

Song of Solomon 1: 1 and 2; “The Kisses of His Mouth”, Sermon # 1 in a series entitled – “I am my Beloved’s”, Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on March 22nd, 2009, in the Afternoon Worship Service.

When I propose to preach through this book and to draw your attention to the believer’s relationship with the King of Kings and Lord of Lord’s as a spiritual marriage relationship, I hope that you will understand that many people, and even some Christian people, have a hard time accepting this. They are usually people who believe with all of their heart that the Scriptures are to be taken literally at all points and so they reject the idea that this is a book which speaks about Christ and His Church. They believe that not to take the Scripture literally is not to take it seriously or realistically. I, myself, believe that the Scriptures should be interpreted literally at every point where they can be. I believe that they ought always to be considered seriously; and that no Scripture is of any private interpretation. But I also have come to understand that many portions of Scripture, this book included, have many things written down which are really impossible to be considered in a literal sense, and where it would be poor exegesis to do so. There are, in all of the books of the Bible, many spiritual figures and pictures and types of the spiritual realities going on in the heart and soul of a Christian. They have been put down in metaphorical and figurative language so that we might understand spiritual realities. I am not a person who is given to trying to find allegories in the Scripture. An allegory is a continued metaphor; a story either true to life and experience, or imaginative; and there are a number of examples of its use in the Bible. One of them is in Galatians 4: 25. Abraham had two sons, one born of the bond-woman and one of the free. Paul says that the bondwoman Hagar and her son is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the Jerusalem which now is, and she is in bondage with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free—which is the mother of all believers and she is not in bondage but free. They are, he says, symbols of two covenants. This is righteous allegorizing and it is seen in some passages of scripture. But when a person who is a preacher or a commentator is interpreting the Scriptures, and is given to the practice of allegorizing, it is rightly seen by most Christians as an objectionable and dangerous practice. And certainly we must be warned that it is an irresponsible practice which some persons have fallen into where they allegorize the Scriptures when they interpret them. They read things into them that are not there, and they end up adding to the Scriptures things which are pure fables. This kind of allegorizing, I believe, is very destructive to the advancement of Christ’s kingdom and His truth in the hearts of believers.

But there is another practice which is just as bad as unrighteous allegorizing. It is to literalize everything that is in any given Biblical text, so that the things which have been written in a figurative or metaphorical way are seen only in a literal light. And the conclusion is that the passage could not have a spiritual

meaning beyond what the words are literally stating. This also, I believe, in good Biblical hermeneutics should be rejected. Jesus spoke in parables and used many metaphors in his speech. The prophets wrote their prophecies by the Spirit of God in such a way that they had a near and a far fulfillment. I find it pathetically sad; that the Scriptures which are God's book, and which contain many instances of spiritual language; words and passages which describe the spiritual realities of the being of God and the heart of man, and the saving relationship which comes to exist by faith in Jesus Christ, should be lowered to only conveying a literal physical description or reality. Some people would interpret the Song of Songs in such a way as to only be of help to people in dealing with their earthly relationships, marital or otherwise. I know that these earthly relationships are very important. And I know that marriage is a holy and wonderful institution, and the relationship of a man to his wife is of great significance. And so, as I go through this book I want to make application where I can to that holy estate and how a husband and wife can live with each other in an understanding way.

But in order to have a good marital relationship, I believe that the Scriptures teach that there ought to be a thriving personal relationship with the Shepherd King of Israel Himself. I am speaking of your coming to know and to see the Lord Jesus Christ as your spiritual husband. And this is what this book is all about. It is a true and holy allegory of Christ and His Church. It used to be seen this way by most churches and most Christians one hundred years ago and before. If you are like me, perhaps you have an old King James Bible from that time period. If you were to open it up, and look to see if it has the headings which overview the contents of the chapter, and if you find them there; you would read this above Chapter 1, verse 1. (The headings are not part of the inspired Hebrew text, but they have been added by a godly man who saw the truth about this book.) "The Church's love unto Christ." "She confesseth her deformity, and prayeth to be directed to His flock." "Christ directeth her to the shepherd's tents; and showing His love to her, giveth her gracious promises." "The Church and Christ congratulate one another." These headings I am saying, which are not in our modern Bibles, give us the indication that we have lost something which never ought to have been lost to our churches and to our hearts. It is this understanding of the Song of Solomon, which I believe is the true understanding. And it will be my purpose to try to recover it for you. But if you will go back and to read and think about these headings; it will be well worth your time if you will take the time to do it.

So the 1st thing that I want to do this afternoon is to introduce to you the 2 main characters in this story.

The book begins with this title - "The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's." Solomon wrote the book and he was indeed the king of Israel when he wrote the book. And he is mentioned by the Bride in a couple of places in the book. (Chapter 3, verse 9 and 11; Chapter 8, verse 11) He appears to be the main

character in this book and is mentioned as the king. And the Bride does appear to be marrying this Solomon who wrote the book. But that we should only look at this story in terms of Solomon marrying this Shulamite girl is something which I cannot affirm. Why do I say this? Because Solomon is not at all a model of what a good Jewish or Christian husband is supposed to be like. We must ask ourselves why this book would be set down in the Scriptures to teach us to be like one who was unfaithful to God in his marital connections? It cannot be that God would permit this. It is recorded In 1 Kings chapter 11, verse 1 that Solomon “loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites—from whom the Lord had said to the children of Israel, ‘You shall intermarry with them, nor they with you.’” Verse 3 says, “And he had 700 wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart.” Indeed, God chastised Solomon very severely for his disobedience to His express command in the law that a king in Israel should not multiply wives. (Deuteronomy 17: 17)

Rather, what we have being portrayed for us here, in the person of the Bridegroom, is Christ Himself. He is being portrayed in a story form, by Solomon, who developed the story by inspiration of God in relation to his own experience of marriage. He had not been faithful as a type of Christ in this regard, but he was one who was desiring to know about the greatest of all marriages; that of the Messiah, the Ultimate King and Shepherd of Israel. The Holy Spirit guided him in writing this story by giving him insight into the mystery of Christ. In this ideal story king Solomon himself would be set forth as a type of Christ the heavenly Bridegroom and Solomon’s relationship with this Shulamite girl would well picture the relationship between Christ and his Church. So, in Solomon’s own language, with the inspirational help and guidance of the Spirit, this story would help Solomon himself and all succeeding generations of believers, to understand the true spiritual relationship between Christ and His Church. It would be a spiritual marital relationship. Solomon would relate this story from his own perspective and the perspective of the Bride. He would portray it in terms that he would be familiar with in many of his own marriages, but the difference would be that in this marriage, he would be faithful, whereas in real life he had not been faithful. This story is actually relating for us how God because of Jesus Christ saw Solomon. He saw him in Christ. He saw Him in all of his sins and mistakes in marriage and but He still loved him because of Christ. God loved Solomon with an everlasting love. And God used Solomon to write 3 books of Scripture. If you will remember, God sent word through a prophet to his mother Bathsheba when he was born, and He told her to call him Jedidiah, which means “beloved of the Lord.”

King Solomon is an eminent type of our Lord Jesus Christ in a number of important ways, even if he is not in terms of his loving many foreign women. He is a type in wisdom and riches and in the greatness and power and glory of his

earthly kingdom. But his desire in repentance would no doubt have been that could have been wise and holy in that regard; that he could have faithfully been a type of Christ in marriage. In writing this story he was given that chance. God, I believe gave Him the desire of His heart. In 1st Kings 4: 30 it says that “Solomon’s wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the men of the East and all the wisdom of Egypt.” “For he was wiser than all men—than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his fame was in all the surrounding nations.” “He spoke three thousand proverbs, and his songs were one thousand and five.” Now I find it quite interesting that of all the songs which Solomon composed, this is the only one which the Lord saw fit to include in the canon of Scripture. This is not simply one of his songs, but it is evidently the best of his songs. It is the Song of Songs. And if it is the Song of Songs, it no doubt has reference to the King of Kings. For all of the Scriptures are meant ultimately to point to Christ. It is not an earthly song with an earthly meaning. It is a heavenly song with a heavenly meaning. It is not meant to be read simply in terms of Solomon and his relationship with this Shulamite girl. It is meant to go much higher in our estimation and thinking. We are meant to think about one who is greater than Solomon and one who is greater than the Shulamite.

The other main character in this story is the Bride or the Shulamite. John Gill says in his commentary on this: “She was called this because she was an inhabitant of Salem or Jerusalem.” “As the woman with whom Elisha lodged, is called a Shunamite, from her dwelling in Shunem; so the church is here a Shulamite or a Jerusalemite, from her dwelling in Salem or Jerusalem.” “And now it is no wonder that the Church or any particular believer should be called a Shulamite, seeing the church, both in the Old and New Testament, frequently bears the name of Jerusalem; so that to be a Shulamite is to be a fellow citizen with the saints and of the household of God.” “And to share in all the privileges and immunities thereof, as they do; who besides the company of the angels and the behavior of the saints, enjoy the presence of Father, Son, and Spirit; and share in all the blessings of the everlasting covenant.” This explanation is entirely in keeping with what we read about the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ in the book of Revelation. Turn over with me to Revelation chapter 19. Here at the end of the 1260 days prophecy in which the downfall of the New Testament Babylon is recorded, we find that the false church is judged to be a harlot and the true Church of Jesus Christ is made ready for the great blessing of entering the Millennium. Listen to how it is spoken of here. Verse “And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, ‘Alleluia!’” “For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!” “Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” “And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.” And then later on after the Millennium and Christ’s second coming we find this written in Chapter 21, verse 1 – “Now I

saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.” “Also there was no more sea.” “Then I, John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” And also verse 9, “Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, “Come I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” “And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God.” Now these are representations of the marvelous things that the grace and favor and blessing of Jesus Christ will bring to His bride the Church. This book of Song of Solomon is not a prophetic book. Rather it is a book which tells us how King Jesus acts as a good Husband to His bride and how He leads her all the way through the wilderness of this life to be with Himself in eternity forever. Many aspects of the believer’s experience are mentioned and opened up in the book, and every one of them, if you will meditate upon them, will be of great benefit to the growth of your personal relationship with Christ if you know Him. If you do not know Him, then listen anyway, for you will see how you can become a part of Christ’s bride and come to know the reality of His love to you a sinner. We will have many opportunities to preach the gospel of Christ as we go through this book.

Now in closing – Let me share with you briefly what it means to be kissed by Christ.

“Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth.” In Psalm 2 we read that the kings of the earth ought to kiss the Son lest His wrath be kindled in the way. Their “kissing” of Christ means that they should come and touch Him by faith; spiritually come and place their mouth upon His face or His lips and show by that expression of their soul that they are confessing their need of His salvation and that they will submit to Him. Let me ask you if you have done this spiritually with the lips of your heart? Have you confessed your own sinfulness to Him; your own need of His kingly help to deliver you from all of your spiritual enemies who are bent upon your destruction; the world, your own sinful heart, and the Devil? If not; why not? Christ is not only a merciful and faithful High Priest, but He is also a compassionate King. Once you come to Him you find that He is not only a loving Savior and Lord, but you find that He is also a loving Friend, Companion, Guide, and Husband to your soul. And you will feel the desire to pray this very prayer of the Shulamite; “Let him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth.” Christ has made the first overture to you in the gospel. He has shown you great love and mercy. Now let your spiritual desires be made known to Him. Let Him know that you want His kisses now that you have become a part of His Bride. The kisses of His mouth are those sweet touches of the words of His mouth to your soul. It is His taking His word and making it so real that it makes an impression upon your soul as a kiss of affection. It is His showing your soul His holy affections and conveying them to you by the realization of the working of His Spirit in your heart. He kissed

you when you first came to Him as a sinner seeking salvation, never dreaming that you would find in Him a Husband and a Companion who would never leave you nor forsake you. He continues to come and to show you His affection in conveying to you more of His grace and His Spirit as you taste from His lips the dying love that purchased these blessings which He so willingly gives to you who ask Him to, and you long for Him to impart His blessings. This is all a part of your salvation and how He leads His dear believing wife, His Church, along. Will you not pray even now as we close this service that He would come anew and afresh to spiritually kiss you and ravish your soul with all the holy delights of His presence and making real to you His word? May your relationship with Christ deepen and grow into that kind of spiritual love so that you will know more of His mind, His will, and His heart toward you in the keeping of all His commandments out of love to Him. There are many expression of affection and love which come to the believer from Christ as He walks with Him every day. Lord willing, we will look more at the love of Christ, the heavenly bridegroom this next week.