

The Song of Songs

Lesson 10: “Sick with Love”

Intro:

BIG IDEA: Love calls on an adventure to take risks we normally wouldn't.

“For true love is adventurous, and every adventure involves risk-taking; and this in turn requires courage to overcome fears and inhibitions. When all this is faced with realism, then glorious and unexpected joys lie at the door.” **Tom Gledhill**⁸²

She

2 I slept, but my heart was awake.
A sound! My beloved is knocking.
“Open to me, my sister, my love,
my dove, my perfect one,
for my head is wet with dew,
my locks with the drops of the night.”
3 I had put off my garment;
how could I put it on?
I had bathed my feet;
how could I soil them?
4 My beloved put his hand to the latch,
and my heart was thrilled within me.
5 I arose to open to my beloved,
and my hands dripped with myrrh,
my fingers with liquid myrrh,
on the handles of the bolt.
6 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.
7 The watchmen found me
as they went about in the city;
they beat me, they bruised me,
they took away my veil (or possibly cloak),
those watchmen of the walls.
8 I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
if you find my beloved,
that you tell him
I am sick with love.

Others

⁸² Gledhill, pp. 172.

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⁹ What is your beloved more than another beloved,
O most beautiful among women?
What is your beloved more than another beloved,
that you thus adjure us?

- We see more evidence that this is not a _____, but a series of love poems w/out a _____.
- The surreal nature of what follows may indicate a _____.
- He cries “*my sister, my _____, my dove, my _____ one.*”
- He wants her to open the door to her. It could be a double _____: he wants her to open to him.
- The door becomes a _____ for her _____.
- He has been out and is wet with dew. Does this imply his sexual longing?
- She is not dressed, and has clean feet. To get up requires putting on _____ and getting her feet _____.
- “*Feet*” can be a euphemism for _____. She may be _____ to engage in sex.
- His attempt to put his hand thru the latch (literally hole) could have sexual _____. In _____ 57:8-10 hand is used for a penis.
- Her response is subject to _____. ESV translates “innards” as “_____” when it could refer to her lower _____ zones. She is aroused too.
- She arises to open up to him, to be receptive. The source of the dripping myrrh is unclear (left by him) but seems to indicate sexual _____ on someone’s part.
- He has departed, much to her disappointment. We are unsure as to why since he “forced the issue” and she finally responded.
- Relationships are filled with _____, manipulation,



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_____ and power plays that only result in us being frustrated, _____ and sexually.

- Her “*soul failed*” her, a diminishment of _____. As if “I almost _____.”
- She “*opened*”, “*sought*” and “*called*.” Earlier he had “*called*”, “*sought*”.
- She pursues him and ends up in trouble. The _____ may represent the public gaze that looks down on her.
- She is physically, and possibly sexually _____.
- Some argue that she is treated as though a _____. “The public judgment of a prostitute was a ritual exposure of her nakedness.”⁸³
- Though defenseless and at least partially uncovered, she seems unfazed, _____. Either a dream or fictionalized.
- The Hebrew is difficult: either she begs the daughters of Jerusalem, who should also be in bed, to _____ her _____ him, or to not _____ him what happened to her.
- Her excuse: I’m sick with love. I do _____ things.
- They ask, essentially, what is so _____ about him.



“Love brings its joys, but those joys are seldom unalloyed for long. We are such flawed and fragile creatures, and interpersonal relationships contain such subtleties. With our joys come fears. Often they surface in our dreams, arising from some sense of failure or fear of inadequacy.” **Dennis Kinlaw**⁸⁴

Allegorical Interpretation: She represents the redeemed church at her worst: lazy, neglecting the means of grace and indifferent to His gracious presence. His withdrawal is one of chastisement. This is very much seen in light of Revelation 3:20. The watchmen are seen as faithful shepherds that expose the sinner’s folly that they might repent and be renewed.

Dramatic Interpretation: Solomon’s job kept him away from her too much, and he was in the habit of approaching her late at night. The dream is her processing her frustration. The actions of the watchmen may represent her guilt over “having a headache.”

Wisdom Literature: Most of us lead self-focused lives which sabotage our love relationships. It is easier to break a relationship than to mend it. This is true of our spiritual lives as well. Too

⁸³ Gledhill, pp. 178.

⁸⁴ Kinlaw, pp. 1232.

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often we are self-focused and disinterested in God. Then we decide to search for Him. We are conflicted and confusing people.

What are legitimate excuses for saying “not now”?

What effect do excuses have on your spouse? On you?

“There is nothing more deflating to a person’s ego than to have one’s mate continually reject his or her sexual advances.” **Joseph Dillow**⁸⁵

Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: “It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.”² But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband.³ The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband.⁴ For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.⁵ Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. **1 Corinthians 7**

Typological View: Just as sexual intimacy is not a “once-for-all” thing but something that is cultivated which experiences ebbs and flows in a marriage, it must be cultivated with Christ.

This leads us into a *wasif* as she describes his physical beauty. This is rare!

She

10 My beloved is radiant and ruddy,
distinguished among ten thousand.
11 His head is the finest gold;
his locks are wavy,
black as a raven.
12 His eyes are like doves
beside streams of water,
bathed in milk,
sitting beside a full pool.
13 His cheeks are like beds of spices,
mounds of sweet-smelling herbs.
His lips are lilies,
dripping liquid myrrh.
14 His arms are rods of gold,
set with jewels.
His body is polished ivory,
bedecked with sapphires.
15 His legs are alabaster columns,
set on bases of gold.

⁸⁵ Dillow, pp. 102.

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His appearance is like Lebanon,
choice as the cedars.

16 His mouth is most sweet,
and he is altogether desirable.

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

Others

6 Where has your beloved gone,
O most beautiful among women?

Where has your beloved turned,
that we may seek him with you?

- He's got good skin/complexion: _____ & _____.
- She goes from head to toe _____ what is so great about him.
- We aren't sure what a "head of gold" is like, esp. since he has _____ hair. Some say "god-like."
- He's got great hair: jet black and wavy. His eyes Well a grey pupil surrounded by white?
- Alternative translation: His eyes are like doves by the _____, His teeth washed in milk, set in place.
- His cheeks, most likely his beard, smells good and enticing. They often _____ their beards. Great to be cheek-to-cheek.
- His lips are like beautiful lilies, which drip with fine smelling _____. Sweet scented herbs were often _____ as something of a mouthwash.
- She uses "god-like" language to communicate a _____ than _____ quality.
- His abdomen is _____ like polished ivory, and bedecked. ____ - _____ abs?
- Some think of a polished ivory _____, so she would be admiring his genitals.
- He has powerful legs. As a whole he's like Lebanon: known for its beautiful _____ & _____.
- She longs to kiss his mouth and taste him.



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Allegorical: this is a song of praise for Jesus. Of course we know little about what Jesus looked like except He was Middle Eastern. Isaiah indicated there was nothing to draw us to Him. So... His eyes are pure, He is steadfast, speaks beautiful, gracious words

Dramatic: She sings the praises of her husband. He is handsome, and speaks grace-filled words. Looks and character.

Does this connect with the dream, answering their question, or does it stand alone?

She

2 My beloved has gone down to his garden
to the beds of spices,
to graze in the gardens
and to gather lilies.

3 I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine;
he grazes among the lilies.

- In a surprise, she says he has gone down to the garden. He is with her (now?).
- They enjoy one another in intimacy. What began with _____ ends with _____.



Allegorical Interpretation: Christ visits the church to grant her blessings. Jesus enjoys the blessings and fruit of His people.

Dramatic Interpretation: They are reconciled. In part because “she assumes responsibility for her personal attitudes and leaves Solomon’s shortcomings in the Lord’s hands.”⁸⁶

Wisdom: It is easy for spouses to get out of step with one another. When we reject them, we often have to pursue them. Don’t let the “not now” be the final word. When we don’t pursue one another distance creeps in. Untended it moves toward divorce. In our Christian experience, we have often put off times of intimacy with God, failing to pursue Him, until we feel spiritually cold and distant. While we are often unfaithful, He is always faithful.

Typological Interpretation: The reality of distance & intimacy reflect the realities of assurance in the life of the Christian. At times we make use of the means of grace and feel close to Christ.

⁸⁶ Dillow, pp. 118.

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At times we neglect them and our selfishness dominates us so we feel far off from Him. But nothing, ultimately, can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. He will again delight in us, and the Church.

Conclusion: