

ADDRESSES ON THE SONG OF SOLOMON

by

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CHAPTER FOUR

SONG OF SOLOMON 4:1-11

“**Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee**” (Song of Solomon 4:7).

IT is not strange that as we think of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Heavenly Bridegroom, our souls are moved to their deepest depths, but it is hard for us to realize that He has a greater love for us than we could ever possibly have for Him. And so here in this fourth chapter of the Song of Solomon, we hear the bridegroom expressing to his loved one the feelings of his heart toward her, and as we read these words, as we listen to these heart-breathings, we should remember that the speaker is really our Lord Jesus Christ, and that the bride may be looked at in various ways, as we have already seen.

Prophetically, we may think of the bride as Israel, and the Lord God rejoicing over her in that coming day; individually, we may think of the bride as representing any saved soul, and the Lord expressing His delight in the one He has redeemed to Himself by His precious blood; or as that Church which Christ loved and for which He gave Himself.

So we may see in these utterances His delight in His Church.

In verses one to seven of this fourth chapter, you will notice that He addresses Himself directly to the bride, and He speaks of her beauties as He sees them in a very wonderful way. The imagery, of course, as throughout this book, is strictly oriental, and goes considerably beyond what we prosaic occidentals are in the habit of using. And yet as we read it, we see that there is nothing coarse, nothing that would bring the blush to the cheek of modesty.

It is the fullest, most rapturous delight of the bridegroom in the bride, but every expression is in keeping with the holiness of this blessed little book.

First, he speaks of her general appearance. Four times over in this chapter, he tells her of her fairness. Twice he declares it in verse one. He says, **“Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair.”** In verse seven we read, **“Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.”** Again in verse ten, **“How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! How much better is thy love than wine!”**

And yet she had no fairness in herself, as we had no beauty in ourselves.

In an earlier chapter we heard her say, **“I am black as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.”** But he says, as he looks at her through love’s eyes, **“Thou art all fair.”** Does it not bring before us the wondrous thing that our Saviour has done for every one of us who have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ?

We would never have been saved at all if we had not realized in some measure our own wretchedness, our own sinfulness, our unlovely character. It was because of this that we fled to Him for refuge and confessed that we were anything but fair, anything but beautiful. We took our places side by side with Job and cried, **“I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes”** (Job 42:5, 6).

We knelt beside Isaiah and exclaimed, **“I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips”** (Isaiah 6:5). We took part with Peter and cried, **“Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord”** (Luke 5:8). But when we took that place of repentance, of acknowledgement of our own natural deformity and unloveliness, He looked upon us in His grace and said, **“Thou art perfect in Mine eyes by the comeliness which I have put upon thee.”**

And now as those who have been washed from our sins in His own precious blood, He addresses us in the rapturous way that we have here, **“Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee.”**

What! No spot in us, when we were stained by sin, when we were polluted by iniquity? Once it could be said of us, **“From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment”** (Isaiah 1:6). And now His holy eyes cannot find one spot of sin, nor any sign of iniquity.

Let this give us to understand what grace hath wrought.

“Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me!”

It is only God’s matchless grace that has thus made us accepted in the Beloved.

Then you will notice that the bridegroom looking upon his bride speaks of her person in the most glowing terms, referring to seven different things.

First, he speaks of her eyes and says to her, “Thou hast doves’ eyes within thy locks.” What does that mean? The dove was a clean bird, the bird of love and sorrow, the bird offered in sacrifice upon the altar, and thus typified our Lord Jesus as the heavenly One. And now he sees reflected in his bride that which speaks of himself. “**Thou hast doves’ eyes.**” We may not have stopped to realize it, but the dove is very keen of sight.

Recently in an eastern city, a poor carrier pigeon fell exhausted on one of those high buildings, and somebody working on the roof of the building caught it utterly unable to rise. They found attached to it a message that had come over three thousand miles, and that little dove had seen its way all along the miles, and; had flown on and on until at last it had brought the message to that eastern city. When our blessed Lord says to us, “**Thou art fair, My love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves’ eyes within thy locks,**” it means not only that we have eyes of beauty, but eyes quick to discern the precious and wonderful things that are hidden for us in His holy Word. Do we respond to this, or do these doves’ eyes sometimes take to wandering, going out after the things of a poor godless world?

He says, “Thy hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from Mount Gilead.” He refers to the Syrian goat with its long silken hair. One can imagine the beauty of the scene, a flock of goats up yonder on the mountain-side. The bridegroom says, “Your hair reminds me of that.”

Hair, in Scripture, is a woman’s glory. That is one reason why she is not supposed to follow the styles of the world and cut away her beauty and glory. You remember the woman of old who loved Jesus and knelt at His feet and washed them with her tears and wiped them with her hair. She was using that which spoke of her beauty and her glory to minister to Him, the loving, blessed Saviour.

Some of my sisters will forgive me if I say that it would be difficult for them to dry anyone’s feet with their hair! Yes, her hair is a woman’s glory and beauty, and, incidentally, that is exactly the reason why the Word of God tells the woman to cover her head when she comes into the presence of the Lord. **When she comes in before Him whose glory fills the heavens, to join with His worshipping people, she is to cover her own glory that no one’s attention may be distracted, but fixed on Christ Himself.**

When you get the inwardness of these things, you find there is a beauty and a privilege in them that does away with all legality, and also does away with leaving us free to follow our own judgment.

In Scripture, some things are commanded because they are right, and other things are right because they are commanded. When He makes known His will, the subject Christian bows to His Word, assured that there is a reason for it, though he does not always understand it. How He delights to behold His obedient people; how He glories in their moral beauty!

Then, in the third place, he speaks of her teeth, and we may think that strange, but there is nothing more beautiful than a lovely set of pearls half-hidden in the mouth.

“Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are shorn, which came up from the washing; whereof every one bear twins, and none is barren among them.”

The two sets of teeth answer to the twins in their cleanliness and sparkling beauty, so attractive in his eyes. And how important the teeth are, spiritually speaking, because they speak to us of mastication, of the ability to properly lay hold of and digest our food.

I am afraid there are a number of toothless Christians from that standpoint.

Some say, “I do not know how it is, but other people read their Bibles and find such wonderful things, when I do not find much in mine.”

The trouble is you have such poor teeth, you do not masticate your spiritual food properly. It is by meditation that we appropriate our daily provision. David said, **“My meditation of Him shall be sweet”** (Psalm 104: 34).

Until He gives you a new set of spiritual teeth, you had better use some second-hand ones. Thank God for what others have found; read their books, and get something that way! By-and-by if you will wait on Him, the Lord will give you back your teeth, even if you have lost them, and you will be able to enjoy the truth for yourself.

The third verse is most lovely: “Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely.”

This is different from that abominable custom of today that leads so many women, of course not consistent Christian women, but those of the world and Christians living on the edge of the world, to put that filthy stuff upon their lips that makes them look like a cross between poor, low women of the street and circus performers.

Here it is the red lip of health, of spiritual health.

“Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely.” Why? Because it is speech that has to do with Him! The bride loves to speak of the bridegroom, as the Christian loves to speak of Christ, and her lips are like a thread of scarlet, for she exalts that blood by which she has been brought nigh to God.

Every real Christian will have lips like a thread of scarlet, for he gladly confesses that he owes everything for eternity to that precious atoning blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is not only when we gather at the table of the Lord, when we bow in worship as we take the bread and cup as from His blessed pierced hand, that we love to sing and speak and think of the blood; but always!

Everywhere, at all times, the believer delights to remember that he has been redeemed to God by the precious blood of Christ.

You will find the scarlet thread running right through this Book.

God has said:

- **“The life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your soul; it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.”**
- **“When I see the blood, I will pass over you.”**
- **“We have been redeemed to God by the precious blood of Christ, as of an unblemished spotless lamb, foreknown indeed from the foundation of the world, but manifest in these last times for you.”**
- **“The blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, cleanseth us from all sin.”**

And when at last we get home to heaven, our lips will be like a thread of scarlet still, for we will join in that new song and sing our praises to Him who was **“slain and has loosed us from our sins in His own blood,”** and we will render adoration unto the Lamb whose blood was shed, that we might be made kings and priests unto God.

O Christian, make much of the blood, speak often of the blood. Do not be satisfied with the namby-pamby, bloodless religion of the day. When you ask the question, “Are you a Christian?” and you get the ready answer, “Oh, yes; I belong to the church,” then see that your lips are like a thread of scarlet and ask, “Are you trusting in the precious blood of the Lord Jesus alone for salvation?”

So often you will find that the idle profession made a moment ago was only an empty thing. They are Christians in name only. There are thousands about us who know nothing of the cleansing value of the blood of Jesus.

“Thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.” You know the temple speaks of the dome of thought, and so the bride’s thought is about her bridegroom. She loves to think of him, to meditate upon the treasures found in his word. Then he delights in her as she delights in him.

In the next verse we have the strength of her character, given her by divine grace. “Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armory, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.”

David’s tower, you see, is the place of defense, the place of strength, and the bride here is one of those who can stand up straight and boldly look the world in the face, assured of the love and protection of her matchless bridegroom. And so we are called upon to be **“strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.”**

The head won't be hanging down like a bulrush when our hearts are taken up with Him. There will be a boldness that is never known when out of communion with Him.

Then, last of all, in the seventh place he speaks of that which tells of affection. "Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies." Her heart is his, her whole being belongs to him, and he rejoices in her. We may well sing:

"Jesus, Thou art enough
The mind and heart to fill;
Thy patient life—to calm the soul;
Thy love—its fear dispel.

"O fix our earnest gaze
So wholly, Lord, on Thee;
That, with Thy beauty occupied,
We elsewhere none may see."

As we joy in Him, we will find that He will joy in us. You remember what Faber wrote:

"That Thou should'st so delight in me
And be the God Thou art,
Is darkness to my intellect,
But sunlight to my heart."

I cannot understand why He should say, "**Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee.**"

I cannot comprehend such matchless grace, but my heart can rejoice in it, and so I love Him in return because He first loved me.

Following this section in which we have the bridegroom's joy in the bride, in verses eight to eleven we have his summons to companionship with himself.

The bridegroom would call his bride away from everything else that has occupied her in order to find in him her all in all.

"Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards. Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck. How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices!"

He sees her upon the mountainside. And, you know, the mountain is the place of privilege, the place of beauty, of worldly grandeur and glory, but it is also the place of danger. The leopard's lair is there and the lion's den, and as he beholds her there alone, he cries, "**Come with me from Lebanon . . . from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards.**"

Our blessed Lord wants the companionship of His redeemed people.

How sweet those words, **“Come with Me!”**

He never calls His people from anything, either the beautiful things of the world or the dangerous things (and after all, the beautiful is often the most dangerous), simply to take a path alone, but it is always, **“Come with Me,”** and you cannot afford, you who love His name, to draw back, to say, “There are other things so lovely, so beautiful, that my soul must have; I cannot leave them to go with Thee.”

He who died for you, He who left heaven’s glory in order to redeem your soul, calls to you and says, **“Come with Me.”**

Can you draw back and say, “No; it is too much to ask; I cannot leave these surroundings; I cannot leave these worldly follies; I cannot quit this place of danger for Thy sake, Lord Jesus?”

Surely there is not very much love there. You need to get down before Him and confess the sin of your cold-heartedness and indifference, and ask for a fresh vision of the love that He manifested in the cross that your heart may be weaned away from everything else.

Dr. Watts has put it:

“He calls me from the lion’s den,
From this wild world of beasts and men,
To Zion where His glories are,
No Lebanon is half so fair.
Nor dens of prey, nor flowery plains,
Nor earthly joys, nor earthly pains,
Shall hold my feet or force my stay,
When Christ invites my soul away.”

Does your heart respond to that? What He desires above everything else is to see His people finding satisfaction in His company.

And then in the closing two verses of this section, verses ten and eleven, we read,

“How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices! Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb; honey and milk are under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon.”

You remember in the first chapter it is she who said, looking up to him, **“We will remember thy love more than wine.”**

Now it is he who responds to her and says,

“How much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices! Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk are under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon.”

His people should be fragrant with the sweetness of Christ.

It is said of the disciples of old, **“They took knowledge that they had been with Jesus,”** and if we are in His company, there will be a rich fragrance of holiness, of heavenliness, about us wherever we are found.

A minister tells of riding with another preacher on top of a bus in London, England. As they came down a poor-looking street with a big factory on one side, they were halted, and they noticed the doors of the factory had opened and hundreds of girls were pouring out and making their way across the street to a lunch room; suddenly the air was filled with a sweet delightful fragrance.

The visitor said, “Isn’t that remarkable in a factory district here in London?—such wondrous fragrance! It seems like the odor of a great garden. You would not think of finding such fragrance in this district.”

“Oh, you don’t understand,” said his friend; “this is one of the largest perfume-factories in all the British Isles, and these young people are working constantly among the perfumes, and every where they go the fragrance remains upon their garments.”

Beloved, if you and I are living in fellowship with Christ, if we keep in touch with Him, everywhere we go His fragrance will be manifested in our lives.

~ end of chapter 4 ~

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