

EXPLORING THE SCRIPTURES

WEEK #25 A GUIDE TO

SONG OF SOLOMON #2

Christ our Beloved

Falling in Love with Christ

Paul warned in II Tim 3.2 we would be in danger of loving ourselves! WE are betrothed to Christ. As engaged to Him we need to express love for Him!

Dr. H.A. Ironside says the key to the story is found in 8: 11. It is the recounting of a poor family of Ephraim in which there is a girl who is a sort of Cinderella. The poverty of the family forces her into the vineyards where she meets the young shepherd. The story of their love is first told. Then he leaves her with the promise that he will return. He is absent for a long time, and she despairs of his return. One day the electrifying word is shouted along the way that King Solomon is coming by. She is not interested, and takes no further notice until word is brought her that King Solomon wants to see her. She is puzzled until she is brought into his presence where she recognizes him as her shepherd lover. He takes her to his palace in Jerusalem where most of the song takes place.

When reading the Song of Solomon, take off the shoes from the natural man, for the ground on which you stand is spiritual ground.

But what does this difficult book teach us? There are four enduring views:

1. **It sets forth the "glory of wedded love"** declaring the sacredness of marital relationship, and that marriage is a divine institution.
2. **It sets forth the love of Jehovah for Israel.** The prophets spoke of Israel as the wife of Jehovah.
3. **It is a picture of Christ and the Church.** The Church is the bride of Christ, a familiar figure of Scripture (2 Cor.11; Eph. 5; Rev. 21).
4. **It depicts the communion of Christ and the individual believer.** The soul's communion with Christ is here set forth.

Though there have been a variety of interpretations of "The Song," we shall only take into consideration one, That those who are "accepted in the beloved" have a path to follow. A path that may bring joy or sorrow while here. It is a very PRACTICAL BOOK. This is a difficult book to OUTLINE., there being so many conversations in so short a portion. Let us take a simple though not entirely satisfying one. It is that of Hudson Taylor's little book "UNION and COMMUNION".

- I. LOVE INTRODUCED(The Unsatisfied Life and Its Remedy) Section One (1:2-2:7) with the unsatisfied longings of an espoused one. Longings which could only be met by her unreserved surrender to the Bridegroom of her soul-we find that when the surrender was made, instead of the cross he had so much feared she found a King, a King of Love, who both satisfied her deepest longings, and found His own satisfaction in her.
- A. THE SWEETNESS OF HIS NAME IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.
 - B. THE FRAGRANCE OF HIS NAME IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. If ever there was a name that, as ointment poured forth," shed a fragrance over all of human life it is the name of Jesus!
 - 1. It is the saving name (Matthew 1:21).
 - 2. It is the sanctifying name. (Colossians 3:17).
 - 3. It is the sovereign name. (Philippians 2:10)
 - C. THE SUPPLY OF HIS LOVE [1:7] "And where do You *rest* the flock?"
 - 1. How we need *food* and *rest*. These two things are found with the Good Shepherd. "He satisfied them with *BREAD* from heaven" (Psa. 105:40).
 - 2. He said, "Come unto me.... I will give you *REST*" (Mat. 11:28) "There remaineth therefore A *REST* to the people of God" (Heb. 4:9).
 - 3. "Bread of Heaven, feed me till I want no more."; "Jesus, I am resting, resting in the joy of what Thou art."
 - D. THE SERVICE OF HIS LOVE 1:9. These wild horses from Egypt (which, as we know, is a type of the world) are now broken, trained, transformed and now pressed into royal service. In a study of I Kings 4:26 and 10:29 we observe that Solomon was quite a "horse-trader". Evidently he loved horses. He had whole cities given over to stabling his horses (I Kings 9:19). Think of it, he bought 40,000 chariot horses from Egypt. That's a lot of horse flesh! He paid high prices for those handsome animals - 150 shekels a piece. (I Kings 10:28,29). Four things may be stated about these chariot horses as we would gather lessons for our souls:
 - 1. *They Were A "Company"* vs-9 Though the bride of Christ is "one" yet she is made up of "a company'.... 1 Corinthians 12:20 But now indeed [there are] many members, yet one body. (NKJV)
 - 2. *One Day These Horses Were Wild* vs.-9 Since they were originally Pharaoh's horses and from Egypt, they were from the world. In our lost estate we belonged to the world. Ephesians 2:1-3 And you [He made alive,] who were dead in trespasses and sins, 2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, 3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. (NKJV)
 - 3. *But They Were Now Bought* Having been redeemed at a high cost they came under a new Master. Bless God for redemption through the Blood! 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit [who is] in you, whom you have from God,

and you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. (NKJV)

4. *Now Harnessed And Enlisted* We, too, are in the chariot-service of our Monarch. "There is joy in serving Jesus." Philippians 1:1 Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: (NKJV)

E. THE SWEETNESS OF HIS LOVE 1:12-14

1. IT IS PRECIOUS LIKE *SPIKENARD* vs.-12 Only when wealthy people had special guests would they break the seal of a costly jar to anoint their friends. What an act of devotion it was for Mary when she broke the alabaster box and poured it on His head (Mk. 14:3). Evidently this Shunamite broke her box of ointment "while the king was sitting at his table."
2. IT IS PAINFUL LIKE *MYRRH* vs.-13 Myrrh was a fragrant gum that exuded from Arabian trees. It was used as a composition with anointing oil (Ex. 30:23-25). Sometimes it was used as a purifying cosmetic (Esther 2:12). It was also used by Mary as an anointing ointment for Jesus.
3. *CAMPHIRE (also called "henna flower")* vs.-14. These flowers grew from a plant common in Palestine.
4. What a wonderful lesson there is in all this for our own souls. [1:13-14] Let us, like the Shulamite, rejoice in our prospect! Let us hug to our hearts, like a bundle of myrrh, the treasured truths we have of the cross and the coming of our Lord, which point us back to His burial and forward to the bridal feast when we shall hold Him to our hearts, rejoicing in His person.

I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold,
I'd rather be His than have riches untold, I'd rather have Jesus than houses
or land,
I'd rather be led by His nail-pierced hand;
Than to be the king of a vast domain
And to be held in sin's dread sway;
I'd rather have Jesus than anything
This world affords today.

GEORGE BEVERLY SHEA

5. The Lord Jesus laid aside His glory, the glory that He had with the Father before the worlds began, and stooped to be born into the human family by way of the virgin's womb. He entered His ministry in the face of ridicule, opposition, and unbelief to face Gethsemane, Gabbatha, Golgotha, and the grave. He was spat upon, beaten, scourged, crowned with thorns, and nailed to a cross. He died beneath the wrath and curse of God. He laid in death for three days and three nights while the entire universe held its breath. But He

came bursting forth from the tomb! We ask ourselves why He should come thus, in all the enormous energy of His deity, to pay such a price for us. There is only one answer: He loves us!

Love found a way to redeem my soul,
Love found a way that could make me whole;
Love sent my Lord to the cross of shame,
Love found a way! O praise His holy name!

CONSTANCE B. REID

F. THE PROVISIONS OF HIS LOVE in 2:3-4:

1. Matchless Rest "sat" as Christ promised in Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to Me, all [you] who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. "For My yoke [is] easy and My burden is light." (NKJV)
2. Total Security "shadow" as we are told in Psalm 91:1 He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. (NKJV)
3. Overflowing Joy "delight" as we find in his presence Psalm 16:11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence [is] fullness of joy; At Your right hand [are] pleasures forevermore. (NKJV)
4. Abundant Supply "fruit" as Christ said in John 15:5 "I am the vine, you [are] the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. (NKJV)
5. Individual Guidance "brought me" v. 4 as our Good Shepherd always will Psalm 23:3-4 He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You [are] with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. (NKJV)
6. Glorious Fellowship "banqueting" Revelation 3:20 "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. (NKJV)
7. Consistent Victory "banner" (Conquest, Protection, Enlistment) as promised in 2 Corinthians 2:14 Now thanks [be] to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. (NKJV)

II. THE LOVER COMES (Communion Broken, Restoration) The second section (2:8-3:5) showed failure on her part. She was lured back gain into the world, and soon found that her Beloved could not follow her there. Then with full purpose of heart going forth to seek Him and confessing His name, her search as successful and her communion was restored.

- A. I found him," she cried, "I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go" (3:4). Again she begs Solomon's women to leave her alone, particularly to cease from their efforts to awaken affection for their chosen lord. All this speaks vividly to us. Our best defense against the approaches of the world is to talk openly and freely about the Lord Jesus.

Others will soon get the message.

B. As C. F. Weigle puts it:

I would love to tell you what I think of Jesus,
Since I found in Him a Friend so strong and true;
I would tell you how He changed my life completely,
He did something that no other Friend could do.

All my life was full of sin when Jesus found me,
All my heart was full of misery and woe;
Jesus placed His strong and loving arms around me
And He led me in the way I ought to go.

F. WEIGLE

III. WEDDING CELEBRATIONS (Unbroken Communion) The third section (3:6-5:1) told of unbroken communion. Abiding in Christ, she was the sharer of His security and His glory. She draws the attention, however, of the daughters of Jerusalem from these outward things to her King Himself. And, while she is thus occupied with Him, and would have others so occupied, she finds that her royal Bridegroom is delighting in her and inviting her to fellowship of service, fearless of dens of lions and mountains of leopards.

A. HE LISTENS TO US WITH LOVE. THE ATTENTIVE EARS OF OUR GROOM.

Song of Solomon 4:3 Thy lips [are] like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech [is] comely: Where, in all this wide world today, can the Lord Jesus find words to fill His loving heart with joy, unless those words come from the lips of His own? Our beloved Lord listens to the babble of noise that ascends on high from this earth in a thousand tongues. He is listening for those who speak His language, the language of Heaven. He is listening for someone who will say from the heart:

My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine,
For Thee all the follies of sin I resign;
My gracious Redeemer, my Savior art Thou!
if ever I loved Thee, Lord Jesus 'tis now.

I love Thee because Thou hast first loved me,
And purchased my pardon on Calvary's tree
I love Thee for wearing the thorns on Thy brow,
If ever I loved Thee, Lord Jesus 'tis now.

A. J. GORDON

HE SECURES US WITH HIS LOVE. THE SECURITY OF BETROTHAL (4:4). The shepherd saw around the neck of his beloved a string of coins, such as eastern women wore to symbolize betrothal. Certainly a string of such coins around the neck, shining in the sun, would look like an array of shields hung on the wall of an armory. In Bible times marriages were arranged. As soon as the assent of the bride's parents was obtained, the suitor gave the bride a betrothal gift. The bride-to-be wore this gift to act as a

protection. The coins, like the engagement ring of today, warned other would-be suitors that her heart and her hand have been pledged to another. Unwanted or improper advances can thus be warded off.

Our great Shepherd's betrothal gift to His Bride is the Holy Spirit. He is called "the earnest of our inheritance". (Ephesians 1: 14). The thought behind that word "earnest" is exactly the thought behind the idea of an engagement ring. We are to display the Holy Spirit before the world to signify that our affections have been engaged to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead" (Romans 7:4).

WE ARE SECURE BECAUSE GOD'S SPIRIT SIGNS US

✓ 2 Corinthians 1:21 Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God.

The Holy Spirit signs each saint of God as an authentic original masterpiece. Holy Spirit is poured out on us by our Heavenly Father. Thus to have been "anointed" means we bear the signature of God. This signing promises us the security of divine authenticity.

- ✓ **GOD'S GIFT IS GRACIOUS:** John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:
- ✓ **GOD'S SUPPLY IS INEXHAUSTIBLE:** John 3:34 "For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure.
- ✓ **GOD'S ANOINTING IS PERSONAL:** I John 2:20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things.

WE ARE SECURE BECAUSE GOD'S SPIRIT SEALS US

✓ 2 Corinthians 1:22a who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

The ancient world was built around the security of sealed shipments. With all the perils of the old world it was imperative that a customer knew his shipment was untainted from the journey to him. Thus all the ancients recognized the sealing of goods. This was accomplished by the pressing of a signet ring into soft wax across the opening of a document, tomb, sealed box and so on. Holy spirit "Seals" us = security of divine ownership. He is our precious possession. The seal assured three things:

- ✓ Certified the contents as authentic.
- ✓ Signified the presence of the owner.
- ✓ Verified the image of the signet was transferred.

WE ARE SECURE BECAUSE GOD'S SPIRIT SECURES 2 Corinthians 1:22b and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

✓ Holy Spirit also given to us as a pledge. God delivered us our engagement ring = security of divine protection

THE PASSIONATE RESPONSE OF THE SHULAMITE (4:6) The Shulamite responds to her shepherd speaking about the morning and the mountain. The Morning-What A Fantastic Morning It Will Be "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away." Her heart is

occupied with the coming day. One day the shadows will flee away and the bright and blessed day will dawn. That is her hope, and that is the great hope of the Church.

On that bright and golden morning
when the Son of man shall come,
And the radiance of His glory we shall see;
When from every clime and nation
He shall call His people home,
What a gathering of the ransomed that will be!
FANNY J. CROSBY

- B. The Shepherd's Pledge Song of Solomon 5:1 I am come into my garden, my sister, [my] spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved. (KJV)
1. The first great truth here is that of rapture. The Lord is coming for His Church. He does intend to catch it up into His arms and take it to be forever with Himself He says, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself-, that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2-3). Under the symbol of marriage the Lord constantly sets before us the bliss we are going to enjoy with Him in a coming eternity. More than that we cannot say. After all, nobody speaks much about the honeymoon! Some moments are too sacred to be shared with anyone but the beloved.
 2. There is also an expectation here of *millennial bliss*: "I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk." Notice that all the verbs are in the past tense. The spiritual lessons locked up in this statement are profound and blessed, but to extract their full force we have to carry them far beyond the experience and expectation of the Shulamite's shepherd to that of our Shepherd.
 3. "I have gathered my myrrh with my spice." What can this mean but the glory of His sufferings? Never will those sufferings be forgotten. The hymn writer beautifully refers to the wounds of the Lord Jesus as "rich wounds, yet visible above, in beauty glorified." And so they are.
 4. "I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey." What can this mean but the glory of His sweetness? Who in all the universe is sweeter than the Lord Jesus Christ?
Every day with Jesus is sweeter than the day before,
Every day with Jesus, I love Him more and more;
Jesus saves and keeps me, and He's the One I'm waiting for,
Every day with Jesus is sweeter than the day before.
ROBERT C. LOVELESS
 5. No wonder the Psalmist could exclaim, "O taste and see that the LORD is good" (Psalm 34:8). The glory of His sweetness will be manifested

during the millennial age and will be savored by His own throughout eternity.

THE LOVERS DESCRIBE ONE ANOTHER (Communion Again Broken. Restoration) The fourth section (5:2-7:10), however, shows again failure; not as before through worldliness, but rather through spiritual pride and sloth. Restoration now was much more difficult, but again when she went forth diligently to seek her Lord and so confessed Him as to lead others to long to find Him with her, He revealed Himself and the communion was restored, to be interrupted no more.

REJOICING IN LOVE (Unrestrained Communion) The fifth section (7:11-8:4), as we have seen, describes not only the mutual satisfaction and delight of the bride and Bridegroom in each other, but the recognition of her position and her beauty by the daughters of Jerusalem.

- ✓ It is through the bride that attention is drawn to the Bridegroom; their union and communion are now open and manifest. For the last time the wilderness is mentioned; but sweetly solaced by the presence of the Bridegroom, it is *no wilderness to the bride*. In all the trustfulness of confiding love she is seen leaning upon her Beloved. He is her strength, her joy, her pride, and her prize, while she is His peculiar treasure, the object of His tenderest care. All His resources of wisdom and might are hers; though journeying she is at rest, though in the wilderness she is satisfied, while leaning upon her Beloved.
- ✓ There is too much here to try to sum it all up in a paragraph, Let us instead just look at one verse Song of Solomon 8:13 Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear [it]. (KJV). Here we see a picture of a yearning God and Savior
- ✓ The blessed Lord, with Whom we have been eternally united desires to fellowship with us !
- ✓ He purchased us out of sin's slave market for that purpose, yet we seem not to consider it at all.
- ✓ We busy ourselves with our "companions." We are more interested in conversing with them than with the Lord of all the universes.
- ✓ They "hear and understand" our voice. He desires that He hear it directed toward Him in loving communion,

THE CONCLUSION OF LOVE [8:13-14] As John Phillips said: Paradise has been regained. The shepherd uses a word for "dwellest" which literally means to "abide permanently." Never again will his beloved be in peril from the world or its prince. She has come into his garden at last, there to remain in a paradise of bliss forever. He has no higher hope of happiness than to hear her voice. Whatever can she say to him? She can tell him again and again, "I love YOU! I love you, I love you." That is all the music he desires.

- ✓ The Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, the uncreated, eternal Son of the living God, He who has had the shining seraphim to be His slaves, who fills all Heaven with His praise-He says to us, "Cause Me to hear thy voice." Can thoughts soar higher than this?

- ✓ He has so arranged the ages that, at last, He will bring us into a Paradise much fairer than that which He planted eastward in Eden. There He will say to us, "Now then, let Me hear thy voice." We cannot explain it, we cannot enter into it, we can hardly believe it! We borrow the language of the psalmist and say, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, it is too high."
- ✓ He longs to hear our voices even today. He loves to hear them raised in songs of adoration and praise. He loves to hear our words of worship. But what can we possibly say to Him, to Him whose word can create stars and suns?

Take my love; my Lord I pour
At Thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee.

FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL

- C. We have the shepherd's last request: "Cause me to hear thy voice! Tell me you love me!" [8:13] Then comes *the Shulamite's last reply*: "Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices" (8:14). What would our Shepherd want us to say to Him that could exceed that? Why, nothing at all! "Lord Jesus, come! Come in all Your vigor and in the splendor of that boundless life of Yours! Come! Leap over all obstacles! Let nothing ever come between us again, even the most pleasant things we could imagine, mountains of spices, let nothing ever come between us again!" The love song ends where the book of Revelation ends, where the Bible itself ends: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus"