

Song of Solomon Introduction / Continued

* _ * _ * _ * _ * _ *

~ Our Spiritual Safari is beginning to listen to a song that has significant spiritual implications for saints of God. The bride of Christ is set before us here as nowhere else in Scripture. In our last report, we considered a brief introduction; and some of those introductory thoughts should be expounded upon. If you did not read our first report from the Song of Solomon, I highly suggest you go back and do so now – because this report and the first combine as one report. We’re talking about, among other things, the relationship between Christ and the church as His bride. While we will examine many perspectives of marriage in this song, our spiritual message will focus on the relationship between Christ and the church.

Myriad critics, particularly German rationalistic schools of philosophy in the last two centuries, when liberalism first penetrated the church via unbelief, concocted several interpretations of Song of Solomon; all of which are untenable and unacceptable. Their interpretations are vile, disgusting, pornographic, and perverse. Naturally, the natural man is only capable of thinking in such petty terms – so that’s what they do. Unfortunately, that has broken off into several shards of dangerously fragmented teaching. Once it gets under the skin, it becomes infected – to the point of requiring amputation – or causing death, in some cases.

Almost all of the books man has ever written about Song of Solomon are unacceptable; and I mean unacceptable to D.L. Moody, Dr. Harry Ironside, Rutherford, and several other renowned Bible scholars of the past. In our Spiritual Safari, I am merely passing along to you a paraphrased interpretation from Dr. H.A. Ironside. I trust his interpretation. Frankly, I do not fully understand it entirely; however, the parts that I am unsure of will not be commented on. You’re going to have to actually read the Bible and pray for understanding and wisdom now, friends; you won’t get it any other way — not from any human. I fully recognize my incompetence and inadequacies teaching the Bible, in general; and that awareness is even more acute as we delve into this wonderful song. But I’m not bothered too

much by my shortcoming, because *no one* is qualified or capable of singing this song properly, correctly and completely.

A young Shulamite woman in the extremely rugged hill country of Ephraim appears before us. Her family were tenant farmers; hillbillies, if you will. Her dad is dead, and she lives with her mother, her sisters, and at least two brothers. None of them like her very much, and they all make her work outside; to the point where she had a pretty good suntan going. Unfortunately, a suntan wasn't an asset in that day as it is today – it was a disgrace. The women in the court kept milky white pale skin. A suntan meant you were a worker; a second class citizen. Well, she spent so much time keeping the families vineyard and her brother's sheep that she never had time to tend to her own needs. She didn't get her hair and nails done every week at the beauty salon. Even so, she had a natural, exquisite and unmatched beauty!

Well, this family lived on a caravan route, so she saw the endless trade caravans traveling back and forth between Jerusalem and everywhere else. Many traveling women wore expensive jewels and satin robes, covered by parasol's and sporting all manner of spices, perfume, creams, lotion – you name it – they had it. This little Shulamite girl had never had any of those things before. She had seen and heard about luxury goods, but she had never possessed anything like that. All she could do was dream about things that were everyday items to those in the palace. She couldn't even conceive of the furnishings that would actually be there. She didn't know those things existed.

Then, one day in the field, a handsome shepherd appeared and fell in love with her. Likewise, she fell in love with him. Peculiarly, he didn't have a flock. His sheep were of the other pasture, he said; and she asked him about that. Well, this shepherd was out looking for one little lost sheep. That's when he crossed paths with the Shulamite girl. Then, he had to continue on, but he promised he would return for her. The days passed, she waited and – nothing. No cards, no text messages, no phone calls – nothing. There was really nothing much she could do except wait. Naturally, she began to doubt if he was coming back. Her family and friends began to ridicule her for being taken in so easily. They had their suspicions about

what transpired. Well, there shall come in the last day's scoffers; saying, where is the sign of His coming? Either way, she loved him, she waited for him - and she dreamed about him.

Do you miss Christ? What does Jesus really mean to you? Is there any evidence that Christ is leading your life? When is the last time you went into the presence of the Father and confessed your sins? Religious gimmickry and pretending to be a super-duper saint will never satisfy our heart. Jesus said, *"Lo, I am with you until the end of the age...."* In prison, Paul said, *".... the Lord stood by me."* Christ saith, *"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."* Is Jesus standing by you and fighting for you? See, as Christians, our real test isn't our faith. Faith is a gift from God to begin with. No, our real test is in our service, sacrifice, and using our spiritual gifts while we wait for Him to return and take us home. One of these days Christ is going to call us out of this world to be with Him forever.

How much are you involved with this world, friends? How much have you invested here that would break your heart to leave behind tonight? I have a feeling that if Christ came right now and took us away, there are some who would weep all the way to Heaven. Some people seem to be doing so well down here with luxury and gadgetry, going to Heaven likely seems to be a backwards move. Well, Song of Solomon presents a wedding that is as applicable to our twenty-first century as it was in the days before Jesus' earthly ministry. It happens to be *YOUR* wedding, too, by the way. Salvation is the same type of love affair as holy matrimony. They are literally the same thing.

Now, we're going to learn what marriage is *really* all about in this profound section of Scripture. Today, love and marriage have been reduced to a computer compatibility algorithm; a program by which everyone lies about who they are and what they do – or don't do – and the only real attraction is a ten year old picture that looks nothing like that person – if it is even them in the first place. We have come up with an informal marriage contract with rules and regulations – according to our own small-minded standard of right and wrong – and if those rules are broken, then we feel as if divorce is permissible and imminent. It's easy to say our lives should mirror God's love — but how can we really do that when we live in this

modern society? Contemporary humanity has the lowest view of male and female the earth has ever known. Well, there is a true and real love; a genuine respect for each other — but only God can provide it. Without Christ as the dynamic, there is no marriage. Without genuine love, a marriage won't amount to anything except a nightmare. A man is to see in his woman a person he can worship. Yes, I mean exactly that, friends. Worship is respect paid to worth. The oldest marriage vows in the church have the man say to the woman, “.... *I, with my body, worship you.*”

A man should see everything that is possibly worthwhile in this world in a bride. Sadly, that's not how man views marriage today. His entire satisfaction should be found in her — but that's rarely the case; because that would mean loving her so much that he is willing to die for her. The Word of God is most expressive; and God is absolutely clear on this point. Until we can get back to this viewpoint of marriage, then you can make all the rules and contractual obligations for marriage you want to, but they will not satisfy or solve marital problems. We're talking about a love that only God Almighty can put in our hearts. Song of Solomon presents Christ as the bridegroom and reveals exactly what He thinks about her — the church; you — and me. Christ sees no spot in those who are to be His bride. He sees His church as a lily among the thorns. So, as our Spiritual Safari continues in this expedition through the entire Word of God, we're going to hear Him speak, and the bride answer back. I hope you can continue with us ~

* _ * _ * _ * _ * _ *