

Love Lives

Song of Solomon 8.3–7

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Persuasion:

I. Love Embraces – Song of Solomon 8.3

3 His left hand is under my head,
And his right hand embraces me.
(Song 8.3)

A. Notice that verses 3 and 4 parallel 2.6, 7.

B. Why does she say this?

1. Is it a way of telling how it should be?
2. Is she simply telling us the story so that we can picture it?
 - a) Are they laying down or standing?
 - b) Solomon had written in Ecclesiastes 3 that there is a time for embracing.

C. Love is intimate.

D. Love wants to embrace.

E. Love wants to be embraced.

II. Love Waits – Song of Solomon 8.4

4 I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
Do not stir up nor awaken love
Until it pleases.
(Song 8.4)

A. She had said this before.

1. 2.7
2. 3.5

B. This may help us to understand what was going on in verse 3.

C. Timing is everything.

“Love should not be stirred up before its proper time, because the love relationship, unless carefully guarded, may cause grief instead of the great joy it should bring to the human heart (cf. 2:7; 3:5). Neither is it necessary to seek to arouse love, for worthy love will awaken of itself in its own time” (Sierd Woudstra, p. 603).

D. Love waits for the best time for pleasing.

E. Love waits for lovers to have their time together.

III. Love Reminds – Song of Solomon 8.5

5 Who is this coming up from the wilderness,
Leaning upon her beloved?
I awakened you under the apple tree.
There your mother brought you forth;
There she who bore you brought you forth.
(Song 8.5)

A. This scene reminds us of 3.6,

1. which referred to Solomon, but
2. here she has the royal approach.
 - a) Compare what he said about her also in 6.10.
 - b) The woman speaking this verse saw the Shulamite leaning upon Solomon.
 - (1) Was she tired?
 - (2) No, it was the leaning of love,
 - (a) to be held,
 - (b) to be caressed.
 - c) See also 8.3.

- B. This sounds like someone, undoubtedly a woman, who participated in the birth of the Shulamite.
- C. She seems to be happy for the Shulamite,
 - 1. remembering her humble beginning as a newborn, but
 - 2. now exalted as queen to the famous Solomon.
- D. Love reminds.
- E. Love rejoices.
- F. Love announces.

IV. Love Lives – Song of Solomon 8.6, 7

- 6 Set me as a seal upon your heart,
As a seal upon your arm;
For love is as strong as death,
Jealousy as cruel as the grave;
Its flames are flames of fire,
A most vehement flame.
- 7 Many waters cannot quench love,
Nor can the floods drown it.
If a man would give for love
All the wealth of his house,
It would be utterly despised.
(Song 8.6, 7)

A. Leland Ryken says,

“The moment of epiphany toward which the entire book moves: a request for permanence in love—the most beautiful such request in all the world’s love poetry” (*Words of Delight*, p. 282).

“The most customary way to structure a long work of literature is to move it toward some climactic moment of epiphany or insight near the end” (pp. 287, 288).

“Here is the interpretive framework that explains what kind of love we have been looking at throughout the book. Love songs the world over are full of

vows of eternal constancy, since love at its most intense wants to be bound to the beloved. True or permanent love is the subject of the Song of Solomon” (p. 288).

B. Notice the negative comparisons:

1. death,
2. the grave,
3. fire,
4. floods, and
5. despising,
 - a) which all serve to show
 - b) the strength and vibrancy of love.

C. What did she want from Solomon?

1. To be the seal upon his heart.
 - a) This probably meant that she wanted his heart for her alone.
 - b) She wanted to be the one that closed up his heart and sealed.
2. To be as a seal upon his arm.
 - a) Is this a way of saying that she wanted to be his right-arm woman?
 - b) Or was this like the signet ring of a king, which he used to seal documents?

D. What explanation did she give for wanting to be his seal?

1. Love is as strong as death.
 - a) How strong is death?
 - b) Even as we can escape death, so
 - (1) when one loves another,
 - (2) it cannot be escaped.

2. Jealousy is as cruel as the grave, and fiery.
 - a) How cruel is the grave.
 - b) It robs forever.
 - (1) She wanted to be the seal upon his heart and arm, because
 - (2) she wanted him exclusively.
 3. Many waters cannot quench love.
 4. Floods cannot drown love.
 5. Others do not appreciate the sacrifices of love, which did not matter to her.
- E. Love wants to be permanent.
- F. Love wants to be in the heart of the other.
- G. Love wants to live forever.
- H. Love cannot be stopped.
- I. Love cannot die.
- J. Love wants to sacrifice, even if not appreciated.

Exhortation:

I. What shall we do with this section of the Song of Solomon?

- A. Love respects the time of lovers.
- B. Timing is everything and love works for the time and waits for the time.