

Pictures of Love

See love for what it is, and then speak it to one another

Song of Solomon 1.2–2.7

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Persuasion:

I. Song of Solomon 1.2–6 – The Remembrance of Love

- 2 Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth—
For your love is better than wine.
- 3 Because of the fragrance of your good ointments,
Your name is ointment poured forth;
Therefore the virgins love you.
- 4 Draw me away!
We will run after you.
The king has brought me into his chambers.
We will be glad and rejoice in you.
We will remember your love more than wine.
Rightly do they love you.
- 5 I am dark, but lovely,
O daughters of Jerusalem,
Like the tents of Kedar,
Like the curtains of Solomon.
- 6 Do not look upon me, because I am dark,
Because the sun has tanned me.
My mother's sons were angry with me;
They made me the keeper of the vineyards,
But my own vineyard I have not kept.
(Song 1.2–6)

A. Notice that the first line is in the third person,

1. which does not necessarily mean he was not present, but
2. she announced her love of him as though before a vast audience.

B. How then does this magnificent love song begin?

1. She starts with her desire for his kisses.

- a) Why did she say the kisses of his mouth,
 - b) why was, “let him kiss me” not enough?
2. What reason does she give for wanting his kisses?
- a) How love was better than wine.
 - b) She would much rather have his lips touching her lips than wine.
3. How is love better than wine?
- a) The best wine requires skill, but love requires greater skill.
 - b) Love lasts longer.
 - c) Love is personal.
- C. According to verse 3 why did the virgins love him?
1. He developed a reputation for the fragrance of his good ointments, and
 2. so his name matched his ointments.
 - a) His love was better than wine.
 - b) His name was ointment.
- D. Thinking of his kisses, thinking of the fragrance of his good ointments, and thinking of his name as ointment pour forth,
1. she requests of him that he draw her away.
 2. Why would she make that request?
 - a) She either wanted him to take away from her current life, or
 - b) she wanted the two of them to go away together.
- E. The second line has the daughters of Jerusalem saying that they would run after him, according to the Hebrew, which is masculine singular.
1. Was this so that they might not be alone while unmarried?
 2. Was this that they might attend to her while married, such as queens have?
- F. Here she referred to him as the king.

1. Where did he take her?
 - a) He brought her into his chambers.
 2. How did the daughters of Jerusalem respond to what he did?
 - a) They celebrated her, according to the Hebrew feminine singular.
 - b) What did they declare?
 - (1) They said they would remember his love more than wine.
 - (2) And she said rightly did they, the daughters love him.
- G. In verses 5 and 6, she explains that she had not been nobility, nor lived the life of royalty, but she worked in the vineyards.
1. What outward sign did she have that showed she worked in the fields?
 - a) Twice she referred to her suntan,
 - b) explaining that her brothers in anger made her work in the vineyards.
 2. She did not want to be judged by her outward appearance, but
 - a) by what she was inwardly,
 - b) that is why she said that she was lovely,
 - (1) she was different on the inside as opposed to her rough appearance.
 - (2) True beauty is inward.
 - (a) 1Pe 3.1–6
 - (b) 1Ti 2.9–15
 3. To what did she compare her outward appearance?
 - a) The tents of Kedar and the curtains of Solomon.
 - b) Did those tents and curtains have dark colors, but a high value?
 - c) Or was it the rough and weathered appearance to which she referred?
- H. In ages past, a dark suntan meant that one was a laborer, but now

1. it can mean either one who works in the sun, or
 2. it can mean one who does not have to work but has time to enjoy the sun.
 - a) John Waddey says, “It is a trait of all cultures that beauty is the opposite of the norm” (p. 102).
- I. To whom does she say these things?
1. She says them to the daughters of Jerusalem.
 2. Perhaps these were the other women in Solomon’s court, his wives, concubines, and virgins.
 - a) When Solomon took her in, they may have instantly judged her as not being like them, and so they rejected her.
 - b) Therefore, she urges them not to judge her outward appearance, but
 - (1) to see her for what she was on the inside,
 - (2) which is what Solomon did.
- J. In the fifth line of verse 6,
1. she indicates that she has not been able to keep her own vineyard,
 2. which might be a reference to herself.
- II. Song of Solomon 1.7–11 – The Ornaments of Love
- 7 Tell me, O you whom I love,
Where you feed your flock,
Where you make it rest at noon.
For why should I be as one who veils herself
By the flocks of your companions?
 - 8 If you do not know, O fairest among women,
Follow in the footsteps of the flock,
And feed your little goats
Beside the shepherds’ tents.
 - 9 I have compared you, my love,
To my filly among Pharaoh’s chariots.
 - 10 Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments,

Your neck with chains of gold.
11 We will make you ornaments of gold
With studs of silver.
(Song 1.7–11)

A. In verse 7, after having addressed the other women, she addresses Solomon.

1. She desired his presence.
2. Therefore, she wanted to know where he was working to visit him.
 - a) What does she mean when she refers to veiling herself?
 - b) While in the presence of strangers,
 - (1) she veiled herself, but
 - (2) she wanted to be open and relaxed in his presence.

B. It appears that he then plays a game with her in verse 8.

1. Why do you think he answered that way?
2. What answer did he give?
 - a) She could follow in the footsteps of the flock, feed her little goats, and
 - b) she would be by the shepherd's tent.
 - (1) She could find him easily.
 - (2) It seems that in the last line he gives the most obvious clue.

C. What does he call her in the first line of verse 9?

1. He refers to her as his love.
2. Why call her, "My love"? What does that mean?
 - a) To him, she embodies love.
 - b) Throughout the Song he calls her, "My love,"
 - c) whereas, she refers to him as her "beloved."

D. To what does he compare her?

1. She is like Solomon's filly among Pharaoh's chariots.
2. Does this mean she is the best, or that she gets the attention of others?

a) G. Lloyd Carr notes,

“...in ancient Egypt after the middle of the second millennium BC, mares were never used to draw chariots. Stallions, hitched in pairs, were the standard motive-power of both war-chariots and other royal vehicles. Yet the text here has the feminine singular mare. The preposition linked with chariots is better translated ‘among’ rather than as a possessive. These factors suggest that the comparison here underscores the girl's attractiveness. A mare loose among the royal stallions would create intense excitement” (p. 83).

3. In cultures built around the horse,

- a) as compared to modern America built around the car,
- b) people placed high values on horses.

(1) See how God describes a horse in Job 39.19–25.

(a) Solomon recognized the value of horses (1Ki 4.26).

(b) Egypt provided him with excellent horses (1Ki 10.26–29).

(2) Think of the beauty and value of royal horses and chariots,

(3) then see what Solomon said of the Shulamite.

E. Does verse 10 picture the beauty of verse 9?

1. In verse 9, he compared her to his filly among Pharaoh's chariots, and
2. such horses had decorations upon them.
 - a) Did she wear ornaments that highlighted her beauty like on a filly?
 - b) Even as a filly might wear decorations around its neck, so she did as well.

- F. The daughters of Jerusalem then promise to make her ornaments of gold with studs of silver, showing how they have accepted her into the royal court.

III. Song of Solomon 1.12–14 The Perfume of Love

- 12 While the king is at his table,
My spikenard sends forth its fragrance.
- 13 A bundle of myrrh is my beloved to me,
That lies all night between my breasts.
- 14 My beloved is to me a cluster of henna blooms
In the vineyards of En Gedi.
(Song 1.12–14)

A. What is going on in verse 12?

1. Carr describes Spikenard, "...a very expensive perfume/ointment derived from a plant native to the Himalayan region of India. The scarcity, and hence the value, of this exotic fragrance made it much in demand as a love-potion" (pp. 84, 85).

B. What would a bundle of myrrh be like on your chest during the night?

1. It would certainly be pleasant.
 - a) Myrrh was part of the anointing oil of the priests (Exo 30.22–33).
 - b) The wise men brought myrrh to Jesus at His birth.
 - c) Nicodemus brought to Jesus at His death.

C. To what else did she compare him?

1. He was like a cluster of henna blooms in the vineyards of En Gedi.
2. Where was En Gedi?
3. What is the henna bloom?

D. In verse 9, he compared her to his filly among Pharaoh's chariots, and

1. from there they began to make beautiful interchanges of comparisons.

2. In verses 13 and 14, she then compared him to a bundle of myrrh and henna blooms.

E. Next, they intensify the comparisons, and watch how they interact with one another. This is my favorite part of the Song of Solomon.

IV. Song of Solomon 1.15–2.3 – The Comparisons of Love

- 15 Behold, you are fair, my love!
Behold, you are fair!
You have dove's eyes.
- 16 Behold, you are handsome, my beloved!
Yes, pleasant!
Also our bed is green.
- 17 The beams of our houses are cedar,
And our rafters of fir.
- 2.1 I am the rose of Sharon,
And the lily of the valleys.
- 2 Like a lily among thorns,
So is my love among the daughters.
- 3 Like an apple tree among the trees of the woods,
So is my beloved among the sons.

I sat down in his shade with great delight,
And his fruit was sweet to my taste.
(Song 1.15–2.3)

A. She is so fair to him that he compares her eyes to what?

1. He says that she has dove's eyes.
2. What are dove's eyes like?
 - a) Perhaps we can appreciate the meaning if we compare them to the eyes of other birds, such as bird's of prey.
 - b) How would you compare the eyes of a dove with that of the eyes of an eagle?

3. Solomon emphasized the beauty of her eyes, but perhaps more than that he emphasized what her look meant to him.
- B. In the first two lines of verse 16, she comes back with a compliment,
1. calling him handsome, and
 2. she reveals what she meant by that, he was pleasant.
 - a) Did she mean pleasant looking or
 - b) was his personality pleasant or both?
- C. Then in the last line of verse 16 through 17, she referred to their homes.
1. Their bed was green.
 - a) Some translations present the idea of luxuriant.
 - b) Carr says, "...the canopy of their love-bed is the leafy branches of the trees of the garden" (p. 87).
 2. The beams of their houses were cedar.
 3. Their rafters were of fir.
 - a) Why does she suddenly bring this up?
 - b) What is the meaning of these images?
- D. Perhaps overwhelmed by what he has said of her,
1. she in humility used a comparison for herself, but
 2. it was not a flattering comparison, as we might be tempted to think,
 - a) she compares herself to the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys.
 - b) While she did use a flower comparison,
 - (1) which we typically as beautiful, but
 - (2) what she really did was compare herself to the average flower of the field, and

- (a) that in her judgment she was no different from any other woman.
 - (b) Remember how she first referred to herself to the daughters of Jerusalem,
 - i) that she did not want them to look at her outward appearance, but
 - ii) at what she was inwardly.
 - c) Is there the possibility, in spite of what we read and seen in the Song of Solomon,
 - (1) that she was not attractive outwardly, but
 - (2) that the point of the Song is she was to him?
- E. Then see what Solomon did cleverly in verse 2,
- 1. using her imagery, but
 - 2. not in the way she used it.
 - a) True, one lily among a thousand does not stand out, but
 - b) one lily among thorns does stand out, and
 - (1) to him she was like a lily among thorns.
 - (2) Others may not have seen her as a beauty that stood out among women, but because she belonged to him, she stood out for him.
- F. I think verse 3 shows that she liked what he did, so
- 1. she used his same tactic, comparing him to an apple tree among the trees of the woods,
 - 2. although he had not said anything about himself, but
 - a) she headed him off,
 - b) letting him know just how special he was to her.
 - (1) How much would an apple tree stand out in a forest?

- (2) While we admire all the trees, yet,
 - (a) if the apple tree had fruit on it,
 - (b) it would catch our attention more than the others.
3. She continued with her comparison, showing he was like an apple tree to her.
 - a) She could sit down under his shade with great delight.
 - b) She could eat his fruit, which was sweet to her taste.
- (1) What did she mean by those images?

V. Song of Solomon 2.4–7 – The Banner of Love

- 4 He brought me to the banqueting house,
And his banner over me was love.
- 5 Sustain me with cakes of raisins,
Refresh me with apples,
For I am lovesick.
- 6 His left hand is under my head,
And his right hand embraces me.
- 7 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
By the gazelles or by the does of the field,
Do not stir up nor awaken love
Until it pleases.
(Song 2.4–7)

- A. Speaking of eating, she said that he brought her to the banqueting house.
 1. There he had a banner, and the banner was love.
 2. He was not ashamed of her.
- B. What did she need from the banquet?
 1. She needed cakes of raisins to sustain her.
 2. She needed apples to refresh her.
 - a) Why did she need sustaining and refreshing?

- b) She was lovesick.
- C. In verse 6, she pictured his embrace of her.
- 1. She felt secure in his arms.
 - 2. Why do we like embracing or hugging?
- D. While in this embrace, she charged the daughters of Jerusalem by the gazelles or by the does of the field that they would not stir up nor awaken love until it pleases.
- 1. Normally when we say a charge, it is declared by some authority.
 - a) For example, 1Th 5.27.
 - 2. What then did she mean by charging the daughters of Jerusalem not to do something and that she made this charge by the gazelles or the does of the field?
 - a) Gazelles or does are not aggressive.
 - b) They are timid creatures.
 - (1) Thus, she pleaded with the daughters of Jerusalem that they be quiet and gentle like gazelles and does.
 - (2) It could also be that the love of Solomon and the Shulamite was like a gazelle, and had to be treated gently.
- E. What did she not want them to do?
- 1. She did not want them to stir nor awaken love.
 - 2. What did she mean by that?

Exhortation:

- I. What shall we do with this section of the Song of Solomon?
- II. Treat one another royally.
- III. Be humble before one another (Pro 27.2).
- IV. Speak love to one another.