



Solomon & Delilah

4 The Bewitched King

Beloved's Deadly Embrace



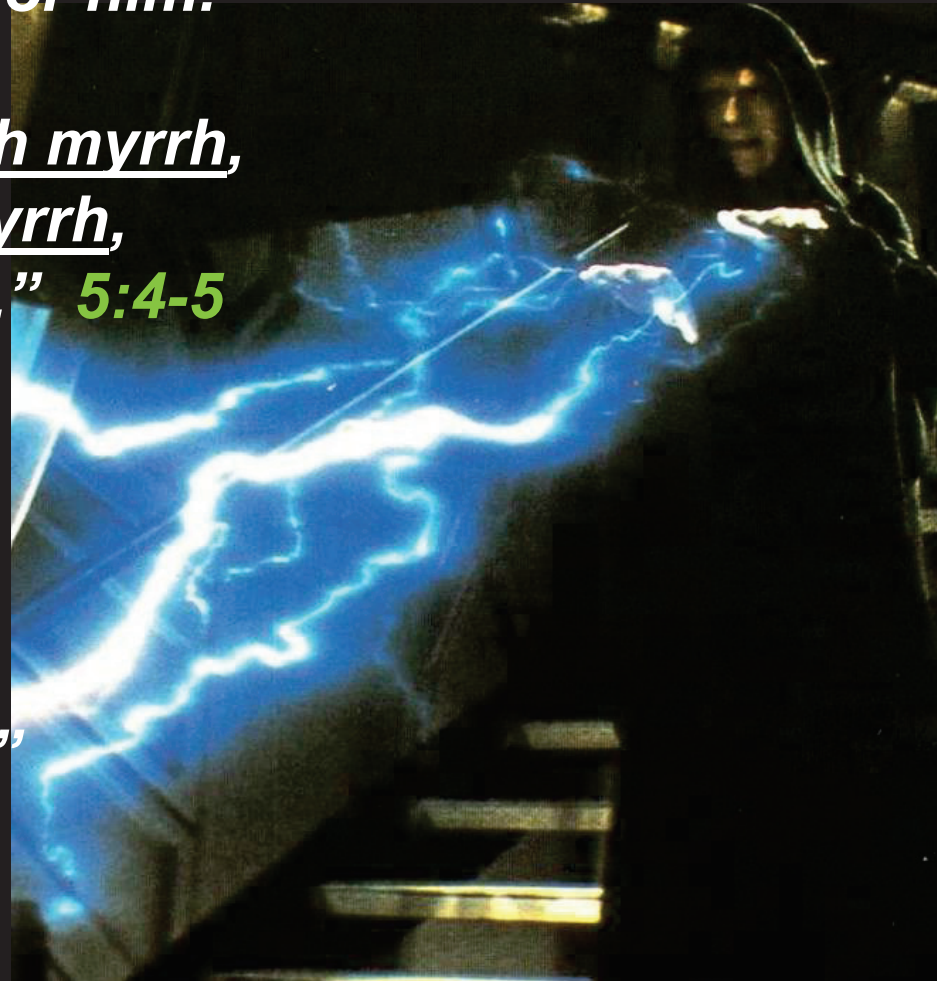
*“My lover thrust his hand
through the latch-opening;
my heart began to pound for him.
I arose to open for my lover,
and my hands dripped with myrrh,
my fingers with flowing myrrh,
on the handles of the lock.”* 5:4-5

The Bride's touch is deadly

Then a strange development:

*“I opened for my lover,
but my lover had left...”*

5:6



Where did he go?
And why?

*“I opened for my lover,
but my lover had left...”*

5:6



Watchmen of Jerusalem

Theme: Protectors of a city;
Obligated to defend *Ezek 33*

Precedential Biblical mention:
A song of ascents. Of Solomon.
Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain. *Ps 127:1*

Watchmen have no power if the city is ungodly

The Bride & the Watchmen

1st Encounter:

Bride: “All night long on my bed I looked for the one my heart loves; I looked for him but did not find him. I will get up now and go about the city, through its streets and squares...” The watchmen found me as they made their rounds in the city. “Have you seen the one my heart loves?” Scarcely had I passed them when I found the one my heart loves. 3:1-4

The watchmen learn:

- The Bride and the King rendezvous at night
- The Bride is intent on the union with the King
- The King is vulnerable

The Bride & the Watchmen

*“I opened for my lover,
but my lover had left...”*

5:6

*“I looked for him but did not find him.
I called him but he did not answer.
The watchmen found me
as they made their rounds in the city.”* **5:6-7**

The watchmen have snatched Solomon away – trying to save him

Conflict

2nd Encounter:

*“They beat me,
they bruised me;
they took away my
cloak, [Heb: ra-diyd]
those watchmen of
the walls!” 5:7*



*In that day the Lord
will snatch away
[Judah's] finery...
the linen garments
and tiaras and
shawls [Heb: ra-diyd]
Isa 3:19-23*

The watchmen do what God does

- ⇒ They attempt to save the city (forfeit lives otherwise)
but are powerless, fulfilling: *Ps 127:1!*
- ⇒ The watchmen are not punished by Solomon...
... he can't justify the union

Daughters of Jerusalem

*“I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
If you find my beloved,
As to what you will tell him:
For I am lovesick.”*

*“What kind of beloved is your beloved,
That thus you adjure us?”*

5:8-9, NASB

- **Adjure = to compel an oath when not freely given**
- **This dynamic has friction**
- **The Bride wants to control the dialogue**

She stakes her claim

*“This is my lover, this is my friend,
O daughters of Jerusalem.” **5:16***



The Oath: “Don’t Interfere”

“Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you by the gazelles and by the does of the field: Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires.” 2:7; 3:5; 8:4

Traditional reading: Don’t start love before it is ready

Hebrew means:

“Do not disturb our lovemaking” Fox, 1985, p107-9

Beloved is aware the King of Jerusalem is mesmerized by her

She adjures the Daughters of Jerusalem not to split them up



Contextual Evidence for “Do Not Disturb”

For each oath (2:7, 3:5, 8:4) the verse before speaks of the onset of an intimate encounter

*“His left arm is under my head,
and his right arm embraces me.”*

2:6

*“When I found him whom my soul
loves; I held on to him and would
not let him go; Until I had brought
him to my mother’s house, And into
the room of her who conceived me.”*

3:4

*“Let his left hand be under my head
And his right hand embrace me.”*

8:3



Witnesses

***“Come back, come back, O Shulammite;
come back, come back, that we may gaze on you!
Why would you gaze on the Shulammite
as on the dance of Mahanaim?” 6:13***

Shulammit = Fem of Solomon?

Yes:

*H-Taylor (1893), Bloch (1995),
Murphy (1999), Septuagint*

No: (would be 'Shelomit')

Glen (1897), Fox (1985)

LXX: “Σαλωμι” = Salome!

= Herodias' daughter

Josephus (AD93)



Solomon's Early Reign: Execution of Adonijah

“Please ask King Solomon—he will not refuse you—to give me Abishag the Shunammite as my wife.” 1 Kgs 2:17

*King Solomon swore by the LORD:
“May God deal with me, be it ever
so severely, if Adonijah does not
pay with his life for this request!”*

*King Solomon gave orders
to Benaiah... and he struck
down Adonijah and he
died. 1 Kgs 2:23-25*



Precedent: Royal prince executed for choosing forbidden bride

Hebrew Culture of Word Play

**Biblical Hebrew employs irony
through similar-sounding words**

*“What do you see, Jeremiah?”
“I see the branch of an almond tree,”
[shaqed] ... “You have seen correctly,
for I am watching [shaqad] to see
that my word is fulfilled.”*

Jer 1:11-12



*Tell [gad] it not in Gath...
In Beth Ophrah roll in the dust [aphar]
Those who live in Zaanan will not
come out [‘tsa]
Mic 1:10-11*



Shulammite = Shunammite

*“Come back, come back, O Shulammite;
...that we may gaze on you!” 6:13*

Equivalent to “Shunammite”
Murphy (1999), Glen (1897)

6:13 *Shulammite.* The beloved. It is either a variant of “Shunammite” (see 1Ki 1:3), i.e., a young woman from Shunem (see Jos 19:18), or a feminine form of the word “Solomon,” meaning “Solomon’s girl.” In ancient Semitic languages the letters *l* and *n* were sometimes interchanged.

NIV Study Bible footnote

- **ACCUSATION OF HYPOCRISY**
Solomon executes Adonijah for desiring Abishag the Shunammite; then marries “Shulammite”

An aerial view of a large-scale battle scene. In the foreground, a dense line of soldiers holds long spears, their tips pointing towards the center. In the middle ground, a large elephant is visible, carrying a platform or structure. To the right, another group of soldiers is engaged in combat, with some on horseback. The background shows more soldiers and a green field. The scene is set in a bright, open environment.

“As the Dance of Mahanaim”

***“Come back, come back, O Shulammite;
come back, come back, that we may gaze on you!
Why would you gaze on the Shulammite
as on the dance of Mahanaim?” 6:13***

Solomon's Early Reign: Execution of Shimei

David to Solomon: *“And remember, you have with you Shimei ...who called down bitter curses on me the day I went to Mahanaim... you will know what to do to him. Bring his gray head down to the grave in blood.”* **1 Kgs 2:8-9**

Solomon to Shimei: *“You know in your heart all the wrong you did to my father David...”* Then the king gave the order to **Benaiah son of Jehoiada**, and he went out and struck Shimei down and killed him. **1 Kgs 2:45-46**



The Legacy of Mahanaim: A House Divided

Events at Mahanaim:

- Jacob makes two camps to defend from Esau

In great fear and distress Jacob divided the people who were with him into two groups **Gen 32:7**

- Abner divides the Kingdom of Israel by anointing Ish-bosheth at Mahanaim after Saul dies **2 Sam 2:8**

- David flees first to Mahanaim when Absalom revolts and divides the Kingdom once again **2 Sam 17**



Mahanaim: Shimei's Death Sentence

[Shimei] pelted David and all the king's officials with stones... So David and his men continued along the road while Shimei was going along the hillside opposite him, cursing as he went and throwing stones at him and showering him with dirt. 2 Sam 16:6,13

David's fleeing retinue dodged the rocks thrown by Shimei: the 'dance' of Mahanaim?

Mahanaim: Israel's house divided

Mahanaim

Indictment

“Come back, come back, O Shulammite; come back, come back, that we may gaze on you! Why would you gaze on the Shulammite as on the dance of Mahanaim?” 6:13



Shunammite: forbidden bride which Prince Adonijah improperly tried to marry

Solomon executed Adonijah for his crime



Mahanaim: throne abused; kingdom divided by Absalom rebellion; Shimei's attack

Solomon executed Shimei for his crime

Solomon has exceeded the crimes of both Adonijah and Shimei

Consider the weight of guilt Solomon bears for his hypocrisy of dividing the City of David with the Shulammite marriage



**Entranced,
Entangled**

**Bride: “While the king was at his table,
my perfume spread its fragrance.” 1:12**

**Solomon: “Your hair is like
royal tapestry;
the king is held captive
by its tresses.” 7:5**

The King describes himself as a captive, mesmerized

She Holds Power

“Your eyes are the pools of Heshbon by the gate of Bath Rabbim.” 7:4

Heshbon is in Moab
Beth Rabbim = ‘House of Rabbis’

He is taking leadership from her beautiful (foreign) eyes



Bride: “Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm”
8:6

Owner seals owned => She owns him

“[angels] put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God.” Rev 7:3

Wasf: Before & After

4:1-7



5:1



7:1-9

Elegant revelation of
their consummation

Clever depiction of
the transfer of power

He leads her:

“Come with me” 2:10

“Come” x 2 2:13

“Come with me
from Lebanon” x 2 4:8

Towards
Jerusalem

BEFORE



4:1-7

***“I have come into my garden, my sister, my bride;
I have gathered my myrrh with my spice.” 5:1***

Away from
Jerusalem

She leads him:

“Come” 7:11

“Come away” 8:14

AFTER



7:1-9