved us.

John 14:21,23

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

THIS IS NOT A NATURAL EXPERIENCE

THIS IS A TIME IN THE SPIRIT WHERE FOOD LOOSES IT’S ATTRACTION AND TIME IS LOST.

The Bride is calling out to Him, but He is calling out to her. She is not where she should be, and He is drawing and calling her. He is making overtures to her. Let us get our cup filled not with wine, but with His love.

Matthew 5:6 They that hunger and thirst… [a *craving* in our heart]

Psalms 42

1 As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.

The Bride is going to thirst after Him. She is not going to thirst after all the things He could give, but Him—His love, His presence—are better than wine.

God wants to manifest Himself in us and through us in a measure that this old world has never seen before.

How much of His presence do you have?

If you have enough to be satisfied than you do not have enough—WE NEED MORE.

**Is all that we have a ‘church affair’?**

Are we only satisfying the natural and glorifying the flesh and not glorifying God?

### DRAW NEAR TO HIM

Let Him develop His love in our hearts so that we can really love Him the way we ought to love Him.

**There are 200 references to wine in OT and NT. Wine pictures "earthly joy." The pronoun "you" is masculine and "love" is plural in Hebrew. The maiden recognizes that the joys of more intimate relationship with Jesus far outweigh any fading joy or pleasures the world has to offer.**

**your anointing oils are fragrant,**

**Oil a frequent symbol of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit conveys the fragrance of Christ into the believer as the Christian walks in an intimate relationship with the Lord. "But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumph, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?" (2 Cor. 2:14-16)**

**your name is oil poured out;**

**A "name" [shem] implies authority of the person who bears it. When we sign our name to a check or to a contract we authorize a transaction in our authority. "...And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12) Old poured over the head of the king or High Priest signified anointing and empowerment from God for an office.  
  
"For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name is great among the nations, and in every place incense is offered to my name, and a pure offering; for my name is great among the nations, says the LORD of hosts." (Malachi 1:11)**

**therefore the maidens love you.**

**Watchman Nee suggests that here the "maidens" [almah] signify, in type, "other believers." The Hebrew word usually means "virgin maidens." All true believers are justified by faith, but not all are interested in a deep walk with God. Not all wish to leave a state of spiritual infancy to pursue the deeper things of God.**

**Draw me after you. let us make haste.**

**James says, "Draw near to God and he will draw near to you." This is wonderful unconditional promise of Scripture telling us that if we take the first step to draw near to God, God will without fail draw near to us.**

**The king has brought me into his chambers.**

**[cheder = inner chamber]. In immediate response to the maiden's heart-felt request, the king brings her into his inner chambers---the place of intimate communion and fellowship. Ray Stedman once said, "God has many intimates, but no favorites." The Shulamite represents the ordinary believer in Christ who desires a more intimate walk with God. In order to achieve this, one first draws near to God in prayer, giving up the other loves (such as the love of the world) in the process.  
  
An old acrostic for Faith is Forsaking All I Take Him. We can not claim the close fellowship symbolized by the royal courts and inner chamber of the king if we cling to the idolatrous lusts of the world. Spiritual adultery and worldliness are the bane of our generation. "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If any one loves the world, love for the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever." (I John 2:15-17) James, the brother of Jesus is even stronger in his rebuke, "You adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God." (James 4:4)**

**We will exult and rejoice in you;   
we will extol your love more than wine;   
rightly do they love you.**

**[meyshar = uprightly] It is because of who He really is---in His humanity and in His Deity---that Jesus is the most worthy object of our love, devotion, service, and worship in all the universe. By faith the maiden and countless others have discovered that the love of Jesus is far better than wine (earthly joy).**

**I am very dark, but comely, O daughters of Jerusalem,**

**[Qedar = dark], [naveh = beautiful, comely]. Catching a glimpse of the Bridegroom in His magnificence causes us to be immediately aware of our own plainness and lowly background. How can this ordinary Bedouin girl hope to attain to the stature worthy of the royal palace of the King?  
  
Hannah---and later Mary the Mother of Jesus, (see Luke 1:46-55)---would give special praise to the God who raises the poor from obscurity, and reduces the self-important to nothingness: "My heart exults in the LORD; my strength is exalted in the LORD. My mouth derides my enemies, because I rejoice in thy salvation. There is none holy like the LORD, there is none besides thee; there is no rock like our God. Talk no more so very proudly, let not arrogance come from your mouth; for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. The bows of the mighty are broken, but the feeble gird on strength. Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, but those who were hungry have ceased to hunger. The barren has borne seven, but she who has many children is forlorn. The LORD kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up. The LORD makes poor and makes rich; he brings low, he also exalts. He raises up the poor from the dust; he lifts the needy from the ash heap, to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor. For the pillars of the earth are the LORD'S, and on them he has set the world. He will guard the feet of his faithful ones; but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness; for not by might shall a man prevail. The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; against them he will thunder in heaven. The LORD will judge the ends of the earth; he will give strength to his king, and exalt the power of his anointed." (1 Samuel 2:1-10)**

**like the tents of Kedar, like the curtains of Solomon**

**[ohel = tabernacle, a nomad's tent] Speaking to the other maidens (the daughters of Jerusalem) Shulamite reflects on her plain background. Her simple natural beauty is however without adornment or pedigree.   
  
The curtains seem to reflect the curtains of the tabernacle and temple which symbolize the righteousness of Christ with which He covers us. Boaz is a type of Christ who takes a gentile bride, covering her with his protection, "And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then she [Ruth] came softly, and uncovered his feet, and lay down. At midnight the man was startled, and turned over, and behold, a woman lay at his feet! He said, 'Who are you?' And she answered, 'I am Ruth, your maidservant; spread your skirt over your maidservant, for you are next of kin.' And he said, 'May you be blessed by the LORD, my daughter; you have made this last kindness greater than the first, in that you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, do not fear, I will do for you all that you ask, for all my fellow townsmen know that you are a woman of worth.'" (Ruth 3:7-11) Ray Stedman's overview of** [**Ruth: The Romance of Redemption.**](http://www.pbc.org/dp/stedman/adventure/0208.html) **is helpful here.**

**Do not gaze at me because I am swarthy,  
because the sun has scorched me.**

**Life in the desert sun scorches and darkens the skin. Glimpsing Jesus, "the Sun of Righteousness" is an overwhelming encounter which makes us deeply conscious of our own deficiencies and unworthiness. Shulamite exhibits a virtuous natural modesty of a type that is fast disappearing in our modern world.**

**My mother's sons were angry with me,   
they made me keepers of the vineyards;   
but, my own vineyard I have not kept!**

**The Shulamite maiden's first encounter with the King has caused her to realize how unfulfilled her spiritual life has been to date. Her own "brothers" (another picture of fellow-believers in the family of God) have arbitrarily assigned her to tending their vineyards, however as yet she has no sense of her own ministry or her own special vineyard. This is often the situation of a new believer who must be assigned, sometimes arbitrarily, to ministries in the church until he and she begins to long for a call from God and the assignment of a life-work. Shulamite's longing for this is now awakened. She inquires of the King,**

**Tell me, you whom my soul loves,   
where you pasture your flock,   
where you make it lie down at noon;   
for why should I be like one who wanders  
beside the flocks of your companions?**

**Shulamite's appeal is to the Chief Shepherd Himself. Where is He to be found tending His flock? How can she align herself with the center of his will (noon-time)? Why should she wander without a sense of personal ministry and life-work aimlessly in and around the flocks of the Chief Shepherd's undershepherds?**

**Solomon:  
  
If you do not know,   
O fairest among women,   
follow in the tracks of the flock, and pasture your kids  
beside the shepherds' tents.**

**First, Solomon addresses the maiden as "fairest among women" indicating that she is fair, lovely, pure and beautiful in His sight. This is one of the wonderful results of our being totally justified before God the moment we first believe. We may not *feel* lovely, worthy, or acceptable in our stumblings, but Jesus each of us a member of His Bride, the true church, "without spot or blemish, or any such thing." Solomon's advice is for her to bring her friends and converts and followers ("your kids") under the watchful care of one of His legitimate shepherds (pastors). "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near." (Heb. 12:23-25)**

**I compare you my love,   
to a mare of Pharaoh's chariots.**

**After offering the compliment, "O fairest among women" Solomon tactfully proceeds to introduce two negative references. The first is to horses and the second to Pharaoh's chariots. Horses were not native to Israel, but came from Egypt and Moses had warned the people against going to war in the style and manner of the nations round about them, "When you come to the land which the LORD your God gives you, and you possess it and dwell in it, and then say, `I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are round about me'; you may indeed set as king over you him whom the LORD your God will choose. One from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not put a foreigner over you, who is not your brother. Only he must not multiply horses for himself, or cause the people to return to Egypt in order to multiply horses, since the LORD has said to you, `You shall never return that way again.' And he shall not multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply for himself silver and gold. And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, from that which is in the charge of the Levitical priests; and it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them; that his heart may not be lifted up above his brethren, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left; so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel." (Deut. 17:14-20)   
  
It seems as if this warning was intended to apply to a specific situation---400 years ahead in time---because Solomon is the very king who multiplied horses greatly, and took 300 wives and 700 concubines. "Solomon also had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen." (I Kings 4:26) Horses symbolize the strength and energy of the flesh, and the Jews were not to reply on Egyptian chariots in waging war. In observing the maiden, the King perceives that Shulamite has not yet to fight spiritual warfare with the divine and superior weaponry of Ephesians 6.**

**Your cheeks are comely with ornaments,   
your neck with strings of jewels.**

**No longer a plain sunburned desert maiden, the king takes note of Shulamite's attractive ornaments and strings of jewels. These indicate spiritual growth and maturation. The strings of jewels about the neck signify repeated wise choices of the will. The use of the** [**"neck"**](http://ldolphin.org/ssong.shtml#anchory) **in other Bible verses to represent the will is made clear from a list of other references to "will" found in the Bible. The cheeks reflect natural beauty. Our natural talents and resources are of no inherent use to God. The "good" side of the flesh represents our attempts to serve God by self effort. If, on the other hand, we allow God to use what we have and what we are, He will gladly do so, and He will embellish us in the process, adding to and enlarging our natural gifts.** [**Spiritual gifts**](http://ldolphin.org/Spgifts.html) **are also given to every believer.**

**We will make you ornaments of gold,   
studded with silver.**

**The King now announces that ornaments of gold, (indicating the mark of God's ownership and Deity), and of silver (symbol of redemption) will be fashioned to further mark the Shulamite as a maiden chosen by God for the royal palace.  
  
In thinking of weddings, in our western culture the bride gets all the attention, and her father foots the bill. The groom is merely an accessory nervously appearing late in the show in an ordinary black and white rented penguin suit from the local tuxedo store. Eastern weddings feature the Groom more prominently. However no wedding would be a good match if the Groom brought all the assets and the poor Bride had none.   
  
Yet this is the situation of the church as the elected Bride of Christ. All the resources are His to begin with. The Holy Spirit must win her from her previous fallen state of being lost in sin, cleanse her life, and equip her with a wedding dowry. (See the illustration of this principle in Ezekiel Chapter 16---referring to Israel as the wife of Yahweh and her lowly origins and lack of pedigree). On the wedding date the Bride of Christ will in fact be presented whole and complete. "...Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish." (Eph. 5:25-27) This is made even more clear by the Apostle John at the end of the book of the Revelation: "Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure"--for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." (Rev. 19:7-9)  
An Interlude of unknown duration now follows. When the story resumes Solomon and Shulamite are in the intimate chambers of love in the palace.**

**Shulamite:  
  
While the king was on his couch,   
my nard  
gave forth its fragrance.**

**Spikenard is an odoriferous aromatic plant from India. References in the Song to herbs and spices indicates the sweet fragrances of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. These are released only as we are crushed and broken in spirit, and as we die to self.  
  
"Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at table with him. Mary took a pound of costly ointment of pure nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was to betray him), said, 'Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii [a year's wages] and given to the poor?' This he said, not that he cared for the poor but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box he used to take what was put into it. Jesus said, 'Let her alone, let her keep it for the day of my burial. The poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me.'" (John 12:1-8)**

**My beloved is to me a bag of myrrh,   
that lies between my breasts.**

**Myrrh is a very expensive Arabian gum from the bark of a tree, used in sacred oil and perfume, symbol of suffering. The Wise men who came to Bethlehem brought gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh to the newborn Messiah, (Mt. 2:11). On the cross Jesus was offered wine mingled with myrrh, (Mark 15:23). To prepare the body of Jesus, "Nicodemus also, who had at first come to him by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds' weight." (John 19:39)   
Suffering love is to be found throughout the Bible. Not only did Jesus suffer beyond our comprehension in order to redeem us, all of his followers are called to suffer also. "Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church..." (Col. 1:24) "Do not be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel in the power of God..." (2 Tim. 1:8) "...if one suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but under that name let him glorify God." (1 Peter 4:16)**

**My beloved is to me a cluster of henna blossoms  
in the vineyards of Engedi.**

**Engedi is the desert oasis, a favorite place of King David, located in a steep Wadi with rushing water that runs from the wilderness of Judea down to the Dead Sea. It is a popular wilderness preserve today. (Eshkol ha'kopher, henna-flowers, are also the source of a popular reddish-brown, sweet-smelling hair dye used in the Middle East.) Shulamite expresses the beauty of her Beloved in terms of fragrant blossoms and the image of a lush oasis in the dry desert.**

**http://ldolphin.org/grapes.gif**

**Solomon:  
  
Behold, you are beautiful, my love;   
behold you are beautiful; your eyes are doves.**

**"The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is not sound, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!" (Matt. 6:22-23) In contrast with eyes that reflect a pure heart, Peter speaks of false teachers as having "eyes full of adultery that can not cease from sin." The dove symbolizes purity.**

**Shulamite:  
  
Behold, you are beautiful, my beloved, truly lovely.**

**Here is a beautiful illustration of the encouragement God brings us by His Holy Spirit, who is our Strengthener, our Comforter. The Scriptures are also given to us for this same purpose, "All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." (2 Tim 3:16-17) "For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope." (Romans 15:4).**

**Our couch is green;**

**[raanan = luxuriant, fresh, green] The greenness of the couch, made from freshly-gathered boughs and branches signifies a new (or a renewed) relationship, in its springtime. "The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want; he makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul..." (Psalm 23:1-3)   
  
It should not be necessary to mention the implicit holiness and purity of the lovers' relationship in Canticles. There is no hint of lust or covetousness or of spiritual uncleanness of defilement in their relationship. "Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for God will judge the immoral and adulterous." (Hebrews 13:4). Does the Song of Solomon apply, then, only to married couples and not to single men and women? Certainly not, for the analogy of normal, monogamous, heterosexual marriage is applied to the nature of the relationship of Christ with His church in Ephesians 4, and the church is made up of boys and girls, single as well as married, widowed and divorced, young and old. Neither is it necessary to be married to be a complete person. Colossians 2:10 says clearly, "you are complete in Him, who is the head of all rule and authority." In** [**Yin, Yang, the Tao, and Wholeness**](http://ldolphin.org/YinYang.shtml) **I have attempted to discuss the inner wholeness of each individual in Christ which is the goal of the process of sanctification in every individual believer.   
  
The issue of sexual purity whether single or married is of paramount importance in our generation. Secular, indeed pagan standards of immorality have inundated the church. Two messages by Ray Stedman which address this issue forthrightly are** [**True Human Potential, (Col. 3)**](http://ldolphin.org/4027.html) **and** [**Sexuality and Wholeness (1 Thess. 4).**](http://ldolphin.org/sexrcs.html) **Amazingly, same-sex "marriages" are even featured on the Saturday newspaper religion pages these days. It should be clear from the archetypal images of the Song of Solomon (as well as from countless other scriptures) that marriage covenants are between one man and one woman. There can be no such thing as a gay or Lesbian wedding "marriage." See** [**Aberrant Sexuality in the Bible**](http://ldolphin.org/Aberrant.html) **and** [**Jesus and the homosexual.**](http://ldolphin.org/Homo.shtml)

**the beams of our house are cedar,   
our rafters are pine.**

**The house of the Bride and Bridegroom is built of two kinds of wood. Strong cedar beams form the supports and beams, softer pine (probably Phoenician Juniper) is used for the paneling and lesser structural members. The cedar referred to is the well-known cedar of Lebanon used in the Temple. "Wood" in the Bible typifies "humanity." A marriage relationship consists of two human beings (one man and one woman) being joined to each other so as to become "one flesh." A new house, a new relationship, in which both contribute in equal measure is the result. The word "house" is plural, but used in a singular sense. An extended dwelling---gardens, orchards and other dwelling places are all "home" for the lovers. "In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also." (John 14:2-3)**

**http://ldolphin.org/pline.jpg**

**Chapter Two**

**Shulamite:  
  
2. I am a rose of Sharon,   
a lily of the valleys.**

**No chapter break should have been inserted here. The old hymn which says, "He's the lily of the valleys, the bright and morning star," referring to Christ, is probably taken from this verse. However it is Shulamite who is speaking. The rose here is probably the sea daffodil, or "lily of the coast," and the lily in the next phrase a variety of narcissus.**

**Solomon:  
  
As a lily among brambles,   
so is my love among maidens.**

**Yet a third variety of narcissus seems to be mentioned here. Shulamite's beauty---because of her pursuit of spirituality and intimacy with her Lord---stands out from the other maidens as a lily in a patch of thorns. The term "my love" is plural in Hebrew. Our Lord Jesus does not have only one believer in all the world with whom he enjoys this intimate relationship. All believers are welcome to enter into that class of intimacy that the Shulamite typifies. In the eyes of the world, God's intimate friends are obscure, unknown, unimportant. To God they are all exquisite flowers in the midst of the brier patch of the world. "...Others suffered mocking and scourging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword; they went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, ill-treated---*of whom the world was not worthy*---wandering over deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had foreseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect." (Hebrews 11:36-40)**

**Shulamite:  
  
As an apple tree among the trees of the wood,   
so is my beloved among the sons.**

**The fruit here is probably the citron, not our common apple. The leaves do not fall off in winter, and the fruit looks like a pomegranate but tastes like a lemony tangerine. Shulamite notes that her Beloved stands out as unique among all the trees of the forest, and among all the sons of Adam. Trees in the Bible are pictures of manhood, as for example in Psalm 1, "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. The wicked are not so, but are like chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish."**

**With great delight I sat in his shadow,   
and his fruit was sweet to my taste.**

**Watchman Nee notes that the term "with great delight" may be rendered as rapture or ecstatic delight. Jesus as the Tree of Life offers shade (protection) and bountifully spiritual nourishment accompanied by delightful fellowship.**

**He brought me to the banqueting house,   
and his banner over me was love.**

**The flying of a banner signifies possession. The banqueting house is "the house of wine," i.e., the house of joy and gladness. "Having, therefore, experienced an initial dedication and having been taken through a deeper experience of the Cross, there is a fuller realization of all that the Lord has wrought for her and made available to her..." (Nee) A great feast accompanies the gathering of all believers in heaven, (see** [**The Coming Marriage Feast of Jesus Christ),**](http://ldolphin.org/Msup.html) **"I tell you, many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth." (Matthew 8:11, 12) "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms; provide yourselves with purses that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Let your loins be girded and your lamps burning, and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the marriage feast, so that they may open to him at once when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes; truly, I say to you, he will gird himself and have them sit at table, and he will come and serve them. If he comes in the second watch, or in the third, and finds them so, blessed are those servants!" (Luke 12:32-38)**

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**Incidentally, Proverbs 7 gives us a description of the counterfeit to this picture of the banqueting house of a godly marriage and/or a pure love relationship between the believer and the Lord, uncompromised by spiritual or physical adultery. In Proverbs Lady Wisdom pictures redeemed femininity. The father then warns his son in Proverbs (a book also attributed largely by Solomon)---of the seductive snares of the harlot. There are two symbolic women in the Bible---antithetical to one another---the harlot and the bride. There are two cities in the Bible which represent the same contrasts of the true and false church, Mystery Babylon the Great, and the New Jerusalem.**

**Sustain me with raisins,   
refresh me with apples;   
for I am sick with love.**

**Intense emotional experiences with the Lord, "mountain-top" awareness of the splendor and majesty of God such as one experiences at a retreat or conference usually are followed by a return to the reality of the valley of shadows below. The result is often "lovesickness." Emotions have perhaps been overwhelmed, the mind, imagination and world-view stretched to the limits. The return to the reality of daily living "in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation" leaves us in need of special sustenance, of grace, and the undergirding of God's watchful care. Recovery from "lovesickness" requires rest as well as the strengthening spiritual foods represented by raisins and apples.**

**O that his left hand were under my head,   
and that his right hand embraced me!   
  
I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,   
by the gazelles or the hinds of the field,   
that you stir not up nor awaken love  
until it please.**

**Hinds and gazelle are swift footed animals and indicate that love, (and also sexual desire), when awakened, intensify and easily push us further than we intended to go. Two extremes exist in the spiritual life. One is the extreme of legalism, traditionalism, mindless ritual and dead orthodoxy. The other danger is excessive emotionalism and the seeking-after of religious experience as an end in itself. The latter leads to deceptive and even false spiritual realities. Unless the believer stays grounded in the Word and in the mundane world, he or she can easily be side-tracked from a balanced walk of faith. Shulamite warns her companions to not stir up nor awaken love until the proper time and place. The advice of this verse is repeated in 3:5 and 8:4.   
  
"Falling in love" as an experience of young lovers has a certain innocence and beauty about it, but seldom do the lovers see one another clearly. Time and further interaction are necessary for them to withdraw their projections on each other and to discover what they really have in common. When an unaware person, who does not know himself or herself very well, first discovers the opposite sex, or first experiences a real dose of the grace of God, the resulting awakening in the unconscious can be accompanied by powerful projections onto others. Carl Jung's goal in his approach to psychology was what he called "Individuation." My close friend Kenny Ammann has compared Jung's concept with Biblical wholeness in a paper prepared for a Stanford psychology class** [**Individuation and the Biblical Concept of Wholeness.**](http://ldolphin.org/individ.html) **"...the aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith." (I Timothy 1:5)  
  
It is now a season of rest in the story of Solomon and Shulamite. An interlude of time of unknown duration follows before the narrative continues. "The summary of the first part of the Song is this: First in the opening section she sees the value of the cross, but not the full reality of the life of resurrection nor the power of it. Second, the peril of the first phase is that of being over-indulgent in a form of inward communion which leaves her exhausted. Third, submission to the cross and the true meaning of dedication with its proper application to life is still unknown to her. Since there has been no real proving of her, she has not yet actually taken up the cross. She still has not walked far enough in that way which brings the testing of the cross. Fourth, still another peril is that she only realizes as yet how precious the Lord has been to her. In other words, she has only been on the receiving end of the fruits of the Lord's labor on her behalf, but has not allowed the Lord to claim the fruits of His labor in her. That is, she has the Lord, but the Lord has not yet gained all of her." (Nee, p40)**

**Shulamite:  
  
The voice of my beloved!   
Behold, he comes, leaping upon the mountains,   
bounding over the hills.**

**Our natural tendency is self-centeredness, maintaining the status quo and living life out of a sense of merely following duty and obligation. We need to hear the call of our Lord to venture forth so that we can be stretched by the exercise of faith once again. Ray Stedman says, "resurrection power...is different; it is not like any other power. It isn't the power of a strong personality nor of an educated mind. It isn't the power of a good family background nor of money nor numbers nor leadership ability. It is the power that raised Christ from the dead, that is able to bring life out of death. What does that mean in practical terms? Well, it means, as I have often said, that it works best in a cemetery. If you are living in a cemetery, if everything is dead and dull and lifeless around you---try resurrection power. That is what it is for. It means that this power takes no notice at all of obstacles, just as Jesus rose from the dead, paying no attention to the stone, to the decrees of Caesar, to the fulminations of the Jewish priests, nor to the guard in front of the tomb. Resurrection power doesn't pay any attention to obstacles. It just surges on ahead, leaves the problems up to God, and goes on. It means that resurrection power requires no outside support. It doesn't rely upon someone else, nor upon something else. It doesn't need a vote of confidence. It doesn't require any kind of undergirding expressions of support from anybody. It can operate alone, completely alone, if necessary. And it means that it makes no noise or display. It doesn't try to arrest attention by some publicity stunt. It just works quietly and, without any noise, effects its transformation, brings life out of death." (Ray C. Stedman, Messages on Ephesians)**

**My beloved is like a gazelle, or a young stag.**

**The swiftness of the gazelle or the young stag leaping upon the mountains pictures not only the vitality of youth and adventure, but is a perfect symbol of the abundant life Jesus offers all who follow Him. "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." (John 10:10) God is not much interested in religion, but rather in real life. "'I do not reprove you for your sacrifices; your burnt offerings are continually before me. I will accept no bull from your house, nor he-goat from your folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the air, and all that moves in the field is mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell you; for the world and all that is in it is mine. Do I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and pay your vows to the Most High; and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me...' 'Mark this, then, you who forget God, lest I rend, and there be none to deliver! He who brings thanksgiving as his sacrifice honors me; to him who orders his way aright I will show the salvation of God!'" (Psalm 50:8-23)**

**Behold, there he stands behind our wall,   
gazing in at the windows, looking through the lattice.**

**The words "window" and "lattice" are plural in Hebrew. The wall stands for the believer's separation from the world. "Do not be mismated with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and iniquity? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, 'I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.'" (2 Cor. 6:14-18) It is springtime, spiritually speaking. In Christian life we all experiences dry and fallow times, and we all endure barren winters. "Times of refreshing" (Acts 3:19) and renewal are however sent to us from the Lord.  
  
We are creatures of habit, falling easily into comfortable routines. Shulamite speaks of "our wall" indicating she wants to have her safe, protected, sheltered private relationship with God. The wall of separation from the world has also become a wall insulating her from the hurts and pains of the world. God is very much involved in the world, and He does so in fresh new ways. Either we respond to his call and venture forth with Him, or we shall be left out altogether.**

**My beloved speaks and says to me:   
  
'Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away;   
for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.**

**"Winter" represents those seasons of withdrawal from the world, of introspection and non-involvement. The winter rains (rain symbolizes the grace of God) prepare the land for the greening of springtime.**

**The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come,   
and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.**

**"Land" is the Hebrew "erets." The King, speaking to his Beloved mentions "our Land," suggesting especially the Holy Land. Symbolically, "the land" is the believer's sphere of influence, the garden which needs our tending and care. Adam was appointed husbandman and keeper of the garden God planted for him and for Eve "eastward in Eden." In the Song of Solomon it is the woman who undertakes the care and upkeep of the gardens which exist for the king's enjoyment.**

**The fig tree puts forth its figs,   
and the vines are in blossom; they give forth fragrance.   
Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.**

**How responsive are we to the call of God to leave our comfortable world of self-centeredness, comfort and safety? To stay behind is to lose a God-given opportunity forever. "Be instant in season and out of season," Paul advises Timothy.**

**http://ldolphin.org/dove.gif**

**O my dove, in the clefts of the rock,   
in the covert of the cliff,   
let me see your face, let me hear your voice,   
for your voice is sweet, and your face is comely.**

**When Moses was on Mount Sinai receiving the Law He asked God if he, Moses, could see the face of God. "Moses said, 'I pray thee, show me thy glory.' And he said, 'I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you my name "The LORD"; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. But,' he said, 'you cannot see my face; for man shall not see me and live.' And the LORD said, "Behold, there is a place by me where you shall stand upon the rock; and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by; then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen." (Exodus 33:18-23)  
  
"For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known." (John 1:18-19) In the New Testament Paul tells us how it is that by faith we look into the face of Jesus and are transformed into His likeness, "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit." (2 Cor. 3:16-18)  
  
Here in the Song of Solomon, the roles are reversed. It is the Bridegroom who longs to see the face and hear the voice of His Bride while they sojourn in the mountains. In the course of the story, the Bride becomes more like the Bridegroom---she is transformed by her times with him. That is exactly how it is with us as believers. We are destined to be conformed to his likeness. However, in the Song, Solomon is also changed by his relationship with the maiden. He acquires many of the Bride's fine qualities and becomes like her. An evenly balanced marriage is one in which each partner contributes towards the emerging wholeness of the other. One-sided marriages, though common today, are sad.  
The "cleft in the rock," or the "rock which was cleft" speaks of the cross. We are hidden in the rock while judgment passes over the world, as Noah and his family were hidden in the Ark. There are approximately 100 references to God as our rock, a verse by verse study is very profitable. "The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold." (Psalm 18:2)---is one example. To be "in the rock" is to be identified with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection. In our early Christian experience we focus on what Christ has done and can do for us. We think little about His own interests in the world. Further dying to self is required of us to see this. "But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as refuse, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own, based on law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith; that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own." (Philippians 3:7-12)**

**Catch us the foxes, the little foxes  
that spoil the vineyards,   
for our vineyards are in blossom.'**

**One special concern in the care of the garden is the mischief and havoc wrought by the "little foxes" that trample the green shoots of the vines and ruin the orchard. It is easy to see that the "little foxes" represent the "small" sins in our lives, the little white lies, the small minor cheating we do, the "insignificant" lusts and selfish pleasures we pursue that grieve the Holy Spirit and threaten to ruin the whole vineyard unless caught and dealt with. "But if we judged ourselves truly, we should not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are chastened so that we may not be condemned along with the world." (1 Cor. 11:31-32)  
  
"Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one sinner destroys much good. Dead flies make the perfumer's ointment give off an evil odor; so a little folly outweighs wisdom and honor." (Eccles. 9:18-10:1)**

**Shulamite:  
  
My beloved is mine and I am his,   
he pastures his flock among the lilies.**

**At the beginning of their relationship Shulamite had no unique ministry and calling of her own. She had asked the Chief Shepherd where He could be found tending his flocks, (1:7) at noontime. He directed her at that time to "follow in the footsteps of the flock," that is to place herself and her converts ("her kids") under the care of an undershepherd in a local assembly. AS Shulamite's spiritual experience deepens she now reveals to us that she knows full well how to find the Chief Shepherd and where it is He may be found tending his flocks. As a result of her venturing-forth from her self-centered routines, she has been able to take part in the work of God in the world. The experience of Christians who volunteer for missions projects around the world always return with new excitement about what God is doing in the world. God's work is not reported in the daily newspapers, nor are God's special servants noticed or recognized by the world. "We [apostles] are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad and buffeted and homeless, and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become, and are now, as the refuse of the world, the offscouring of all things." (1 Cor. 4:10-13)**

**Until the day breathes and the shadows flee,   
turn, my beloved, be like a gazelle,   
or a young stag upon rugged mountains.**

**"Night" refers to the time when Jesus the Lord, the "Sun of Righteousness" is visible absent from the earth. He rules over the universe now from heaven, but He does not yet reign on the earth. Thus it is that we pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven..." The approaching of Dawn signifies the coming of the Lord Jesus in power and splendor. "And we have the prophetic word made more sure. You will do well to pay attention to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts." (2 Peter 1:19). Until Christ returns His presence and power are with us by the enablements of the indwelling Holy Spirit. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age."   
  
An interlude of unknown duration now follows. The next visit of the King will challenge the Shulamite to become involved in a self-giving way in the chief interests of His, out in the world. God's heart of love and compassion is ever on the lost but few are willing to join him in his main concerns. "Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work. Do you not say, "There are yet four months, then comes the harvest"? I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see how the fields are already white for harvest. He who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together.'" (John 4:34-36)**

**http://ldolphin.org/pline.jpg**

**Chapter Three**

**Shulamite:  
  
3. Upon my bed by night,   
I sought him whom my soul loves;   
I sought him, but found him not;   
I called him, but he gave no answer.**

**It is night. (The Hebrew is plural, "nights," indicating many nights.) The king is absent from the royal palace. The darkness, fears, troubles, anxieties and cares of the world press in upon the Shulamite. She longs for the visible comfort and personal presence of her Beloved. All Christians at times have seasons when they feel abandoned by God, alone and forsaken. This is not the actual reality for Jesus has said, "I will never [ever] fail your nor forsake you." Yet when we feel emotionally unsupported, or when our fears mount we usually panic and begin to act upon our doubts and fears. Shulamite does that now. Her calls for her Beloved go unheeded.   
  
Our Lord understands even more completely than we can the feeling of abandonment by God. As Psalm 22 and the gospels reveal, Jesus was actually forsaken by God because He had been made sin for us. The Father turned His face from Him so that He died utterly alone. No one who knows Jesus as Lord will ever suffer this degree of estrangement from God!   
  
"What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not also give us all things with him? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies; who is to condemn? Is it Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, 'For thy sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.' No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8:31-39)**

**'I will rise now and go about the city,   
in the streets and in the squares;   
I will seek him whom my soul loves.'**

**Rising from one's place of rest in fear and panic means reverting to the flesh, to self-effort. It is a departure from a life of "resting in Christ" which marks the walk of those who have entered Canaan land and who know what is called God's** [**"rest."**](http://ldolphin.org/Rest.html)

**I sought him, but found him not.   
The watchmen found me,   
as they went about in the city.**

**It is inappropriate for the experienced, more mature believer who has known the Lord deeply for sometime to rush out into the public streets asking where the Lord may be found. She of all people should know better than anyone! The "watchman" on the walls are the soldiers and guards of the king who protect the city and palace by night. Ezekiel (3:17) and Hosea (9:8) are specifically named as watchmen over Israel for the Lord. The Lord, however is the true protector of his people, "Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain." (Psalm 127:1) In Christian experience we do have watchmen in the church who look out for us, "Obey [be persuaded by] your leaders and submit to them; for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account. Let them do this joyfully, and not sadly, for that would be of no advantage to you." (Heb. 13:7)**

**'Have you seen him whom my soul loves?'**

**Fortunately this test of Shulamite's faith is short-lived. The same test, more severe next time, begins in 5:2. Though slightly delayed, this time the answer to her prayers comes promptly. (For delays in answers to prayers, Daniel 10 offers some insights).**

**Scarcely had I passed them,   
when I found him whom my soul loves.   
I held him, and would not let him go  
until I had brought him into my mother's house,   
and into the chamber of her that conceived me.**

**In ordinary human relationships it is easy to become dependent upon a friend or our spouse to the point where we cling or seek to manipulate, possess, or control the other. This easily becomes idolatry because we put another person ahead of God in our desires to have a tangible person meeting all our needs and helping us every step of the way. It is also selfish for us to violate the freedom and integrity of the other person by demanding of them what we should be seeking from God.  
  
Having found again her Beloved, Shulamite determines that He shall not leave her again. Her more complete surrender to him is symbolized by the phrase, "until I had brought him into my mother's house and into the chamber of her that conceived her." Women know more about motherhood and femininity than men do. They are emotionally deeper than men. For a man, masculinity is born out of an underlying sea of femininity. This is true of the embryo in a mother's womb since all fetuses begin as female. Male hormones override female hormones in males producing sexual differentiation. In childhood, boys must reach out and bond with the same sex: with fathers, brothers, uncles, etc. Girls do not need to break their identity bonds with their mothers to such a degree. In marriage, men can rediscover again the lost secrets of femininity, though it is risky to do so. For a woman to own, possess, manipulate, and control a man places his fragile male ego at risk. We say that such men are still "tied to their mother's apron strings" or that they "need to cut the umbilical cord." Though Freud's concept of the Oedipal Complex is secular, there is truth in the archetypal model of the missing father and the son who never grows up. I have attempted to discuss this complex theme in** [**Aberrant Sexuality in the Bible**](http://ldolphin.org/Aberrant.html)

**I adjure you by the gazelles or the hinds of the field,   
that you stir not up nor awaken love  
until it please.**

**For the second time, Shulamite warns her fellow pilgrims on the pathways of faith about the dangers of excessive love and emotional overload. Neither can we put a Sovereign God in a box of our own making. He will not be so contained. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:8, 9) See** [**A Prayer to The Ordinary God**](http://ldolphin.org/quotes.shtml) **on my "Favorite Quotations page.  
  
Another interlude follows. Watchman Nee says of this division in the Song, "This concludes another section. It brings her to revel in His presence and to hold Him with great energy, yet still in a state of imperfection. The Lord, we see, is still in a passive state in relation to her. A period of time must now elapse while she is at this stage of development in her spiritual affections...In Part 3 we immediately perceive an unprecedented progress. Both her life and her manner of living had obviously risen to a new and higher level." (p62-65) Nee notes that this is now the time of her first real union with the Lord.**

**Daughters of Jerusalem:  
  
What is that coming up from the wilderness,   
like a column of smoke,**

**"The wilderness" signifies the wanderings of Israel for forty years after the Exodus from Egypt and prior to their entry into the promised land under Joshua and Caleb. The Daughters of Jerusalem take note of a great wedding procession of the king returning to Jerusalem. Exodus 13:21-22 says, "And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night; the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people."**

**perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,**

**Frankincense is a costly white resin burned as fragrant incense and used in compounding the holy incense used in the Tabernacle and later in the Temple in Jerusalem. "Incense" in the Bible is a type of prayer, (Rev. 5:8, 8:3). Myrrh again depicts suffering love.   
  
"...another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer; and he was given much incense to mingle with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar before the throne; and the smoke of the incense rose with the prayers of the saints from the hand of the angel before God. Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth; and there were peals of thunder, voices, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake." Revelation 8:3-5)**

**with all the fragrant powders of the merchant?**

**"But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumph, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things? For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word; but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ." (2 Cor. 2:14-17)**

**Behold, it is the palanquin of Solomon!**

**A palanquin, mattah, is an enclosed litter borne on poles. It is a sort of sedan chair or couch with curtains.**

**About it are sixty mighty men of the mighty men of Israel,   
all girt with swords and expert in war,   
each with his sword at his thigh, against alarms by night.**

**Here is the first reference to the soldiers and fighting men of Solomon's court. There are sixty of them and all are armed and experienced, especially against "alarms by night." King David's "mighty men" of valor are described in 2 Samuel 23. We have a foreview in these select military men, Jesus the Captain of the Armies of the Lord and a company of men and women of faith in every generation who serve at his side. They are experienced veterans of spiritual warfare. "The LORD is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him. The LORD is a man of war; the LORD is his name." (Exodus 15:2-3) The forces of the Lord of Hosts also include the** [**angels.**](http://ldolphin.org/gangels.html) **In this procession Solomon and Shulamite are now dwelling in union together in perfect rest. "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." (Matthew 11:28-29)**

**King Solomon made himself a palanquin  
from the wood of Lebanon.   
He made its posts of silver, its back of gold, its seat of purple;   
it was lovingly wrought within by the daughters of Jerusalem.**

**Solomon's sedan chair, or portable throne, features the workmanship of the Daughters of Jerusalem. This illustrates the nurturing, sheltering, supporting, and helping role God originally gave to Eve, but which is characteristic of the Church as the Bride of Christ. Gold symbolizing deity, silver for redemption and purple for royalty are mentioned. God Himself has a portable chariot-throne, described for us in Ezekiel 1.**

**Go forth, O daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon,   
with the crown with which is mother crowned him  
on the day of his wedding,   
on the day of gladness of his heart.**

**Why should Solomon's *mother* crown him on his wedding day? This seems like a strange custom at first. However Moses says, "Therefore (for the cause of marriage) a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh." (Gen. 2:24). A man's deeper ties are to his own mother and must be renounced. No marriage will succeed if mothers-in-law attempt to control, manipulate of dominate. Solomon's mother here relinquishes her natural rights to her son. He is now without question "his own man" and set free to belong to his Bride completely without conflicting loyalties.**

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**The symbolic use of "mother" as a type is brought out in one of the few allegories in the Bible. "Now this is an allegory: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. For it is written, 'Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and shout, you who are not in travail; for the children of the desolate one are many more than the children of her that is married.' Now we, brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now. But what does the scripture say? 'Cast out the slave and her son; for the son of the slave shall not inherit with the son of the free woman.' So, brethren, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman." (Gal. 4:24-31). Jerusalem above, "the mother of us all," like the woman "Wisdom" in Proverbs, represents nurturing grace. She stands in opposition to the bondage of the world and the law which leads the unwary to Sheol as does the "seductive woman" of Proverbs.  
  
The Daughters of Zion are all invited to the wedding feast. The Parable of the Wise and Foolish virgins (Matthew 25) comes to mind. See** [**The Wise and the Foolish**](http://www.pbc.org/dp/stedman/olivet/oliv11.html) **by Ray C. Stedman.**

**http://ldolphin.org/pline.jpg**

**Chapter Four**

**Solomon:  
  
4. Behold, you are beautiful, my love,   
behold, you are beautiful!   
Your eyes are doves behind your veil.**

**The eyes reveal much about a person. The eyes symbolize spiritual discernment as well, "He who has eyes to see, let him see..." The dove is of course a well-know symbol of (1) the Holy Spirit and (2) peace, and (3) purity in the Bible. The veil symbolizes the fact that the beauty of the Bride is reserved for the eyes of the Bridegroom only, not for the world. "Likewise you wives, be submissive to your husbands, so that some, though they do not obey the word, may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, when they see your reverent and chaste behavior. Let not yours be the outward adorning with braiding of hair, decoration of gold, and wearing of fine clothing, but let it be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable jewel of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious. So once the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves and were submissive to their husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are now her children if you do right and let nothing terrify you." (1 Peter 3:3-6)  
  
"...for the LORD sees not as man sees; man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." (I Sam. 16:7)  
  
Spiritual perceptions and deeper truth are not for the world, nor can such truths be comprehended by the carnal and immature. "Do not give dogs what is holy; and do not throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under foot and turn to attack you." (Matthew 7:6)**

**Your hair is like a flock of goats, moving down the slopes of Gilead.**

**Samson's strength was associated with his long hair and his Nazarite's vow (Numbers 6). Hair then symbolizes spiritual strength and covering.**

**Your teeth are like a flock of shorn of ewes  
that have come up from the washing, all of which bear twins,   
and not one among hem is bereaved.**

**Teeth are not only beautiful but they are necessary for chewing food. New Christians are able only to assimilate "the milk of the word," mature believers can handle the "strong meat of the word." "I fed you with milk, not solid food; for you were not ready for it; and even yet you are not ready...(1 Cor. 3:2); "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need some one to teach you again the first principles of God's word. You need milk, not solid food...But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their faculties trained by practice to distinguish good from evil." (Heb. 5:12-14)**

**Your lips are like a scarlet thread, and your mouth is lovely.**

**The lips are the channel of our speech, expressing what is in our hearts (53 references to the lips may be found in Psalms and Proverbs alone). The scarlet thread speaks of redeemed speech. Pure speech is, of course, a mark of spiritual maturity. The contrast between the unrighteous and the righteous is clear in this regard. Of the unrighteous, "Their throat is an open grave, they use their tongues to deceive." "The venom of asps is under their lips." (Romans 3:13) For believers, "Through him [Jesus] then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name." (Hebrews 13:15) "He that would love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking guile." (1 Peter 3:10)**

**Your cheeks are like halves of a pomegranate  
behind your veil.**

**The pomegranate has luscious red fruit on the inside of its tough leathery outer shell. The fruit of the Spirit in the Christian's life is inward and not related to outward appearance.**

**Your neck is like the tower of David,   
built for an arsenal,**

**The neck in scripture represents the will. When we repeatedly make the wrong choices in life we become weak-willed, and we also come into bondage to sin and lose our discernment. Repeated right choices of the will built character strength which may be likened to a strong tower, [migdal = tower]. "He who is faithful in little is also faithful in much."**

**whereon hang a thousand bucklers,**

**[magen = shield]**

**all of them shields of warrior.   
Your two breasts are like two fawns,   
twins of a gazelle, that feed among the lilies.**

**"Breasts" represent the capacity to feed and nourish others spiritually, as Watchman Nee points out in his commentary. The breast also refers to the seat of the emotions. The Song of Solomon is not prudish about nakedness or about the body. It is also not an erotic nor a pornographic poem. Canticles gives an affirmation of physical, sexual love in marriage. See** [**Sex in Marriage**](http://www.pbc.org/dp/stedman/1corinthians/3586.html) **by Ray C. Stedman.**

**Until the day breathes and the shadows flee,   
I will get me to the mountain of myrrh  
and the hill of frankincense.**

**These verses tell us of the resolve of the Shulamite maiden to maintain a life of faith and prayer, and to endure suffering until the Lord comes. "Besides this you know what hour it is, how it is full time now for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; the night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires." (Romans 13:11-14) "I Jesus have sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star." (Rev. 22:16)**

**Solomon:  
  
You are all fair, my love; there is no flaw in you.**

**Sanctification is a life-long process. For the Lord to look at the believer and find "no flaw" is amazing. The biographies of such godly saints as John Calvin or Martin Luther reveal that individuals whom God has greatly used may sometimes exhibit great faults even to the end of their lives. The visible church usually looks pathetic, weak and beggarly in comparison with the woman described in Song of Solomon. Yet it is the guarantee of the Lord Jesus that His Bride the true church will appear before him on His wedding, "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish." (Ephesians 5:27) Jude's benediction (v 24, 25) affirms this, "Now to him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you without blemish before the presence of his glory with rejoicing, to the only God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen."**

**Come with me from (to) Lebanon, my bride;   
come with me from (to) Lebanon.   
Depart from (to) the peak of Amana,   
from (to) the peak of Senir and Hermon,   
from (to) the dens of lions.   
from (to) the mountains of leopards.**

**http://ldolphin.org/forest.gif**

**It makes more sense for the Bridegroom to call his Bride to journey with him "to" the mountains rather than "from" the mountains. The preposition "min" is usually translated "from" but several commentators (Ref. 2 and 4 for example) agree that these verse make the best sense if the calling is into or to these distant mountain places. Lebanon is to the North of Israel and on the border are the tall peaks of Hermon and Senir. Journeying into the mountains is dangerous because leopards and lions dwell there. "Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking some one to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experience of suffering is required of your brotherhood throughout the world. And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, establish, and strengthen you." (I Peter 4:8-10) In the New Testament spiritual warfare is fought in the heavenly places: "For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 6:12) The fresh mountain air and fragrances of pine and flowers is exhilarating, but there is now also the added danger of spiritual pride and aloofness setting in, perhaps even a disdain for one's fellow believers who seem always to prefer living in the valley below.  
  
"Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false, and does not swear deceitfully. He will receive blessing from the LORD, and vindication from the God of his salvation." (Psalm 24:3-5)**

**You have ravished my heart, my sister, my bride,   
you have ravished my heart with a glance of your eyes,   
with one jewel of your necklace.**

**Amazingly the King finds his companion a match for him. She has power with once glance of her eyes to ravish (greatly stir up) his heart. In the course of the Song of Solomon the man and the woman seem to mature together. Attributes that Shulamite once assigned to Solomon are now hers. Their individual lives remain evenly balanced and they are seen as growing in maturity together. In our individual relationship with Jesus with bring nothing of our own when we pledge ourselves to Him. But immediately the Holy Spirit begins to endow us with a capacity to respond to Him. To our amazement we find that God seeks for and enjoys our companionship. Once again we need to think of the Bride of the Lamb as being endowed day by day with the resources that will make her a fitting Bride for the King of kings. While the first Adam had a single wife, namely Eve, the Bride of the Last Adam is not one woman, but a great company of millions of the redeemed, male and female, "of every tribe and nation" who collectively make up what is called in Scripture "the Bride of Christ."**

**How sweet is your love, my sister, my bride!   
how much better is your love than wine,   
and the fragrance of your oils than any spice!**

**The term "sister" speaks of deeper intimacy. Lovers in a marriage are also friends and also members of the same family. At the beginning of the story it was Solomon's love that was better than wine. His fragrance was superior to the finest oil and spices. Now it is Solomon who says these things about Shulamite's love. From whence did she acquire these characteristics? Obviously this is the working of the same Holy Spirit who has filled the Bridegroom from the beginning. Hebrews 2:11, speaking of the union of the Lord Jesus with His people says, "For he who sanctifies [makes whole] and those who are sanctified [made whole] have all one origin [body]. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brethren."**

**Your lips distill nectar, my bride;   
honey and milk are under your tongue;**

**Honey represents natural sweetness, and the Promised Land was a "land of milk and honey." There is nothing wrong with honey as a type or symbol. Natural sweetness in a believer is a starting place to build upon. "Milk" represents the elementary truth of the Bible, the food for the newborn which quickly establishes them in their faith. "I fed you with milk, not solid food; for you were not ready for it; and even yet you are not ready." (1 Cor. 3:2); "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need some one to teach you again the first principles of God's word. You need milk, not solid food; for every one who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a child." (Heb. 13:12-13) "Like newborn babes, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation; for you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. Come to him, to that living stone, rejected by men but in God's sight chosen and precious; and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 2:2-3)**

**the scent of your garments is like the scent of Lebanon.**

**Shulamite evidently responded to her Lover's call to journey with him to Lebanon because her garments now carry the fresh mountains fragrances of Lebanon.**

**A garden locked is my sister, my bride,   
a garden locked, a fountain sealed.**

**The theme of enclosed oriental gardens, orchards and fruit trees is now developed in the Song, [gan = an enclosed oriental garden], reminding us of the garden of Eden as well as the coming Paradise of God. "Then he showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. There shall no more be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall worship him; they shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads. And night shall be no more; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they shall reign forever and ever." (Rev. 22:1-5)   
  
The garden is locked---it is an oriental walled garden not open to the public, but for the private pleasure and use of the owner. The sealed fountain speaks not only of the pure spring of the water of the Holy Spirit, but of the protected sanctity of the marriage covenant. "Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for God will judge the immoral and adulterous." (Hebrews 13:4)**

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**"My son, be attentive to my wisdom, incline your ear to my understanding; that you may keep discretion, and your lips may guard knowledge. For the lips of a loose woman drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil; but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death; her steps follow the path to Sheol; 6 she does not take heed to the path of life; her ways wander, and she does not know it. And now, O sons, listen to me, and do not depart from the words of my mouth. Keep your way far from her, and do not go near the door of her house; lest you give your honor to others and your years to the merciless; lest strangers take their fill of your strength, and your labors go to the house of an alien; and at the end of your life you groan, when your flesh and body are consumed, and you say, 'How I hated discipline, and my heart despised reproof! I did not listen to the voice of my teachers or incline my ear to my instructors. I was at the point of utter ruin in the assembled congregation.' Drink water from your own cistern, flowing water from your own well. Should your springs be scattered abroad, streams of water in the streets? Let them be for yourself alone, and not for strangers with you. Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth, a lovely hind, a graceful doe. Let her affection fill you at all times with delight, be infatuated always with her love. Why should you be infatuated, my son, with a loose woman and embrace the bosom of an adventuress? For a man's ways are before the eyes of the LORD, and he watches all his paths. The iniquities of the wicked ensnare him, and he is caught in the toils of his sin. He dies for lack of discipline, and because of his great folly he is lost." (Proverbs 5:1-23)**

**Your shoots are an orchard of pomegranates with all choicest fruits,   
henna with nard, nard and saffron,**

**(saffron is an orange-yellow flower of the crocus family, used for flavoring drinks and confections).**

**calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense,   
myrrh and aloes, with all chief spices,**

**What God seeks in the life of every believer is not external performance or an impressive record of achievements and accomplishments, but the inner fruit of the spirit. "...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us have no self-conceit, no provoking of one another, no envy of one another." (Galatians 5:23-26)   
  
Shulamite demonstrates that she has now moved beyond a quest for what God can do for her, to an understanding that God wishes to produce fruit in her life. "As for what was sown on good soil, this is he who hears the word and understands it; he indeed bears fruit, and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty." (Matthew 13:23) The stern warning which opens the 6th Chapter of Hebrews reflects the concern of the Holy Spirit for a group of Christians to move from mere profession of faith into bearing fruit. See** [**The Supreme Need for Fruitbearing**](http://ldolphin.org/misc/0001.html) **by Ray Stedman.**

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**a garden fountain, a well of living water,   
and flowing streams from Lebanon.**

**"On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and proclaimed, 'If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, `Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" (John 7:37-38)**

**Awake, O north wind,   
and come, O south wind!   
Blow upon my garden,   
let its fragrance be wafted abroad.**

**The fragrance of the garden, symbolizing the beauty and winsomeness of the relationship between the Lovers, originating in the sanctity of the garden, is wafted by the Holy Spirit (symbolized by wind) into the world. As 2 Corinthians 2 indicates the fragrance of Christ within the believer brings life unto life" or "death unto death" to all who sense it. One class of non-believers is drawn by the attractiveness and beauty of Christ within us. These people around us are responding to the Holy Spirit and are in the process of being drawn towards a relationship with Christ. The other class of unbelievers finds the scents of heaven repulsive and repugnant. These turn away and head away from the light into greater and greater darkness.**

**Let my beloved come to his garden,   
and eat its choicest fruits.**

**http://ldolphin.org/pline.jpg**

**Chapter Five**

**Solomon:  
  
5. I come to my garden, my sister, my bride,   
I gather my myrrh with my spice,   
I eat my honeycomb with my honey,   
I drink my wine with my milk.   
  
Daughters of Jerusalem:  
  
Eat, O friends, and drink:   
drink deeply, O lovers!**

**http://ldolphin.org/grapes.gif**

**Here follows another interlude in time of unknown duration. The King has "gone" from Jerusalem, possibly on an extended military campaign. In Christian experience God never leaves us, but He often withdraws a sense of His presence to test us. Will we walk by faith, acting upon what He has declared to be true, or will be panic and fall back on emotions or the reasoning of the flesh? New Christians experience lots of feedback from the Lord--He holds our hand as it were while we learn to walk. Later He provides us with less immediate feedback. Severe tests of our faith are often accompanied by a sense that God has completely forsaken us. To a test of this magnitude Job replied, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust him." Habakkuk's severe test of faith brought finally his confession, "Though the fig tree do not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. GOD, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like hinds' feet, he makes me tread upon my high places." (3:17-19)**

**Shulamite:  
  
I slept, but my heart was awake.**

**Shulamite has learned to maintain her walk of faith whether the King is near at hand or far away on a journey. She sleeps and goes about normal activities, but with a wakeful, alert heart. "Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be kindled and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire! But according to his promise we wait for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, since you wait for these, be zealous to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace." (2 Peter 3:11-14)**

**Hark! My beloved is knocking.**

**The arrival of the King is sudden and unannounced. He comes in the middle of the night. "Watch therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the householder had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have watched and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready; for the Son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect." (Mt. 24:42-44)**

**'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 King arrives unexpectedly, in great haste. His head is wet with the dew of night. Evidently he seeks the companionship of His bride on this perilous night journey. "Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, 'Sit here, while I go yonder and pray.' And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, 'My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me.' And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, 'My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.' And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, 'So, could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.' Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, 'My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, thy will be done.' And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. So, leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. Then he came to the disciples and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand.'" (Matthew 26:36-46)  
  
"In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard for his godly fear." (Hebrews 5:7)**

**I had put off my garment, how could I put it on?   
I had bathed my feet, how could I soil them?**

**Just as the disciples of Jesus slept during the Agony of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, so here the Shulamite misses the importance of this sudden visit of the Bridegroom. She is puzzled. Why has He not returned to commune with me in our chambers? She has shed self-righteousness and kept herself pure for the King's return, but instead the reality is the King wishes her to rise immediately and follow him into the place of conflict in the world. She hesitates.**

**My beloved put his hand to the latch,   
and my heart was thrilled within me.**

**Finally, full of anticipation and eager to see her Beloved, she rises to open the door. It is too late. An opportunity to respond in immediate faith has gone forever. Many testings of this type come to all believers. Will we seize opportunities to respond to opportunities that come to us suddenly, opportunities that require not only an immediate response, but a denial of self, and perhaps our creature comforts and habitual ways of doing things? This type of test is brought out in the** [**Parable of the Talents (Matthew 24)**](http://www.pbc.org/dp/stedman/olivet/oliv12.html)

**I arose to open to my beloved, and my hands dripped with myrrh,   
my fingers with liquid myrrh, upon the handles of the bolt.   
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.**

**"Why is God silent? Men cry for help, but God knows that what they are crying for is merely relief, that is all. They want to be taken out of the harmful, painful effects of their selfish ways and then allowed to go right back to being selfish. Nobody is concerned about God's glory and about being taught by God and learning at his hand and at his feet. Rather, they are simply crying out for deliverance, they want to use God, and to that kind of an appeal God is silent. I think this is why our prayers are often unanswered. Our selfishness has produced agony in our life and all we want is to escape the penalty; we are not at all concerned about God himself. And that is one reason for God's silence." (Ray C. Stedman, Commentary on Job)**

**The watchmen found me, as they went about in the city;   
they beat me, they wounded me, they took away my mantle,   
those watchmen of the walls.**

**Shulamite experiences something of the rejection the Lord Jesus felt when He came to His own people Israel and was neither received nor known by the majority. "I am the talk of those who sit in the gate, and the drunkards make songs about me. But as for me, my prayer is to thee, O LORD. At an acceptable time, O God, in the abundance of thy steadfast love answer me. With thy faithful help rescue me from sinking in the mire; let me be delivered from my enemies and from the deep waters. Let not the flood sweep over me, or the deep swallow me up, or the pit close its mouth over me. Answer me, O LORD, for thy steadfast love is good; according to thy abundant mercy, turn to me. Hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in distress, make haste to answer me. Draw near to me, redeem me, set me free because of my enemies! Thou knowest my reproach, and my shame and my dishonor; my foes are all known to thee. Insults have broken my heart, so that I am in despair. I looked for pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." (Psalm 69:12-21)  
  
In this case her lapse of faith and emotional panic was not and could not be understood by the "watchmen" of the city. Her actions were inconsistent with what they had previously known her to be as a pillar of faith in the community. It is common for fellow believers to misunderstand some of the major trials that come to the more mature. We may not receive from others help and compassion, but rather ill-treatment. The problem is hers, and she soon recovers her faith.**

**I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,   
if you find my beloved,   
that you tell him I am sick with love.**

**Love-sickness again! A faltering testimony, wavering faith, doubt and a yielding to emotions. Shulamite has temporarily failed this severe test of her faith and obedience.**

**Daughters of Jerusalem:  
  
What is your beloved more than another beloved,   
O fairest among women?**

**When our confidence in God is lost temporarily, when we vacillate and are filled with doubt and fears, our fellow-believers, especially those less mature than we are, those who look to us as a mentor or role model will likewise question their own faith and the integrity of God. Younger Christians expect the more mature to be steadfast, consistent, unmovable and uncompromising even under the most adverse circumstances or during the more severe trials. "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain." ( I Cor. 15:58-59)**

**What is your beloved more than another beloved,   
that you thus adjure us?**

**The Daughters of Jerusalem express puzzlement. This Lover of yours---how is so superior and worth suffering for? Why should we give our allegiance to Him? Note that the Daughters of Jerusalem do, however, address Shulamite as "fairest among women," an appellation giver her earlier by the King (1:8). The maiden quickly recovers her composure and her faith is restored. Though she has not yet "found" her Beloved, by faith she speaks of her past experience of His grace and presence. "Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today, and forever." Her description of the King is now filled with superlatives. Her description reveals His perfect manhood and maturity. A different set of metaphors and symbols is employed by the Holy Spirit when the wholeness and maturity of Shulamite is described poetically in Chapter 7.**

**Shulamite:  
  
My beloved is all radiant and ruddy, distinguished among ten thousand.   
His head is the finest gold; his locks are wavy, black as a raven.   
His eyes are like doves beside springs of water, bathed in milk, fitly set.   
His cheeks are like beds of spices, yielding fragrance.   
His lips are lilies, distilling liquid myrrh.   
His arms are rounded gold, set with ivory work, encrusted with sapphires.   
His legs are alabaster columns, set upon bases of gold.   
His appearance is like Lebanon, choice as the cedars.   
His speech is most sweet, and he is altogether desirable.**

**In Revelation 1, Jesus in His present state of glory has "hair as white as snow"---"and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden girdle round his breast; his head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters; in his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth issued a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength." (Rev. 1:13-16)   
  
Gold symbols His Deity, hair pictures strength. Godly, righteous men in the church are known as "pillars" in the New Testament, (Galatians 2:9).   
  
The voice of the Lord is sweet, yet like the sound of many waters. "And those who are far off shall come and help to build the temple of the LORD; and you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. And this shall come to pass, if you will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God." (Zechariah 6:15). There are many references to the "voice of the Lord" in the Bible. For example, Psalm 29, "Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Ascribe to the LORD the glory of his name; worship the LORD in holy array. The voice of the LORD is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD, upon many waters. The voice of the LORD is powerful, the voice of the LORD is full of majesty. The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars, the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon. He makes Lebanon to skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox. The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire. The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness, the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh. The voice of the LORD makes the oaks to whirl, and strips the forests bare; and in his temple all cry, 'Glory!' The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; the LORD sits enthroned as king forever. May the LORD give strength to his people! May the LORD bless his people with peace!"  
  
One appearance of** [**The Angel of the Lord**](http://ldolphin.org/AngelL.html) **is given us in the New Testament. This unique angel, clearly the Son of God appearing in human form, is the Captain of the Hosts of the Lord. "Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head, and his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire. He had a little scroll open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the land, and called out with a loud voice, like a lion roaring; when he called out, the seven thunders sounded." (Revelation 10:1-3)**

**This is my beloved and this is my friend,   
O daughters of Jerusalem.**

**In the Old Testament Abraham was called "the friend of God." This is clearly a title reflecting intimacy with God. Moses spoke with God "face to face" on an intimate basis. "Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend." (Exodus 33:11) In the New Testament Jesus opens the doors to all his disciples by henceforth calling them "friends," "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you." (John 15:13-15)**

**http://ldolphin.org/pline.jpg**

**Chapter Six**

**Daughters of Jerusalem:  
  
6. Whither has your beloved gone,   
O fairest among women?   
Whither has your beloved turned   
that we may seek him with you?**

**Shulamite's stirring testimony and description of her Beloved quickly turn the Daughters of Jerusalem from their own doubts and uncertainty. With eagerness they now are ready to seek a more intimate relationship with the King such as Shulamite enjoys.**

**Shulamite:  
  
My beloved has gone down to his garden,   
to the beds of spices,   
to pasture his flock in the gardens,   
and to gather lilies.**

**Where is her Beloved to be found? He is tending his gardens (in the world) and shepherding his flocks. He is gathering lilies. "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, `Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance." (Luke 15:4-7)**

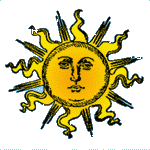
**I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine;   
he pastures his flock among the lilies.   
  
Solomon:  
  
You are beautiful as Tirzah, my love, comely as Jerusalem,   
terrible as an army with banners.   
Turn away your eyes from me, for they disturb me.   
Your hair is like a flock of goats, moving down the slopes of Gilead.   
Your teeth are like a flock of ewes, that have come up from the washing,   
all of them bear twins, not one among them is bereaved.   
Your cheeks are like halves of a pomegranate behind your veil.   
There are sixty queens and eighty concubines,   
and maidens without number.**

**Shulamite has not only attended to the gardens, vineyards, and orchards, but 60 from the Daughters of Jerusalem have chosen to pursue her same path of intimacy with the King, and 80 more young maidens have joined the company of the redeemed. These developments among her fellow pilgrims may be attributed to the willingness of Shulamite to be used of the Lord in drawing others around her into a deeper walk with Him.   
  
Since we know in real life that Solomon departed from a monogamous marriage, and not only had many wives and many concubines, many of which were by no means believers, it is tempting to read back into the Song of Solomon Solomon's subsequent biography. I think this should be avoided. The Song seems to reflect Solomon's' better early years before his spiritual decline began.**

**My dove, my perfect one, is only one, the darling of her mother,   
flawless to her that bore her.**

**Though the King has "many intimates, but no favorites" to quote Ray Stedman, the King sees each believer as unique and valuable. Every one of God's children receives personally attention. He has only sons and daughters in his household, no grandchildren and no step-children.  
  
If God is the Father of all believers then who is the mother of the believer? Evidently this must be the church which nourishes the believer from new birth throughout life. Adam is the father of his race, while Eve is called "the mother of all living." Abraham is "the father of all who believe," and Sarah is "a mother of nations."**

**The maidens saw her and called her happy;   
the queens and concubines also, and they praised her.**

****

**'Who is this that looks forth like the dawn,   
fair as the moon, bright as the sun,   
terrible as an army with banners?'**

**Here is an unusual description of the Shulamite! But it is a fitting description of a godly woman indwelt by Jesus Christ. The church of Christ---feminine in her receptive role as a vessel for the Lord to fill with Himself---is "terrible as an army with banners." As Jesus said, "I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it, [i.e. the gates of hell shall not withstand the aggressive assaults of the church]." (Mt. 16:18). The sun and the moon are ancient symbols of Christ and His church. The moon shines only by reflecting the light of the sun, and "rules" the earth during the nighttime of the sun's visible absence.   
Israel is the woman clothed with the sun in Revelation 12. For a detailed explanation see** [**The Woman and the Serpent**](http://www.pbc.org/dp/stedman/revelation/4204.html) **by Ray C. Stedman.  
The majestic splendor of the King of kings in glory is described several places in the Bible: "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered; let those who hate him flee before him! As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; as wax melts before fire, let the wicked perish before God...With mighty chariotry, twice ten thousand, thousands upon thousands, the Lord came from Sinai into the holy place. Thou didst ascend the high mount, leading captives in thy train, and receiving gifts among men, even among the rebellious, that the LORD God may dwell there. Blessed be the Lord, who daily bears us up; God is our salvation." (Psalm 68:1-19)**

**Shulamite:  
  
I went down to the nut orchard, to look at the blossoms of the valley,   
to see whether the vines have budded, whether the pomegranates were in bloom  
Before I was aware, my fancy set me, in a chariot beside my prince.**

**If one were to look for a break in the text to indicate a transition of Shulamite (or the church as Bride of Christ) from the earthly to the heavenly realm of existence, this would seem to be that transition point. Jesus said, "He who keeps my word will never know what it is to die (John 8:51). Christians who seek to maintain a close walk with God learn how to continue in fruitfulness. There is no thought of "retirement" for the Shulamite. Her thoughts are ever on tending the garden.**

**Daughters of Jerusalem:  
  
Return, return, O Shulamite,   
return, return, that we may look upon you.**

**If the previous comment is correct, then Shulamite is now missed on earth by her companions, the daughters of Jerusalem for whom she is a role model and teacher.**

**Why should you look upon the Shulamite,   
as upon a dance before two armies?**

**http://ldolphin.org/pline.jpg**

**Chapter Seven**

**Solomon:  
  
7. How graceful are your feet in sandals,   
O queenly maiden!**

**"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings, who publishes peace, who brings good tidings of good, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'" (Isaiah 52:7, Rom. 10:15)  
  
The setting seems to shift to the courts of heaven. For the first time the Bride is addressed also as "queenly maiden." The true church, not the Virgin Mary is the "Queen of Heaven." Semiramis, wife of Babylon typifies the complete counterfeit. See** [**Semiramis, Queen of Babylon, by Bryce Self.**](http://ldolphin.org/semir.html) **The false church of the end time, the great harlot, "Mystery Babylon the great" also pictures the false Bride. See** [**The Dragon Lady**](http://www.pbc.org/dp/stedman/revelation/4208.html) **by Ray C. Stedman. For a development of the themes of the harlot and the bride from Genesis to Revelation see** [**The Theme of the Great Harlot in Scripture.**](http://ldolphin.org/Harlot.html)

**Your rounded thighs are like jewels, the work of a master hand.   
Your navel is a rounded bowl that never lacks mixed wine.   
Your belly is a heap of wheat, encircled with lilies.   
Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle.   
Your neck is like an ivory tower.   
Your eyes are pools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bathrabbim.   
Your nose is like a tower of Lebanon, overlooking Damascus**

**The thighs represent spiritual strength which comes from years of spiritual discipline and training. Jacob's thigh was thrown out of joint when he wrestled with The Angel of the Lord at Peniel, showing that our spiritual strength must not come from natural strength, i.e., from the flesh. The references here indicate inner fruitfulness and fecundity. Inner creativity ("beingness") is the specialty of the fairer sex. Men think themselves better at outward expressions of "doingness"---invention, warfare, building, hunting, thrusting and ranging. A nose compared to a tower is a strange compliment. "Nose" represents discernment.**

**Your head crowns you like Carmel, and your flowing locks are like purple;   
a king is held captive in your tresses.   
  
How fair and pleasant you are, O loved one, delectable maiden!   
You are stately as a palm tree, and your breasts are like its clusters.**

****

**I say I will climb the palm tree and lay hold of its branches.   
O may your breasts be like clusters of the vine,**

**This open expression of passion and desire by the King is free from the lust and sensuality that are so common in our culture when a man becomes "turned-on" by the woman he loves (or perhaps really just lusts after). There is nothing impure or inappropriate by such eloquent, delicate metaphors for physical, sexual love in marriage.   
  
Women today often find men cold, up-tight, remote, detached and insensitive. Many men in our culture are out of touch with their emotions and ill at ease in expressing their desires and their love. Carl Jung would explain this in his model of individuation by saying that men need to get in touch with their inner feminine heritage symbolized by the archetype of the "anima." Even today's popular men's movement is an attempt to loosen up the frozen American male in regard to a healthier sense of camaraderie and brotherly affection and freedom from what the gay community labels "homophobia."  
  
Date palms are prodigious in the numbers of dates they yield in great clusters. Grape vines that have been cultivated properly often become weighted down by their bountiful lush fruit. Symbolically the King is commending her capacity to feed others which has increased greatly.**

**and the scent of your breath like apples,   
and your kisses like the best wine that goes down smoothly,   
gliding over lips and teeth.**

**Wine is a symbol of joy. Rather than God bringing the believer joy, here the symbolism of the joy we can bring our God. God's joy is mentioned in several places: "looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb. 12:2) "Sing to the Lord, all the earth! Tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples! For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, and he is to be held in awe above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols; but the LORD made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before him; strength and joy are in his place." (1 Chron 16:23-27) "Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents." (Luke 15:1))  
"For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building." (1 Cor. 3:9)**

**Shulamite:  
  
I am my beloved's, and his desire is for me.**

**"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones." (Proverbs 3:5-8) "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD; and you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might." (Deut. 6:4, 5)**

**Come my beloved, let us go forth into the field,   
and lodge in the villages;   
let us go early to the vineyards,   
and see whether the vines have budded.   
whether the grape blossoms have opened  
and the pomegranates are in bloom.**

**Earlier we saw that it was Solomon who came to Shulamite to draw her out of her natural reclusiveness into the gardens at springtime. Now it is Shulamite who takes the initiative in inviting Solomon to inspect the gardens, vineyards, and orchards with her.  
  
Our generation is preoccupied with what God can do for us, our careers, or happiness, our health and well-being. Few seem to ask the question, "What can we do for God?" Shulamite has learned to be fruitful on behalf of her Lord, "The point is this: he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work. As it is written, 'He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.' He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your resources and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for great generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God..." (2 Cor. 9:6-11)  
  
The fruitfulness and bounty of the gardens has progressively expanded as the story develops. The first hint of a garden outside the house was the call of the Shepherd to tend the vineyards because of the "lithe foxes" (Chapter 2, verse 15). Ephesians 2 says we are "God's handiwork created in Christ Jesus for creative, artistic works, which God has prepared before hand for us to discover," (paraphrasing the Greek a bit). This means every Christian's "good works" can be as diverse and varied as the array of flowers, fruits, nuts and spices Shulamite is cultivating in her beautiful gardens. These are all for the king's enjoyment.  
  
It is also foreign to us for us at first to grasp the interplay of the Three Persons of the godhead in all that God does and is. The Persons of the godhead always express self-giving love the One to the Other outside of time and space. This is true whether or not there exists a created order! In the creation God has drawn us to Himself that we might enter into His divine activity, and as Peter says (2 Peter 1:4) so that we might "become partakers of the divine nature." Thus a given Person of the godhead is able to take delight in what the another Person is doing. It is the Holy Spirit who works in the Bride to present her beautiful and lovely to the Son. It is the Father who has given the Bride as a love-gift to His beloved Son. The Father has sent the Spirit to call out and prepare the Bride. As stated in the Introduction, "God is love," and love requires at least two persons: a lover and a beloved. The challenge of mature love is for the two lovers to be evenly matched.   
  
Whether or not the king's presence is with her, Shulamite maintains her fruitful life, "in season and out of season," unhindered by her emotions or by circumstances. This is what mature faith is all about.**

**There I will give you my love.   
The mandrakes give forth fragrance,   
and over our doors are all choice fruits, new as well as old,   
which I have laid up for you, O my beloved.**

**Mandrakes [haduadain] or "love apples" are thought to be an aphrodisiac. This sweet fruit opens at harvest time (Gen. 30:14-16) The reference to "all manner of fruits, new as well as old" reminds us of the words of Jesus about wise scribes, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old." (Matthew 13:52)  
  
Proper and pure love is unashamed and need not hide itself, as is the case with "the unfruitful works of darkness," (Eph. 5:11). "For you are all sons of light and sons of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. For those who sleep sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But, since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we wake or sleep we might live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing." (I Thess. 5:51-11)**

**http://ldolphin.org/pline.jpg**

**Watchman Nee considers Chapter Eight to be a final division in the book. "As the believer grows into deeper union with Christ, as in the case of this loved maiden, there is an increasing realization that the presence of the outer man or carnal shell imposes limitation upon the spirit within. The inner man is renewed daily, but the outer man decays day by day. The corruptible body of flesh is kept for its allotted period by the revivings and refreshments of the Holy Spirit, but it must needs die. The power of God is often displayed through its weakness, yet the body of flesh remains very much as a thorn in the side of the spirit."  
  
"We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words. And he who searches the hearts of men knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God." (Romans 8:22-27)**

**Chapter Eight:**

**8. O that you were like a brother to me,   
that nursed at my mother's breast!   
If I met you outside, I would kiss you, and none would despise me,   
I would lead you and bring you into the house of my mother,   
and into the chamber of her that conceived me.   
I would give you spiced wine to drink, the juice of my pomegranates.   
  
O that his left hand were under my head,   
and that his right hand embraced me!   
  
I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,   
that you stir not up nor awaken love until it please.**

**This is the third time Shulamite has passed along this admonition to the Daughters of Jerusalem, who represent her younger brothers and sisters in the Lord.**

**Daughters of Jerusalem:  
  
Who is this coming up from the wilderness,   
leaning upon her beloved?**

**The mature love of the believer is identified with "the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. "Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church..." (Col. 1:24); "But rejoice in so far as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed." (1 Peter 4:13); "So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ as well as a partaker in the glory that is to be revealed." (1 Peter 5:1)  
  
"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you. Since we have the same spirit of faith as he had who wrote, 'I believed, and so I spoke,' we too believe, and so we speak, knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence. For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God. So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, because we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen; for the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal." (2 Cor. 4:7-18)**

**Solomon:  
  
Under the apple tree I awakened you.   
There your mother was in travail with you,   
there she who bore you was in travail.**

**These verses seem cosmic---beyond ordinary time and space. They seem (to me at least) to suggest the forming of Adam/Eve from the dust of the earth, and the mysteries of the new birth as well. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and to an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time...You have been born anew, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for 'All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord abides forever.' That word is the good news which was preached to you." (1 Peter 1)**

**Shulamite:  
  
Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm;   
for love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave.   
Its flashes are flashes of fire, a most vehement flame.   
Many waters can not quench love, neither can floods down it.   
If a man offered for love all the wealth of his house,   
it would be utterly scorned.**

**It would be more logical perhaps to attribute these verses to the King, but it is the Shulamite who speaks of holy covenants and of fidelity. The seal on the heart stands for guarded and protected emotions and the seal on the arm for guarded, sanctified actions. Lover and Beloved are united in death, burial and resurrection. This relationship between Christ and his church is frequently emphasized in the New Testament. "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For he who has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him." (Rom 6:3-9)**

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**"And you he made alive, when you were dead through the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience. Among these we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of body and mind, and so we were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." (Ephesians 2:1-7).  
  
The language is apocalyptic. We are lifted beyond time and space to eternal things. The coming judgment of the world will be by fire (2 Peter 3), as the last terrible judgment of mankind was by the great flood of Noah. Only loyal love [hesed] can overcome such judgments and conquer death, and sustain us through the trials of this life into the next. True love can not be bought at any price and all attempts to buy this love are rejected at once as falling far short. "You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your fathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. He was destined before the foundation of the world but was made manifest at the end of the times for your sake. Through him you have confidence in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere love of the brethren, love one another earnestly from the heart. You have been born anew, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for 'All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord abides forever.' That word is the good news which was preached to you." (1 Peter 1:18-25)**

**Shulamite:  
  
We have a little sister, and she has no breasts.   
What shall we do for our sisters,   
on the day when she is spoken for?**

**Bride and Bridegroom counsel together to help a younger sister who is not yet mature. Wise parents work together to discern the strengths and weaknesses of their offspring so that they can be built up and will be well-rounded. The Lord and His church work together as partners to help us all grow together to mature personhood in Christ. "until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love." (Ephesians 4:13-16)**

**If she is a wall, we will build her a battlement of silver;   
but if she is a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar.**

**Our spiritual lives are built upon the foundations already laid---"no other foundation can anyone lay than that which has been laid which is Christ Jesus." The wall indicates separation from the world, battlements of silver indicate ongoing, further redemption. Doors protect what comes into our lives and what goes out. We need strong doors just as Jerusalem needed strong gates. Ray Stedman's studies in Nehemiah show the need for walls and gates in our spiritual lives. See** [**Studies in Nehemiah**](http://www.pbc.org/dp/stedman/nehemiah/)

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**I was a wall, and my breasts were like towers;   
then I was in his eyes as one who brings peace.**

**Shulamite reflects back on her own pilgrimage of faith and how far God has brought her. It was only yesterday that she was the seeking desert maiden with nothing to bring to the King. She now has the stature of a queen at the side of Solomon.   
  
"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." (Philippians 4:8)   
  
"...the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty or insincerity." (James 3:17)**

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**Solomon had a vineyard at Baalhamon;   
he let out the vineyard to keepers;   
each one was to bring for its fruit a thousand pieces of silver.   
My vineyard, my very own, is for myself;   
you, O Solomon, may have the thousand,   
and the keepers of the fruit two hundred.**

**Shulamite is contented with her own life-work and calling. Other less worthy servants may serve the Lord for hire, but her work is a labor of love. "Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel; the former proclaim Christ out of partisanship, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in that I rejoice." (Philippians 1:15-18) "In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God. For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has wrought through me to win obedience from the Gentiles, by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Holy Spirit, so that from Jerusalem and as far round as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ, thus making it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on another man's foundation, but as it is written, 'They shall see who have never been told of him, and they shall understand who have never heard of him.'" (Romans 15:17-21)  
  
"Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world." (James 1:27)**

**O you who dwell in the gardens,   
my companions are listening for your voice;   
let me hear it.**

**It is the Lord Jesus who dwells in the gardens (plural). Shulamite is not alone in her quest for a close and intimate relationship of love with her Lord. Out from our dark and sleazy world of sin God continually seeks many of the Daughters of Jerusalem to come to His banquet. "All who will may come." Jesus said, "The queen of the South [the Queen of Sheba, see 1 Kings 10, 2 Chron. 10] will arise at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them; for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here." (Luke 11:31)**

**Make haste, my beloved,   
and be like a gazelle or a young stag  
upon the mountains of spices.**

**What is it, in the final analysis that is so attractive about the King? Shulamite is drawn back many years to the adventure, the always fresh relationship and the abundant supply of resurrection life which makes all things new. Our God brings life out of death, order out of chaos, light out of darkness and joy out of sorrow and hope out from the place of despair.   
  
"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away." And he who sat upon the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new.' Also he said, 'Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.' And he said to me, 'It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the fountain of the water of life without payment. He who conquers shall have this heritage, and I will be his God and he shall be my son.'" (Revelation 21:1-7)**

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http://ldolphin.org/pline.jpg**

**The 45th Psalm**

**This Psalm is set in the splendor of an oriental palace with a royal wedding, invited guests and imagery of the coming Millennial rule of Jesus Christ and His church upon the earth. I have added it because it is such a clear parallel to the Song of Solomon and has always been one of my favorite Psalms.  
  
For a commentary on this Psalm see** [**The King in His Beauty**](http://www.pbc.org/dp/stedman/psalms/0395.html) **by Ray C. Stedman.**

**Psalm 45**

**To the choirmaster: according to Lilies.   
A Maskil of the Sons of Korah; a love song.   
  
1 My heart overflows with a goodly theme; I address my verses to the king;   
my tongue is like the pen of a ready scribe.   
  
2 You are the fairest of the sons of men; grace is poured upon your lips;   
therefore God has blessed you forever.   
  
3 Gird your sword upon your thigh,   
O mighty one, in your glory and majesty!   
  
4 In your majesty ride forth victoriously for the cause of truth and to defend the right;   
let your right hand teach you dread deeds!   
  
5 Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies;   
the peoples fall under you.   
  
6 Your divine throne endures forever and ever.   
Your royal scepter is a scepter of equity;   
  
7 you love righteousness and hate wickedness.   
Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows;   
  
8 your robes are all fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia.   
From ivory palaces stringed instruments make you glad;   
  
9 daughters of kings are among your ladies of honor;   
at your right hand stands the queen in gold of Ophir.   
  
10 Hear, O daughter, consider, and incline your ear;   
forget your people and your father's house;   
  
11 and the king will desire your beauty.   
Since he is your lord, bow to him;   
  
12 the people of Tyre will sue your favor with gifts,   
the richest of the people   
  
13 with all kinds of wealth.   
  
The princess is decked in her chamber with gold-woven robes;   
in many-colored robes she is led to the king,   
with her virgin companions, her escort, in her train.   
  
15 With joy and gladness they are led along as they enter the palace of the king.   
  
16 Instead of your fathers shall be your sons;   
you will make them princes in all the earth. 17 I will cause your name to be celebrated in all generations;   
therefore the peoples will praise you forever and ever.**

**http://ldolphin.org/pline.jpg**

**Symbols in the Song of Solomon**

**How does one determine the symbolic use of words in the Song of Solomon? The best way to proceed is to look up all the uses of the word elsewhere in the Bible with the help of a Concordance.**

**The "Kiss" in scripture**

**The word "kiss" used in Verse One stands for "intimacy." Other uses of the word "kiss" in Scripture are referenced below.  
  
Gen. 27:26 Then his father Isaac said to him, "Come near and KISS me, my son." (Familial affection is implied).  
  
Gen. 31:28 And why did you not permit me to KISS my sons and my daughters farewell? Now you have done foolishly.   
  
2Sam. 15:5 And whenever a man came near to do obeisance to him, he would put out his hand, and take hold of him, and KISS him. (Respect and affection)  
  
2Sam. 20:9 And Joab said to Amasa, "Is it well with you, my brother?" And Joab took Amasa by the beard with his right hand to KISS him. (Betrayal)  
  
1Kgs. 19:20 And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, "Let me KISS my father and my mother, and then I will follow you." And he said to him, "Go back again; for what have I done to you?" (Familial affection is implied).  
  
1 Kgs. 19:1519 And the LORD said to Elijah, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; and when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael to be king over Syria; and Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint to be king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah you shall anoint to be prophet in your place. And him who escapes from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay; and him who escapes from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not KISSED him." (The kiss as used here means the erotic, sensual kiss).  
  
Ps. 2:12 KISS his feet, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way; for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him. (Respect and submission to God, reverence and subservience).  
  
Ps. 85:10 Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will KISS each other. (An intimate union)  
  
Song 1:2 O that you would KISS me with the KISSes of your mouth! For your love is better than wine, (a longing for intimacy)  
  
Song 8:1 O that you were like a brother to me, that nursed at my mother's breast! If I met you outside, I would KISS you, and none would despise me. (Again, intimacy and the closest but purest of affection).  
  
Hosea 13:2 And now they sin more and more, and make for themselves molten images, idols skillfully made of their silver, all of them the work of craftsmen. Sacrifice to these, they say. Men KISS calves! (Sensual, self-abasing, vulgar display of false intimacy). Matt. 26:48 Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I shall KISS is the man; seize him." (The famous betrayal kiss of Judas).  
  
Mark 14:44 Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I shall KISS is the man; seize him and lead him away under guard." (Judas).  
  
Luke 7:45 You gave me no KISS, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to KISS my feet. (Proper devotion and pure-hearted love for Jesus).  
  
Luke 22:47 While he was still speaking, there came a crowd, and the man called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them. He drew near to Jesus to KISS him; (Judas).  
  
Luke 22:48 but Jesus said to him, "Judas, would you betray the Son of man with a KISS?" (Judas).  
  
Rom. 16:16 Greet one another with a holy KISS. All the churches of Christ greet you. (Brotherly affection and love in the family of God).  
  
1Cor. 16:20 All the brethren send greetings. Greet one another with a holy KISS.   
  
2Cor. 13:12 Greet one another with a holy KISS.   
  
1Ths. 5:26 Greet all the brethren with a holy KISS.   
  
1Pet. 5:14 Greet one another with the KISS of love. Peace to all of you that are in Christ.   
  
Prov. 7:13 She seizes him and kisses him, and with impudent face she says to him: (the harlot's kiss of erotic seduction).  
  
Prov. 24:26 He who gives a right answer kisses the lips.   
  
Prov. 27:6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy.**

**Song 1:2 O that you would kiss me with the kisses of your mouth! For your love is better than wine, (intimacy).  
  
Song 7:9 and your kisses like the best wine that goes down smoothly, gliding over lips and teeth.****The Neck in Scripture:  
  
Gen. 27:16 and the skins of the kids she put upon his hands and upon the smooth part of his neck;   
  
Gen. 27:40 By your sword you shall live, and you shall serve your brother; but when you break loose you shall break his yoke from your neck." (An imprisonment, or enslavement of the will)  
  
Gen. 33:4 But Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept.   
  
Gen. 41:42 Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in garments of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck; (Joseph honored for godly choices of the will)  
  
Gen. 45:14 Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck.   
  
Gen. 46:29 Then Joseph made ready his chariot and went up to meet Israel his father in Goshen; and he presented himself to him, and fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while.   
  
Gen. 49:8 Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father's sons shall bow down before you.   
  
Exod. 13:13 Every firstling of an ass you shall redeem with a lamb, or if you will not redeem it you shall break its neck. Every first-born of man among your sons you shall redeem.   
  
Exod. 34:20 The firstling of an ass you shall redeem with a lamb, or if you will not redeem it you shall break its neck. All the first-born of your sons you shall redeem. And none shall appear before me empty.   
  
Lev. 5:8 He shall bring them to the priest, who shall offer first the one for the sin offering; he shall wring its head from its neck, but shall not sever it,   
  
Deut. 21:4 And the elders of that city shall bring the heifer down to a valley with running water, which is neither plowed nor sown, and shall break the heifer's neck there in the valley.   
  
Deut. 21:6 And all the elders of that city nearest to the slain man shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley;   
  
Deut. 28:48 therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the LORD will send against you, in hunger and thirst, in nakedness, and in want of all things; and he will put a yoke of iron upon your neck, until he has destroyed you. (Bondage and oppression)  
  
Judg. 5:30 `Are they not finding and dividing the spoil ?--A maiden or two for every man; spoil of dyed stuffs for Sisera, spoil of dyed stuffs embroidered, two pieces of dyed work embroidered for my neck as spoil?'   
  
1Sam. 4:18 When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell over backward from his seat by the side of the gate; and his neck was broken and he died, for he was an old man, and heavy. He had judged Israel forty years.   
  
2Chr. 36:13 He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God; he stiffened his neck and hardened his heart against turning to the LORD, the God of Israel. (A hardened resolve to resist God)  
  
Neh. 9:16 "But they and our fathers acted presumptuously and stiffened their neck and did not obey thy commandments; (stubborn, self-will)  
  
Neh. 9:17 they refused to obey, and were not mindful of the wonders which thou didst perform among them; but they stiffened their neck and appointed a leader to return to their bondage in Egypt. But thou art a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and didst not forsake them.   
  
Neh. 9:29 And thou didst warn them in order to turn them back to thy law. Yet they acted presumptuously and did not obey thy commandments, but sinned against thy ordinances, by the observance of which a man shall live, and turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their neck and would not obey.   
  
Job 16:12 I was at ease, and he broke me asunder; he seized me by the neck and dashed me to pieces; he set me up as his target, (a broken of self-will)  
  
Job 39:19 "Do you give the horse his might? Do you clothe his neck with strength?  
  
Job 41:22 In his neck abides strength, and terror dances before him. (Strength of will and intent)  
  
Ps. 69:1 Save me, O God! For the waters have come up to my neck.   
  
Ps. 75:5 do not lift up your horn on high, or speak with insolent neck." (Stubborn and self-willed, rebellious)  
  
Ps. 105:18 His feet were hurt with fetters, his neck was put in a collar of iron; (bondage of the will)  
  
Prov. 1:9 for they are a fair garland for your head, and pendants for your neck.   
  
Prov. 3:3 Let not loyalty and faithfulness forsake you; bind them about your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. (Making many wise choices of the will repeatedly)  
  
Prov. 3:22 and they will be life for your soul and adornment for your neck.   
  
Prov. 6:21 Bind them upon your heart always; tie them about your neck.   
  
Prov. 29:1 He who is often reproved, yet stiffens his neck will suddenly be broken beyond healing. (self-will)  
  
Song 1:10 Your cheeks are comely with ornaments, your neck with strings of jewels. (A contrite spirit and will response to the Spirit.)  
  
Song 4:4 Your neck is like the tower of David, built for an arsenal, whereon hang a thousand bucklers, all of them shields of warriors. (A strong will set resolutely to do the will of God)   
  
Song 7:4 Your neck is like an ivory tower. Your eyes are pools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bathrabbim. Your nose is like a tower of Lebanon, overlooking Damascus.   
  
Isa. 8:8 and it will sweep on into Judah, it will overflow and pass on, reaching even to the neck; and its outspread wings will fill the breadth of your land, O Immanuel."   
  
Isa. 10:27 And in that day his burden will depart from your shoulder, and his yoke will be destroyed from your neck." He has gone up from Rimmon,   
  
Isa. 30:28 his breath is like an overflowing stream that reaches up to the neck; to sift the nations with the sieve of destruction, and to place on the jaws of the peoples a bridle that leads astray.   
  
Isa. 48:4 Because I know that you are obstinate, and your neck is an iron sinew and your forehead brass,   
  
Isa. 52:2 Shake yourself from the dust, arise, O captive Jerusalem; loose the bonds from your neck, O captive daughter of Zion. (A liberating of the will and human spirit from the bondage of sin)  
  
Isa. 66:3 "He who slaughters an ox is like him who kills a man; he who sacrifices a lamb, like him who breaks a dog's neck; he who presents a cereal offering, like him who offers swine's blood; he who makes a memorial offering of frankincense, like him who blesses an idol. These have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations;   
  
Jer. 7:26 yet they did not listen to me, or incline their ear, but stiffened their neck. They did worse than their fathers.   
  
Jer. 17:23 Yet they did not listen or incline their ear, but stiffened their neck, that they might not hear and receive instruction.   
  
Jer. 19:15 "Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Behold, I am bringing upon this city and upon all its towns all the evil that I have pronounced against it, because they have stiffened their neck, refusing to hear my words."   
  
Jer. 27:2 Thus the LORD said to me: "Make yourself thongs and yoke-bars, and put them on your neck.   
  
Jer. 27:8 "`"But if any nation or kingdom will not serve this Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and put its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, I will punish that nation with the sword, with famine, and with pestilence, says the LORD, until I have consumed it by his hand.   
  
Jer. 27:11 But any nation which will bring its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him, I will leave on its own land, to till it and dwell there, says the LORD."'" (Bondage or enslavement by a foreign power, in this case Babylon).  
  
Jer. 28:10 Then the prophet Hananiah took the yoke-bars from the neck of Jeremiah the prophet, and broke them.   
  
Jer. 28:11 And Hananiah spoke in the presence of all the people, saying, "Thus says the LORD: Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all the nations within two years." But Jeremiah the prophet went his way.   
  
Jer. 28:12 Sometime after the prophet Hananiah had broken the yoke-bars from off the neck of Jeremiah the prophet, the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah:   
  
Jer. 28:14 For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: I have put upon the neck of all these nations an iron yoke of servitude to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and they shall serve him, for I have given to him even the beasts of the field.'"   
  
Jer. 30:8 "And it shall come to pass in that day, says the LORD of hosts, that I will break the yoke from off their neck, and I will burst their bonds, and strangers shall no more make servants of them.   
  
Lam. 1:14 "My transgressions were bound into a yoke; by his hand they were fastened together; they were set upon my neck; he caused my strength to fail; the Lord gave me into the hands of those whom I cannot withstand.   
  
Ezek. 16:11 And I decked you with ornaments, and put bracelets on your arms, and a chain on your neck.   
  
Dan. 5:7 The king cried aloud to bring in the enchanters, the Chaldeans, and the astrologers. The king said to the wise men of Babylon, "Whoever reads this writing, and shows me its interpretation, shall be clothed with purple, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom."   
  
Dan. 5:16 But I have heard that you can give interpretations and solve problems. Now if you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed with purple, and have a chain of gold about your neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.   
  
Dan. 5:29 Then Belshazzar commanded, and Daniel was clothed with purple, a chain of gold was put about his neck, and proclamation was made concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.   
  
Hosea 10:11 Ephraim was a trained heifer that loved to thresh, and I spared her fair neck; but I will put Ephraim to the yoke, Judah must plow, Jacob must harrow for himself.   
  
Hab. 3:13 Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, for the salvation of thy anointed. Thou didst crush the head of the wicked, laying him bare from thigh to neck. Selah.  
  
Matt. 18:6 but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.   
  
Mark 9:42 "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung round his neck and he were thrown into the sea.   
  
Luke 17:2 It would be better for him if a millstone were hung round his neck and he were cast into the sea, than that he should cause one of these little ones to sin.   
  
Acts 15:10 Now therefore why do you make trial of God by putting a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?**

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**Guide to the Use of Numbers and Symbols in the Bible**

**The following information is extracted from a larger reference,** [**Miscellaneous References Concerning the Bible**](http://ldolphin.org/App.html) **In reading the Bible, it soon becomes apparent that certain numbers (such as 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 12, 40, 70, etc.) occur more frequently than we would expect. From the context it is soon apparent that some of these numbers have symbolic as well as literal meaning. (This symbolic meaning of numbers is not the same thing as assigning numerical values to the Greek and Hebrew letters that comprise the text. The latter approach does allow useful computer analysis of the structure of the Bible from which authorship of various books can be confirmed and certain obscure passages or manuscript errors clarified).  
  
The number ONE stands for unity. "There is ONE God, and ONE mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for many." A second example is the S'hma, "Hear O Israel the LORD your God is ONE God..."  
  
TWO stands for union. "For this cause (marriage) a man shall leave his father and his mother and the TWO shall become one flesh." Man, created as Adam/Eve, was separated into Adam and Eve so the two could complement one another in a new kind of unity. Two is the basis of the BINARY system of counting.   
  
THREE is the number of God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The THIRD Day is the day of resurrection in scripture.  
  
FOUR is the number of the world system (cosmos). Thus, we have the FOUR winds, the FOUR seasons, the FOUR corners of the earth, and the FOUR living creatures (cherubim, i. e. angels) around the throne of God.  
  
FIVE is the number of division. Thus, there were FIVE wise and FIVE foolish virgins invited to the marriage feast.  
  
SIX is the number of man because man was created on the SIXTH day. The number 666 is the number of the antichrist, the man who proclaims himself to be God. SIX days are appointed for man to work. The seventh day (the Sabbath) is to be devoted to rest.  
  
SEVEN is the number of completeness in the old created order, (4+3=7). There are seven days of creation and in Revelation this number occurs 54 times. The number seven occurs repeatedly in the Book of the Revelation.   
  
EIGHT is the number of new beginnings. Jesus rose from the dead on the Eighth Day of the week, a Sunday. Eight is the basis of the OCTAL system of counting.  
  
TEN is the number of worldly completion (4+6=10). Ten virgins total. Ten toes on the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, ten horns on the beast of Revelation 17:2. Ten is the basis of the DECIMAL System.   
  
TWELVE is the number of eternal perfection as in the TWELVE Tribes of Israel and the TWELVE apostles of the church (12+12=24 elders). There are TWELVE gates to New Jerusalem, its walls measure 12 X 12 cubits high and the sides are 12,000 furlongs in length.  
  
FORTY is the number of testing. Jesus was tempted in the wilderness FORTY days and nights. Israel wandered in the wilderness FORTY years. During the flood of Noah the rain fell FORTY days and nights.  
  
FIFTY is the number of the Jubilee Year in Israel. The land was to rest every seventh year and after 7X7+1=50 years to revert to original owners with debts being forgiven. The Day of Pentecost, when the church was born, occurred seven sabbaths plus one day after the death of Jesus, on a Sunday morning.  
  
SEVENTY is the number of years the Jews spent out of the land during the Babylonian captivity. SEVENTY heptads, or "weeks of years," were given to Israel (see Daniel) for the completion of their national destiny.  
  
METALS: Various metals are mentioned in the Bible - including gold, silver, brass, iron, lead, and tin. GOLD is a symbol of deity prominent in the Tabernacle of Moses and the First and Second Temples. SILVER stands for redemption and was used in quantity in the tabernacle. BRASS stands for judgment, as in the altar of sacrifice, or Moses' Serpent of Brass. LEAD and TIN are baser metals removed by refining as dross to yield silver and gold. IRON stands for military (or industrial strength), and IRON mingled with CLAY (Daniel) represents the weakness of modern Western democracies which combine rule by the common people with military and industrial strength. WOOD represents humanity, as in Psalm 1:3, etc.  
  
COLORS: SCARLET represents natural life in man since "the life is in the blood." This is the color of "life poured out" to ransom us. WHITE stands for purity; BLUE, for the heavens; BLACK, for death; GREEN, for new life in nature; PURPLE, for royalty and PALE GREEN, for famine. GARMENTS stand for righteousness. Imputed faith is represented by white garments and filthy rags represent self-righteousness, or defilement by the world.   
  
HONEY represents natural sweetness (a characteristic of the flesh; hence, not a positive symbol). LEAVEN (yeast) is a universal symbol of sin in scripture.   
  
ANIMALS: HORSES are always "war horses" (imported from Egypt) and represent reliance on the world's resources rather than on God in spiritual warfare. The kings of Israel were not to multiply horses for themselves. DOGS are unclean animals and refer to the lowest forms of behavior by men. WOLVES are false teachers who prey upon the SHEEP. The latter represent believers who are helpless, dumb, prone to wander, and always in need of a shepherd. BULLS and RAMS represent masculine strength. LIONS and LEOPARDS can represent spiritual enemies in the heavenly places ("...your adversary the devil goes around like a prowling lion..."). On the other hand, Jesus is the "Lion of the Tribe of Judah." GAZELLES, HINDS and DEER represent youthful energy and vitality as seen in the Song of Solomon. The BEASTS in Revelation (and Daniel) are men (world leaders) as seen by God, except that the "four living creatures" in Revelation are mighty angels known as cherubim.   
  
BIRDS: The DOVE is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. The EAGLE pictures the serene sovereignty of God. God took Israel out of Egypt "on eagles' wings". BIRDS of PREY represent forces of destructiveness. Animal HORNS picture power in a human ruler.   
  
The SEA stands for the masses of mankind. The "great sea" is the Mediterranean and the "eastern sea" or "salt sea" is the Dead Sea. MOUNTAINS are symbols of human government. The STARS frequently represent the angels. The SUN is a symbol for Christ who rules the earth by day; and the MOON, the church who rules the earth by night", and has no light of its own.   
  
The NECK symbolizes the will (as in "stubborn and stiff-necked"). The LOINS represent masculine virility and strength. The FEET indicate activity: "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who preach the gospel..." or, "Their feet are swift to shed blood." The EYES represent spiritual insight and inner beauty. A KISS is a symbol for intimacy.   
  
INCENSE symbolizes prayer; and MYRRH, suffering. FAT stands for the natural richness of life; hence, the fat of the sacrifices belongs to God alone.  
  
GRASS represents the ephemeral life of man. Good FRUIT is the result of living in dependence on Christ, and bad fruit, the natural result of self-life. THORNS and THISTLES stand for the works of the flesh.   
  
MILK is spiritual food for new-born babes in Christ; BREAD for growing young men, and the MEAT of the Word, deeper truth for the maturing believer.   
  
A WOMAN typifies every believer in such passages as Romans 7:1-4. A HARLOT symbolizes fallen mankind (men as well as women), and the GREAT HARLOT, the apostate church and the final state of the world system under the dominion of evil. The true church and the false church are both symbolized by the figures of a woman and by a city.   
  
The VINE represents Israel's national influence among the nations. The FIG TREE stands for Israel's religious history; and the OLIVE TREE, Israel's true spiritual history apart from outward religious appearances.   
  
The HOLY SPIRIT is symbolized in Scripture by (a) a dove, (b) water, (c) oil, (d) fire, (e) wind or breath, (f) light.   
  
Without denying the historical validity of the Old Testament in any way, CROSSING THE RED SEA is a picture of leaving the world (Egypt) under the domain of the god of the age (Pharaoh) to be baptized into Christ at the Red Sea crossing.   
  
The WILDERNESS stands for Christian living under the law in the power of the flesh.   
  
CROSSING THE JORDAN stands for the truth of Galatians 2:20, entering the land, (the Spirit-filled life); by renouncing self and living thereafter in the power of the Spirit.   
  
The ENEMIES in the LAND: CanaanITES, HivITES, JebusITES, EdomITES, MoabITES are pictures of the flesh. JACOB represents the average believer, deceiving and deceived.   
  
ISRAEL is the man who wrestled with God (the Angel of the LORD), and becomes changed as a result, a picture for us of sanctification.   
  
ESAU, the brother of JACOB is the father of the EDOMITES, hence a picture of the flesh. Agag, Haman, and Herod are notable among the descendants of Esau.   
  
ASSYRIA represents lawlessness, BABYLON, religious confusion and error.   
  
The Old Testament pictures every believer as a king over the kingdom of his (or her) life. Power to rule in righteousness is given only as we subject ourselves to the King of kings, Jesus.**