

THE KING SPEAKS | SOS 4:1-15

- Verse 1 – In chapter 3 the bride and groom are preparing for the wedding. In chapter 4, they are together.
 - **Behold, thou art fair** –
 - The chapter begins with the groom expressing his delight in the beauty of the bride, using the imagery of the land of Israel.
 - While this is awkward to the western reader, such is natural when one realizes that the *land* shall be called *Beulah* (married).
 - Isaiah 62:1-5 is the necessary background (and the prophetic equivalent) to this chapter.
 - **doves' eyes** – These words are almost identical to 1:15.
 - **thy locks** - This is not locks of hair, but rather a veil.
 - **thy hair...** -
 - Gilead is the land east of the Jordan that was occupied by Gad and Manasseh.
 - A flock of goats descending down the mountainside would be a beautiful agricultural scene.
- Verse 2 - **thy teeth...** -
 - In a land of sheep and goats, the pictures of vv. 1-2 are the most beautiful pictures of sheep and goats.
 - Here the sheep are freshly shorn and clean, and seen at the time of producing offspring, each one having born twins, and no barrenness among them.
- Verse 3 –
 - **thy temples** –
 - These are **temples** not *cheeks*. There is another Hebrew word for *cheek*.
 - Some translations (ESV, NRSV, NLT, GNB, *The Message*) change to *cheeks* because the translators cannot understand how **temples** can be referred to as **pomegranate**.
 - Better to allow the words to stand, in spite of the translator's inability to comprehend their meaning.
 - **thy locks** - As in v. 1, this is a veil, not locks of hair. This gives the knowledge to the reader that the marriage has not yet taken place.
- Verse 4 –
 - When it is understood that this is a description of the land, which will soon be *Beulah*, these descriptions begin to make more sense. Descriptive of a woman they are simply odd.
 - In the ancient day, it is believed, the **bucklers** and **shields** were hung on citadels after a victory.
- Verse 5 – As throughout this description, to try to make comparison to a woman's body one must use the wildest of imaginations. This is a description of the *land* not the *woman*.
- Verse 6 –
 - **Until the day break...shadows flee away** –
 - At first, this appears to be a contradiction because when the sun rises at day break, shadows will *appear*, not **flee away**.
 - This seems so scientifically undeniable that the NASB, without merit in the text, changed the break of day to the "cool of the day when the shadows flee away."
 - However, when Scripture is allowed to interpret itself, the meaning becomes clear. Jeremiah 6:4 says that when **the day goeth away** that the **shadows of the evening are stretched out**. So, the *frightening shadows of the night* will **flee away** when the sun comes out.

- **mountain of myrrh...hill of frankincense –**
 - During the night, the King will be at the **mountain of myrrh** and the **hill of frankincense**.
 - This is either a reference to the time of the absence of Israel's King, where He is associated with His death more than His presence, or, possibly a reference to the "secret place of the Almighty at which the bride is hidden.
 - While myrrh and frankincense is associated with death and burial in the New Testament, in the Song of Solomon it is associated with beauty and wealth.
- Verse 8 –
 - **Come –**
 - The word **come** is supplied by the translators, despite not being italicized.
 - The spouse is not coming **from Lebanon**, but rather *someone is being invited* to the peaks of Lebanon to look down upon the land.
 - It could even be translated, "With me from Lebanon...my spouse [look at her] with me from Lebanon."
 - **My spouse** - This is the first of six times the bride is called the **spouse**.
 - **from the lions...leopards** - Lebanon was known as the place of the lions. Now, with the millennium beginning (within the allegory), it is safe to stand (the shadows have fled - v. 6).
- Verse 9-
 - **ravished** - The root word is "to gain or capture the heart."
 - **my sister, my spouse** - This double term doesn't speak of incest, but of the closeness of the relationship.
- Verse 10 - The bride had made these same comparisons of the groom in 1:1-4.
- Verse 11 –
 - The land is producing the *milk and honey* of the millennial promises.
 - **the smell of Lebanon –**
 - As in Hosea 14:5-7 and Isaiah 60:13, Lebanon is presented as the standard of beauty and freshness.
 - Even in modern days, before Hezbollah destroyed Lebanon, it was often considered the "Paris" or "pearl" or "Riviera" or "jewel" and even "Switzerland" of the Middle East.
- Verse 12 –
 - The words **inclosed** and **shut** are from the same word in Hebrew.
 - The King is speaking about the protected status of the bride. (In ancient Israel, a walled vineyard and a sealed and protected spring were protected from enemy intrusion).
- Verses 13-14 –
 - The *Beulah land* is described in its richest glory.
- Verse 15 - Compare Jeremiah 2:13. In both ancient and modern Israel, *living water* was fresh, moving water (as opposed to stagnant and perhaps deadly water).

THE BRIDE SPEAKS | SOS 4:16

Here, for the first time in this chapter, the bride speaks, calling upon the gentle winds to stir the pleasant fragrances of her land, and invites the groom into **his garden**. This is the beautiful future awakening of the Bride.

THE KING SPEAKS | SOS 5:1

The groom (Jesus Christ) has said He will always accept the invitation of His bride (Israel). Here, the acceptance of the invitation is shown.

Note: V. 1 belongs with chapter 4, as a response to 4:16, more than with chapter 5, which thematically begins with 5:2.