

THE MAIDEN SPEAKS | SOS 1:1-7

- Verse 1 - This is the ninth of 10 songs, according to the Jewish Targum.
- Verse 2 –
 - Chapter 1 is written from the perspective of the final outcome of the story. That is, it is a foreshadow of the love-relationship. Later the story will back track and we will see the love develop.
 - The woman (the remnant of Israel), is immediately presented as one desirous of the King's love and the expression of that love. She will be seen to lack the confidence in herself. Her love is going to be much more variable than that of the King. Her "self-esteem" is weak and she often finds fault with herself. This is allegory of the love of the remnant for her King.
 - The **kisses of his mouth** should not be seen as erotic, for the mouth is the only thing we have with which to kiss. This is not "kisses on the mouth," in an erotic sense. Her, the maiden desires public display of affection.
- Verse 3 –
 - **Ointment** - The word is most often translated "oil."
 - An **ointment** in Biblical days was used for anointing. It represented the reign of a priest or king.
 - The **virgins love thee** because He was able to anoint them for leadership in the coming Kingdom.
 - In the last days, there is a bride and also the **virgins** who love the groom.
 - Interpretations abound, and one should always question the assumptions.
 - Whether the virgins represent the church, the remnant of the Jewish people, or some other group is a matter of debate.
 - What is not a matter of debate is that there is a group represented by virgins.
- Verse 4 –
 - **Draw me** –
 - This is the final desire of the remnant. She passionately wants to be loved by her King. (See Hosea 11:4 and Ps. 45:14).
 - The Jewish Targum states that the words **Draw me, we will run after thee** were spoken by the righteous in the days of the Exodus, when they saw the *shekinah* glory in the pillar of fire / cloud.
 - **We will be glad** - Notice the 2nd person plural - In some manner, the beloved remnant comes with an escort of fair maidens (see v. 3).
 - **We will remember...** -
 - An alternate translation:
 - "More than of wine will we tell of your loving, for more than the handsome You do they love." ¹
 - In this sense, the maidens say of the King: You are better than the wine and better than all the handsome young men of the Kingdom.
- Verse 5 –
 - **I am black** - This should be compared to the appearance of the King in Song of Solomon 5:10. Here the remnant is ashamed of her looks in comparison to that of the King.
 - The Targum, in taking the view that this chapter covers the history of Israel, states that the children of Israel turned black from heat and soot in making the golden calf, but when they repented, their faces began to shine, and this occurred when they made curtains for the tabernacle that allowed the *shekinah* to once again dwell among the people.

¹ Goulder, Michael D. *The Song of Fourteen Songs*. Vol. 36. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1986. Print. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series. [This book is not recommended for a dispensational study of the Song of Solomon].

- **Ye daughters of Jerusalem** –
 - Throughout the song, these are the other women of the King's harem. Since they must be seen as part of the redeemed, yet not the coming remnant, we will consider them to be the Old Testament saints.
 - The phrase daughters of Jerusalem is used seven times in the book, always in a positive manner.
 - The phrase is also used eight times outside of this book, in singular or plural forms. It appears that the singular is a reference to the remnant while the plural is a reference to the Old Testament saints.
 - The prophets always speak in the singular and always (with the possible exception of Isaiah 37:22) in reference to the future remnant.
 - In Micah 4:8 it says, "The kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem" (in the singular) and the reference is to the remnant.
 - In Zeph. 3:14 the daughter rejoices because "The Lord has taken away thy judgments" (v. 15).
 - In Zech. 9:9 the daughter is told to rejoice because, "thy King cometh unto thee."
 - In Luke 23:28, on the way to the cross, Jesus instructs the "daughters of Jerusalem" to "weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children."
- **The tents of Kedar** - The tents of Kedar is seen as being *far away from God* (Ps. 120:5) and the **curtains of Solomon** are presumably the curtains of the Temple. Thus, while the comparison is referring to their darkness, the picture is also "both near and far."
- Verse 6 –
 - This is likely a both literal and figurative: a darkness from the sun and a darkness from sin.
 - The Targum view is this is the address of the Jewish assembly to the nations. They are "black" with sin (not skin color) because **mine own vineyard have I not kept**, but followed the gods of other nations. Since Israel is held to a higher standard, they are "black" while the other nations are not.
- Verse 7 –
 - **Tell me** –
 - The remnant longs to know where the King will be, so that in the heat of the day she can find respite from the sun. She no longer wants to be among **the flocks of thy companions**, but rather in the tent of the King.
 - In the Targum, this is the plea of Moses, at the beginning of his work, as he asks of God how the sinful nation is going to survive in the heat of the noonday sun. He does not want to be "veiled" (not knowing how they will survive).
 - **Why should I be as one who turneth aside** –
 - Another rendering is, "why am I as one veiled, By the ranks of thy companions?" (YLT).
 - In either rendering, the remnant desires to be in the fold rather than **as one that turneth aside** or as one "veiled" (either reference to the blinding of the Jewish people or their mourning).

THE KING SPEAKS | SOS 1:8-11

- Verse 8 –
 - The King does not answer her question, but tells her how to find her answer: **by the footsteps of the flock**.
 - That is, "you'll find the King when you follow Israel's own teaching (the law and the prophets).
 - It is important to recognize that Israel is going to be brought to salvation by the Hebrew Scriptures (the Old Testament), not the Greek Scriptures (the New Testament).
 - Note: an alternate understanding is that this is the "daughters of Jerusalem" (v. 5) who are singing this portion of the song, toward the young lady, as a means of encouragement.
- Verse 9 – The King continues talking to the maiden. A comparison to **a company of horses** is not flattering, and **horses in Pharaoh's chariots** is even less flattering. Since Pharaoh is never seen positively in the Bible, it is problematic to make this verse a *positive comparison*. Rather, the Lord is expressing grief over the remnant, that she is (at this point) aligned with that which shall soon be destroyed in the sea.
- Verse 10 - Here, the King describes the beauty of the maiden's cheeks when they are enhanced with **rows of jewels** (KJV), or "garlands" (YLT).
 - The Hebrew word טַרְטִימַי [torim] is a series or sequence of the same thing, often described as a "braid."
 - The word is used in v. 11 and translated **borders**.

- In the KJV, note that *of jewels* is supplied, not in the text. It is a very plausible interpretation that the King says, "even though I've compared you to the **horses in Pharaoh's chariots**, I still believe you would be beautiful with a bridle and harness, being brought under control.
- The Targum teaches that this verse represents the Torah's laws and precepts as the rope and yoke (represented by the **neck with chains**). That is, when the remnant comes into obedience, she is a beautiful thing.
- Verse 11 - The word **borders** is the same Hebrew word as **rows** in v. 10.
 - Since this is in the light of the need for a bridle and yoke, the King says He will make these instruments of control a thing of beauty.
 - The Targum views the **borders of gold** to be the two tablets of stone and the **studs of silver** to be the words on the stones (see Ps. 12:6-*Thy words are like silver*).

THE MAIDEN SPEAKS | SOS 1:12-14

- Verse 12 -
 - The odor of the remnant (whether pleasant or odorous) comes to the attention of the King.
 - Most Christians would view the smell as pleasant, while the Jewish interpretation is odorous.
 - The Targum teaches that this is representative of the Lord sending Moses off the mountain, having given him the **borders of gold with studs of silver** which are the tablets and their laws. God *smells* the odorous work of His people, as they are making the golden calf.
- Verse 13 -
 - Though KJV presents this as words of the maiden toward the King, the grammar does not specify. The YLT is more grammatically accurate: "A bundle of myrrh *is* my beloved to me, Between my breasts it lodgeth."
 - Regardless of the gender, the picture is one of love, tenderness, and sacrifice.
 - If the woman is speaking, then **my wellbeloved** is the bundle of myrrh (representative of a sacrifice), being sacrificed for the remnant.
 - If the King is speaking then the woman is on the altar of sacrifice, and He is going to rescue her.
 - The Targum teaches that this is reminiscent of Isaac being sacrificed on the altar and spared, which is a picture of the remnant, about to be sacrificed, but spared at the last minute.
- Verse 14 - The Hebrew קֹפֶר [koper] is of the same root as *kippur*, the covering, ransom, or pitch. If this speaks of the King, then the ransom is perhaps in view. If it speaks of the maiden, then the beauty of the *camphire* or henna is in view.
- Which view? The most likely view of vv. 13-14 is that they are spoken of the King by the maiden. The Jewish interpretation has taken them as spoken by the King describing the maiden. The Jewish interpretation likely came from a desire to avoid the easy comparisons with Jesus.

THE KING AND MAIDEN DIALOGUE | SOS 1:15-17

- Verse 15 - The king praises the maiden for her beauty. In the Targum, the reference is to the beauty of Israel when she is obedient, bringing the sacrifice of a dove.
- Verse 16 - The maiden responds to the love of her King and rejoices in the fruitfulness of the relationship when they are rightly aligned with him.
- Verse 17 - In the Jewish interpretation, this is the interjection of Solomon, rejoicing in the Temple, with a forward look to the future and final Temple of "King Messiah." However, since the Hebrew translated **house** is plural (and should be "houses,") seeing the Temple in this verse doesn't work. Rather, it could be a celebration of the King that both he and his fiancé are blessed with the safety and wealth of good houses.