

## Song of Solomon

### The awakening of love, ch. 2 v. 8 - ch. 3 v. 5.

*[Please note: sections in blue type are not broadcast on every radio station.  
King James Version of the Scriptures used unless otherwise stated.]*

#### Introduction

Our current series is on the Song of Solomon, sometimes called The Song of Songs. The six talks in the series follow the divisions and titles given by Hamilton Smith, in his book, The Song of Songs. If you do not have a copy of this book, I would thoroughly recommend it. Hamilton Smith wrote in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and his ministry has been a blessing to many Christians. He was a cousin of the respected Bible teacher, F. B. Hole, and lived from 1862-1943.

Before we go any further, let me say that today, just as I usually do in my talks, I will be reading and quoting from the Authorised Version of the Bible, sometimes called the King James Version, and these references will be listed in the transcript which can be found on our website, [www.truthfortoday.org.uk](http://www.truthfortoday.org.uk) Please feel free to download any of our talks to listen to, or print them off to read. If you have been blessed by our ministry, then please tell your Christian friends about us.

Last week the title for the first canticle (or song) was, 'The assurance of love.' Our title this week, for the second song is, 'The awakening of love.' In the coming weeks, in the Lord's will, we will consider the further songs under the titles; 'The communion of love', 'The restoration of love', 'The witness of love', and 'The triumph of love.'

I have really enjoyed re-reading the exposition by Hamilton Smith of this lovely little Old Testament book, and I have used many of his thoughts for today's talk. In fact, some of what I say today will be directly quoting his words or (maybe just updating some of the older words which are less commonly used today).

Christ is the great theme of all Scripture, and, in its several parts, the Holy Spirit delights to set forth special aspects of Christ and His glory. Here, in The Song of Songs, His great object is to present the eternal love of Christ for His people.

To set forth this love, the Spirit of God has employed the marriage relationship as a type (or picture). In a series of songs we have unfolded to us the love of an exalted bridegroom for a bride of low estate, together with the varied experiences through which she is brought into full relationship with him, and the enjoyment of his love.

In the very first verse we read, "The song of songs, which is Solomon's." The main characters in the book are: the bridegroom, King Solomon, and the bride, a shepherdess called the Shulamite. In the bridegroom we have a clear type (or picture) of Christ. Perhaps how we view the bride is less clear. I believe all Scripture is for us, but not necessarily all about us; and that each Scripture has only one interpretation. However, having said that, I believe that we can apply a Scripture in more than one way, giving a different view from its strict interpretation.

I know that not all believers will agree, but I believe the primary application of the bride in The Song of Solomon depicts the godly believing remnant of Israel, in the period following the rapture to glory of the Christian church. So, this little book in the Old Testament, I suggest, has a prophetic character. However, the way that Hamilton Smith presents the truth of this book is to look at Christ's love for His people (more widely) and their response to that love. So, with this application, I'm sure we can take today's verses for ourselves, lovers of Christ and those who through grace are part of that company, the church, who will be the bride of Christ in the coming day of glory.

### **The Awakening of Love.**

Today's section begins at ch. 2 verse 8 and continues to the end of verse 5 of ch. 3. It begins with the bride speaking (vv. 8 - 9), then we hear the voice of the bridegroom (vv. 10 -15), and then the bride speaks again (v. 16 - ch. 3 v. 5).

We should note that the setting in the second song is different from the first song, where the bride and the bridegroom were together in a loving embrace. Now we read that the bride is in her own home and the bridegroom is seen only through the latticed windows, a very interesting detail, which conveys the thought that her view was obscured so that the bridegroom was not seen clearly.

#### **The bride speaks –**

“The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattice” (ch. 2 vv. 8-9).

Why the separation has come in we do not know, but we find the bride in her own home and the bridegroom outside.

In the days following the crucifixion of Jesus we read of Peter returning to his old occupation, fishing, and of two downcast and sad disciples heading to their own homes. They had very quickly lost sight of the words Jesus had spoken concerning His resurrection. Thomas was not with the others when the risen Jesus came among His own, showing them His hands and feet. How guardedly we should speak of those who fall away, or grow cold in heart, as we know only too well just how easily this happens if the Lord's presence is not a reality to us. How often, in the history of the Lord's people, a time of great joy and blessing is followed by a season of low spiritual inactivity. And so we find that the banqueting house of the king (see ch. 2 v. 4) is easily replaced by the home of the bride, with its wall and latticed windows. [Communion with the king at his table is followed by the solitary longings of his bride in her own home.](#)

We have a solemn warning in the Lord's words to the church at Ephesus, a company of believers who had experienced the heights and joys of Christian blessings,

“Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love” (see Revelation ch. 2 v. 4).

And what was true of that early church is often true of the Christian testimony today, and of us as individual believers. [After the joy and freshness of first love how often a young convert settles down at a low spiritual level, in which, though the outward routine of service may be kept up, yet the constraining love of Christ, the true motive for all service, is lacking.](#) Such are the bride's conditions portrayed in this second song.

But the bride is stirred by hearing the voice of her beloved, which tells her that he is coming. Then in the distance he is seen approaching over the mountains; a little later he stands behind the wall of the house, before he shows himself through the lattice windows. The affections of the bride are first awakened by the voice of the bridegroom, and although she had been sleeping, at once she recognises the voice of her beloved. So it was with Peter, who had gone fishing. What a difference it made when he realised that it was the Lord who was standing on the seashore. So, too, with the two despondent disciples on the road to Emmaus - what a difference it made when they

recognised who it was who was with them. He first made their hearts burn within them as He talked with them by the way. Then He entered their home at evening time, and at last He revealed Himself to them, just a glance, as it were, through the lattice, and then He was gone. And in the same way He deals with His beloved people today. He awakens our drowsy affections for Him by making His still small voice of love be heard in the secret of our souls. And in wonderful patience He often stands at our doors, even as He stood at the door of the poor Laodicean church, waiting to enter and have communion with His own.

### **The bridegroom speaks –**

“My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away. O my dove, thou that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely. Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes” (ch. 2 vv. 10-15).

Until now the bride could only catch the sound of his voice, but now she hears the words he spoke, and gladly repeats what her beloved says. The king would no longer be without his bride; he would call her away from the dark wintry plains to fairer, brighter scenes. His first word, “Rise up”, arouses her from her circumstances. His next word proclaims how precious she is in his sight: “My love, my fair one.” And lastly, she hears the longing of his heart, “Come away.”

In the same way, the Lord is speaking to His people today. Can we hear His voice saying to us, “Rise up”, as He seeks to arouse us from the spiritual sleep that has overcome us? He is saying to us,

“Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest” (see Micah ch. 2 v. 10).

We are reminded by the apostle Paul,

“Now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed” (see Romans ch. 13 v. 11).

How precious we are to Christ! We read,

“Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church...” (see Ephesians ch. 5 vv. 25-27).

It should move our hearts in worship to hear Him still address His bride as, “My love, my fair one”, despite our coldness, our wanderings, and our failures. He calls us away from this poor world, as He says,

“Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world...” (see John ch. 15 v. 19).

We very soon shall hear His voice saying, “Come away”, as He calls us to meet Him in the air.

The king not only calls his bride from her home in the plains, he also unfolds to her a new world of blessing, where neither storm nor winter's blast can ever come, where all is beautiful to the eye, sweet to the ear, and pleasant to the taste - the land of flowers and singing, the land of green figs and the new wine. The presence of his bride is all that is lacking to complete the blessedness of that scene, and therefore the king concludes with the call,

“Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away” (see ch. 2 v. 13).

When the Lord gathered His sorrowing disciples around Him, on that last sad night before the cross, He poured comfort into their troubled hearts by bringing before them another world, a home

that He was going away to prepare, beyond this world's wintry night. The storm of God's judgement that was over our heads was about to burst on His head, but He looked beyond the darkness and the judgment and opened to their (and our) vision a new home, where faith will be changed to sight. Where the flowers will appear, where the time of weeping will be past, where the time of singing will be; and where the voice of the dove will be heard, as the saints join to sing the new song of glory to the Lamb. There, indeed, we shall feed on heaven's fruit and drink of the new wine. And to complete the blessedness of that heavenly scene – the presence of the Bride, the Lamb's wife, clothed in fine linen, clean and white (see Revelation ch. 21 vv. 2, 9-10 & ch. 19 vv. 7-8). Before leaving His own, Jesus said,

“I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” (see John ch. 14 v. 3).

Indeed, soon, very soon, the winter-time will be past and the waiting-time will be over. He will come to fetch His bride, and we shall hear His call, “Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.” Well might we sing, “What a day, glorious day, that will be!”

The king has told his bride of a land of sunshine and song, when the winter will be past, and the rain will be over and gone; but in the meantime she is in the land of winter and storm. But the one who is coming for her is the one who protects her. He likens his bride to a dove hiding in the cleft of the rock and finding shelter from the storm in the secret places. And even so today, while waiting for the Lord, His people have enemies to oppose, and difficulties to face; but grace has provided a hiding-place and a place of safety from the storms of this life.

Through the lattice windows, the king had revealed himself to his bride, and spoken to her; but this does not satisfy his heart. He longs to see her face and to hear her voice. To his ear her voice is sweet, and in his sight her countenance is fair. Our blessed Lord desires to reveal His glories to us, His people; and to commune with us until that day when He will take us to Himself. But just as there were foxes which spoiled the vines and destroyed the tender grapes for the king and his beloved, so too, we need to be aware of the foxes. Even the little foxes - those things (which are not of God), but which can so easily come into our hearts and spoil the fruit of God in our lives and the response of worship from our redeemed hearts.

The Lord Jesus Christ longs for the company of His people, His desire is to sup with them and they with Him. To sit at His feet and have communion with Him, is the 'one needful thing'. Our busy service He can dispense with, but our company He will not be without. Mary yielded this pleasant fruit to the Lord, but not so Martha (see Luke ch. 10 vv. 38-42). For the moment a little fox had made her unfruitful. Happily there appears to be no such impediment when we read of the later feast they made for the Lord (in John ch. 12).

### **The bride speaks -**

“My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth amongst the lilies. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved; and be thou like a roe, or a young hart, upon the mountains of Bether. By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. I will rise now, and go about the city; in the streets, and in the broadways, I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not. The watchmen that go about the city found me; to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth? It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: 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 that conceived me. I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please” (ch. 2 v. 16 – ch. 3 v. 5).

The king had paid a brief visit to his bride and was gone; but in that short interview he had awakened her affections. He had poured into her ear the report of a land of sunshine and flowers, a land of rest and song, a land of joy and plenty. He had called her to arise and to come away to that happy land. He had disclosed the longings of his heart to see her face and to hear her voice. As she listens to those wonderful things, her heart is stirred, her love is awakened, and in the realisation of his love and devotion, she exclaims, "My beloved is mine, and I am his."

Likewise, Christ deals with His own today. He reveals Himself to us. He unfolds to us all that His heart has purposed for us. He tells us how He longs to have us with Him. He desires to hear our voices as we raise the new song. As He talks with us by the way, He makes our slow hearts burn, and gives us the deep consciousness that He is ours and we are His. Good if we, too, can say, "My beloved is mine, and I am His."

The king has already likened his bride to the lily and has unfolded to her all the thoughts of his heart. Thus she is brought to realise that his delight is in herself. During the night of his absence and until the marriage day, "He feeds among the lilies." During the night of Christ's absence what is there to minister to His heart save His beloved people! It is still true, He feeds His flock among the lilies, until the day dawns and the shadows flee away.

Solomon's bride expresses the longing of her heart for other visits from the king even as the roes and the harts come down from the mountains by night to feed in the plains (see ch. 2 v. 17 footnote I in JND translation). So, indeed, may we welcome every occasion on which the Lord comes into the midst of His people as they pass through this dark world.

The night visit of the king has awakened the affections of his bride. She has heard of the day and looks forward to the daybreak, but she is still in the night. But if the bride is left behind in the night, she is left with the deep yearnings of her heart for her beloved. She has been aroused from her slumbers. Love has been awakened, and now she delights to speak of her beloved as the one whom her soul loves. Four times over she uses the expression, "Him whom my soul loveth."

But awakened love is not content without its object. Love makes her a seeker. Until now we have seen the bridegroom as the seeker, but now, at last, his bride is the one that seeks. Christ must first be the seeker, but having found us, we should desire to be with Him, day by day.

Note that it is the bridegroom himself who is sought by his bride. It is not the daybreak, the time of singing, nor the land of song, that she seeks; no, it is the person himself who she longs to see. In her eyes he is fairer than the fairest land, and better than all the blessings that he brings. When love is awakened, it is only Christ who can satisfy the Christian's heart. As home-sick saints we welcome the thought that soon the last tear will be wiped away, the last sorrow will be passed, and the last enemy overcome; but as love-sick saints we want 'Jesus himself.'

The closing verses of this second song give us further instruction. Love had been awakened; love had made her a seeker, but she does not immediately obtain the object of her desire. Though she sought the bridegroom, she twice has to admit, "I found him not." She looked for him in a wrong way, then in the wrong place, and then by asking the wrong people.

First, we read that his bride says,

"By night on my bed, I sought him" (ch. 3 v. 1).

She sought him, at least in her head, but it was while she lay, at her ease, on her bed. That was the wrong way. Then she says,

"I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets" (ch. 3 v. 2).

This was progress as she rises to make a proper effort to find him, but he was not to be found in the city streets - he was feeding amongst the lilies. She looked in the wrong place. Then she makes a further mistake by asking the wrong people,

"Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?" (ch. 3 v. 3).

The city watchmen have no interest in her beloved.

Like her, we will fail to “win Christ” (see Philippians ch. 3 v. 8) unless we search for Him in a right way, in the right place, and with the help of the right people. Finally, she finds her beloved and holds him, and will not let him go. Oh, that we too, in our day, would show the same energy of love for our blessed Lord Jesus Christ!

The second song closes, like the first, with her earnest appeal to the daughters of Jerusalem, that nothing should be allowed to disturb the enjoyment of love between the bridegroom and his bride (ch. 3 v. 5).

May God bless you all.

Thank you for listening to this Truth for Today talk on The Song of Songs ‘The awakening of love.’  
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