



8 The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. 9 My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattice. 10 My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. 11 For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; 12 The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; 13 The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away. . . 16 My beloved is mine, and I am his... (Song 2:8-13, 16)

This devotion is no pretention to a full commentary on the Song of Solomon. Indeed, I feel incompetent to make such an in depth commentary of this wonderful book that epitomizes the meaning of real, true love – not just between bride and groom, but between Christian people everywhere and their Lord. The immeasurable devotion and love for the Bride and her Groom is that which any husband should feel for his beloved wife, and vice versa; however, the greater example is of that abundant and unabated love that the Lord Jesus Christ harbors for His Bride, the Church, and the Bride cherishes for her Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The key verse for this Book is found in two places: *“My beloved is mine, and I am his.”* (Song 2:16a) and *“I am my beloved’s, and my beloved is mine.”* (Song 6:3a) The only means of our ‘owning’ the Lord is to be owned by Him. *“We love Him because He first loved us.”* (1 John 4:19) This is the common order of love between a husband and wife. The fair lady is easy to love, but the rough and rugged gentleman is less lovely. But the love of a man for his chosen bride will win the lady if it is sincere, genuine, and unrelenting. We cannot love that which we have not known. We cannot know the Lord until He has loved us. He loved and knew His elect before they were yet conceived in their mother’s womb.

There are as many varied and diverse interpretations of this Book as there are commentators. The one I like best is that of Dr. H.A. Ironsides: *“A girl of poor family worked in a vineyard, which belonged to Solomon (8:11). He, as a young shepherd, met this girl, and they fell in love. The shepherd-lover had to go away, with the promise of his return. She became despondent over her long wait, but remained faithful to her lover. While working in the field one day, word was brought to her that King Solomon, who was in her village, wanted to see her. Amazed, she immediately recognized him as her shepherd-lover. They go together to his palace in Jerusalem, and it is here that most of the story takes place.”*

Who among the disciples recognized Christ as King of Kings from the first meeting? They could not even understand that He must die on the cross for them until it was an accomplished fact. What of the men on the Road to Emmaus who recognized not the Lord until He served them, again as at the Last supper, Bread?

Solomon wrote three poetic works – the Book of Proverbs (a book of wisdom), Ecclesiastes (his book on folly), and Song of Solomon (his book on love). Solomon was remarkably qualified as master in all three subjects!

The nature of Song of Solomon is to illustrate the unity and oneness that should exist between God and His people – the Church. Its overriding purpose is to teach the imperative of faithfulness to the Lover and Shepherd of our Souls.

Chapter 1 outlines the close communion between the Bride (the Church) and the Bridegroom (the Lord Jesus Christ). In this short Book of the Bible, the term “beloved” is mentioned no less than 23 times. This ‘belovedness’ is summarized in the New Testament: “*<sup>1</sup>Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. <sup>2</sup>Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*” (1 John 3:1-2)

Solomon is clearly teaching that Christ is our all-in-all, and that entails loving Him with all of our heart. We see Christ illustrated throughout in mystery and beauty. Here are examples of Christ in Solomon’s Song:

1. The Rose of Sharon. This was a flowering plant that grew in wilderness areas. Its beauty contrasted sharply with the dull and monotonous terrain of desert sands and stones. It was seen in unexpected places by the weary traveler, and gave hope and promise of better things to come. It usually appears in white or purple and is the National Flower of Korea (*mugunghwa*: 무궁화). How wonderful for a nation to own, as its national symbol, a flower representing the Lord Jesus Christ! “*I am the rose of Sharon.*” (Song 2:1)
2. The Lily of the Valleys. “. . . *the lily of the valleys.*” (Song 2:1) There is a quaint old Gospel song that names Jesus as the “Lily of the Valley,” but that is not quite right – Jesus is the “Lily of the Valleys – not Valley only.” In every “*valley of the shadow of death*” we have the Lord Jesus Christ as our constant companion. He dispels the darkness and the shadows flee, for death is only a shadow to the saint and not the real thing.
3. The Chiefest of Ten Thousand. “*<sup>10</sup>My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.*” (Song 5:10) This is certainly an understatement, but the number was considered to be of infinite proportions in this dialogue. Christ is the One and Only of all that have walked the earth.
4. He is Altogether Lovely: “. . . *he is altogether lovely.*” (Song 5:16) Without Christ, there would be no world, no love, no salvation, and no beauty. His love has made all things possible. He is the beyond measure for loveliness. “*The Christian needs no argument to make him love Christ. Just as a mother needs no argument to make her love her child- she does it because it is her nature to do so. The new-born creature must love Christ, he cannot help it. Oh! who can resist the matchless charms of Jesus Christ? the fairest of ten thousand fairs, the loveliest of ten thousand loves. Who can refuse to adore the prince of perfection, the mirror of beauty, the majestic Son of God?*” Charles Spurgeon, *Remembrance of Christ*.

We see two major divisions illustrated in this beautiful book of poetry:

- The Bridegroom (Jesus Christ)
- The Bride (the Church)

### **The Bridegroom (The Lord):**

1. Just as love covers all sins (Proverbs 10:12), so does the love of the Bridegroom (Christ) cover all defects of the Bride (Church). *"Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee."* (Song 4:7) and *"I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me."* (Song 7:10)
2. The Bridegroom rejoices over the Bride. *"For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee."* (Isaiah 62:5) A young man in love will fight man or bear that disparages his beloved bride.
3. The Bridegroom will give His life for the Bride. *"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."* (Eph 5:25)
4. The Bridegroom (Christ) will claim the Bride (Church) as His own. *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."* (1 Thess 4:16-17)
5. The Lord will present His Bride to His Father as His glorious Bride. *"That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."* (Eph 5:27)

### **The Bride (Church):**

1. The Church feels, justifiably, her lack of worthiness. *"Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother's children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept."* (Song 1:6)
2. The Church (Bride) loves the Bridegroom because He first loved her. *"My beloved is mine, and I am his."* (Song 2:16) and *"We love him, because he first loved us."* (1 John 4:19)
3. The Church is purified by Christ and appareled in a Robe of Righteousness. *"And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."* (Rev 19:8)
4. The Church is bedecked with Jewels of divine Grace. *"I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."* (Isaiah 61:10)
5. As the Shulamite maiden, the Church eagerly looks for Christ's appearing. *"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."* (Heb 9:28)

Like all eager and honored brides, the Church sends out invitations to the Marriage Feast. *"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."* (Rev 22:17) Can any miss the beauty and splendor of these illustrations given in

Song of Solomon of that love shared by the Bride and her Bridegroom? Is it possible to ignore the obvious necessity of love for Christ, and for each other, presented here in this lovely poetic work? I think not. Is it not high time that the Church begins to demonstrate her love for Christ in obedience and true worship; and to recognize the commandment to love one another as a token of who we are? *"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."* (John 13:34-35)

Have you done, friend?