

## Woman in the Mirror

### Lesson #1: Who she is

#### I. Let me tell you a story...about the Shulammite woman in the Song of Solomon

##### A. Introduction

1. This book is part of the "writings" in the Hebrew Bible. It is part of the wisdom literature.
2. This "song" may be a compilation of many poems written by several authors or it is most likely a love song attributed or dedicated to King Solomon. (Remember, he had 700 wives and 300 concubines).
3. It may be an allegory (reflecting no factual or historical record). It may be a typology (picturing something in the future). It may be a drama (intended to teach a principle). It may be a literal depiction between two lovers. And as such can be referred to as a love song (like Psalm 45).

##### 4. It is explicit.

"Frankness, openness, tenderness, coupled with ardent longing, explicitly erotic descriptions and intent towards the lover and the beloved, mark the love poetry from all over the ancient near east. The Song of Solomon is no exception." (G. Lloyd Carr, p. 39)

##### B. The Story Line

##### 1. Her self description (1:5)

"Dark am I": Emphatic pronoun

Black, swarthy – deeply tanned by the sun

"Yet lovely" - "But comely"

"Dark like the tents of Kedar": an area southeast of Damascus where nomadic tribes tended their black goats.

##### 2. Her conclusion (1:6)

"Do not gaze," "Do not look upon me" – literally, quit staring!

##### 3. His gentle encouragement (1:8-11)

He uses his words to adjust her conclusion

"Most beautiful" (1:8) This is a constant theme, see 2:10, 13, 4:1, 7, 10, 5:9, 6:1, 4, 7:1

"My love," "My darling," "My dearest." (9 times in book). This term has at its root a desire "to guard, care for, or tend with an emphasis on the delight and pleasure which attends that responsibility." (Carr, p.82)

4. A bit of friendly banter between the lovers (1:15-17)

5. Her renewed self description: (2:1)

"Rose of Sharon": Sharon is a low coastal plain south of Mt. Carmel that produces abundant wild flowers. This "rose" (crocus) is also mentioned in Isaiah 35:1. It is like a mountain tulip.

"Lily of the Valley" – a hyacinth or water lily.

C. The Shulammitte woman gives three accurate descriptions: "I am black" and "I am lovely" – both are accurate – but short sighted. "I am the rose of Sharon" – also accurate but this time she has a long view in mind.

## **II. These same two viewpoints confront the "Woman in the Mirror" today.**

A. The limited view: I have a condition – I am flawed! (1 John 1:8-10, Romans 3:9-23)

1. Physically

2. Emotionally

3. Spiritually

4. It's an accurate statement about the "woman in the mirror." We are developing, stumbling from infancy to maturity.

5. I am flawed – my spiritual life takes work!

B. The long view (with perspective): I have a position in Christ.

1. I am a new creature in Christ: 2 Corinthians 5:17

2. I am His Workmanship (poem): Ephesians 2:10

3. I "live" in Him: Acts 17:28

4. I am seated (positioned) with Him: Ephesians 2:6

5. We take this position, not by attempting to get into it (or to maintain it)

## **III. Who we are**

A. Dead to sin. Baptized into His Death. Buried with Him (Romans 6:2-4)

B. Quickened / made alive with Christ (Ephesians 2:5)

- C. Galatians 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."
  - D. We are a Rose of Sharon!
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### **All Class Discussion Questions:**

1. Why doesn't the "long view" (our position in Christ) reign more in our hearts?
2. Are women particularly susceptible to negative "self talk"? why/why not?
3. How are we flawed? How do we usually deal with it? How should we deal with it?
4. What will help this woman in the mirror?