

Song of Solomon 3:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.

Analysis

The bride continues her search narrative: 'It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.' After seeking unsuccessfully through the city (verse 2-3), the bride finds her beloved 'but a little' distance beyond the watchmen. The discovery brings overwhelming relief and possessive clinging: 'I held him, and would not let him go.' The Hebrew 'achaztihu' (אָחַזְתִּיהוּ, I held/seized him) suggests firm grasping, while 'velo arpennu' (וְלֹא אֶרְפְּנֵהוּ, I would not let him go) expresses determined unwillingness to release. The bride brings him to 'my mother's house... the chamber of her that conceived me'—intimate, domestic space associated with origins, security, and family blessing. This verse teaches that persistent seeking finds reward, that love clings to the beloved once found, and that covenant relationship seeks family/community blessing and inclusion. Spiritually, it prefigures the believer's determined pursuit of Christ ('I held him'), persistence in prayer ('would not let him go'), and desire to bring Christ into every aspect of life ('my mother's house').

Historical Context

Ancient Israelite weddings involved bringing the bride to the groom's family home (Genesis 24:67; Matthew 1:24). Here, unusually, the bride brings the beloved to her mother's house—suggesting either betrothal protocols or the bride's desire for maternal blessing on the relationship. The mother's house (beth immi) and her chamber represent intimate family space, security, and the domestic sphere where women wielded particular authority. Ancient Near Eastern culture valued parental blessing and family involvement in relationships. The bride's persistent seeking through the city (verses 2-3) demonstrates remarkable courage and determination in a culture restricting women's nighttime movement. The image of holding and not releasing echoes Jacob wrestling with God: 'I will not let thee go, except thou bless me' (Genesis 32:26). Early church tradition saw this as the believer's persistence in prayer and determination to experience God's presence. The Puritans emphasized tenacious faith—holding fast to Christ through trials and refusing to release Him despite difficulties. Modern application affirms that spiritual maturity involves determined seeking and persistent clinging to Christ through all circumstances.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What does it mean to 'hold Christ and not let Him go'—maintaining persistent prayer, determined faith, and refusal to abandon relationship despite difficulties?
2. How does bringing the beloved into 'my mother's house' illustrate the importance of community blessing and inclusion in both marriage relationships and spiritual life?

Interlinear Text

כְּמַעַט	שָׁעַבְרִיתִי	מֵהֶם	עַד	שָׁמַצְ אֹתִי	אֶת
It was but a little	that I passed	H1992	H5704	from them but I found	H853
H4592	H5674			H4672	
שָׂאֶהֱבָהּ	בְּפִשִׁי	אֶחֱזִיתִי	וְלֹא	אֶרְפֶּנוּ	
loveth	him whom my soul	I held	H3808	him and would not let him go	
H157	H5315	H270		H7503	
עַד	שֶׁהֵבִיאתִיו	אֶל	בֵּית	אִמִּי	וְאֶל
H5704	until I had brought	H413	house	him into my mother's	H413
	H935		H1004	H517	
וְדָר	הוֹרֵתִי:				
and into the chamber	of her that conceived				
H2315	H2029				

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 8:17: I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.

Proverbs 4:13: Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life.

Song of Solomon 8:2: I would lead thee, and bring thee into my mother's house, who would instruct me: I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate.

Isaiah 45:19: I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.

Jeremiah 29:13: And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

Matthew 7:7: Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

Lamentations 3:25: The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him.

Song of Solomon 6:12: Or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib.

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