

The Song of Songs

LESSON 8: DREAMS AND OTHER NONSENSE

Intro:

BIG IDEA: Dreams, while good, can lead to _____ expectations that crash on the _____ of reality.

“Love is a brand of madness.” **Tom Gledhill**⁵⁷

Dreams are like fantasy.

“We are sexual beings who live out our sexuality through stories and fantasies of desire and beauty. ... We unwittingly inherit sexual scripts from our body, our family, the culture, the church, our friends, pornography, past sexual abuse, and countless other sources.” **Allender & Longman**⁵⁸

Intimacy

Variety

Power

Violation of a taboo

“Most sexual fantasies are not mere replay of direct sexual experience but a series of images or scenes woven from past experience, desire, observation, and outright creative imagination. ... We are sexual beings that are aroused and moved by sexual stories and scripts that most often remain internal and secretive and at times even hidden from ourselves.” **Allender & Longman**⁵⁹

A Frustrating Dream

On my bed by night
I sought him whom my soul loves;
I sought him, but found him not.
² I will rise now and go about the city,
in the streets and in the squares;
I will seek him whom my soul loves.
I sought him, but found him not.
³ The watchmen found me
as they went about in the city.

⁵⁷ Gledhill, pp. 146.

⁵⁸ Allender & Longman, pp. 89.

⁵⁹ Allender & Longman, pp. 90-91.

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“Have you seen him whom my soul loves?”

⁴ 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 who conceived me.

⁵ I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
by the gazelles or the does of the field,
that you not stir up or awaken love
until it pleases.

- The opening of this poem is mysterious. She sought him on her bed? Is this about a dream?
- Did she wake up and find him gone?
Did she leave her home? Kinlaw thinks it is all a dream.⁶⁰
- “*I sought him*” ____ x. “*I will seek him*” one additional time. “*Found him not*” ____ x.
- “*Him who my soul loves.*” ____ x . She loves him with all that she is.
- He was not found in her bed (?). She got out of bed and searched for him in the streets.
- She moves from _____ to near _____. It seems unlikely a woman would do this. Dangerous!
- Irony: she can’t find him, but is found by the _____.
- Soon she found him and would not let him go.
They can’t remain in _____ with this desire.
- She is the _____. She lets her desire be known. Women are not merely _____ receivers of attention.
- Her desire was to bring him home, to the _____.



⁶⁰ Kinlaw, pp. 1225.

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- Her “*mother’s house*” or “*my mother-house*,”⁶¹ the “*chamber of conception*” may refer to her _____.
- Longman thinks this is pattern: “absence and longing lead to search and discovery, which results in intimacy and joy.”⁶²
- She repeats the warning about _____ up love too soon.
- One way we can stir up love too soon is our _____ life. Her dreamings/desires have resulted in _____ or _____ desire.
- Sexual longing, or lust, can _____ us to the _____ aspects of another person’s personality, _____ and behavior.

Allegorical Interpretation: It is “the sweetest thing in the world to enjoy communion with Christ, it is the saddest thing in the world to a believer to be without the Lord’s manifest presence and fellowship.”⁶³ This a call to seek Christ in His Word and the sacraments.

Dramatic Interpretation: She is dreaming of what life will be like after marriage. At times the king will be away and she will miss him. Often this is seen as a call to “count the cost” of marrying a particular person.

Wisdom Literature: In our world, fallen as it is, finding love is difficult. Often even when we think we’ve found it, it can slip away. True intimacy is only attained after any obstacles. Cherish it!

Christological Interpretation: The feelings she experiences in the absence of her lover/husband are a reflection of the feelings we should experience in the physical absence of Christ. Feelings of His absence should cause us to seek him with all our heart.

These 2 are similar but the allegorical misses the application to human relationships and jumps right to seeking Christ.

A Royal Procession

⁶ What is that coming up from the wilderness
like columns of smoke,
perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,
with all the fragrant powders of a merchant?

⁷ Behold, it is the litter of Solomon!
Around it are sixty mighty men,
some of the mighty men of Israel,

⁸ all of them wearing swords
and expert in war,
each with his sword at his thigh,
against terror by night.

⁹ King Solomon made himself a carriage

⁶¹ Gledhill, pp. 145.

⁶² Longman, pp. 129.

⁶³ Fortner, pp. 67.

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from the wood of Lebanon.

¹⁰ He made its posts of silver,
its back of gold, its seat of purple;
its interior was inlaid with love
by the daughters of Jerusalem.

¹¹ Go out, O daughters of Zion,
and look upon King Solomon,
with the crown with which his mother crowned him
on the day of his wedding,
on the day of the gladness of his heart.

- Longman sees this as an _____ poem. Gledhill sees this as the beginning of a _____ that runs into chapter 5
- Option 1: _____ approach. It is an earlier myth about a sacred marriage rite adapted by Israel.
- Option 2: an actual _____ that took place and was associated with Solomon.
- Option 3: a poem that draws on the _____ of Solomon's life to describe the beauty of a wedding in the heart of a woman anticipating her own wedding day.
- Option 4: there is a contrast between the _____, and lack of _____, of Solomon's wedding and the wedding of our _____ (Duguid).
- A better translation may be "*who is that coming*" which provides the initial contrast.
- The bridal train is visible in the distance, and fills the _____ with a beautiful aroma.
- The person riding in the train is unclear: _____ pronouns but it also seems to be _____.
- The perfume, made from myrrh and frankincense, conveys _____. They were not native to Israel, but brought in from _____ or _____.
- Solomon is surrounded by his _____ - twice as many as accompanied David (2 Sam. 23:18-23).
- The carriage, like the palace, is made from the _____ of Lebanon.
- It is actually a palanquin or _____, a couch on which you can recline which is carried by others.
- It is beautiful, covered in precious _____ and fabric.



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- The poem focuses on Solomon's _____ and _____ through these images.
- Often people mimic the _____ on their wedding day: horse-drawn carriages, limos etc.



Allegorical Interpretation: It is a picture of the Bride of Christ safely traveling thru the wilderness to the awaiting arms of Christ for the wedding supper of the Lamb. She has been made beautiful by Christ and his many graces given to us. “The believer’s heart is his bed. He lies all night between our breasts, and reveals his love in our hearts.”⁶⁴ The Church expresses her admiration of Christ. “The purple canopy, or covering of this chariot, is the atonement of Christ. It is dyed in the purple blood of our royal King, which he shed to redeem us at Calvary.”⁶⁵

Dramatic Interpretation: She is now looking back to her wedding. A bridal procession carries her from the foothills in the north to the palace. BTW, that would be a long ride.

Wisdom Literature: Solomon’s glory is superficial, but it is not what has captured this man’s heart. He longs for the simple beauty of his beloved.

Christological Focus: In the Book of Revelation, it is the Whore of Babylon that is opulent and draws attention to herself. Christ’s bride is adorned simply and purely. It is she who enjoys an intimate relationship with Him forever. The dressed to the nines Prostitute is banished, and so are those who loved her luxuries.

“For many couples it is too dangerous to tell the other where one’s thoughts go or what images are sustaining the arousal. And it is not our suggestion that those images be wantonly shared with one another.” Allender & Longman⁶⁶

Conclusion:

⁶⁴ Fortner, pp. 80.

⁶⁵ Fortner, pp. 83.

⁶⁶ Allender & Longman, pp. 98.