

Seeking the Beloved

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[0 : 00] Now as we continue into chapter 3 here of the Song of Solomon, we still have the bride, as it were, who is the main speaker in these first five verses.

There is a switch after verse 6, which then is either the bridegroom himself speaking or whatever kind of neutral narrator, but it becomes principally the bridegroom as to what is sometimes referred to as that particular canticle or that little sort of songlet, as it were, within the song, switches between one and the other.

And that, and focus it from there, as though it's coming more from the bridegroom, switches from verse 6 in chapter 3 through into verse 1 of chapter 5. Before that and after that, it's more the bride, the girl, singing.

And to begin with, it is more herself that is singing here. By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth. I sought him, but I found him not.

Now, remember of course that in the original there are no chapter divisions. So this is a direct continuation from what we have as verse 17 in chapter 2 onto the beginning of chapter 3.

[1 : 09] Now remember how chapter 2 ended. Until the day break, or begins to breathe, the breathing of the day, until the day break and the shadows flee away.

In other words, until the dawn. Till the dawn comes turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe on a young heart upon the mountains of Bethar. So we have this sense of awaiting the dawn.

And yet the dawn is not yet here. There is this sense of waiting, this sense of expectation, but it's not yet come. Because it is still night.

By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth. It is still the night, but the dawn, the morning is expected. It is anticipated. And we have this sense elsewhere in Scripture, of course, as well.

Psalm 130, verse 6. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning. I say more than they that watch for the morning.

[2 : 07] And we're probably more familiar with it in the metrical version of that. But it's the same sense here. It is the Lord that is looked for. The Lord who has awaited his coming more than they that watch for the morning.

And in the sense that, as in Malachi, for example, he's described as the son of righteousness. S-U-N as opposed to S-O-N. As though he is the one that brings warmth.

He's the one that brings light. He is the one that brings life itself. As, you know, without the sun, our planet would just be a cold, dead, dark desert.

There'd be nothing growing in it. Nothing life at all. It would just be a complete, dead, barren wits.

But the sun of righteousness, as Malachi says, chapter 4, verse 2, arisen with healing in his wings. This is the sun that we look for. The rising of the sun. The breaking of the dawn until the day break and the shadows flee away. And in the same sense, he has described the revelation.

[3 : 07] He describes himself as the bright and morning star. The first indication that the dawn is on its way. The morning star. And, of course, in chapter 2 of Revelation, he says, I will give him.

That is, him that is faithful to him. I will give him the morning star. He will give himself to those who are faithful and diligent here. But this diligence, this seeking after him, is something which the bride, in a sense, knows that she must do.

And up to a point, in a sense, is not yet doing. By night on my bed, I sought him whom I so loved. I sought him, but I found him not.

I will rise now and go about the city in the streets and the broad ways. I will seek him whom I so loved. I sought him, but I found him not.

Now, the sense here is for moving to this sort of, I want to say, indolence. It's perhaps a bit brutal to say, you know, it's sloth and it's just a lazy being in your bed. But the sense here that is being

conveyed is of we do not apprehend Christ.

[4 : 14] We don't lay hold upon Christ by simply taking our ease and lying in our bed and so on. We must be stirred up in the seeking of him.

There is a need to be stirred up seeking after the Lord. And Isaiah 64, for example, verse 7. There is none that calleth upon thy name but stirreth up himself to take hold of thee.

For thou hast hid thy face from us. I sought him, but I found him not. He's seeking, hiding his face a little in the sense that if we are stirred up and seeking him, we would find him.

Thou hast hid thy face from us, hast consumed us because of our iniquities. If we're to go on to Jeremiah 29, verses 12 and 13. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me. I will hearken unto you, and ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. Isaiah 26, likewise, at verse 9.

[5 : 17] With my soul have I desired thee in the night. Yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early. For when my judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

There is this need for stirring up. For not just lying on our beds and hoping it will all be okay, and that the Lord will come to us and it will be nice and easy. You know, Amos has more of an alarmist warning in chapter 6, verse 1.

Woe to them that are at ease in Zion. Notice it's in Zion. In the Lord's citadel, the Lord's own city, which we'll come to in due course in this chapter, is the city is good for the church.

It is the illustration of the people of God, but to be at ease in the church. Woe to them that are at ease in Zion. And trust in the mountain of Severia, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came.

And in verse 4, that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall. So, the Lord is not going to be found by simply lying in our ease.

[6 : 30] It is a striving after Christ that we must have. By night at my bed I saw them. Yes, it is good that there are the initial stirrings, but we will not find them simply with being at our ease.

There is a striving. There is a need to be stirred up. I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets. So the city then, is taken as being, as we said, the church of Jesus Christ.

I mean, for example, if we look in Hebrews, chapter 12, verse 22, it says, But here come unto Mount Zion, yet Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.

Who inhabits the heavenly Jerusalem? It is the people of God. So therefore, the city stands illustratively for the people of God, the church of God.

And we are to seek the Lord amongst his people. We are to seek him in the church, yes, because I can well remember myself as a youngster, when I, before I had professed faith, or before, long before I was converted, and one reason that I wanted to seek more of the Lord, and although I was somewhat disenchanted with the local church, yet I thought, well, I'm not going to find the Lord outside of his church.

[7 : 52] So, however difficult he is to find, he must be somewhere within the body of the church. He's going to be in there, therefore, I'm not going to find him outside of it.

I'm not going to find God on the golf course, or going for a walk by the river, or by just looking my own way. He's going to be amongst his people somewhere. But somehow the answers must be found within the church.

Now, the answer is not the church. And Christ is not the church. That he is going to be within the midst of his people. I will rise now and go about the city in the streets.

I will seek him amongst his people. I will seek him in the city. I will seek him in the church. And in the broad ways, I will seek him. Now, the broad ways, it accounts for the areas near the city gates, that were traditionally open spaces, in eastern cities and towns.

And these open spaces were where people would come together, either for markets, or for business, or trade, or whatever. It's the sort of areas where, when you have conquering kings, come in and take a city.

[9 : 02] We read of how they set up their throes, in the gates of the city, in the big, wide open space that is there, as soon as you come through the gates. In the broad ways, where the people assemble themselves together.

Now, likewise, I warned in the Hebrews, again, not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. So, this, where the Lord's people are assembled together, the broad ways, I will seek him, whom my soul loveth.

I sought him, but I found him not. You see, it's right to seek him amongst the Lord's people. It's right to seek him within the church, within the city, as it were. But, the one whom my soul loveth, is not itself the church.

The one whom my soul loveth, is not itself the city. Yes, it is good to be there. It is good to seek him there. It is good to be stirred up to these things. But, the one whom my soul loveth, is more than all these things, deeper than all these things.

I sought him, but I found him not. The watchmen, that go about the city, found me. To him I said, saw ye him whom my soul loveth.

[10:16] So, who do we understand by the watchmen? Well, if we go to Isaiah 62, verse 6, we read, I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem.

Again, Zion, Jerusalem, the city, the church of God, which shall never hold their peace, day nor night. Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence.

And likewise, Ezekiel 3, verse 17, when we read, Son of man, I have made thee a watchman, unto the house of Israel. Therefore, hear the word of my mouth, and give them warning from me.

We should probably understand the watchmen to be, those who have a responsibility for the souls, of the flock, of the people of God. Those, in other words, who are charged with the spiritual oversight, with the proclamation of the gospel, the preachers of the gospel, and so on.

Those who are able to direct people where they should go. Not in any sense of being perfect themselves, but rather, we might say, as the lepers hammering on the gates of Samaria, trying to say to the hungry city, where bread is to be found.

[11:31] And so the watchmen, going about the city, whose job in the original context, would be to patrol the streets, and to make sure they were safe, and that everybody was kept safe, and looked after, there wasn't disturbances, the watchmen that go about the city found me.

To whom I said, saw ye him whom I saw love. Now, if you are coming to the right city, if you're coming to where the people of God are, in other words, seeking him in the church, if you're seeking the direction of those who are able to tell you, where to go for that satisfaction, then it's not surprising that we read, it was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth.

And we might almost take it, when almost ready to give up, when almost ready to faint for sorrow, for breaking of heart, and I would suggest probably sometimes that, when people are seeking the Lord, it is when they're almost to the end of their tether, when they can go no further, when they fall as it were upon the threshold of his door, that the Lord opens to them, and lifts them up, and brings them in.

So, her soul's strength is almost gone, when she finally finds it, 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. Think, for example, of when, you know, Mary Magdalene and the other women, when they appear to Jesus, Jesus appears to them, you know, I think it's Matthew's account of the gospel, and they held him by their feet, and they wouldn't let him go.

[13:13] And he had to say at that point, well, touch me not, because I've not yet ascended to my father, and so on, but in this instance, the bridegroom is willing to be held. I held him, and would not let him go.

I'm not going to, I'm not going to let him out of my sight anymore, you know, because he has been found of her. He's been found of her because he has allowed himself to be found, because the Lord does not desire to push away his people.

And he said, so we turn again to Isaiah, and see what we read there in chapter 54, verses 7 and 8, for a small moment, have I forsaken thee.

But with great mercies will I gather thee. In a literal wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.

I'm paraphrasing, but it's, you know, Samuel Rutherford, who was one of the great Scottish covenanters of the 17th century, he's appeared to have said that, you know, as night times and the dew of the night are more needful for a flower to flourish in its fruit and to blossom and so on, than just pure undiluted sunshine.

[14 : 34] You know, if all it had was blazing sun day after day after day, it would simply wither and die. The flower, in order to grow, in order to blossom, in order to bloom into its fullness of beauty and colour, it needs the night seasons.

It needs the dew of the night, as well as the blazing of the sunshine. And sometimes it is for this reason, that the Lord withdraws the light of his countenance.

That he withdraws a little from us. It's not because he doesn't love us, it's because a little bit of darkness can sweeten for us the light.

A little bit of hunger adds edge, bite to the appetite. It makes the partaking of what we receive all the sweeter when we have it.

A little bit of absence, they say, makes the heart grow fonder. Too much, of course, is not good. As someone cynically said, absence makes the heart grow fonder of someone else.

[15 : 40] So it's not a good idea to be apart for a long period of time. And the Lord knows that. That if he were to withdraw altogether from his beloved, she would simply break her heart and die.

And he doesn't want her to do that, but he does want that the appetite be heightened. That there be a heightened desire, that the flower should benefit from something of the darkness of the night.

And the dew that will mouser and refresh the leaves and the petals of the flowers so that when the sun comes out again, the flower is the more refreshed and strengthened.

Now the context of those verses that we read in Isaiah, you know, for a small mode have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindnesses, kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.

Now the illustration he's been using in Isaiah is in fact that of a bride and bridegroom, of a husband and wife. Because if we look at the context here, if we go back to verse 5, for thy maker is thine husband, the Lord of hosts is his name, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth, shall he be called.

[16 : 59] For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God, for a small moment have I forsaken thee, and so on.

So he's not turning away from her forever, but sometimes the Lord does withdraw his comfortable presence from us. Sometimes the Lord does cause us to travel through the darkness.

Sometimes we are wet with the dew and the showers of heaven, or with our own tears. But it is not because the Lord does not love us. It is because sometimes this is needful in order to heighten, in order to strengthen, the relationship with the Lord.

So, rather, I held him, I would not let him go, until I brought him into my mother's house and into the chamber of her that conceived me. Now, the very mention of mother's house implies a guard against any impropriety.

You know, it's a sign, for example, that our relationship is getting serious if they want to bring you home to meet their mother. If they want to bring you home to meet their parents, then, you know, things are getting serious.

[18 : 14] So, into my mother's chamber, there's no impropriety here. A mother is present. It's all above board into the chamber of her that conceived me.

We have here a love that has the purity of that of a sister, but the intensity, the fervency of that of a bride.

And throughout this song, you will find that, again, there's reference to my sister, my spouse, my love, my dove, my undefiled.

And throughout, the love is always expressed in terms of that kind of purity, that kind of delight, such that even the, the delighting in anatomical beauty and perfection, which we might shrink from and think in terms of, well, a bit on the risky side and really not entirely appropriate, it is of such purity, it is of such beauty as simply to be an acknowledgement of the perfection of the kind of love and beauty that the Lord has for his bride.

It is entirely chaste, it is entirely pure. I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the ropes and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake, my love, till he pays.

[19 : 42] Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke? Who is this the perfume with myrrh and fine-toothed with all the powders of the merchant?

Now, if this is the bridegroom now speaking of this bride, then there is a sense in which she has been in the wilderness without him, but she's coming out of the wilderness now. There's also a sense in which we could apply it to the bridegroom.

There's echoes here, if you think about it, about, again, that passage in Isaiah, who is this that cometh out of Eden with dyed garments from Bozra? You know, in the senses of having won a great victory and having been drenched, as it were, in the blood of the battle.

But here it is coming out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfume with myrrh and frankincense with all powders of the merchant. Now, there are so many things here that could be unpacked.

First of all, coming out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke. Now, who was in the wilderness? Well, the children of Israel, the Church of God, and in the wilderness all these 40 years. By what were they led?

[20 : 50] By day, a pillar of smoke, a pillar of cloud by day that led them. Here's this referencing, almost echoes, of the pillar of cloud like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense with all powders of the merchant.

Now, of course, the mud and frankincense, these are costly perfumes. These are they which are of great beauty and of great cost as well, as well as the fragrance of them.

Now, they have to be brought from some distance. They're not just growing everybody's back garden. That which is of the highest price has to be brought a distance.

It has to be brought in. It has to be a great expense. So, likewise here, myrrh and frankincense with all powers of the merchant. It is at vast expense, that which beautifies, that which enhances.

And, of course, Christ's blood is ultimately that which beautifies and redeems and saves us. And it is at vast expense. And it's the highest price that has ever been paid.

[22 : 02] And this which beautifies, this which symbolizes the very presence of the life of God, just like the pillar of cloud did before in the Old Testament.

Who is this that comes out of the wilderness? Well, if it's the bride who's being, he's saying, it's me. It's I. I'm coming out of the wilderness. If it is the bride, we can say, she is being brought to her husband like pillars of smoke and would imply that he is accompanying her because he is the one alone who is able to bring her out and beautify her.

Behold, his bed, which is Solomon's. Three score-valley men are about to have gone into this room. They all hold swords being expert in war.

Now, if you were to think in the original context here of Solomon himself, despite the fact that we think in terms of Solomon's reign as a time of just unmitigated glory, wall-to-wall blessing, prosperity, and goodness and so on, when you actually read about the teams of workmen that he, you know, virtually enslaved, you might say, and all the overseers that there were over working in the mountains and the quarries and the cedar forest and so on, it's not for nothing that there was, after his death, this sort of mini-rebellion, you might say, against his rule.

And this is what Rehobo, his son, had to cope with. He said, you know, your father made our yoke heavy, but if you lighten it, we'll serve you okay. Now, we have a hint of this here because if the, if Solomon's bed has to be guarded by 70, or 60, armed guards, you know, that's his innermost bedroom.

[23 : 54] Who in the world can you trust? You can't trust your own chamberlains, you can't trust your most closest servants, you're going to have armed bodyguards, 60 of them, round about your very bed chamberlain.

Then, you know, this indicates a certain degree of political, almost, if not instability, you might say, almost paranoia, if it's the original context. But remember that everything here is pointing onwards to Christ.

What do we understand by his bed, which is Solomon's? Well, I would suggest to you that the bed, the place where the king is to repose, is to rest, is that which is the heart, the heart of his, his own people.

Chapter 3, verse 17 of Ephesians, chapter 3, 17, that Christ may dwell, rest, well, permanently, in your hearts, by faith, that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height and so on.

Christ dwelling in your hearts. The word was made flesh and dwelt among us. Now, if the heart represents the bed where the king dwells, where the ultimate, greater than Solomon, dwells, his bed, which is Solomon, is to heart.

[25 : 19] Three score valiant men that are of the valiant of Israel. When it says the valiant of Israel, it implies that they are of the Lord's own appointing, of the Lord's own people in the sense that it probably means angels, guarding and protecting, but it means they are not mercenaries.

They are not the Kerithites and the Telethites who are basically Philistine mercenaries that David hire for his own bodyguards, but rather these are of the valiant of Israel.

They belong to the Lord's host and these are they which guard the bed, the heart where the king is meant to rest, to dwell with his beloved.

And they all hold swords, being excellent, and what? Every man has a sword about his thigh because of fear in the night. The swords are not drawn. They are in their sheath and they're scattered. They are resting.

They're ready to be drawn in the event of battle or attack or trouble. But rather the heart is that which has to be guarded.

[26 : 26] It is that where the Lord dwells and if it is not guarded then it becomes susceptible to all manner of deceit. The heart is deceitful above measure.

Gentlemen, they are desperately wicked. Who can not? Now, if the believer's heart is to be guarded thus, then Solomon is himself an example in his lifetime of a heart that was unguarded, particularly latterly.

Solomon started well, but then perhaps he got overconfident or complacent or whatever and we read that when he was old, his wives, his multiple numbers of pagan wives, turned his heart away from the Lord.

Now, anything or anybody that either comes between us and the Lord or seeks to turn us away from the Lord can only be by definition evil.

Now, these pagan wives that we might be a little harsh to say they were by definition evil. Their desire, of course, was to worship their own God, the gods of their own country and their own way.

[27 : 37] They wanted their husband, their king, to build the altars, to make them little temples and so on, so they could carry on doing that. And you might say that's not an unreasonable request, except that they had married him to the royal family of the king of Israel.

They ought to, like the heart of Ruth with a great humility, desire then the God of Israel under whose wings they had come to trust.

However, their desire was to turn Solomon's heart away to their own gods and he allowed himself to be turned. Whatever it is that comes between us and the Lord, it may be an obsession with our career, it may be an unhealthy desire without bank balance, it may be a love for anything, however harmless in and of itself, but which when it takes us over, when it becomes more important than the Lord, has begun to turn our hearts away from him.

Now, if I am facing a bright, bright light, then if something comes between me and the bright light, a screen or an obstruction of some kind, then the effect of that obstruction is going to create shadow, it's going to create darkness.

It doesn't mean the thing itself is necessarily a harmful, bad thing, but if there was pure light before and something gets in the way, the effect is shadow, the effect is darkness, greater darkness than there was before.

[29 : 04] Likewise, if I am beholding the light and I turn away from it, then I am beholding now greater darkness than I was before in the sight of the light.

Whatever it is that causes us to turn away or to come between us and the Lord, who is the light of the world, increases our darkness.

Now, if something is of the darkness, it is of the evil one. If it is of the light of the world, it is of the Lord. And whatever it is that increases our understanding or love or desire for the Lord can only be good.

Whatever the source of it, if it is pointing us to Christ, it can only be good. It may be that we have things to learn from people of perhaps different Christian traditions from ourselves.

We may have some grasp or some understanding that maybe we have missed. There is nothing wrong with a little humility, in understanding things that point us more purely to Christ.

[30 : 09] But all of that is enhancing the light. Solomon allowed the darkness to come between him and the light of the world. So the heart where the king reposes, the bed of which of Solomon's needs must be guarded.

And we must guard our hearts against every possible distraction from the Lord. King Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon. A chariot of course is a demonstration of magnificence.

It's not just a battle vehicle in this sense, but rather a vehicle of triumph of the wood of Lebanon. He made the pillars of silver. Now of course the pillars, whatever, the pillars of wisdom, Proverbs tells us, chapter 9, verse 1, wisdom, hath built her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars.

The feet of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The pillars they all have silver, the bottom, or rather the back, the reclining portion of the child is of gold, pure gold.

The covering of it of purple. Now the covering, some common people have suggested, points aside to the veil of the temple that covered, as it were, the Ark of the Covenant in the Temple, or it could also by extension be a reference to the crimson or purple robe in which Christ himself was clothed partly in mockery, but which nevertheless was part of his glory.

[31 : 41] The covering of it of purple, the most expensive of dyes and of clothing. The mist still being paved of a flow there, being paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem.

The senses are the kind of mosaic, as it were, upon which one walks with one's feet. The very road before you, the very place where your feet tread, the preparation as it were of the gospel of peace, remember, in the armour that we have in Ephesians 6.

It's paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem. You know, we can't really describe adequately the love that the Lord has for his people.

Sometimes I've said in the past that by way of our inheritance, we are all honorary sons, because sons inherit. So whatever our particular gender has to be, we become honorary sons of God in the sense that we inherit.

Well, here you could say we are honorary daughters. Daughters in the sense that the Lord has his love and desire toward his bride.

[32 : 50] And this is obviously in a feminine sense, so we all become, in a sense, honorary daughters, paid with love for the daughters of Jerusalem. As we go on through the chapters, we'll come, of course, to that famous section in chapter 8.

Set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thy arm, for love is strong as death, jealousy as cruel as the grave. The coals thereof are coals of fire, which have the most vehement flame.

Many waters turn up much love, and I look at the floods for it. If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be content. The midst of Solomon's chariot, of Christ's vehicle of triumph, is paid with love for the daughters of Jerusalem.

Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon with the crown, wherewith his mother crammed him, and gave his espoused him. His mother, of course, doesn't just mean bath, she, but in the original sense.

When we're looking toward Christ, his mother is in a sense, not simply me, but rather as many as a representative of mankind. He is the son of man as well as the son of God.

[34 : 04] His mother is the human race, as it were, the church for whom, as it were, he has given himself. His mother crowned him. How did she crown him? In the day of his espousals, now this isn't the day of his betrothals, but rather the day of his espousals, the day when he espouses his wife to himself, the day of his nuptials, his wedding day, the marriage supper of the lamb.

In other words, what is the crown? Wherewith he is crowned? Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, behold the crown. Well, there's something about him I would suggest to you in Philippians chapter 4 verse 1.

Therefore, Paul writes, my brethren, dearly beloved, and long for my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.

In this context, I would suggest to you the crown which is looked towards. The crown is those whom he has redeemed to himself.

Now, one reason would say that is if you think about, you know, Revelation chapter 19, where I think it's in verse 12, you know, I saw heaven open and behold a white horse, and he had set upon him was all faithful and true and righteousness, he was a judge and made war, his eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns.

[35 : 28] How do you wear many crowns on your head? If it is a physical crown that is envisaged, wearing many of them at once is going to be a bit tricky, but if we're envisaging rather a spiritual illustration of all the redeemed who are, like Paul writes to the Philippians, his joy and crown, then this is the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousal, his wedding day, the day of the gladness of his heart.

this is his delight, this is his joy. Some have suggested it's the crown of thorns as his crown, that's not a crown of joy, that's a crown of sorrow, of weeping, of the grim suffering of Christ, but the crown that is the gladness of his heart is those whom he has redeemed, who for the joy that was said before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the majesty on high.

This is a song of joy, a song of love in all its purity, a song of the crowning glory of the greater than sovereign, and that crowning glory is ultimately those whom he has redeemed for himself as the bride of Christ.

That's her.