

# His banner over me was love (Quality: Good)

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[ 0 : 00 ] I'd like to venture again this evening in directing your thoughts to Solomon's Song, the second chapter, reading verse 4.

Solomon's Song, the second chapter, reading verse 4. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.

We have felt that this fourth verse is really in the centre of the first seven verses in this second chapter of Solomon's Song.

And therefore we commenced our meditation by looking first of all at the first two verses in this chapter.

I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys. As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.

[ 1 : 20 ] As we seek to come to this fourth verse, we have felt the need first to build on the only foundation that there is for salvation in heaven, that is in the Lord Jesus Christ.

who has condescended to speak of himself. In the first verse, I believe it is Christ that speaks here, I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys.

We spoke then, or attempted, to speak of Christ this morning, first as the rose of Sharon, the red rose of Sharon, the one who gave his life a ransom for his people, the sacred fragrance that there is in Christ.

We read in the Revelation this morning, chapter 19, concerning him. And I just turn once more and read what we read then, among other truths.

And as the Apostle John was given a glimpse of the glory of Christ, as recorded in verses, particularly verses 11 and to the 16th verse.

[ 2 : 59 ] But in verse 13 in the Revelation, chapter 19, and he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and his name is called the Word of God.

Oh, how precious then this is. I am the rose of Sharon. The red rose. We mentioned how, what we might perhaps speak of as more the original red rose, as we have it in our own country.

And the wonderful fragrance that is to be known, I'm sure I am aware, having been a gardener and having quite a bit to do with roses in the past, but one is aware that as time goes on, many different varieties of roses have been produced.

But I feel right here that the red rose, the one I think of, it has this wonderful fragrance. Now, the Lord himself has condescended then to speak of himself in this.

He left the glories of heaven, came down upon the earth, and in all that he walked in, which we just thought to speak a little of in that that follows in verse 1, and the lily of the valleys.

[ 4 : 24 ] And there again, the lily spoken of here is, I believe, a white lily with much fragrance. And so we spoke of the Lord Jesus in his holy humanity, and in his humiliation, what he endured from Bethlehem to Calvary.

We feel we cannot go into these things again this evening, although if it was to be so, we would. And, of course, it is the very centre of the Gospel.

And I have just brought this with me because this wonderful hymn or poem on the life and death of Samuel Rutherford, I quoted a part of the one verse this morning, and I felt I must just read the whole verse to you this evening.

There the red rose of Sharon, that is, in glory. There the red rose of Sharon unfolds its hearts and bloom, and fills the air of heaven with ravishing perfume.

Oh, to behold its blossom. Friends, this is to be known here. Oh, to behold its blossom here, and to know its fullness in glory at last.

[ 5 : 52 ] Oh, to behold its blossom, wild by its fragrance found, where glory dwelleth in Emmanuel's land.

And then we continue by looking into the second verse. As the lily among the thorns, so is my love among the daughters.

And if I understand this rightly, and one is so aware of our special need in attempting to speak from Solomon's song, but as I understand this second verse, it is the Lord Jesus speaking with regard to his beloved people, his bride, his treasure, as the lily among thorns.

And how true this is, as his people are brought to own him, love him, to obey him. They are like speckled birds in this world.

This world is not their home. They're not at home in the world. They're separated by the grace of God. And they are so aware that they are among thorns.

[ 7 : 02 ] And we try to convey this thought that as Christ speaks of himself as a lily white, and the perfume that is known in all that he is, and yet his dear people, they receive grace for grace.

They know what it is to shine as his reflection is wrought in their hearts by the refining process that God gives to all his people.

And then in closing, we also mention that if we are among his people, we shall know what it is to have two armies within our own breast. In every believer, without exception, every true believer will know and feel this, that in every believer, two armies are seen, and it will create conflict.

And on the one hand, we have the lily. On the other hand, we have the thorns. Oh, the thorns. And dear friend, one perhaps might just express this.

They plattered a crown of thorns, and what thorns they were, as I understand it, that grow in Palestine. Thorns that perhaps we, and I feel it's right to say, we do not know, in just the same way in our own country.

[ 8 : 21 ] But oh, they plattered a crown of thorns, and they put it upon his head. Now his people, then he likens them as the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.

Then it comes to this, and I must just read verse 4 once more. You see, may we be favoured to see how these truths are linked together.

I felt from the beginning, in trying to preach, that God's word is in perfect order, and one so constantly feels our need that we may keep it thus, that we may rightly divide the word of truth.

But he brought me, this glorious person, he brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love. But first of all, we have verse 3.

It might well be thought that it should be the other way round. Verse 4, in the place of verse 3, that I must seek to convey what I feel in this, regarding the third verse, before we come to the fourth.

[ 9 : 34 ] Now what does it say in verse 3? As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. The apple tree, in comparison to many trees, is very insignificant.

If you think of a giant cedar, and an apple tree, however large an apple tree might grow, of course I'm thinking of it in the sense of our own country here.

So, we think of it in this way. But if you think of a vast cedar tree and a little apple tree, that before a cedar tree can be of any real value or use, it needs to be cut down.

God has likened his dear people in one place or another to various kinds of trees, and the cedar of Lebanon in their beauty and glory.

But the, we might say, the little apple tree, in comparison to the great trees that there are. But here, the church of Christ is speaking of their saviour in this particular way.

[ 10 : 54 ] As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. Well, this brings me then to this part of the subject.

And I begin by asking all of you this vital question, what think ye of Christ? You dear young people that are here tonight, indeed all of you, may the Holy Ghost convey this question into every heart that is here.

What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? Many people today speak of Christ as an example, as a man only.

They do not want to know him as the eternal son of God. They would take his glory from him because of the proud heart of man.

They do not wish to have such a glorious person to reign over them in their lives. They do not recognise him as the eternal son of God.

[ 12 : 07 ] But do we recognise him as such? We certainly will if we know something of what follows in verse 4. But I have desired to speak of Christ once more today.

As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. Is he beloved to us?

Is he, has the Holy Spirit made him the one thing, friends, I repeat it, the one thing needful. Dearest Lord, is to be one with thee.

And when and as poor sinners are brought by him to his dear feet, are brought to bow before him as sinners, know something of what true repentance is, and are favoured to sit at his dear feet as Mary did.

and when you are made aware of this, that this is the one thing needful, it will transcend everything else in your life.

[ 13 : 19 ] And when you are brought to this point and place in which the Lord Jesus means more to you than anything else in this world, well, is it so?

Has it been so? we need to ask these questions, I feel. What does Jesus mean to you and I? Is he precious?

Is he precious? I tremble and have trembled even in speaking like this because I feel there's a danger of our giving utterance to such words without really knowing the power of truth in our hearts.

I tremble in one sense to speak of Jesus in this way that Jesus is precious says the word. But what comfort can this word afford until the Holy Ghost makes him precious to us and he's precious to his people in all their life as they follow him and as they know him and as they are favoured in their souls.

As you have come to chapel this evening, could you say that you've come seeking him, seeking Jesus? Could you say that you had to bow before your God today in asking that it might be so?

[ 14 : 42 ] Have you wanted Christ to be your all and in all today in the services? Have you wanted him to reign? Have you wanted him to rule? Have you wanted him to make himself known to you as your Jesus, your Saviour, your Lord and in all those sacred offices that he sustains which we've been singing of in the first two hymns that we've had tonight and those of you that were here this morning will know that we sang the first six verses in our morning service.

So may we come then by the Spirit's sacred influence to this sacred place as the apple tree among the trees of the woods so is my beloved among the sons.

Thou art fairer than the children of men. Grace is poured into thy lips. Therefore God, even thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

Christ is precious. He's precious in his precious blood. He's precious in his holy, sacred righteousness.

He's precious in all that he is to his people. I cannot begin to go into all this this evening but to be given some sense of this and I just put it to you like this.

[ 16 : 13 ] Have you ever known what it is to feel that he is more precious to you than anything in this world or any person? And if we're favoured with our loved ones and our dear ones and we love them but if you've known the love of Christ shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Ghost and then he has become the chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely.

He's taken first place in your life. But I've said this before, I say it again, the more we love him, the more we are aware that he loves us and then we shall love him, the more we will love our loved ones.

Oh, the more we shall love our loved ones. And then Solomon by the Spirit he goes on here.

As the apple tree among the trees of the woods so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

When Christ is made precious to our souls when he does become the one thing needful and the altogether lovely, when our poor souls are taken up with him, oh, then we shall sit down.

[ 17 : 43 ] I sat down in such times as this. It was a token of reverence and love to sit down when King David after he had been spoken to by Nathan who told him he was not to build the house for God and yet the Lord blessed the dear man with submission and willingness and what do we find then?

We find this, then went King David in and sat before the Lord and he sat at the feet of Jesus that day and he said, who am I?

Oh, Lord God and what is my house that thou hast brought me hitherto? Christ was everything to David that day. The Lord had put everything in his life even to build the temple.

The Lord had put it in its right place and Christ was first and that was the effect. He sat. You see, it's a token of love and sacred reverence, divine favour to sit at the feet of Jesus.

It was so with the poor man out of whom the Lord had delivered from that mighty power of evil and friends, if we know anything of our hearts we shall know we're just the same as that man but when the Lord had delivered him he was found sitting and clothed and in his right mind and the people that were there to witness it they were afraid and they wanted the Lord to go you see.

[ 19 : 19 ] They wanted him to go. Where do we find the dear man that the Lord had delivered? We find him here. He desired him, that is Jesus, that he might be with him.

Now this will always be the effect of sitting down under his shadow with great delight and partaking of his fruit. It will always bring a poor sinner here.

You'll want to be with him. I wonder how many of us here tonight have come to this sacred place you've wanted to be with him.

You've wanted to be with him. You'll want to be with him here and you'll want to be with him in glory. I sat down under his shadow with great delight and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

Another way in which poor sinners do sit down under his shadow with great delight is when they encounter the storms and the tempests and the temptations and the sorrows and the bereavements and the troubles and the tribulation of their lives.

[ 20 : 31 ] In Isaiah chapter 30 or 32 we have these wondrous words. behold a king shall reign in righteousness and princes shall rule in judgment and a man and a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind and a covert from the tempest as rivers of water in a dry place as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

Now this is what the Lord is to his people. He is a shade. The Lord is thy keeper. The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day nor the moon by night.

The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil. The Lord shall be with you in your coming out and your going in from this time forth and even forevermore.

Well how precious to sit down under his shadow with great delight. It speaks I feel of being brought to sit down under his shadow to be delivered from the storms of life the trials in our lives and to sit at his dear feet and when we are given sweet submission to his holy will and fall as it were completely into his sacred arms the eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms and poor sinner you'll never sing he'll hold you up he'll carry you through he'll be with you in life and he'll be with you in death I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.

How wonderful then to be brought into this and we have it of course in verse 4 I just read verse 3 once more as the apple tree among the trees of the woods so is my beloved my beloved among the sons I sat down under his shadow with great delight and his fruit was sweet to my taste how sacred when we feed upon Christ and to feed upon Christ as I understand it is to feed upon his word Christ and his word are both the same now it's to feed upon his word and that is to feed upon Christ and how sacred when we are favoured to feed when we are when we are blessed in this when the Lord grants a portion for our soul and maybe those of you here tonight and you may be saying but oh I've gone for so long there's been nothing for me I have not known this for so long but oh do you long for it again do you feel your need of it tonight have you prayed for the minister have you prayed for your pastor have you said

[ 23 : 24 ] Lord I can get nothing from him I can only receive food for my soul as thou Lord does grant it it must come from the Lord dear friends it will never come from the man you see this is where the the precious food comes from the Lord himself I am the bread of life and he is the water of life and in John chapter 6 there are there is that most searching word and I must just mention it except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood there is no life in you now that will make you tremble it's made me tremble does make me tremble except or unless ye eat the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood there is no life in you now that's the word of Jesus dear friend now you may feel that then there is no hope for me I have never known it but the Lord help you to consider it tonight oh when the

Lord has spoken to you through his word yes regarding the things of this life regarding the things to do with your souls and the Lord has spoken to you through his word and you have embraced it by God given faith through the Holy Ghost working in you and you have embraced the truth you felt something of its power it's been made your your the word of God to your soul it's been made yours have you a little Bible oh have we a little Bible what I mean is have we those precious truths that the Lord has spoken to our souls that have filled our soul with love that have humbled us in the dust we've sat at his dear feet well we must come to verse four then he brought me to the banqueting house and his banner over me was love if you have been brought to understand a little and it will only be a little of the truths that

I have tried to convey to you today concerning Christ his people his love his mercy his favour now if you know something of this you'll understand what is recorded you'll say amen to verse four you'll say yes Lord that's true of me it was not the will of man or of anyone that my soul was quickened into life but it was through Christ alone you've received life through him conveyed into your heart by the holy ghost now how do we feel then about this fourth verse he he brought me god the father god the son and god the holy ghost he brought me to the banqueting house how did this begin in our souls experience i venture to say this first of all he brought us to his word as sinners before him can you remember some of you of course will not be able to but i hope i can just convey this but those of you who do know the spot of ground where jesus did thee meet and when his word entered your soul what did it do to you it brought you at once to him now to those of you that cannot speak of a clear call by grace as it were but you will be able to speak of this he brought me to the banqueting house and his banner over me was love now he has brought you to his word hasn't he you may you will have heard solemn things from his word the soul that sinneth it shall die oh israel thou hast destroyed thyself but in me is my hell you will have known quickening words you will have known searching words you will have known words of truth that have conveyed to you that you are a sinner you're not ashamed to own it you must own it because you are a sinner you acknowledge this but I'm a sinner needs no proof

I sorely feel the fall well he brought me to the banqueting house he brought you to his word he brought you to the throne of grace he brought you to cry for mercy he brought you to seek for salvation in christ alone he set your affection on things above and not on things on the earth the lord separated you by his grace and brought you to his dear feet and oh the sacredness of it when I can sit at jesus feet and he anoints my head such peace ensues so calm so sweet I think my foe's all dead of course the hymn goes on and read it when you get home you'll see if you're among his people you'll know something of what follows in that hymn a sense of our guilt our violence our wretchedness and we shall know something of this more and more as we go on in our life we shall never get beyond it here because we're living in an enemy's land and then of course let us look at it like this he brought me to the banqueting now friends if there's life in your soul and you're here tonight seeking jesus who brought you here who changed your heart renewed your will and turned your feet to zion's hill to those of you that went away like the prodigal into a far country and if the lord has brought you back you will have to say he brought me to the banqueting house he brought you again as it were perhaps everyone here was taken as a child into the house of god i do not know but i believe most if not all were but that doesn't mean to say that you entered into these sacred things we must first be born again our souls must be quickened into life before we begin to seek jesus then if we think of it too in this way he brought me to the banqueting house who brought us dear friends into the house of god upon our knees as it were do you remember the first time you bowed your head in the house of god you didn't want anybody to see you bow your head but you had to bow your head you were compelled to do so because of the burden of your soul so then you'd say yes he brought me to the banqueting house he has brought you into the house of god as a converted sinner turned completely round and now instead of seeking your pleasures here you seek them in his house you seek them from his word and you seek them in your life he brought me to the banqueting house and the evidence of this the precious evidence and his banner over me was love this is why you're here his banner over me was love it was everlasting love that drew you with the cords of a man and brought you to his dear feet everlasting love was the source and secret of it all we love him if we do love him we love him because he first loved us we acknowledge that we would never have loved him if he hadn't first loved us to those of you who may be in the time of your espousals the lord says to you i remember thee the kindness of thy youth the love of thine espousals when thou wentest after me in the wilderness in a land that was not sold for those of you that are there tonight you've come seeking jesus

you've come seeking jesus because of the love that you have to him that he's given to you and you must seek him my sheep hear my voice i know them they follow me it's christ that you want oh i look back in my own life to those precious days when one saw christ and every time we came into the house of god in those days we were often favoured the lord often favours his people in the days and times of their espousals they do not live there but they know something of it and then again in all the days of your life and the trials and the troubles and the difficulties and the tribulation that you have known and do know well perhaps today but oh have you come seeking jesus once more have you felt perhaps you so need a word from god you need christ above everything else in your life this is what you need it's christ nothing not will content my heart but fellowship with him and that's where you are tonight is it is it where we are tonight is it jesus only and then again we think of it of course as regarding heaven itself he brought me to the banqueting house and his banner over me was love and those souls that long to see him now shall will see him face to face i just refer to this beautiful poem or hymn once more because it's very sacred and i'm sure some of you have known what it is to read these 19 verses that were penned on the life and death of samuel rutherford i can say that at times they've been food to my soul but at one verse we just read it perhaps we'll read more than one in closing this evening but this is what was penned and it was so true of samuel rutherford oh i am my beloved and my beloved mine he brings a poor vile sinner into his house of wine i stand upon his merit i know no other stand not e'en where glory dwelleth in emmanuel's land i shall sleep sound in jesus friends this is the religion that we all need this is what we all so need every one of us here tonight must die and be as water spilled on the ground but this is what we all need this revelation this understanding granted to us i shall sleep sound in jesus filled with his likeness rise to love and to adore him to see him with these eyes between me and resurrection but paradise does stand then then for glory dwelling in immanuel's land we could go on but we must leave it the verses that follow really speak of precious souls sitting at the feet of jesus and it says stay me with flagons comfort me with apples for i am sick of love see that one desire now was to see jesus was to be favored was to feed on him his left hand is under my head

[ 35 : 50 ] and his right hand doth embrace me i charge you oh ye daughters of jerusalem by the rows and by the hinds of the field that ye stir not up nor awake my love till he pleases and when we have been favored we wanted to be with him we have not wanted him to go you wanted him to stay the lord mercifully add his blessing amen may be helped to conclude with him 940 compared with christ in all beside no comeliness i see the one thing needful dearest lord is to be one with thee him 940 improvebulst

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The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End Is 23 The End The End The End The End The End The End Thank you.

Thank you.

To return home. To grant them a safe journey. And Lord, do bless everyone. And do remember those that may stay to witness the sacred ordinance of the Lord's Son.

[ 41 : 14 ] Oh, favour them, Lord, to see no man save Jesus only. And then we pray for those that will now come to thy table.

Come with them, Lord. Come with us. Be with us. For we so need thy help. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God with the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Amen.