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God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Song of Solomon 1.

(2014)

The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises

But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

Teach it, don't demand it.

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Song of Solomon 1.

INTRODUCTION: the following introduction is quite long, but it does help understand the Song of Solomon, for those who are only interested in the actual chapter skip this section and scroll down to Song of Solomon chapter one. According to the most common interpretation, the Song of Solomon is a collection of love poems. It is possible that Solomon (tenth century B.C.) is the author (1:1). However, this verse could mean that the Song was dedicated to Solomon or was written about him, so many scholars regard the book as anonymous nevertheless it is a very intimate and romantic story of a man's love for a woman and a woman's love for the man. The focus of the Song of Solomon is that love is the same whether it is between: -

- A man and a woman or a husband and wife.
- God and Israel or Christ and the church.

For this reason the Song of Solomon can be about: -

- Solomon and the woman he loved.
- The relationship between God and Israel.
- The relationship between Christ and the church.

She: could refer to a woman, Judah or the church.

He: could refer to Solomon, a king or Christ and God.

The others: could refer to, friends, Israel or the world.

The daughters of Jerusalem: normally refer to Judah or the holy and faithful ones.

The primary focus is an intimate love story between a king and a dark skinned Shulammite woman, that is evident, but the king can also be seen as an echo of Christ's love for those who belong to him (the church) while the woman represents those who love Christ (the church) expressing their love for him. It is this aspect of the Song of Solomon that this study will focus on, but this is certainly not a dogmatic study or the only interpretation, but hopefully will inspire the reader to seek for even greater detail and their own insights. The following verses show the great love Christ has for the church: -

- Paul wrote: Christ loved the church and gave himself for it. (Ephes. 5:25).
- Jesus said: greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends. (John 15:13).
- Paul stated: for no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church. (Ephes. 5:29).

The global church: don't make the mistake of limiting the church to only the established religious institutions, denominations or church buildings. Certainly they are part of the body of Christ but they are not the only part. There are many individual Christians in all countries of the world who meet in coffee bars, social outings and mostly their own homes to give thanks to Christ and share their discoveries of God's word and their spiritual experiences with the Lord. Many of these people are helping others and simply manifesting the reality of their faith to the people that come into their lives.

God is not limited to any one pattern or religious organisation; He is far too creative for that. Jesus church is global and is manifested in a vast variety of ways across the face of the earth. Remember the word church does not embrace everyone simply because they confess to be Christians, when the Bible uses the word

church in its true sense it has in mind those who belong to Christ and who do the will of his Father. Jesus summed up the will of God in his command to all his followers in the words, "Love your neighbour as yourself," (Mark 12:31). James the brother of Jesus refers to this command as, the royal law (James 2:8). This is because it means do-good to others and not harm and because Jesus himself said, "All the law regarding mankind is summed up in the words love your neighbour as yourself," (Rom. 13:9) (Gal. 5:14).

Those who deliberately harm or use people, especially those who belong to Christ for their own selfish gain and greed, sexually, financially, verbally, emotionally, mentally or spiritually are referred to by Christ as workers of iniquity and will be cast out from the eternal Kingdom (Matt. 7:21-23).

Not everyone who confesses to know Christ is part of his church there are those in the Lord's present spiritual Kingdom who he calls wicked servants. They use his name and his Gospel for their own selfish gain and line their own greedy pockets with the wealth and riches of this world by making merchandise of those who do belong to him. Nevertheless Jesus knows those who are his and those who are not and will deny those who use his message of grace, mercy, compassion and love for their own selfish gain from entering his eternal Kingdom. Jesus said: -

- I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, but you do not believe because you are not part of my flock. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. (John 10:14) (John 10:26-27).

In the following study when the word, church is used in Scripture it not only applies to all the faithful members of a religious organisation and a local church building but also embraces all the faithful worldwide who Jesus loves and who he knows belongs to him and his global family. Before reading the Song of Solomon it is important to understand that many of the Old Testament prophecies regarding Israel include the New Testament Gentiles who accept Christ.

This is because under the New Testament covenant of grace God is creating one new nation in Christ called the church which is made up of Jews and Gentiles (Gentiles are everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew). All the promises to Israel are now in Christ which means they include both the Jews and the Gentiles. In this new nation God is creating in the Lord Jesus Christ Old Testament Israel is equal with the Gentiles.

The apostle Paul in his letters wrote: -

- Gentiles were separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus they have been brought to God by the blood of Christ. Jesus has made Jews and Gentiles both one by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances so that Jesus might create in himself one new man (nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles). In Jesus both Jews and Gentiles are being built together into a dwelling place called the church for God by the Spirit. (Ephesians. 2:1-22 abbreviated).

This means that all the future and eternal promises God made to Israel through the Old Testament prophets also apply to those who belong to Christ and in the beautifully written love story recorded in the Song of Solomon it means that the love the king has for the dark skinned Shulamite woman is the same love Christ has for those who faithfully follow him. The book of Revelation states: -

- When Christ returns everyone will see him (the Gentiles) and those who pierced him (the Jews). And tells us, Jesus the faithful witness and the ruler of kings on earth loves us (Jews and Gentiles), freed us from our sins by his blood and ransomed a people for God from every tribe (Jews) and language and people and nation (Gentiles) to be a kingdom and priests to God and they and will reign on the earth (Revelation 1:5-10).

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

Song 1:1 ----- ¹The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.

This maybe a song written by Solomon's or perhaps a song dedicated to him.

The woman speaks.

Song 1:2-4 ----- ²Let him (the king) (v4) kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! For your love is better than wine; ³your anointing oils are fragrant; your name is oil poured out; therefore virgins love you. ⁴Draw me after you; let us run. The king has brought me into his chambers. We (the woman and the virgins) will exult and rejoice in you (the king); we will extol your love more than wine; rightly do they (the virgins) love you.

Since most know how beautiful the love is between a man and a woman this study is focused upon the love Christ has for the faithful church and the love the faithful church has for Christ so the following verses when looked at in this light can be viewed symbolically in the following manner.

- Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth. (v2).

Expresses the deep love the faithful have toward Christ.

- For your love is better than wine. (v2).

Christ's abounding love is greater than all the treasures of the world and fulfils all emotional needs.

- Your anointing oils are fragrant. (v3).

Christ spiritual gifts and blessing surpass and excel all others.

- Your name is oil poured out. (v3).

Christ's name is a soothing balm to those who love him.

- Therefore virgins love you. (v3).

The godly and righteousness love Christ.

- Draw me after you; let us (the virgins) run. (v4).

Faithful Jews and Gentiles deeply desire to be drawn to God and to Christ. They do not sit on the sidelines as a spectator, but seek, ask and knock continually desiring to have a spiritually deeper relationship with God and with the Lord Jesus Christ their King and Saviour.

- The king has brought me into his chambers. (v4).

Christ has brought all who belong to him into a hidden spiritual and intimate fellowship with him that others cannot see and do not understand.

- We will exult and rejoice in you. (v4).

Faithful Jews and the Gentiles will honour and rejoice in God and Christ.

- We will extol your love more than wine. (v4).

Those saved by faith in Christ to eternal life value the love of God and of Christ more than all the treasures of the world.

- Rightly do they (the virgins) love you. (v4).

Rightly do the righteous love Christ.

The woman is still speaking.

Song 1:5-7 ----- ⁵I am very dark (black in KJV), but lovely, O daughters of Jerusalem, like the tents of Kedar, like the curtains of Solomon. ⁶Do not gaze at me because I am dark, because the sun has looked upon me. My, mother's sons were angry with me; they made me keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard I have not kept! ⁷Tell me, you (the king) whom my soul loves, where you pasture your flock, where you make it lie down at noon; for why should I be like one who veils herself beside the flocks of your companions?

Kedar: probably means mighty or dark.

Curtains of Solomon: were absolutely majestic and beautiful.

O daughters of Jerusalem: Jerusalem is often personified as a mother with children. Her children are all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests, prophets, husbands, wives and their children so the expression, "The daughters of Jerusalem," embraces, all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. When they are spoken of as virgin daughters it carries the idea of them having only one husband (God). For further information see the title: -

- Daughters of Jerusalem in, Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- I am very dark, but lovely, O daughters of Jerusalem, like the tents of Kedar like the curtains of Solomon. (v5).

Symbolically means that though those who love Christ are not perfect in thought or behaviour, their faith makes them beautiful to God. The following verses literally apply to Israel, but by extension they apply to everyone who loves God and belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ. God says of them: -

- They are His treasured possession from all the people of the earth. (Exodus 19:5).
- They are chosen to be a people for God's treasured possession. (Deut. 7:6) (Deut. 14:2) (Deut. 26:18).
- They are God's portion and the apple of His eye. (Deut. 32:9) (Deut. 32:10).
- They are born by God and carried and saved from the womb. (Isa 46:3) (Isa 46:3).
- They are called God's child and His son. (Hosea 11:1).

This is the love God has for the faithful in His global family it is the same love a boy has for his sweetheart and the same love a man has for his wife and the same love expressed in this Song of Solomon.

When the following verses are looked at symbolically they can mean: -

- Do not gaze at me because I am dark, because the sun has looked upon me. (v6).

Do not look at the faults of those who are faithful and love Christ, because by their faith in Christ they are forgiven and by his blood they are made righteous and by their faith in God's Son are made beautiful to Him.

- My, mother's sons were angry with me; they made me keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard I have not kept! (v6).

The woman has not kept her own vineyard, means she has not remained sexually pure, this is probably why her brothers were angry with her. The woman can be seen as a symbol of the faithful and those who belong to Christ confessing their sin, and asking the Lord not to look upon their mistakes, but see their faith and the love they have for him.

- Tell me (the woman), you (the king) whom my soul loves, where you pasture your flock, where you make it lie down at noon. (v7).

Those who love Christ, desire to seek out and fellowship with others who have the same deep love toward him.

- For why should I (the woman) be like one who veils herself beside the flocks of your (the king's) companions? (v7).

Mistakes of the faithful and the flaws of those who love Christ should not shame them from fellowshiping with others who love Christ.

The apostle John wrote: -

- If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us, but if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. (1 John 1:1-10).

Now the King speaks.

Song 1:8-10 ----- ⁸If you do not know, O most beautiful among women, follow in the tracks of the flock, and pasture your young goats beside the shepherds' tents. ⁹I compare you, my love, to a mare (horses in KJV) among Pharaoh's chariots. ¹⁰Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments, your neck with strings of jewels.

Symbolically the following verses can mean: -

- If you do not know, O most beautiful among women, follow in the tracks of the flock, and pasture your young goats beside the shepherds' tents. (v8).

If those who belong to Christ do not know the way to go, look to the past and observe the lives of those who have walked in God's ways. Then alongside Christ and in his love teach the younger ones who are also wondering, "What is the right path?"

- I (the king) compare you, my love, to a mare (horses in KJV) among Pharaoh's chariots. Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments, your neck with strings of jewels. (v9-10).

A horse among Pharaoh's chariots was something of strength, power and beauty. God considers the faithful and those who love Christ as being spiritually strong and valuable jewels in his Kingdom.

The King is still speaking.

Song 1:11 ----- ¹¹We (the king and the shepherds) will make for you (the woman) ornaments of gold, studded with silver.

Symbolically this verse can mean that Christ and his shepherds (prophets and apostles) will spiritually fulfill (clothe) those who love him with all the beauty of his spiritual blessings, (i.e. love, joy, contentment, peace etc., and eternal life in everlasting glory).

The woman now speaks.

Song 1:12-14 ----- ¹²While the king was on his couch, my nard (spikenard in KJV) gave forth its fragrance. ¹³My beloved (the king) is to me a sachet of myrrh that lies between my breasts. ¹⁴My beloved is to me a cluster of henna (camphire in KJV) blossoms in the vineyards of Engedi.

Nard: (spikenard in KJV) (nerd) is fragrant from a substance or plant that gives off a distinctive and pleasant smell.

Myrrh: means to distil or trickle in drops and be made bitter (literal or figurative).

Henna: (camphire in KJV) refers to the henna plant (used for dyeing). Figuratively it means to cover, atone, cleanse, forgive, pardon and be merciful. It is a symbol of redemption or a ransom price.

Engedi: was a place in Palestine, figuratively symbolising affliction or outward appearance.

Symbolically the following verses can mean: -

- While the king was on his couch, my (the woman) nard (spikenard in KJV) gave forth its fragrance. (v12).

To be in the presence of Christ is extremely enjoyable and brings feelings of pleasure, satisfaction, joy, peace and contentment.

- My (the woman) beloved (the king) is to me a sachet of myrrh that lies between my breasts. (v13).

Christ is bitter to those who love him in the sense that the closer they get to knowing him and his love the more they see the depth and root of sin that dwells within the human heart and that is a sharp prick to the conscience and mentally difficult and unpleasant to accept.

- My (the woman's) beloved (the king) is to me a cluster of henna blossoms in the vineyards of Engedi. (v14).

Christ forgives and covers the sin of those who love him and is their redemption and the ransom price for their salvation and this forgiveness and love is like the most glorious blossom of the most beautiful flower in a vineyard.

The woman is still speaking.

Song 1:15 ----- ¹⁵Behold, you (the king) are beautiful my love; behold, you are beautiful; your eyes are doves.

Symbolically this verse is expressing the great love the faithful have for Christ their Lord and King and the deep heartfelt worship and praise they offer to him. There is nothing in Christ that is not beautiful to those who know and love him.

The woman is still speaking.

Song 1:16-17 ----- ¹⁶Behold, you (the king) are beautiful, my beloved, truly delightful. Our couch (bed in KJV) is green ¹⁷the beams of our house are cedar; our rafters are pine.

Green is a symbol of being prosperous, strong, healthy and growing well, especially because the conditions are right, while beams, cedar, rafters and pine carry the idea of a structure being built so beautifully all will be attracted to it and built so strongly it will endure the storms of life. Symbolically this verse carries the idea that those who love Christ will spiritually and mentally prosper and grow in strength because their lives are built on a strong foundation that will endure forever.

End.