

THE FAIREST OF TEN THOUSAND: THE SONG OF THE SHULAMITE
THE ATTRIBUTES OF JESUS IN SONG OF SOLOMON 5:10-16
SESSION 5: HIS LOCKS ARE WAVY, AND BLACK AS A RAVEN
– GARY WIENS

Numbers 6:2, 5, 8 “*Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When either a man or woman consecrates an offering to take the vow of a Nazirite, to separate himself to the LORD, . . . 5 ‘All the days of the vow of his separation no razor shall come upon his head; until the days are fulfilled for which he separated himself to the LORD, he shall be holy. Then he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow. . . . 8 All the days of his separation he shall be holy to the LORD.*”

I. THE METAPHOR – “HIS LOCKS ARE WAVY, AND BLACK AS A RAVEN.”

There are three dimensions to this metaphor that we want to examine today: the devotion of Jesus to His Father and to the task that was before Him, the complexity of thought and strategy that is implied in His leadership, and the youthful zeal with which Jesus embraces His assignment.

When Jesus spoke to the Pharisees and scribes about their devotion to the study of the Scriptures, He made the claim that all the Scriptures spoke of Him (John 5:39). The prophetic picture of devotion was the Old Testament calling as a Nazirite, but the true model of devotion and zeal for holiness is Jesus Himself, and this imagery speaks to the reality of His commitment to the Father’s plan.

A. The Nazirite imagery of devotion

1. The word “Nazirite” comes from two possible Hebrew words, each of which give a part of the picture.
 - a. “*nazar*” – “to separate,” thus speaking of devotion to God and His purposes.
 - b. “*nezer*” – a “diadem,” or crown, which brings the uncut hair into focus as the outward sign of the Nazirite.
 - c. *The long, uncut hair of the Nazirite was the symbol of strength and abundant vitality (see 2 Sam 14:25-26) and was worn in honor of the Lord as a sign that he belonged to the Lord and dedicated himself to His service with all his vital powers. Then, too, a luxurious growth of long hair was looked upon as imparting a somewhat handsome appearance, an ornament, and, in the case of the Nazirite, was the diadem of the head consecrated to God.* (from The New Unger's Bible Dictionary. Originally published by Moody Press of Chicago, Illinois. Copyright (c) 1988.)

2. Biblical pictures of this calling

These elements of devotion are external signs of a fully devoted heart. They were given as means of helping one so dedicated to fulfill his or her vows, external trappings that strengthened internal commitment. The external elements would discourage dabbling in sinful behavior. **Example:** the genuine costumes in “The Lord of the Rings” trilogy.

a. Old Testament – Samson

Judges 13:5 For behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. And no razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.”

(1) His supernatural birth – Judges 13

(2) His separation unto the Lord – Judges 13:5; Numbers 6:1ff

(3) His passionate grace to bring deliverance to Israel – Judges 14ff

b. New Testament – John the Baptist

God’s purpose in sending a Forerunner like John was that he would serve as a bridge between what was familiar and the One who was to come. He would embrace the fervent zeal of a most religious person, yet be filled with joy and the anticipation of the coming of Jesus.

Luke 1:15 For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb.

(1) His supernatural birth – Luke 1

(2) His separation unto the Lord – Luke 1:80 “. . . ***became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts until the day of his manifestation to Israel.***”

(3) His joy – John 3:29

B. Balanced by His perfect liberty

1. His external liberty obscured His identity, and angered the religious establishment

Matthew 11:19 The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ But wisdom is justified by her children.”

2. By His perfect balance, Jesus redefined dedication to God – Matthew 5-7 ***“For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the Kingdom of heaven.”***

3. This perfect and glorious liberty is the key to unlocking God’s purposes in the earth

Romans 8:19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing (unveiling, full disclosure) of the sons of God.

II. HIS DEVOTION

A. Total and undivided devotion

Isaiah 42:4 He will not fail nor be discouraged, Till He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands shall wait for His law.

1. Jesus came with perfect internal dedication

a. Hebrews 10:5 – “*a body You have prepared for me*”

(1) A human body was the mechanism God designed for the perfect living out of His character

(2) This was always God’s intent for humanity, to be done in intimate partnership

b. Luke 12:50 – “*I have a baptism to be baptized with . . .*”

c. John 12:27 – “*for this purpose I came to this hour.*”

2. This dedication was expressed in perfect external obedience

a. John 5:19-20 – “*whatever (the Father) does, the Son does in like manner.*”

b. John 8:28 – “*I do nothing of myself; but as my Father taught me, I speak these things.*”

B. Youthful in its strength

1. Isaiah 63:1 – “*The greatness of His strength*”

2. Psalm 45:3-4 – “*in Your majesty ride prosperously*”

3. Revelation 11:17-18 – “*You have taken Your great power and reigned.*”

C. Ornament to God

1. Exodus 28:2-4 – “. . . *holy garments, . . . that He may minister to Me as priest.*”

2. Isaiah 61:10-11 – “*He has covered me with the robe of righteousness as a Bridegroom decks Himself with ornaments.*”

III. HIS THOUGHTS

In the Scriptures, the hair of Jesus is pictured as both black as a raven and white as snow. These two images speak of significant things with regard to the thoughts and ways of God.

- A. Dark and impenetrable
1. His mercy and kindness to weak people
 - a. Isaiah 55:6-13 – ***“My thoughts are not your thoughts”***
 - b. Isaiah 40:28-31 – ***“His understanding is unsearchable”***
 2. Judgments upon the wicked – St. Theresa of Avila
 - a. Psalm 10:5 – ***“Your judgments are far above, out of his sight (the understanding of the wicked).”***
 - b. Psalm 36:6 – ***“Your judgments are a great deep.”***
- B. Wise and pure – Jesus’ equality with the Father is declared in this dimension of His character
1. Daniel 7:9 – the “Ancient of Days”

Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Micah 5:2 “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.”
 2. Revelation 1:14 – the appearance of the “First and Last.” Here Jesus takes to Himself the names of the Father:
 - a. Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End
 - b. Who is and was and is to come
 - c. The Almighty

CONCLUSION:

The focus and dedication that characterizes the life of Jesus must be understood in the context of His identity as Son of God and Bridegroom of the Church. His joy in embracing these two realities, and His dedication to the completion of the tasks involved is total, thereby establishing a new reality of life in God.

Because of who Jesus is, we have great hope that will never disappoint us. Our total redemption is sure, not merely for escape from death and hell, but ever-increasing emergence into the glorious liberty for which we were created, the very image of Christ.