

He is altogether lovely (Quality: Good)

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- [0 : 0 0] You will find our text in the Song of Solomon and in the fifth chapter and in the 16th verse. Song of Solomon and in the fifth chapter and at the 16th verse. There in the middle of the verse, yea, he is altogether lovely.
- Yea, he is altogether lovely. I got down some of the modern versions just to see how they rendered these words.
- For I regard these words as matchless in the translation before us. Yea, he is altogether lovely. Apart from the fact that there are those that miss out the yea altogether.
- It is of no consequence, so they don't include it. They subtract, in other words, from what God has said. Some of the so-called improvements they make are no improvement to my way of thinking.
- [1 : 1 9] A new American standard Bible. And he is wholly desirable. And he is wholly desirable. Does that come to us with the force and the preciousness of what is there in our text?
- Yea, he is altogether lovely. I got down the Good News Bible. Today's English version. And this is what I read.
- Everything about him enchants me. Is that an improvement? That's today's English, is it? Well, I don't want it. Everything about him enchants me.
- Now, I shall stay with what our forefathers have stayed with and be very thankful that I do. Yea, he is altogether lovely.
- Couldn't be better put than that. Now, what does it mean? Of whom does it speak? Interpretations are many. As some of you will doubtless know, how is this book to be taken?
- [2 : 2 6] Is it to be taken literally? Is it to be taken figuratively? Well, I'm not going into all the different interpretations.
- It would be without any profit to us. But I'm going to state that I see in this marriage poem commemorating the love of Solomon and his bride.
- A marriage hymn, if you like. And yet, beyond that, I see there is the expression of the love of Jehovah to Israel.
- And beyond the love of Jehovah to the old Israel, I see the love of Jehovah Jesus to the new Israel. To the church that he has loved even to purchase it with his own precious blood.
- And I will take it in this sense that it speaks chiefly and principally of Christ. He is altogether lovely.
- [3 : 3 8] Now, if you look at this chapter, you will see that from the sixth verse, we are told that the bride is seeking for the bridegroom.
- He has come knocking and she has not opened. She has deferred to open the door. And when she does open it, he's not there. He's gone. I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himself and was gone.

My soul failed when he spake. I sought him, but I could not find him. I called him, but he gave me no answer. And so she goes to seek him out.

She enters the city. The seventh verse, we're told, the watchmen that went about the city found me. And they rudely and roughly treated her.

They smote me. They wounded me. The keepers of the walls took away my veil from me. And then she comes up against some of the women, the daughters of Jerusalem.

[4 : 56] I charge you, she asked, two daughters of Jerusalem. If he find my beloved, that you tell him that I am sick of love.

She asks concerning him. She wants him to say that if they will find him, this must be the message that she longs for him. She's sick of love.

Back comes their answer in the ninth verse. What is thy beloved more than another beloved? What's so wonderful about this one whom you are seeking thus?

O thou fairest among women, what is thy beloved more than another beloved that thou dost so charge us? And so she begins to speak of him.

She begins to describe him. And here is the passage which sets forth Christ who is altogether lovely.

[5 : 57] We haven't time to properly take up these verses. I just mention them and seek to give the main line of how we understand them of Christ.

Because my business is with these words. Yea, he is altogether lovely. But she speaks there of his complexion.

My beloved is white and ruddy. White that speaks of his separation from all that is dark and sinful.

Christ is that one who comes as the Holy One of God. He is white but he is ruddy. And what is the ruddiness of Christ?

It is that which speaks of the blood that was shed by the Holy One, the Just One, dying for the unjust. Christ to bring us unto God.

[6 : 59] And he to her is the chiefest among ten thousand. He is literally the standard bearer in the great company that makes the host of the Lord.

He is that one that stands out. He is that one who is as an ensign unto the people. So is our Saviour Christ. He stands out. He is unique.

He is the God-man. And then she turns in the description to his head. His head is as the most fine gold.

Gold speaking of worth. And here is the eternity. And here is the glory of the one who is the Saviour.

The Son of God from all eternity. And then she speaks of his hair, his locks, are bushy and black as a raven.

[8 : 01] And it is John Gill that says that he was a Nazarene from birth. Do you remember the Nazarenes? The Nazarite vow that was taken in the Old Testament.

Saint Samson was dedicated to the service of the Lord.

And we are told there in the Gospel according to Matthew. Matthew 2.23. He was separated from the Lord.

He was separated, you see, from his very birth. He was separated to the work that God had entrusted to his church. And as she speaks of him, his locks are bushy and black as a raven.

Christ in all the covenant engagements was true to the vow that he had taken. Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.

[9 : 13] And then in the twelfth verse, he speaks of his eyes. His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of water washed with milk and fitly set.

To the enemies of Christ, his eyes are as a flaming fire. That looks to the very heart. That penetrates to all that they have done.

And all that they have ever thought to do. And strikes terror into their hearts. So it will be in the day of judgment. But to his people, to his bride, his eyes are as the eyes of doves.

In all their meekness and in all their purity. And then in the thirteenth verse, he speaks of his cheeks. That there is a bed of spices as sweet flowers.

Aromatic. Giving forth a perfume. Reminiscent of the first chapter of the Song of Solomon. And that third verse, thy name is as ointment poured forth.

[10 : 20] And the name of Christ stands for the character and the attributes of Christ. And all about Christ. All of his being. All of his attributes.

Which are his as the Son of God from all eternity. They are as ointment poured forth. To his people to hear about him. Is to feel that these things are more than anything that this world has to offer.

His name is as ointment poured forth. And then she goes on to speak of his lips. His lips like lilies dropping sweet smelling myrrh.

In the forty-fifth psalm which is a psalm of love. A psalm for Solomon. And therefore not unconnected to this portion of the word of God before us.

We are told that grace is poured into thy lips. How lovely is that expression as it speaks of our great Solomon. Grace is poured into thy lips.

[11 : 27] Never man spake as this man. They wonder that the gracious words that proceeded from his mouth. Grace poured into his lips. His lips like lilies dropping sweet smelling myrrh.

And then his hands are as gold rings set with beryl. The gold again of eternity and glory. And the beryl of humanity.

And he is that one whose hands of strength. Nothing can pluck us from his hand. Nothing. Satan cannot do it. No man can do it.

We cannot even pluck ourselves were we to make the attempt. When his hand is upon us. None can pluck them from my hand. And then his belly or his bowels literally in the Hebrew.

His heart. There it is. It's as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires. It speaks of the depth of that love. The heavenly character of that love.

[12 : 30] Like the heavenly blue of the sapphire. Love that will never end. Nothing can separate us from that love of Christ for us.

Who loved us and gave himself for us. And we can never understand that love completely. There's always more than we can see.

We can only see, said one, a little of God's loving. A few rich treasures from his mighty store. But out there beyond the ice horizon.

There's more. There's more. Oh, the heart of Christ towards us is the heart of love. Everlastingly to his people.

And then she comes to his legs in the 15th verse. Are as pillars of marble set upon sockets of fine gold. The durability of eternal purposes in the Redeemer.

[13 : 31] And then his countenance. That is his overall appearance. Why it's like Lebanon. The Mount Lebanon. Shining in its limestone composition. And yet also shining white.

Because of the gleaming snows upon its summit. And there is that shining forth of Christ. He is as the sun shineth in its strength.

And those cedars. Excellent as the cedars. So sought after. So desired. The cedars of Lebanon. He is all of this.

And then his mouth. She says is most sweet. The breathings of love. The power of the Holy Spirit bringing Christ to us.

Oh, his mouth is most sweet. Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. And so she comes to what I want to look at a little with you tonight.

[14 : 34] Yea, she says. He is altogether lovely. She's overcome. She's ravished by the very thought of the one of whom she is supplying this description.

Yea, she said. He is altogether lovely. And I say that the child of God is brought to something of that. He is altogether lovely.

If you have known him who loved you. Saw you ruined in the fall. Yet loved you notwithstanding all. And gave his dear self for your sake.

As you think of his person and his work. And all that he is. And all that he's done. And that he has loved you. Brought you to him at this great cost.

The cost of his precious blood shed for many for the remission of sins. In the new covenant. You are brought to this. Yea, he is altogether lovely.

[15 : 39] Now let us make a little consideration of this. The titles of the Lord are all setting forth his loveliness to it.

Yea, he is altogether lovely. I mean by the titles of Christ. The names and the descriptions that God has been pleased to use in the pages of the Old and New Testament.

Concerning his son. Every one of them is a lovely title. When you think of them. In the book of Haggai. He is described as the desire of nations.

The desire of nations shall come. Oh, what a lovely title that is. He is the desire of nations. Even those Gentile nations that apparently knew not God.

He is a people amongst them. And that people will be made to seek after him. And as his desire is to them, so their desire is to him.

[16 : 38] He is the desire of nations. He is the desire of his people. The gospel has been preached amongst the Gentiles believed on in the world. And he is the desire of nations.

He is our desire this night, is he not? Desire of nations. Think of that title. He is the Prince of Peace. The Prince of Peace. We are princes of the earth.

And anything could be said in description of them save this, that they are princes of peace. They are so often messengers of war and bitterness and hatred.

But he is the Prince of Peace. He is that wonderful counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father.

He is the Prince of Peace. And he, to secure that peace, has taken away the enmity and reconciled those that were at enmity against God and against whom God must necessarily be at enmity.

[17 : 41] Also reconciled them by his precious blood. He is the Holy One of God. He is the Holy One of God. We mentioned it this morning. It was not possible that his Holy One should see corruption.

What a title that is. What a lovely title it is. What a lovely description it is of the dear Savior that he is the Holy One of God.

He is God's Holy One. God's dear Son. God's loved Son. The only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father. The Holy One of God.

He is, says Peter, the chief cornerstone, elect and precious. Chief cornerstone of the building, elect and precious.

And there are so many other titles. He is the refuge. He is the righteousness of his people. He is the shield. He is the strength of Zion. He is the horn of their salvation.

[18 : 43] He is the Passover. He is as the Jew. He is as the manna. He is all of these things. He is the ladder. He is the treasure.

He is the peril. He is that one who is all sufficient. Yea, he is altogether lovely.

What a fruitful and delightful study it is to go through the names of Christ. Meditating upon them.

Turning up the references. And viewing him in all those blessed names. Names of inspiration. That the Spirit of God has seen fit to apply to the dear Son of God.

And our Savior. Yea, he is altogether lovely. And then his types show that he is altogether lovely.

[19 : 41] The types of Christ. There are those things. And indeed there are those persons. Let us take the persons first. There are those persons. In the Old Testament scriptures.

That are types of Christ. Anticipations of Christ. They show something of Christ to us. You think of Moses. What a type of Christ was Moses.

Of his birth. We are told that when his parents saw that he was a goodly child. They hid him from sight. And that's by faith.

In Hebrews 11. When we are told of the faith of Moses. Remember. We are also told of the faith of his parents. They had faith in God. They took those steps to secure their little baby son's life.

And they did this by faith. And they did it remarkably. They hid him in the ark of the bulrushes. And none less than the daughter of Pharaoh.

[20 : 46] Took him and brought him up. He was brought up in the court. But he left it. And he identified with his people. And Christ has identified with his people. And he drew his people out of bondage.

And Christ draws his people out of a greater bondage. Than ever was the bondage of Israel and Egypt. And he is that one who is the mediator of the law.

But all grace and truth have come by Jesus Christ. You see that Moses is a type. You see that Moses is a type. He shows those things which point in the direction of Christ.

But all Christ eclipses the glory that is there in Moses. And yet the glory that was in Moses was such that his very face shone. And the children of Israel couldn't look directly upon him.

And begged him that he might hide that glory that was shining from his countenance. But all the mystery of godliness. God manifest in the flesh that man could look upon him.

[21 : 49] And yet there is that which outshines all the glories of Moses. For he is altogether lovely. Think of David. There is another type.

Think of David. David. And David is that great king that brings all the nation together. And subdues all the nation. Brings it from its unruliness and its civil war.

And unites it and makes it strong. Christ is that great king over Zion. Christ is that one that subdues his nation. His loved nation for whose sake he shed his precious blood.

David is the man after God's own heart. And over the son the father says. This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. And the testimony of the resurrection is to the way that Christ is pleased in all things.

His father. So that his father justifies him. And raises him from the dead. And in these personal types we see that he is altogether lovely.

[22 : 58] And then in the things that speak of him. He is altogether lovely. There are things that speak of Christ. The ark speaks of Christ. I mean the ark in which Noah and his family were sheltered and preserved.

In the awful day of the flood. That speaks of Christ. He is that ark in which we are hid. Against all the tempest of God's wrath that will be stirred up at the last day.

Are we in the ark? Are we in Christ? Do we know what it is to be out of condemnation and to be in Christ? He is altogether lovely.

Because he is the ark. Not just for the eight that were saved. Then as by water. But he is the savior of his people. He is an innumerable multitude that are within that ark of safety.

That precious ark. That ark that was buffeted sore for our sakes. And yet its precious contents were never spilled. He died for his people.

[24 : 05] And that which he did for them is that which he obtains for them. An everlasting salvation. They are secure. They are delivered. The ark speaks to us of Christ.

But oh how Christ comes far beyond any thought that we have of Noah delivered by an ark. That ark of salvation.

That ark of safety in the person and in the work of Christ. And then there is the manna. And the manna that supported Israel through these wilderness years.

That was attended with miracle even in the use of it. That Christ is that manna. That manna come down from heaven. His is that bread that is come down from God.

Those that ate the manna in the wilderness died. But those that eat that bread which is Christ. That heavenly manna will never die. They live eternally.

[25 : 08] Christ is the manna. That manna. Altogether lovely that type is to us as we learn of whom it speaks.

The sufficiency. The satisfaction that's in Christ. You see your satisfaction. Have you tasted that the Lord is gracious? Have you eaten of that heavenly manna?

And then there is the mercy seat. In Exodus 25. The mercy seat overlaid with gold. And with a cherubim looking in upon it.

And there God said I will meet. I will meet with my people. I will meet with thee there. But more precious than the tabernacle mercy seat.

More lovely than that shittim wood overlaid with gold. Is that of which it speaks. That of which it is but a type. It speaks of Christ.

[26 : 04] And God meets with us in Christ. And he will never meet with us outside of Christ. Outside of Christ our God is a consuming fire. And it's not just the golden cherubim that look in upon the mercy seat.

It is the angel presence that we think of. God manifest in the flesh. Justified in the spirit. Seen of angels. As he came in order that he might be the propitiation.

And you know that it's the same word that is used of the mercy seat. It is the place of reconciliation. The place of propitiation. The blood was the sign of bulls and goats.

And the animal sacrifices of the way that God required. That without the shedding of blood should be no remission. But it was not that the blood of animals would take away sin.

It was rather ever a pointer to the blood of Christ. But cleanseth us from all sin. And he is the mercy seat.

[27 : 09] He is the propitiation for our sins. Whom God has delivered up. Whom God has sent. Yea he is altogether lovely. We need not tabernacle or temple.

They had their place and they were glorious in their day. And we need not cathedrals and vast edifices built to the so-called glory of God.

We have the mercy seat which is Christ. We gather in the spirit. We gather with the emergency of those that are believer priests unto God.

We need not the ceremonial. And we need not the ritual. And indeed we repudiate every aspect of it. Because we are complete in Christ. And he is altogether lovely.

And we would have no distraction from him. We love the simplicity of the way that the worship of his house is ordered in the New Testament church. The beauty of holiness is never more set forth when we meet as we do around the word of God.

[28 : 20] Where Christ himself in the midst condescends to address us. We say that in his types he is a most wondrous, a most glorious savior.

Yea, he is altogether lovely. Altogether lovely in his titles. Altogether lovely in his types.

Altogether lovely in his accomplishments also. Yea, he is altogether lovely as a man. Coming for us.

Coming in fashion as a man. Fairer than the children of men. Is a description of him in Psalm 45 verse 2. There never was a man like him.

Now I know there are those that say, ah, but doesn't it say in Isaiah that there was no beauty in him that man should desire him. No form nor comeliness in him.

[29 : 19] It does say that. But that does not mean that this one who took his humanity in the way that we went into a little this morning. By the virgin birth.

Had that perfect humanity. A true humanity. But yet preserved from any taint or contamination by sin. We say that he was a perfect man.

And the sense in which men see no beauty in him is because he was marred more than men by the sufferings that he took upon him. And by all that he endured for us.

He was as that man of sorrow. Sundaquainted with grief. But we are not saying that he was anything other than perfect. That holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

And I believe that he is fairer than the sons of men. There never was another like him. Never will be. I do not press the point to any speculation.

[30 : 19] But I say that it was because of his afflictions. And because of the depravity of men's hearts they see no beauty in the Redeemer. But he is fairer than the sons of men.

He is altogether lovely. Altogether lovely in his humanity. In that which he has accomplished in assuming our nature. Yea, he is altogether lovely as the one that stands for us and represents us.

Was there ever perfection like the perfection that we see in the work that he has wrought for us? Perfection in his law keeping. There was not one jot or tittle that was not fulfilled of all that the law required.

When you think of what the law requires. When you think of how in any day, even in an hour of the day, how often we sin against the law of God and transgress it.

Think of that perfect obedience that he rendered from the very beginning. How he was submissive even at the age of twelve years to Joseph and Mary.

[31 : 26] Was subject unto them. How he grew in wisdom and in stature. How he went about as we saw recently on a Sabbath evening. Doing good. Think of these glorious accomplishments.

Yea, he is altogether lovely. There is nothing there that is questionable or doubtful. There is nothing that is sordid. There is nothing that is unseemly. There is nothing there that is salacious about anything that he does or anything that he says.

And though some awful things were said of him by his enemies in their malignity against him. Stirred up by Satan himself. Not one charge was ever proved.

And there is that testimony from the lips of Pilate even. And from the dying thief. We, he said, we receive that which is the recompense for what we have done.

But this man had done nothing. And Pilate said, I find no fault in him. Yea, he is altogether lovely. He is the holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.

[32 : 29] Higher than the heavens, Jesus. And he is altogether lovely. And in his blood shedding he is altogether lovely. You don't see it until you are given the eye salved by the Spirit of God.

That takes the spiritual blindness away and causes blear eyes to see what he has done upon the cross. And men recoil from it and they cannot understand it and it seems weakness.

And they say that he was the victim of circumstances. And he was subject to the gathering forces that were against him and all these things. But we know that in the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God he did what had to be done.

Though it cost him his very life. He died for our sins. He was not one that swooned upon the cross and then recovered after. But never knew death.

He tasted death for every man. He tasted death for his people's salvation. And we say that in what he did though there were all those things about it that are awful to behold.

[33 : 39] There is a loveliness in it. There is a loveliness in it. A loveliness in what he wrote for us. I remember reading of a little girl that was with her mother.

And her mother was speaking to her. And the little girl in love to her mother said, I love your hair and I love your face mommy. And she came to her hands which were scarred and marred and disfigured.

And she said, but I do not like your hands mother. And her mother said, And her mother said, when you were a very little baby, there was a fire.

And to rescue you, my hands were burned and deformed. And the little girl said, I love your hair and I love your face. But mommy, I love most of all your hands.

Because they were put forth to save me. Do you love him? Who is altogether lovely. Who died to have us. He loved me and gave himself for me.

[34 : 51] Always accomplishments. What words can we find to express these things? These are deep things. These are profound things.

What a savior he is. His suffering. See from his head, his hands, his feet. Sorrow and love flow mingled down.

Did e'er such love and sorrow meet. Or thorns compose so rich a crown. Yea, he is altogether lovely.

And he will be altogether lovely when he comes again. He comes, it says, to be admired in his saints. We shall look our eyes away in that day when we see him as he is.

For he is altogether lovely. Now, let me conclude just by saying how excellent he is. No wonder Paul would not know anything but Jesus Christ and him crucified.

[35 : 57] What other message have we but Christ? A man said to me some years ago in another place that one should never preach two sermons on the same theme on the one day.

He said that was an unthinkable thing to do. He censured various ministers that had gone and they had a similar message morning and evening. While he would censure me today.

I've spoken of Christ this morning. I speak of Christ tonight. I trust that all through the coming days I shall be given to speak of him. He wouldn't have had Paul in his pulpit because Paul said he determined to know nothing among them but Jesus Christ and him crucified.

For he is altogether lovely. We can never hear too much of him. We can never hear enough about him. But what if we have not eyes to see him?

Those that cannot see the loveliness of Christ. They are blind indeed. They are blind indeed. Oh, that God will give them seeing to see him.

[37 : 11] And to be able to say, yea, he is altogether lovely. And if we long that those that see him not might be given the spiritual sight, we pity those that will not see him.

We pity them because what else can they find that is comparable to him? Oh, they've got their idols and they've got those that they will follow.

Almost wherever they go. And they will spend their substance and they will give their allegiance to all those various voices amongst those of men.

But there is none like Christ. And what will they do? All those to whom they give their allegiance. Those that they follow blindly, hither and thither, wherever they lead.

Where will they take them? They will never take them upward. They will never bring them down. And we pity those that are following any other save Jesus Christ.

[38 : 16] And those that have not seen that he is altogether lovely. We pity them because they are going to a place except God bring them to see and to believe and to receive God's dear son.

They are going to a place where they shall never see anything lovely through all eternity. Whereas God's people are going to a place where they will never see anything else.

For he will be the sun that shines in heaven. It will not need sun nor moon to lighten that blessed place. For the lamb in the midst is the light thereof.

Yea, he is altogether lovely. Oh, then that men might see him and love him. Oh, that we might see him and love him.

That we might love him more. Christian, do you want to love him more? Do you want to serve him better? Do you want to follow him more nearly? Do you desire that you might be taken up with him?

[39 : 17] My desire, I fear that I am so very unlike him. But I long to follow him. And I know no better, Master, to commend to you. And my longing is that everyone that enters within these walls might see something of the beauty of Christ.

And come to say, yea, he is altogether lovely. Yea, he is. Not he was, but he is.

Not in part, but altogether. Yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved.

This is my beloved and this is my friend. All ye daughters of Jerusalem. May we be unashamed to speak his name. May we not be silent about him.

How can we be silent? We would testify as God opens our mouths concerning one who is our beloved and our friend.

[40 : 21] Yea, he is altogether lovely. God then seal to us his precious word and give us, as we come, many of us to the Lord's table, that which is a suitable preparation of heart.

As we come into the banqueting house, with the banner over us being his love, and sit down under his shadow with great delight, and find his fruit sweet indeed unto our taste.

Yea, he is altogether lovely. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen.