

Christ my Beloved – Song Series

In Christ's Salvation Carriage

Text: Song of Solomon 3:6-11

Introduction:

1. The scene now abruptly changes to a picture of the bride home-bringing through the wilderness in her Beloved's (Solomon's) bridal carriage to the royal city. Note the words 'bed' (Vs. 7) and 'chariot' (Vs. 9) The king has made lavish provision for her journey through the wilderness to Jerusalem. She is in a place of rest and protection. So, Christ our King, has wondrously provided for our spiritual journey to heaven in the Gospel.
2. C.H. Spurgeon describes the picture: "Great princes in the east are in the habit of travelling in splendid palanquins (sedan chairs), which are at the same time chariots and beds. The person reclines within, screened by curtains from public view; a bodyguard protects the equipage from robbers, and blazing torches light up the path along which the travellers proceed."
3. We will meditate on this beautiful picture with the help of four words

I. Perfume (Vs. 6)

A. The Source of the Perfumes

1. The entourage is quickly recognised as Solomon's (Vs. 7). These perfumes are provided by the king.
2. These perfumes reveal something of the King Himself.

B. The Symbolism of the Perfumes

1. 'myrrh' = was extracted from a plant by crushing it and collecting the juice and was a very costly perfume. It was used as a perfume and thus speaks of the fragrance of Christ's life (Psalm 45:8). It was also used as an embalming agent and was used in the burial preparations of Christ's body (John 19:39-40) Hence, it speaks to us of the sweet bitterness of Christ's suffering death.
 - a. 'frankincense' = a fragrant odorous resin that oozed through the bark of certain trees. It was very costly. Speaks of the fragrance of the life of Christ. His life was a sweet savour to the Father. There was absolutely no trace of the smell of sin in His life. 1 John 3:5 "... **in him is no sin.**"
2. "all the powders of the merchant" = sweet-smelling powders speaking of the multitude of Christ's sweet graces
3. The bride has been perfumed by her King so that she sends forth a fragrance that is a witness of Him. In like manner, believers send forth the sweet smell of Christlikeness as they cooperate with the inner workings of the Holy Spirit.

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II. Protection (Vs. 7-8)

A. The King's Vehicle (Vs. 7a)

1. 'bed' = a sofa, litter or bier (Strong's) The Eastern equivalent of a state coach (Flanigan)
2. 'bed' is "a difficult word meaning a covered litter. It is like a couch long enough for a rider to recline, covered with a canopy and resting on pillars at four corners. It is hung round with curtains to exclude the sun and has a door, sometimes of lattice work, on each side." (Ginsburg quoted by Rabbi Lehrman)
3. This is "a boxlike litter carried by staves resting on the shoulders of living men." (Nee)
4. Described in more specific detail in Vs. 9-10. It is rich in salvation pictures/symbolism.

B. The King's Valiant (Vs. 7b-8)

1. The Men
 - a. Strong men – 'valiant'
 - b. Sword bearing men – "the all hold swords"
 - c. Skilled men – "being expert in war"
 - d. Note: This was important due to the presence of evil enemies that would seek to plunder a wedding procession like this
2. The Meaning
 - a. Principle: The safety and security of the bride is provided for by the Groom. Christ saves us and He guarantees our security from the day of our salvation and into eternity. "Who are kept by the power of God..." (1 Peter. 1:5) No one can pluck us out of Christ's hand (John 10:27-28)
 - b. Principle: Christ provides valiant, spiritual men who are skilled in the use of the Spirit's sword (the truth) to guard His people from predators (e.g. false teachers and seducers)

III. Provision (Vs. 9-10)

A. The Designer of the Royal Carriage (Vs. 9)

1. This royal carriage was designed and constructed by the King Himself (Vs. 9). It reflected His wisdom and majesty. In like manner, God is the Author and Designer of the grand plan of salvation. It reveals the wisdom and majesty of God. The Gospel is "the gospel **of God**".
2. "Christ made his 'carriage' of grace and salvation (the Gospel) by His atoning death on Calvary." (Masters) "Symbolically it sets before us the beauty and glory of Christ's provision for His bride." (Flanigan)

B. The Description of the Royal Carriage (Vs. 10)

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1. Structure of cedar wood – cedar trees are tall, strong and beautiful with a unique scent. Cedar was used extensively by Solomon in the building of the temple. Speaks of the perfect Manhood (humanity) of Christ.
2. Pillars of silver – silver was the atonement money (Ex. 30:13 – half shekel of sanctuary) and therefore a symbol of the truth of redemption. Pillars of the chariot are of silver. The work of our Redeemer is our support and stay.
3. Base of gold – speaks of the Royalty and Deity of Christ. The bride's rest depends upon the Person of Christ – He is perfect God and perfect Man.
4. Covering of purple – the colour purple is made up of blue and red. Blue speaks of heaven and red of the blood of Christ. So, we shelter beneath the covering of Divine blood.
 - a. Purple mentioned 26 times in Exodus in connection with the drapings of the tabernacle and the garments of the High Priest.
 - b. Purple used to cover the brazen altar of sacrifice when Israel was on the move (Num. 4:13). "That which covered the great Altar of sacrifice covered Christ on that last sad morning with Calvary in view (John 19:2-5)
 - c. "Look up, Christian, and delight thyself in that blood-red canopy which shelters thee from the sun by day and from the moon by night! From hell and heaven, from time and from eternity, art thou secured by this covering which is of purple." (C.H. Spurgeon)
5. Embroidery of love – the midst of the chariot is paved like a mosaic with the king's love. God's plan of salvation has the love of God imprinted all over it. Eph. 5:25 "...Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." (Rom. 5:8; John 3:16; 1 John 4:17)

IV. Praise (Vs. 11)

"At the close of the scene, the call now goes forth to the daughter of Zion to behold the king, who now shows himself to the object of his love and to the jubilant crowd, as the festal procession approaches." (Keil and Delitzsch)

A. The Call to Praise (Vs. 11a)

1. The bride's exhortation is to "behold king Solomon". Our message to the world is "behold King Jesus"!
2. This is the bride being a witness of her king. In like manner, we are to testify of our Saviour.

B. The Centrepiece of Praise (Vs. 11b)

1. "the crown" = The focus of the bride is upon the crowned king.

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2. “day of the gladness of his heart” = the day Solomon was espoused to the Shulamite maiden was a day of joy for him. In like manner, we have been espoused to Christ and it brings gladness to His heart that we are His.
3. 2 Cor. 11:2 *“For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have **espoused** you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.”*

Conclusion:

1. Do you know Christ as Saviour? Are you in His salvation carriage?
2. Are we sending forth the sweet savour of Christlikeness to a watching world?