

## CHRIST OUR BELOVED IN THE SONG OF SOLOMON<sup>i</sup>

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.

- I. JESUS NAME ABOVE ALL NAMES
  - A. THE BEAUTY OF HIS NAME IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. (1:3-4) These are the two most interesting persons in the world to one in love! Let there be a thousand people present, the lovers have eyes only for each other. The Shulamite reminds herself of *the magnificence of his presence*: "Because of the savor of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth." Darby translates it: "Thine ointments savor sweetly: Thy name is as an ointment poured forth." It is significant that God, for the most part and especially in the Old Testament, revealed Himself to men by means of His names. Elohim! Adonai! Jehovah! The Old Testament saints fell in love with those names, especially the name Jehovah; and in so doing they fell in love with Him of whom the names so eloquently spoke. They wrote them down under the guiding impulse of the Holy Spirit again and again, this way and that:
    1. Jehovah-jireh-The LORD Who Provides (Genesis 22:14)
    2. Jehovah-Nissi-The LORD Our Banner-The LORD Who Protects (Exodus 17:15)
    3. Jehovah-Shalom-The LORD Who Gives Peace (Judges 6:24)
    4. Jehovah-Tsidkenu-The LORD Our Righteousness-The LORD Who Pardons (Jeremiah 23:6; 33:16)
    5. Jehovah-Shammah-The LORD Who Is There-

- 6. The LORD Who Is Present (Ezekiel 48:35)  
Jehovah-Roi-The LORD My Shepherd-The LORD Who Pastors (Psalm 23:1)
- 7. Jehovah-Mekkadishkem-The LORD Who Sanctifies-The LORD Who Purifies (Exodus 31:13)
- 8. Jehovah-Ropheka-The LORD Who Heals-The LORD The Physician (Exodus 15:26)
- 9. Jehovah-Sabbaoth-The LORD Of Hosts-The LORD Of All Power (I Samuel 1:3)
- 10. Jehovah-Elyon-The LORD Most High-The LORD Who Is Preeminent (Psalm 7:17; 47:2)

B. THE FRAGRANCE OF HIS NAME IN THE NEW TESTAMENT To the Old Testament saints the name Jehovah was an ointment poured forth shedding its fragrance over all. New Testament saints think of Him as JESUS. 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:** "Thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).
- 2. **It is the sanctifying name.** We are to do all things, in word and deed, in the name of the Lord Jesus Colossians 3:17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. (KJV)
- 3. **It is the sovereign name.** "At the name of Jesus every knee should bow" (Philippians 2:10). It is the name that charms our fears and bids our sorrows cease." It is the name that, as "music in the sinner's ears, brings life and health and peace."

There is no name so sweet on earth  
No name so sweet in Heaven,  
The name before His wondrous birth,  
To Christ the Savior given.

GEORGE W. BETHUNE

- II. THE SUPPLY OF LOVE [1:7] "And where do You *rest* the flock?" How we need *food* and *rest*. These two things are found with the Good Shepherd.
  - A. "He satisfied them with *BREAD* from heaven" (Psa. 105:40).
  - B. 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).
  - C. "Bread of Heaven, feed me till I want no more.";
  - D. #503 "Jesus, I am resting, resting in the joy of what Thou art."
- III. THE SERVICE OF HIS OWNERSHIP 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:
  - A. *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)
  - B. *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)

- C. *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) #520-21 Redeemed
- D. *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) #511 Now I belong to Jesus

IV. THE TREASURES OF HIS LOVE 1:12-14 Now the conversation shifts and it is the Shunamite who is speaking. The verses of this section have to do with *fragrance and beauty* for here we have spices with a strong and very sweet aroma as well as beautiful camphire (which was the henna flowers so abundant in Palestine). Let us take a moment to examine these three fragrances that were meant for her Bridegroom as He "sat at his table" (vs.- 12)

- A. *SPIKENARD vs.-12* Spikenard was a fragrant ointment gathered from an East India plant. The spikenard was

taken from its fibrous root. This spice is mentioned three times in the Song of Solomon (1: 12; 4:13,14) and twice in the New Testament (Mark 14:3; John 12:3). We recall that Mary brought her "very costly" box of spikenard to anoint the body of the Lord Jesus. Spikenard imported from India came in carefully sealed alabaster jars. 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 if 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."

- B. *MYRRH vs.-13* Myrrh is mentioned several times in the Old Testament (Cf. Gen. 37:25; 43:1 1). It is also mentioned in the New Testament. Wise men brought it as a gift to Jesus at His birth (Mat. 2). Our Lord, after His death was embalmed with myrrh (John 19:39). 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.
- C. *CAMPHIRE (also called "henna flower") vs.-14.* These flowers grew from a plant common in Palestine. The flowers were highly scented and yellow or white in color. The leaves of this plant were dried and ground into cosmetic dye powder. Women of Egypt dyed the palms of their hands a dark, dusky red with this. The powder was also used as an effective check to excessive perspiration - a deodorant, if you please! The dye from the yellow flowers was used to stain the hair and the beard.
- D. 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.

#517 I'd rather have Jesus

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

E. 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

V. 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. **MEASURELESS 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. **BOUNDLESS 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. **ENDLESS 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)

VI. TALKING ABOUT OUR BELOVED I found him," she cried, "I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go" (3:4). 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.

A. 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.

C. F. WEIGLE

VII. THE SENSITIVITY 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

VIII. THE SECURITY OF BETROTHAL TO CHRIST (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).

1. **THE SPIRIT SEALS** Holy spirit “Seals” us = security of divine ownership. He is our precious possession. 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; <sup>22</sup>Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. (KJV) The ancient world recognized the sealing of goods. This was the pressing of a signet into soft wax across the opening of a document, tomb, sealed box and so on. The seal assured three things:
  - a) Certified the contents as authentic.
  - b) Signified the presence of the owner.
  - c) Verified the image of the signet was transferred.
2. **THE SPIRIT SIGNS** As the Holy Spirit is poured out on us “Anointed” is our signature of God = security of authenticity, divine.
  - a) John 1:12 - His gift is gracious
  - b) John 3:34 - His supply is Inexhaustible
  - c) First John 2:20 - His Anointing is Personal
3. **THE SPIRIT SECURES** The Holy Spirit also given to us as a pledge. God delivered us our engagement ring = security of divine protection

IX. **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

- A. 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 ACTION** 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. **THE ANTICIPATION** 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. THE PASSION "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. THE ATTRACTION "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. THE SATISFACTION 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.

- X. 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.

- XI. 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.

A. 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.

- XII. 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.

A. **THE HEIGHTS OF HIS LOVE:** 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?

B. **THE DEMANDS OF HIS LOVE:** 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

1. **GOD LONGS:** The blessed Lord, with Whom we have been eternally united desires to fellowship with us !
2. **GOD BUYS:** He purchased us out of sin's slave market for that purpose, yet we seem not to consider it at all.
3. **GOD WAITS:** We busy ourselves with our "companions." We are more interested in conversing with them than with the Lord of all the universes.
4. **GOD DESERVES:** They "hear and understand" our voice. He desires that He hear it directed toward Him in loving communion,

C. **THE PLANS OF HIS LOVE:** 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."

D. **THE RESPONSES OF OUR LOVE:** 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

We have the shepherd's last request: "Cause me to hear thy voice! Tell me you love me!" [8:14] 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).

1. What would our Shepherd want us to say to Him that could exceed that? Why, nothing at all! "Lord Jesus, come!
2. Come in all Your vigor and in the splendor of that boundless life of Yours! Come! Leap over all obstacles!
3. 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!
4. The love song ends where the book of Revelation ends, where the Bible itself ends: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

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<sup>i</sup> This lesson was drawn from the following sources: **The Word of God; Baxter, Explore the Book; Scroggie, The Unfolding Drama; Christ in all the Scriptures; The Criswell Study Bible; Walk through the Bible; The Compact Guide to The Bible**, Lehman Strauss, CHM.