

Rightly Do They Love You

By George Davis

"Draw me after you, let us make haste. The king has brought me into his chambers. We will exult and rejoice in you; we will extol your love more than wine; rightly do they love you." (Song of Solomon 1:4 RSV)

Solomon's Song of Songs is the perfect parable of Christ and His bride. It is a poetic story replete with the language of love. It is an allegory, wonderfully descriptive of the deepening affection between the bride and the Groom -- their love growing in purity, devotion and intensity.

In his insightful book entitled *The Ultimate Intention*, DeVern Fromkey gives us the key to understanding this little book.

"The King James Version fails to give the clear meaning of the fourth verse of the first chapter. In the Latin Vulgate translation we find this: 'He brought me into the winepress and set love in right order within me.' Comparison with other versions confirms this as an accurate expression of the meaning. . .The story presents the intimate fellowship between the Bridegroom and His bride. . .it shows how the love of the bride moves from plane to plane and is finally set in right order." (Pg. 156)



The expression "set love in right order" could well imply that love between a man and a woman, in its beginning stages, is typically in a state of disorder and mixture and is in need of adjustment. It is initially very egocentric, in that each one looks to the other to fulfill their needs and desires. Many couples never get beyond this level in their relationship and therefore never go on to become one. They live in constant turmoil, continually failing each other's expectations. If they are ever to reach that place of oneness in which each one cares for the other more than themselves, love must first be set in right order within them.

Likewise, the Shulamite maiden's love for her beloved

had to grow in fervor and purity before she could rightly love him. Love was being set in right order within her. She made three proclamations that reveal her growing passion of heart and the gradual displacing of her self-love with a genuine sacrificial love for her beloved. Her journey began with her first proclamation, which is found in chapter two, verse sixteen.

"My beloved is mine, and I am his. He browses among the lilies." (2:16)

At first her relationship to her beloved is very one-sided. Her beloved had become a wonderful addition to her life. "My beloved is mine. . ." Although it is clear that she loves him, her love is out of order, in that early on she shows little consideration for her beloved's feelings and desires.

Her second proclamation is found in chapter six, verse three.

"I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine. He browses among the lilies." (6:3)

She is beginning to become aware of her beloved's desires. She is starting to put His interests before her own. But still, she is very much alive to her self-love and quickly follows with her previous refrain - "my beloved is mine." She is in transition, but she has not arrived yet.

At last, through much searching for her beloved and hungering for his embrace, love was set in right order in her heart. Her third proclamation reveals an even more perfect condition of heart, in which all thoughts of what she would get out of the relationship were gone.

"I am my beloved's. His desire is toward me." (7:10)

Once she had thought that her beloved was her possession, but now she has come to see that she is His. Once her love was egocentric, making her beloved a slave to her desires, but now she has finally come to value His desire above her own. She no longer lives for her own appetites but for his pleasure. From now on, all the energies of her life are spent with a view toward his delight and glory (7:13). "The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for you, O my beloved." She is lost in his love. It has been a long journey but she has finally arrived.

Now let's consider how this applies to our relationship with the Lord.

When we begin our walk with the Lord we also tend to see all things as being related to our pleasure and comfort. "Jesus died for me! All God's gifts are mine! Jesus is mine!" In this state of spiritual infancy, the believer can be like an egocentric child screaming "Mine! Mine! Mine! My beloved is mine! All his benefits are mine!" Please don't misunderstand me! I am thankful for all God's gifts! But they were given for a far greater purpose than just to make our mundane and temporal lives more bearable. Salvation is a gift, a blessing, but as long as it is viewed egocentrically, related merely to our escape from the consequences of sin, it is not full salvation. All God's gifts are given to relate us more perfectly to Him -- to draw us into a place of greater intimacy with Him, that we should no longer live unto our selves but unto Him.

As it is in the natural realm so it is in the spiritual realm. When we grow, we put away childish (egocentric) things (See 1Corinthians 13:11) and as love matures or is set in right order in our hearts, by degrees, we come to see beyond our inheritance, our blessing, to God's inheritance in the saints. This is a time of transition and mixture, in which we vacillate between a spirit-wrought desire to put His desires before our own, while still clinging to our private ambitions, still endeavoring to get God to bless our agendas. As we grow into God's eternal perspective, love is increasingly set in right order in our hearts and we begin to see beyond our narrow egomaniacal pursuits to the grander panoramic view of the Father's eternal purposes. Little by little, His desires begin to take precedence over our own. It is then that we begin to seek Him, not His benefits, not His gifts, not the wealth of our Beloved but our Beloved himself.

As we seek Him and His glory, we begin to discover the reason we were created, and we begin to see that we are His workmanship, created for His glory and pleasure. We enter a place of blessedness in which we are no longer at the center of the universe, a place where His glory is foremost. In which this constant refrain is heard before His throne. *"Worthy are you, our Lord and God, the Holy One, to receive the glory, the honor, and the power, for you created all things, and because of your desire they existed, and were created" (Revelation 4:11)!*

As we move on into the Father's eternal viewpoint we are also led into His chambers, into a place of greater intimacy, where our love is further set in right order and we, in increasing measure, live for His pleasure and glory. Like the Shulamite maiden, we

have come to value His loving kindness more than life itself and His love brings us more joy than wine (4:10). Where once we thought God and His blessings were our own unique possessions, we now understand that all His gifts are given to relate us to Him and His larger purposes not just to make us wealthy, healthy and comfortable. His gifts are not given to us to be squandered upon ourselves.

When we were children in the Lord, we spoke, felt and thought as a child would (see 1 Corinthians 13:11). Our love was egocentric, making God subservient to our desires, but now we have come to see and value His desire. We have come to that place of perfection, the more excellent way, where love is rightly ordered. From this point on, we find pleasure only in those things that give Him pleasure. Only then are the pleasant fruits of our lives laid up for Him alone. Only then can we say, "The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for you, O my beloved!" Only then do we correctly appraise all things in the light of eternity. Only then have we learned the lesson of the book. "[Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. If a man offered for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly scorned](#)" (8:7). When God's love is the all-important thing -- more important and valued than all the wealth of a man's house, then and then only, is love set in right order!

[Who is this who comes up from the wilderness, leaning on her beloved?](#) (Solomon 8:5)