

WORSHIPING OUR CHRIST IN ALL THE BOOKS OF POETRY

The Scriptures are all about God revealing Himself to His creatures. The ultimate expression of God's nature and character is Christ. Note the words of Hebrews 1:3 Who being the brightness of [his] glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; (KJV). Since the Word of God reveals God, and Jesus is the image of the Invisible God, then we can find and worship our Lord Jesus Christ in every part of the Bible!

1. In the Books of History we see God's servants Following the Lord Jesus Christ. He was the Creator in the Garden, the Rock in the Wilderness, the Angel of the Lord and so on!
2. In the Books of Poetry we see God's servants Worshiping the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Suffering One, the Good Shepherd, the Redeemer and so on!
3. In the Books of Prophecy we see God's servants:
 - Seeing Christ (Major prophets) as Ruler, Prince of Peace and so on.
 - Trusting Christ (Pre-exilic prophets) as the Judge, One from Everlasting and so on.
 - Hoping in Christ (Post-exilic prophets) as the Sun of Righteousness, the Coming King and the Lord of All.

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Christ in all the Books of Poetry

Tonight , may I impress upon your heart that the book you hold in your hands is unlike any other in the Universe? And with that truth deeply upon our hearts, in the days ahead, shouldn't we treat it differently, read it diligently, wait before it expectantly and from it learn to live triumphantly? Jesus shines from every book of the Bible. Each reveals some truths about our beautiful Lord Jesus. And, there is one that has as its

theme and central purpose to unveil and reveal JESUS CHRIST THE LORD. To see the central theme of Christ in all the Scriptures look at these verses: Revelation 19:10, John 5:39 and Luke 24:27.

CHRIST is seen IN THE books of history:

- A. In **JOB** He is our Sure Redeemer. **"CHRIST OUR SUFFICIENCY"** This book of the five Wisdom books gives THE TRUTH FROM GOD ON SUFFERING..
- B. In **PSALMS** He is our Shepherd. **"CHRIST OUR WORSHIP"**. This book gives THE TRUTH FROM GOD ON WORSHIP..
- C. In **PROVERBS** He is Wisdom Incarnate. **"CHRIST OUR WISDOM"**. This book gives THE TRUTH FROM GOD ON LIVING (principles not promises).
- D. In **ECCLESIASTES** He is the only hope of contentment. **"CHRIST OUR WAY OF LIFE"**. This book gives THE TRUTH FROM GOD ON LIFE.
- E. In **SONG OF SOLOMON** He is our Beloved. **"CHRIST OUR ALTOGETHER LOVELY ONE"**. This book gives THE TRUTH FROM GOD ON LOVING.

(960410WE) JOB **"Christ our Sufficiency"**

As long as mankind has existed there has been suffering. Because of sin in the world some suffering is understandable. But what about the innocent, the saints. Every year 17,000,000 people starve to death on planet earth. That comes to 60,000 people each day. The vast majority are children. Why do they likewise suffer?

This is a constant question and it deserves an answer. Let us look at Job's saga of suffering and from it discern a portrait of patience. This portrait is only discernable when we see the secret of suffering through God's great sovereignty.

God is revealed through four of His Divine names in this book. One of these names provides the key to our understanding of suffering. That name is His Name EL-SHADDAI: "The God who is ENOUGH". He is the Almighty, the All Sufficient One. Of the 84x this word is in the Scriptures 43x are here in Job!

- I. We can relate to suffering
 - A. In the loss of loved ones: parents, children, mates, friends, fellow workers
 - B. In the loss of needed things: job, marriage, dreams, money, health, home, security
- II. We can react to Suffering
 - A. Unbiblical = shock, denial, panic, anger, despair, bitterness, resentment
 - B. Biblical = accepting, submitting, trusting, growing
- III. Three Lingering Lessons Learned from Job the Seasoned Sufferer:
 - A. **PLEASING GOD SHOULD BE OUR GOAL IN LIFE NOT HAPPINESS, COMFORT OR SATISFACTION.** Job 5:17-21 Behold, happy [is] the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty: 18 For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole. 19 He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no

evil touch thee. 20 In famine he shall redeem thee from death: and in war from the power of the sword. 21 Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue: neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh. (KJV)

1. 1 Corinthians 10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. (KJV)
2. 2 Corinthians 5:9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. (KJV)

B. FOLLOWING GOD USUALLY ENTAILS LOSING PRECIOUS POSSESSIONS AND SUFFERING PAIN FOR HIS SAKE.

1. Job 23:8-14 Behold, I go forward, but he [is] not [there]; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: 9 On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold [him]: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see [him]: 10 But he knoweth the way that I take: [when] he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. 11 My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined. 12 Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary [food]. 13 But he [is] in one [mind], and who can turn him? and [what] his soul desireth, even [that] he doeth. 14 For he performeth [the thing that is] appointed for me: and many such [things are] with him. (KJV)

C. TRUSTING GOD TURNS PRESENT "LOSSES" INTO FUTURE "GAINS".

1. Job 42:10-17 And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before. 11 Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold. 12 So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. 13 He had also seven sons and three daughters. 14 And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Kerenhappuch. 15 And in all the land were no women found [so] fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren. 16 After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, [even] four generations. 17 So Job died, [being] old and full of days. (KJV)

From an overview of Job we can see suffering from five perspectives:

- I. To Make us Aware of the Battle [COSMOLOGICAL VIEW] in the Prologue chapters 1-2
 - A. Satan's Challenge strikes deeply, rapidly and unexpectedly. The possibility of recovery seemed hopeless.
 1. He has power over the NATIONS Job 1:13-15 Now there was a day when his sons and daughters [were] eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house; 14 and a messenger came to Job and said, "The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, 15

"when the Sabeans raided [them] and took them away -- indeed they have killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" (NKJV) [Sabeans were wandering Bedouins from around Uz], Job 1:17 While he [was] still speaking, another also came and said, "The Chaldeans formed three bands, raided the camels and took them away, yes, and killed the servants with the edge of the sword; and I alone have escaped to tell you!" (NKJV) [Chaldeans were nomadic marauders].

2. He has power over NATURE Job 1:16-19 as his ten sons and daughters were killed by a tornado.
3. He has power over NATURAL MAN Job 2:7 So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD, and struck Job with painful boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. (NKJV)

II. To Make us Aware of Sin [RATIONAL VIEW] recorded in the words of Job's three friends in chapters 3-31. Suffering is the result of sin in ones life [4.7-9; 8.20]

A. The five results of Sin

1. **SIN CUTS OFF COMMUNICATION WITH GOD** Psalm 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear [me]: (KJV)
2. **SIN GRIEVES GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT** Ephesians 4:30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. (KJV)
3. **SIN SICKENS UNREPENTANT SAINTS** 1 Corinthians 11:27-30 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink [this] cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of [that] bread, and drink of [that] cup. 29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this cause many [are] weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. (KJV)
4. **SIN INVITES THE DISCIPLINE OF GOD.** Hebrews 12:5-6 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. (KJV)
5. **SIN LEADS TO DEATH IN PERSISTENTLY SINNING SAINTS.** Revelation 2:22-23 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. 23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. (KJV)

III. Three Eternal Truths when facing Suffering:

A. **BUY GOLD [FOCUS ON WORK IN CHRIST'S CHURCH].** 1

Corinthians 3:10-17 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; 13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the

day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. 16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and [that] the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? 17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which [temple] ye are. (KJV)

B. BUY TIME [WALK IN THE SPIRIT AND FOCUS ON CHRIST].

Ephesians 5:16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. (KJV)

C. BUY FIREPROOF [FOCUS ON THE END].

1. 2 Peter 3:10-11 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. 11 [Seeing] then [that] all these things shall be dissolved, what manner [of persons] ought ye to be in [all] holy conversation and godliness, (KJV)
2. 2 Corinthians 5:9-11 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things [done] in [his] body, according to that he hath done, whether [it be] good or bad. 11 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. (KJV)

(960515WE) PSALMS "Christ our Worship"

The Psalms are preeminently focused upon our Triune God. His character is more clearly and dramatically proclaimed here than in any other book of the Bible. Divine Names are prominently in use: Adonai "Lord," occurs 63 times, EI and Elohim "God" occur 427 times, and the name Yahweh is found no less than 742 times.

The words of our Lord Jesus and His Apostles were filled with the Psalms.

To prepare for Gethsemane He sang Psalms at the Last Supper with His disciples.

Matthew 26:30 and Mark 14:26 = 5214 humneo AV - sing an hymn 2, sing praise 2; 4 singing of paschal hymns these were Psalms 113 - 118 and 136, which the Jews called the "great Hallel"

- To endure the horrors of Golgotha He had the words of the Psalms flowing from His lips on the Cross. Matthew 27:46 and Luke 23:46 quote Psalms 22:1 and 31:5.
- After His resurrection Christ reminded the sorrowful in Luke 24:44 that the Psalms often speak of Him.
- At Pentecost Peter has to draw from the wealth of the Psalms [16:8-11] to express the good news of the Gospel to his people.
- In the book of Romans the Apostle Paul needed the Psalms [51:4 for v. 4; 14:1-3 and 53:1-3 for v. 10; 5:9 and 140:3 for v. 13; 10:7 for v. 14; 36:1 for v. 18] to frame

the depths of human depravity in chapter 3. How deeply and widely they figure into all our human experience.

Another powerful concept in the Psalms is the word "Hallelujah." This word is actually a plural command, meaning something we must do together, in public. This reminds us that Praise is not the same as thanks. The meaning of halal is to proclaim or declare, to speak about God rather than to thank Him for something. The object of praise is the jah part of this compound word, which is an abbreviated form of the name Yahweh. In short, praise is joyfully proclaiming, in public, the attributes of God and the acts of God.
No wonder "Hallelu-Yah" is the most often repeated command in the Bible!

The Psalms flow from the lives of several Old Testament writers under the inspiration of God's Spirit. David writes about 92 [73 are directly ascribed to him, the New Testament ascribes 2 more, the LXX 15 more and 2 are arrived at by comparison with I Chronicles 16]; Solomon writes Psalms 72 and 127; Moses Psalm 90; Heman, Ethan, Asaph and the sons of Korah write others.

The Psalms are books within a book.

1. As a Book of Nature - God's handiwork in Creation and the Realm of Nature is portrayed in breathtaking grandeur.
2. As a Book of Rescue - there are words for those who hurt. Nearly every emotion and feeling known to humans is mirrored and ministered to within the Psalms.
3. As a Book of Redemption - hope is presented for sinners, extolling the mercy and goodness of our God as He forgives sinners.
4. Finally as a Book of God's Word - the beauty, perfections and power of the Scriptures are plainly seen by those who seek Him with their whole heart.

Jesus Christ is everywhere evident in the Psalms. The Psalms see Him coming both as the Baby and the King. They foretell the events of His birth, His earthly life, His holy character and the Pain of His passion. His death, burial and resurrection are powerfully portrayed. There are 14 specific Messianic psalms [2,8,16,22,34, 35, 40-41, 45, 68-69, 109-110, 118]. In the Psalms Christ is revealed frequently as:

1. the Good Shepherd [23, 77, 78, 80, 95, 100, 119],
2. the Rock of Ages [27, 28, 31, 71, 42, 61, 72, 78, 89, 94-95];
3. the Light [27, 118, 43];
4. and the Redeemer [19, 69, 72, 77, 78, 103, 106, 107, 119].

I. Note just a few of the great worshipful Psalms and the prayers they contain:

- A. **Psalm 39:4-13** - A PRAYER FOR GOD'S FAVOR BECAUSE LIFE IS BRIEF.
- B. **Psalm 51** - THE GREAT PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS AND CLEANSING.
- C. **Psalm 56** - GOD'S PROTECTION WHEN WE ARE AFRAID.
- D. **Psalm 61** - FOR GOD'S COMFORT AS A ROCK AND A REFUGE.
- E. **Psalm 63** - LONGING FOR GOD'S PRESENCE.
- F. **Psalm 139:23-24** - DESIRING TO BE PURE IN GOD'S SIGHT.
- G. **Psalm 142-143** - STRENGTH IN THE TIME OF TROUBLE. THIS IS THE RESULT OF (143:5-6) MEDITATING UPON GOD'S WORKS OF OLD.

There are 13 Psalms around events in David's Life:

Psalm 59 describes I Samuel 19:11; Psalm 56 describes I Samuel 21:11; Psalm 34 describes I Samuel 21:13; Psalm 142 describes I Samuel 22:1; Psalm 52 describes I Samuel 22:9; Psalm 54 describes I Samuel 23:19; Psalm 57 describes I Samuel 24:3; Psalm 60 describes II Samuel 8:13; Psalm 51 describes II Samuel 12:13; Psalm 3 describes II Samuel 15:16; Psalm 63 describes II Samuel 15:23; Psalm 7 describes II Samuel 16:5; and Psalm 18 describes II Samuel 22:2-51.

But most of all the book of Psalms is seen through the 23rd Psalm. The first Psalm we learn as children becomes the last word we lean on in that dark valley called death. This Psalm yields the three choice secrets of a believers life: the secret of happiness in life, peacefulness in death and security in eternity.

In *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23*, Phillip Keller¹ tells how difficult it is to get a sheep to lie down. Sheep do not easily lie down, he says. In fact, "It is almost impossible for them to be made to lie down unless four requirements are met. Owing to their timidity they refuse to lie down unless they are free from all fear. Because of the social behavior within a flock, sheep will not lie down unless they are free from friction with others of their kind. If tormented by flies or parasites, sheep will not lie down.... Lastly, sheep will not lie down as long as they feel in need of finding food. They must be free from hunger." To rest, a sheep must be free from fear, tension, aggravation, and hunger. So the psalm begins with a picture of a sheep who has found its shepherd to be a good shepherd, able to meet its physical needs and provide release from anxiety.

I. THE PERSPECTIVE:

- A. In Psalm 22 We meet the Good Shepherd who gives His life for His sheep. This mirrors Christ in John 10:11. This is the PAST aspect of His ministry. My Savior. Past Grace
- B. In Psalm 23 is the Great Shepherd living to Equip His sheep. This explains Heb 13:20-21. This is His PRESENT ministry. My Shepherd. Present Guidance.
- C. In Psalm 24 we meet the Chief Shepherd Returning to Reward His sheep. This explains I Peter 5:4. This is the FUTURE aspect of His ministry. My King. Future Glory

II. THE PSALM (11 blessings to go!):

- A. Psalm 23:1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. (CONTENTMENT)
- B. Psalm 23:2a He maketh me to lie down in green pastures (REST):
- C. Psalm 23:2b he leadeth me beside the still waters. (REFRESHMENT)
- D. Psalm 23:3a He restoreth my soul: (RENEWAL)
- E. Psalm 23:3b he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.(RIGHTEOUSNESS)
- F. Psalm 23:4a Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, (COMPANIONSHIP)
- G. Psalm 23:4b I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. (COMFORT)
- H. Psalm 23:5a Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: (SECURITY)

¹ Phillip Keller, *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1970), p. 35.

- I. Psalm 23:5b thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. (POWER)
- J. Psalm 23:6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: (HOPE)
- K. and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever. (DESTINY)

(960522WE) PROVERBS "Christ our Wisdom"

Paul revealed a wonderful truth about Christ. He said 1 Corinthians 1:30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God -- that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. (NIV). Jesus becomes that wisdom as His brother James said James 3:17 But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. (NIV). In the Proverbs we find the wisdom of Christ distilled in a very practical form.

Solomon was the author of 3,000 proverbs and 1,005 songs the Bible tells us (I Kings 4:32). His God given wisdom surpassed all the noted wisemen of his day (I Kings 3:12). In our study of PROVERBS this week we look at one of the few Old Testament books that state their purpose clearly at the start. In Pr. 1:2-6 we find a twofold purpose:

1. Build Moral Character 1:3-5
2. Build Mental Wisdom 1:2, 6

Some have said that the three books Solomon wrote may have arisen from the three stages of his life.

- Song of Solomon from the young man in love.
- Proverbs from the wisdom of a mature man at his zenith. And
- Ecclesiastes from an old and bitter man looking back on his wasted opportunities. . .

What we are sure of is the vast reputation Solomon had for wealth and wisdom. His fleet was known to the ports of the world. His commercial enterprises brought him vast and rare treasures. Those ships based in Elat would wind their way from Gibraltar to Arabia to India. Exotic goods of the fabled East and the jungles of Africa flowed into Jerusalem. Vast caravans plied the trade routes east and west bringing the goods of the world to his doorstep. Women from every corner of the world sought and hundreds found his favor. Romance and love flowed from this most amazing man. From this era flows the SONG OF SOLOMON.

Then there was the stream of inquirers who came to sit at his feet in wonder as he spoke. At the head of the line was the Queen of Sheba who came 1,200 miles with a vast fortune. She was overcome at his exceeding wisdom and wealth. "The half was never told me!" His actual possessions were so much more than his unbelievable reputation. She went away in wonder and praise to his God. From this era rises the PROVERBS.

Yet with all that. With incredible Divine Blessings. With personal visits from the God of Heaven. With wisdom unsurpassed on the planet. With wealth beyond the greatest kings of the Earth. With wine, women and palatial living . . . nothing ever satisfied him. The hands spread out to God in prayer were pulled back and instead grasped the idols of paganism. The heart of zeal for the Living and True God became cold, distant and empty. From this final era trickles ECCLESIASTES. A look at Ecclesiastes 12 shows Solomon may have ended right.

The book of Proverbs gives three basic categories of proper relationships.

- I. Man to SELF
 - A. Character [20:11]; anger [29:11]; wealth [1:4] and foolishness [6:10-11].
 - B. Wisdom [1:5]; pride [27:1]; speech [18:21]; laziness [13:4]; self control [6:9-11] and kindness [3:3].
- II. Man to MAN
 - A. Love [8:17]; friends [17:17]; enemies [19:27]; gossip [20:19] and truthfulness [23:23].
 - B. Fathers [20:7]; mothers [31:11-31]; children [3:1-3]; education in the home [4:1-4] and discipline in the home [22:6].
- III. Man to GOD
 - A. In death [15:11]; fear of God [1:7]; sin [28:13] and rewards and punishment [12:28].
 - B. In righteousness [10:25]; tests [17:3]; blessing [10:22]; commandments [6:23]; humility [3:34]; and trust [22:19].

In proverbs we see Christ as the incarnate wisdom. Follow these verses to see Him in all His glory.

Wisdom	The Word
Proverbs 8:27-29 When he prepared the heavens, I [was] there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: 28 When he established the clouds above: 29 when he appointed the foundations of the earth: (KJV)	John 1:1-3 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. (KJV)
Proverbs 8:30 Then I was by him, [as] one brought up [with him]: and I was daily [his] delight, rejoicing always before him; (KJV)	Hebrews 1:2 by [his] Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; (KJV)

The Wisdom of God in Proverbs is vital for Parenting. The scriptures reveal in Luke 2:52 four crucial needs in our children :

1. **Our children lack wisdom.** They must be taught how to discern what is right and wrong, unprofitable and profitable, dangerous and safe and so on. This must be taught for them to mature.
2. **Children lack stature.** They are physically weak and start life helpless. They must be fed, directed to rest and care for their needs. They must be protected or they can't make it in the world.
3. **Children lack favor with God.** They are born sinners. They are pagans who must be led into the truth and love of God. Without training up in God's way they will drift away.
4. **Children lack favor with mankind.** They are not ready for society. They start and continue in life totally selfish unless disciplined. They must learn humility and selfless behavior. Left alone children are social misfits.

(960529WE) ECCLESIASTES
"CHRIST OUR WAY OF LIFE".

Solomon as nearly no other person in history had the world at his feet. He was possessor of uncountable wealth and possessions (2:8); he was unsurpassed in education and knowledge (1:16); he was in the peak of worldly fame, popularity and prominence (2:4-6); he was unbridled in his ability and desire to pursue and find pleasure (2:3). After a life of pursuit he confesses with Christ that one may well gain the whole world and still lose his own soul (Matthew 16:26). Only in the Lord is there any hope for this life! We must meet that "One Shepherd" (12:11) who alone offers "abundant life" (John 10:9-10).

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God divinely inspired Solomon to record the truth of what it takes to have contentment in life as a believer. This a philosophy of life for us as Christians. The Lord has given us revelation to help us govern our temporal lives on earth. He didn't leave us alone to try to come up with our own plan!

We might distill down the essential truths of these 12 chapters as being:

- LIFE APART FROM GOD IS VAIN.
- LIFE WITH GOD CAN BE VAIN IF CONTENTMENT IS NOT PRACTICED!

SELF LIFE IS FUTILE, CHRIST LIFE IS EVERYTHING! Frustration is produced by putting out gaze on self or circumstances instead of on the Lord! (Heb 12:2) When we look at

self or the world around us it is depressing because both are not designed to last forever! Note in chapter 2 the personal pronoun "I" is used 36 times. This is much like Romans 7 where Paul describes the self-life struggle personally over 30 times. Then in Romans 8 life in the Holy Spirit almost erases Paul's self awareness.

Many doctrines are found in this book:

- I. Mankind and Labor
- II. Wisdom versus Folly
- III. Reality of death and brevity of life
 - A. EARTHLY LIFE IS SHORT Ecclesiastes 12: 7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. (KJV)
Genesis 3: 19 In the sweat of thy face shall thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it was thou taken: for dust thou [art], and unto dust shalt thou return. (KJV)
 - B. EARTHLY LIFE IS TERMINAL Ecclesiastes 5: 15 As he came from his mother's womb, naked shall he return, To go as he came; And he shall take nothing from his labor Which he may carry away in his hand. (NKJV)
 - C. EARTHLY LIFE IS UNPREDICTABLE Ecclesiastes 9: 12 For man also does not know his time: Like fish taken in a cruel net, Like birds caught in a snare, So the sons of men [are] snared in an evil time, When it falls suddenly upon them. (NKJV)
 - D. EARTHLY LIFE ENDS IN DUST Ecclesiastes 12: 7 Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it. (NKJV) BUT DEATH DOESN'T END IT ALL!
- IV. Pleasure and Living Life
 - A. PLEASURE IS GOOD
 - B. PLEASURE IS A GIFT FROM GOD
 - C. PLEASURE IS OKAY! Pleasure does not dispel the vanity of life. It is not the answer to life. But pleasures lived to the glory of God are worthwhile. It is okay to do things in life just because we enjoy them.
- V. Mankind and our Creator
 - A. GOD IS THE LIFE GIVER Ecclesiastes 7: 29 Truly, this only I have found: That God made man upright, But they have sought out many schemes." (NKJV)
 - B. GOD HOLDS OUR DESTINY Ecclesiastes 9: 1-2 For I considered all this in my heart, so that I could declare it all: that the righteous and the wise and their works [are] in the hand of God. People know neither love nor hatred [by] anything [they see] before them. 2 All things [come] alike to all: One event [happens] to the righteous and the wicked; To the good, the clean, and the unclean; To him who sacrifices and him who does not sacrifice. As is the good, so [is] the sinner; He who takes an oath as [he] who fears an oath. (NKJV)
 - C. GOD DESIRES RIGHTEOUSNESS OVER RELIGIOUS SACRIFICES Ecclesiastes 5: 1 Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil. (KJV) 1 Samuel 15: 22 And Samuel said, Hath the LORD [as great] delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey [is] better than sacrifice, [and] to hearken than the fat of rams. (KJV)

Chapter 9 gives us four conclusions to live by:

1. **BE CONTAGIOUSLY, OVERFLOWINGLY HAPPY BY CHOICE.** Rise above circumstances by the fruit of the Spirit called joy! Ecclesiastes 9:7 Go, eat your bread with joy, And drink your wine with a merry heart; For God has already accepted your works. (NKJV)
2. **BE CONTINUALLY FREE OF GUILT AND RID OF ITS BONDAGE AS GOD'S CHILDREN.** Be aware His forgiveness and approval. Ecclesiastes 9:8 Let your garments always be white, And let your head lack no oil. (NKJV)
3. **BE CONSTANTLY COMMITTED TO GOD AS A FEARER IN MY PERSONAL LIFE, MARRIED LIFE, WORK LIFE AND SO ON.** Ecclesiastes 9:9 Live joyfully with the wife whom you love all the days of your vain life which He has given you under the sun, all your days of vanity; for that [is] your portion in life, and in the labor which you perform under the sun. (NKJV)
4. **BE COMPLETELY IN GEAR THROUGHOUT LIFE BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT LIVE LIFE TO THE MAX.** Ecclesiastes 9:10 Whatever your hand finds to do, do [it] with your might; for [there is] no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going. (NKJV)

(960605WE)

SONG OF SOLOMON

"CHRIST OUR ALTOGETHER LOVELY ONE"

These 8 chapters, 117 verses and 2661 words in the Hebrew Bible called Song of Solomon are the 5th of the Hebrew Wisdom Books called the MEGILLOTH. Each were read at one of the Jewish Feasts. Esther at Purim, Lamentations at unleavened bread; Ecclesiastes at Tabernacles; Song of Solomon at Passover and Ruth at Pentecost!

God spoke, inspiring Solomon to record three books of the Bible. This was his first. Still young, asking the Lord for wisdom, he tells us of 1st love. Love unforgettable and unforgotten. When he was young and full of life Solomon writes a Song about the beauty of 1st love. Love that transcends all others. Love that captivates and holds. It is a special treasure and one we must hold close. Never lose that first love. The Loveliness of Christ, His beauty is the treasure that we must never misplace in our hearts. We need to come back again and again to our first love!

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 you and I came to Christ He gave us His treasures. We may not know how precious they were until time shares that reality with us. He gives His name, His forgiveness, His provision of every need. Are you running so fast that the wonders of His love, those treasures are being swept off the desk of your life?

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.

I. **HAVE YOU FALLEN IN LOVE WITH JESUS CHRIST ? (1:2)**

II. **HAVE YOU EVER SEEN 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:

- A. Jehovah-jireh-The LORD Who Provides (Genesis 22:14)
- B. Jehovah-Nissi-The LORD Our Banner-The LORD Who Protects (Exodus 17:15)
- C. Jehovah-Shalom-The LORD Who Gives Peace (Judges 6:24)
- D. Jehovah-Tsidkenu-The LORD Our Righteousness-The LORD Who Pardons (Jeremiah 23:6; 33:16)
- E. Jehovah-Shammah-The LORD Who Is There-The LORD Who Is Present (Ezekiel 48:35)
- F. Jehovah-Roi-The LORD My Shepherd-The LORD Who Pastors (Psalm 23:1)
- G. Jehovah-Mekkadishkem-The LORD Who Sanctifies-The LORD Who Purifies (Exodus 31:13)
- H. Jehovah-Ropheka-The LORD Who Heals-The LORD The Physician (Exodus 15:26)
- I. Jehovah-Sabaoth-The LORD Of Hosts-The LORD Of All Power (I Samuel 1:3)
- J. Jehovah-Elyon-The LORD Most High-The LORD Who Is Preeminent (Psalm 7:17; 47:2)

III. **HAVE YOU EVER SMELLED 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!

- A. **It is the saving name:** "Thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).
- B. **It is the sanctifying name.** We are to do all things, in word and deed, in the name of the Lord Jesus (c.f. Colossians 3:17).
- C. **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

IV. **HAVE YOU EVER EXPERIENCED THE SUPPLY OF LOVE ? [1:7]** "And where do You rest the flock?"

- A. As His sheep we need food and rest.
 - 1. These the Good Shepherd gives us. "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). Remember the wicked are like a troubled sea! Isaiah 57:20.
 - 3. "Bread of Heaven, feed me till I want no more."; "Jesus, I am resting, resting in the joy of what Thou art."

V. **HAVE YOU EVER ENTERED THE SERVICE OF HIS OWNERSHIP ? (1:9)**

- A. **A LESSON FROM HORSES** 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. **WE ARE CHOSEN** 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. **WE ARE TRANSFORMED** 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. WE ARE INDWELT 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. WE ARE NOW BOUND TO CHRIST 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)

B. A LESSON FROM SLAVES Ex. 21

1. PUBLIC
2. PAINFUL
3. PERMANENT

VI. **HAVE YOU BEGUN TO TREASURE 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. HIS LOVE WAS COSTLY LIKE 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. HIS LOVE WAS PAINFUL LIKE 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. The tree is hacked, cut and beaten. Myrrh then exudes from the wounds! 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. HIS LOVE WAS BEAUTIFUL LIKE 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.
 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

- a) WE SHOULD BE EXPRESSING OUR LOVE: What a wonderful lesson there is in all this for our own souls. [1:13-14]

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

VII. HAVE YOU FOUND THE PROVISIONS OF HIS LOVE ? (2:3-4):

- A. **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) OVERLOAD
- B. **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)
- C. **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)
- D. **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)
- E. **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)
- F. **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)
- G. **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)

VIII. **ARE TESTIFYING ABOUT FINDING CHRIST ? (2:8-3:5)** with full purpose of heart going forth to seek Him and confessing His name, her search was 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). 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.

C. F. WEIGLE

IX. **HAVE YOU PONDERED ENGAGEMENT TO CHRIST ? (3:6-5:1)**

A. **AS OUR GROOM HE IS LISTENING FOR OUR VOICE (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

B. **AS OUR GROOM HE IS SECURING OUR LIVES (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. **HAVE YOU BEEN AUTOGRAPHED BY THE SPIRIT ? THE SPIRIT SIGNS HIS OWN!** 2 Corinthians 1:21 Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, (NIV); As the Holy Spirit is poured out on us "Anointed" is our signature of God = security of authenticity, divine.
 - a) JOHN 1:12 - HE GIVES GRACIOUSLY
 - b) JOHN 3:34 - HE SUPPLIES INEXHAUSTIBLY
 - c) I JOHN 2:20 - HE ANNOINTS PERSONALLY
 2. **HAVE YOU BEEN SEALED BY THE SPIRIT ? THE SPIRIT SEALS HIS OWN !** "SEALS" US = SECURITY OF DIVINE OWNERSHIP. He is our precious possession. 2 Corinthians 1:22 who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. (NKJV) 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) **AUTHENTICITY** Certified the contents as authentic.
 - b) **SECURITY** Signified the presence of the owner.
 - c) **DESTINY** At the end of the journey the impressed image of the signet verified the delivery plan.
 3. **THE SPIRIT SECURES** The Holy Spirit also given to us as a pledge. God delivered us our 'engagement ring' = the security of divine protection. 2 Corinthians 1:22 who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. (NKJV)
- C. **AS OUR GROOM HE IS WAITING FOR US! (4:6)** Song of Solomon 4: 6 Until the day breaks And the shadows flee away, I will go my way to the mountain of myrrh And to the hill of frankincense. (NKJV) The Shulamite responds to her shepherd speaking about the morning and the mountain. The morning-What a fantastic morning it will be. Her heart is occupied with the coming day.
- D. **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,
- E. **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."
- F. **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