**Song of Songs 1:5-8**

**TO DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM**

 **5** Dark am I but lovely, O daughters of Jerusalem,

 like the tents of Kedar,

 like the curtains of Solomon.

 **6** Do not stare at me for I am dark;

 the sun has scorched me.

 My mother’s sons were angry with me.

 They appointed me caretaker of the vineyards,

 but of my own vineyard – that belongs to me –

 I have not taken care.

**(in soliloquy)**

 **7** Tell me, O you whom my soul loves,

 where you pasture your flock,

 where you rest them at noon,

 lest I become as a veiled woman by the flocks

 of my companions.

**DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM TO BRIDE**

 **8** If you do not know, O most beautiful among women,

 go forth on the trail of the flock.

Attraction Points of the Shulamite Woman.

     The Shulamite woman lamented her situation. She believed she was lovely about her physical features, but she had a problem with the impression she believed that she made on others. Her dark skin-tone was like the tents of Kedar in a dark black-wool color, and the curtains of king Solomon’s palace in a deep purple color. So her dark and somewhat ruddy skin-tone gave her an apparent inferior feeling towards women in the king’s palace.  Indeed, she was of a sunburned complexion.

     Women in those days prized fair skin-tone because it meant they were “indoor-girls” like those who are at a white-color job position nowadays.  They had not been out in the fields working at hard physical labor. Well, they had been pampered and sheltered inside the palace quarters and their private homes in Jerusalem.

     The woman gave the reason for her skin being dark.  Her half-brothers made her work in the vineyards that they were hired to take care of by the king Solomon.  While working at hard physical labor she was not able to take the best care of her skin. And she went on saying her own vineyard, that was, her own physical body. She was obedient to her own half-brothers’ authority and order.

     We have an excellent example of a hardworking woman in the Bible.  The woman in Proverbs 31:10- 31 where “she girds herself with strength and makes her arms strong.” (31:17) Also “20She extends her hand to the poor,
And she stretches out her hands to the needy… 26She opens her mouth in wisdom,
And the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.
She looks well to the ways of her household,
And does not eat the bread of idleness.
**28**Her children rise up and bless her;
Her husband *also*, and he praises her, *saying*:
**29**“Many daughters have done nobly,
But you excel them all.”
**30**Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain,
*But* a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised.
**31**Give her the product of her hands,
And let her works praise her in the gates.”

     Are you attracted to a person who is hardworking and obedient to authority? You’d better choose to be. A man or woman who refuses to obey human authority figures is going to most likely rebel against the authority of God. Such a person is not going to want to fulfill the God-given roles required within a Christian marriage-a wife to submit to the decision-making authority of her husband, a husband to submit to the decision-making authority of Jesus Christ. In other words, a person who does fear YAHWEH is the one who submits him or her to divine authority and any human authority figures (Proverbs 31:30). Choose a person who yields to authority and who not only has respect for God’s power, authority, and commandments, but also is obedient to God’s leading and to keeping God’s rules for righteous living.  Thus, in this Song of Solomon, the submission will be nothing new for the Shulamite woman.

**When Are You Ready To Marry?**

Several Prerequisites for Time to Date.

     Dating is a prelude to courtship and marriage for any Christians in most cases. Until you are ready to begin the process of choosing a life-long mate, you will find it better not to date one person exclusively. Rather have a group outings, make just acquaintances and forge Christian friendships. But date is a totally different matter, so date when you are ready to marry.

1. You are ready to date and marry: When you have a clear certain image of

the kind of man or woman you will choose to marry, and when you have resolved in your heart that you will not settle for less no matter what.

     In summary, The person whom I date and marry must love the LORD God with all his heart, actively desire to follow God in all things, have a servant’s heart (Stewardship attitude), and be the one for me that God chooses. He must love me honest, moral, steadfast, and temperate. He must care for me willingly and sacrificially as much as he cares for him. He must have a good reputation, handle himself in a godly manner -even in times of stress- and be willing to yield to authority.”

2.  You are ready to date and marry: When you do not have to compromise any aspect of your relationship with God in order to be with the person to whom you are attracted.

     As in 1:7, the Shulamite woman would not sacrifice her integrity and her reputation, or her chastity, to get the king Solomon. Indeed, she had her own strong convictions. If at any time you feel that you can’t, shouldn’t, or wouldn’t do something that you know is right before the eyes of God for you to do, solely for the sake of getting the attention or heart of another person, well I will say this, “Put on the brakes with all of your strength!” The right person for you as a Christian man or woman is a mate who will encourage you to grow in your faith and who will stand firmly by your side in your pursuit of all that God has for you and in the obedience of all that God requires of you. The Shulamite woman was truly attracted to king Solomon’s shepherd character: a strong yet gentle one for his flocks. (1:8)

     Indeed, someone who has a synergy effect in his spiritual life when matched yours is the right person to date and marry.

3.   You are ready to date and marry: When you are willing to be single rather than to make a bad choice of a marriage partner.  Until you are truly willing to be single – rather than settling for second best in a spouse – you are not ready to date and marry.

4.  You are ready to date and marry: When you are becoming the person that your ideal husband or wife is praying about the meeting. Let us remember clearly that all Christian single men and women are God’s precious sons and daughters, yes, they are princes and princesses of the Heavenly King.  Why on earth your Heavenly Father and King would bestow a man or woman of shallow character on His precious sons and daughters? Make sure that you are becoming an answer to countless prayers for a seeking Christian marriage partner.

**Questions to Ponder with Prayers**

1.    Are you truly willing to be single rather than marry a person who is not a Christian or who is not right for you in God’s eyes?

2.    To what degree do you think it is possible to change another person through your prayerful and long-enduring influence and presence?

3.   What difficulties do you face in moving from one attraction point to character point and then spirituality one?