

Sermon Notes for 7/12:

Song of Songs 1:1-4

"Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth—for your love is more delightful than wine. Pleasing is the fragrance of your perfumes; your name is like perfume poured out. No wonder the young women love you! Take me away with you—let us hurry! Let the king bring me into his chambers."

Rabbi Akiva

"All of the Writings are holy, but the Song of Songs is the holy of holies!"

Midrash Shir haShirim

"Had the Torah not been given, it would have been possible to conduct the world on the basis of the Song of Songs alone."

St. Teresa of Avila

"It will seem to you that there are some words in the Song of Songs that could have been said in another style. In light of our dullness such an opinion doesn't surprise me. I have heard some persons say that they avoid listening to them. Oh, God, help me, how great is our misery! Just as poisonous creatures turn everything they eat into poison, so do we."

Rabbi Ellen Bernstein (Toward a Holy Ecology)

"We rarely note the loss of beauty, not because it isn't real or because we aren't disturbed by it, but because we have been trained not to take beauty's value into account...Beauty calls us to love the world and act for the sake of the whole earth...it's not enough to just value the natural world. If we want to save it, we must also love it, since love implies a responsibility, and therefore a giving back to that which we love."

Fyodor Dostoevsky (The Brothers Karamazov)

"Love all God's creation, both the whole and every grain of sand. Love every leaf, every ray of light. Love the animals, love the plants, love each separate thing. If you love each thing you will perceive the mystery of God in all; and once you perceive this, you will grow every day to a fuller understanding of it until you come at last to love the whole world with a love that will then be all-embracing and universal."

Vigen Guroian (The Melody of Faith: Theology in an Orthodox Key)

"God is like a cantor who chants Creation into existence and rejoices everlastingly over its beautiful harmony. This song continues, and its melody moves and inspires humankind to restore beauty and harmony to a Creation that is fallen and misshapen."

Song of Songs 8:6-7a

"...For love is as strong as death, its passion as unyielding as the grave. It burns like a blazing fire, like a mighty flame. Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot wash it away"