

# Through the Bible Book by Book

## Old Testament

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### Song of Solomon

**Title:** The name of this book in the Hebrew Bible is "Song of Songs," so called evidently from the fact that of all Solomon's songs (I Kings 4:32) it is the greatest.

**Theme:** The Song of Solomon is a love story, glorifying pure, natural affection, and pointing to the simplicity and sanctity of marriage. That this story has a typical significance may be inferred from the fact that, under the figure of the marriage relation are described the Lord's love for Israel (Hosea chapters 1-3; Isaiah 62:4), and CHRIST's love for the church (Matthew 9:15; II Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:25; Revelation 19:7; 21:2). So then the following theme suggests itself: The love of the Lord for His people as typified by the love of the bride and bridegroom.

Note. In reading this book the student should remember that he is reading an oriental poem, and that Orientals are given to a plainness of speech in the most intimate of matters - plainness of speech foreign and sometimes distasteful to most Occidentals. Delicate and intimate as the language is in many places, it should be noted that there is nothing here that would offend the most modest Oriental. Dr. Campbell Morgan says, "In the first place this was undoubtedly an earthly love-song, but it was very pure and very beautiful. There are men and women who would find indecencies in heaven, - if they ever got there, - but they would take them in their own corrupt souls."

To those who live lives of simple purity, these songs are full of beauty as they utter the language of human love; and finally, in spiritual experience, they express the relation of such as have been wooed by GOD in CHRIST, and thus have come to love and know Him."

**Author:** Solomon. (1:1).

#### CONTENTS:

Of all the books of the Old Testament, the Song of Solomon is perhaps the most difficult of interpretation and analysis. In this study we shall limit ourselves to giving a brief outline of the story contained in the song, and of the dialogues between Solomon and his bride. For a devotional study of the Song of Solomon, we would recommend a small inexpensive book by Hudson Taylor, "*Union and Communion*."

"The story about which this idyll is woven seems to be this: King Solomon visits his vineyard in Mount Lebanon. He comes by surprise upon a beautiful Shulamite maiden. She flees, and he visits her, disguised as a shepherd, and wins her. Soon he comes to claim her as queen. They proceed to the royal palace. Here the poem begins and relates the story of love." - Dr. Haas.

### **I. The Bride in Solomon's Gardens** (Chaps. 1:2 to 2:7)

1. The bride asks for a pledge of love, and praises the bridegroom (1:1-4).
2. She makes a plea to the daughters of Jerusalem not to despise her humble origin, and asks where she may find the bridegroom. The maidens in chorus reply (1:5-8).
3. Then follows an affectionate conversation between Solomon and his bride (1:9 to 2:7). Solomon speaks, 1:9-11; the bride, 1:12-14; Solomon, 1:15; bride, 1:16 to 2:1; Solomon, 2:2; the bride, 2:3-7.

### **II. The Bride's Memories** (Chaps. 2:8 to 3:5)

1. She recalls her lover's visit one spring (2:8-17).
2. She recalls a dream concerning him (3:1-5).

### **III. The Betrothal** (Chaps. 3:6 to 5:1)

1. The inhabitants of Jerusalem describe the approach of the king and the bride (3:6-11).
2. Then follows a conversation. Solomon, 4:1-5; bride, 4:6; Solomon, 4:7-16a; bride, 4:16b; Solomon, 5:1.

### **IV. At the Palace** (Chaps. 5:2 to 8:4)

1. The bride relates a dream she had concerning Solomon. She dreamed that he had departed, and that in her search for him, she had been harshly treated by the watchmen of the city. In her dream she enquired of the daughters of Jerusalem concerning him, and described his beauty (5:2 to 6:3).
2. Solomon enters and praises her (6:4-9).
3. Dialogue between chorus of maidens and bride; chorus, 6:10; bride, 6:11, 12; chorus and bride alternately, 6:13; chorus, 7:1-5.
4. Solomon enters and praises the bride. 7:6-9.
5. The bride invites her beloved to visit her home (7:10 to 8:4).

### **V. The Bride's Home** (Chap. 8:5-14)

The inhabitants of the country speak, 8:5a; Solomon, 8:5b; the bride, 8:6, 7; her brothers, 8:8,9; the bride, 8:10, 12; Solomon, 8:13; the bride, 8:14.

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