



**Love for the Absent Shepherd Illustrates Occupation with Christ; Confidence & Courage  
Eliminate Human Viewpoint; Trust in Man is Cursed by God, Jer 17:5**

36. This is where the right woman enters into the soul of the man and the right man has entered into the soul of the woman. Such is the case for the Shulammite and the Shepherd.
37. Since the Shepherd is present in her soul the Shulammite can talk to him. He is present in her memory center and she is able to isolate her attention on him even though he is physically absent.
38. This is extremely important since Solomon is about to become a major distraction with all the allurements associated with living in his Jerusalem palace.
39. However, the Shulammite is occupied with the Shepherd which is a picture of the believer's occupation with Christ.
40. Occupation with Christ is the believer's major problem-solving device and some of the principles that define it are important to note in this context:
  - (1) Occupation with Christ is personal love for the Lord expressed by the mature believer. It is the capacity to love an absent Savior made possible by one's maximum knowledge of Him acquired through spiritual growth.
  - (2) The principle of loving the absent Christ is stated by Peter in:

**1 Peter 1:8 - And even though you have not seen Jesus Christ, you keep on loving Him Who presently you do not see, yet you constantly keep on rejoicing with happiness inexpressible and full of glory.**
  - (3) The Shulammite is occupied with the Shepherd whom she loves and even though he is absent she still possesses him in her soul through fragrance of memories and from this she experiences complete happiness while in a present state of adversity.
  - (4) Whereas through occupation with Christ the believer looks on the Lord as his Role Model, so also the Shulammite regards her Shepherd Lover.
  - (5) You cannot love a person you do not know. Knowledge of the Lord is only possible by learning about Him from divine revelation through Scripture.
  - (6) The Shulammite knows her right man. It is a personal relationship that has developed to the point of soul rapport. She knows how he thinks and knows that he is her source of love, provision, and protection.
  - (7) Just as she places her faith in the Shepherd Lover so also the believer places his faith in Jesus his Shepherd-in-Chief Whom he loves.
  - (8) Occupation with Christ thus becomes the ultimate problem-solving device and is mandated in:

**Hebrews 12:2 - Be concentrating on Jesus [ occupation with Christ ], the Founder and Perfecter of our faith ...**

**1 Peter 3:15 - Sanctify [ set apart as superior ] the Lord Christ in your streams of consciousness ...**
  - (9) Those who have occupation with Christ find that it produces true motivation in life:



**2 Corinthians 5:14 -** We have discerned that One died for all for we are constantly motivated [ **retroactive progressive present of συνέχω, *sunechō*: to be completely dominated by occupation with Him** ] by the love of Christ;

**v. 15 -** and He died for all in order that they which live should no longer live for themselves but for Him Who died for them and rose again for their benefit.

- (10) This principle isolates one's focus on Christ and not on circumstances, systems, or people. The benefit is confidence in one's position in Christ which is confirmed by the fact He died and rose again so that we might have eternal life.
- (11) Confidence in these facts produces courage in the face of life and circumstances and eliminates the tendency to evaluate one's exigencies from human viewpoint.
- (12) Human viewpoint is subjective and is grounded on personal opinions which are conclusions drawn from supposition, speculation, and assumption.
- (13) This is dangerous. Conclusions drawn from human viewpoint have a tendency to result in human viewpoint solutions.
- (14) These solutions are executed from a position of weakness and depend on resources of the flesh that are usually accompanied by mental attitude sins that provide justification and rationalization for them.
- (15) Preoccupation with people places emphasis on the wrong object. One should be occupied with Christ not people. In so doing he will not be occupied with his adversary which is God's job. Jeremiah addresses these two approaches to problem solving in:

**Jeremiah 17:5 -** [NET] The Lord says, "I will put a curse on people who trust in mere human beings, who depend on mere flesh and blood for their strength, whose hearts have turned away from the Lord.

- 1. This is a passage that establishes the principle that Jesus Christ controls history. This control is directed at two targets: (1) those who function on human viewpoint and produce sin, human good, and evil which earn cursing and (2) those who function on divine viewpoint that produces righteous acts, divine good, and historical impact which earn blessing and reward.
- 2. The King James Version defines the source of strength provided by human viewpoint as "making flesh his arm." The NET Bible translates this "who depend on mere flesh and blood for strength."
- 3. The arm is used metaphorically for human energy which is impotent in the face of life's challenges by comparison to divine omnipotence which is delegated to the believer through the power of the Holy Spirit.