

Synthetic Bible Studies

Containing an outline study of every book of the Bible
with suggestions for Sermons, Addresses and
Bible Expositions

By

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LESSON TWENTY-TWO

SONG OF SOLOMON

Of all the books of the Old Testament I feel myself least competent to speak of the Canticles, or the Song of Solomon. I am not ignorant of what others have thought and written about the book, but personally I have not grasped its contents as in the case of some of the other books. Under the circumstances, therefore, the best I can do just now is to give in substance what other teachers have said. I think Angus' *Bible Hand Book* is a good guide, and I will draw chiefly from that source.

Internal evidence seems to confirm the voice of antiquity that Solomon wrote the book (I Kings 4:32).

As it is called the Song of Songs, the title carries with it the idea that it is the best of all his songs. Moreover, although it is not quoted in the New Testament, yet it always formed part of the Old as far as we have record, and was in the canon of sacred Scripture which JESUS and His apostles recognized as such.

When it was written is not known, but its imagery seems to be drawn from the marriage of Solomon either with Pharaoh's daughter or some native of Palestine, espoused some years later, of noble birth, though inferior to her husband. For the first idea compare such places as I Kings 3:1; 7:8; 9:24, with chapters 1:9, and 6:12 of the Song, and for the second, look at the language of the Song, 2:1, 7:1; 1:6.

There are two characters who speak and act throughout, Shelomoh, a masculine name, meaning "peaceful," and Shulamith, a feminine form of the same name, (1:6; 3:11; 6:13; 8:12).

There is also a chorus of virgins, daughters of Jerusalem, (2:7; 3:5; 5:8, 9).

Towards the close two brothers of Shulamith appear, (8:8, 9; 1:6).

As in most of the Hebrew poetry, and indeed all ancient poems, there are no breaks to indicate change of scene or speakers, which is to be determined partly by the sense, but chiefly by the use of the feminine and masculine pronouns.

The whole book, as our author and many others believe, is to be regarded as a description of wedded love; and yet, of course, it has a higher aim.

It is noticeable that there is a sudden change from the singular to the plural pronoun in 1:4, which seems to indicate that Shulamith must be taken collectively; a fact which, put together with some other things gives credence to the idea both of Jews and Christians that the story should be applied to the history of GOD's chosen people and their relation to Him.

Every reader of the Bible knows that the union of the Lord with Israel. and that of CHRIST and His church are represented under the same figure of marriage. See such passages as Psalm 45; Isaiah 54:5,6; Jeremiah 2:2; Hosea 2:14-23; Matthew 9:15; John 3:29; Ephesians 5:23-27, etc.

Outline of the Book

The following is Angus' outline of the Song of Songs:

1. Shulamith speaks, 1:2-6; then in dialogue with Shelomoh; Shul., 1:7; Shel., 1:8-11; Shul., 1:12-14; Shel., 1:15; Shul., 1:16-2:1; Shel., 2:2; Shul., 2:3.
2. Shulamith now rests, sleeps and dreams (Shelomoh addressing the daughters of Jerusalem, and charging them not to wake her, 2:7; 3:5); 2:4-6, 8-3:4.
3. The daughters of Jerusalem see a nuptial procession approaching (3:6-11).
4. Dialogue between Shelomoh and Shulamith. Shelomoh speaks (4:1-16) (as far as "flow out"), Shul., 4:16; Shel., 5:1.
5. A night scene: Shulamith seeking for Shelomoh; meets and converses with the daughters of Jerusalem; Shul., 5:2-8; daughters of Jerusalem, 5:5-9; Shul., 5:10-16; daughters of Jerusalem, 6:1; Shul., 6:2, 3.
6. Morning scene; Shelomoh visits his garden early, and meets Shulamith; Shel., 6:4-10; Shul., 6:11, 12; the dialogue continuing to 8:8.
7. The brothers of Shulamith are introduced and speak: 8:8, 9; Shulamith answers them, 8:10-12; Shelomoh speaks, 8:13; and Shulamith answers, closing the scene, (8:14).

~ end of Lesson 22 ~
