

Song of Songs

Objectives

To understand the spiritual meaning of this great book

References

- ✠ Song of Songs by HH Pope Shenouda the 3rd
- ✠ Song of Songs by Father Youssef Asaad
- ✠ Song of Songs (St. George church of Alexandria)
- ✠ Many years with People's Questions by HH Pope Shenouda, the 3rd

Scriptural Verse

"I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine. He feeds his flock among the lilies"
(Songs 6:3)

Lesson Outline

Author

- ✠ King Solomon wrote this poetic book.
- ✠ He spoke three thousand proverbs, and his songs were one thousand and five (1 Kings 4:32).

Overview

It is a dialogue of love between the Lord Jesus Christ (the Groom) and the church or the human soul (the bride). It is the story of the church / human soul who lives with God and experiences His love. She knows how to be lovely even when she is sinful. She never fails to love Him despite her weaknesses. Her love to Him is built on a strong and deep faith in His love which is why she dares to call Him "My Beloved".

Format

This book is written as a symbolic love story between two lovers. She describes her memory, confesses her weakness and proclaims His sweetness and glory while He sees her beautiful and perfect.

Note:

This Book also resembles the Book of Revelation in describing the intimate relationship between God and the Church either here on earth or in heaven. Both Books have the same ending - a plea from the bride to her groom to come quickly.

- ✠ "Make haste, my beloved" (Songs 8:14)
- ✠ "Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22: 20)

This Book is not to be mistaken for a true love story between two lovers

The verses of love between the lovers cannot describe a romantic relationship because certain descriptions cannot suit a bride or a groom but can very well suit the Lord, the church and the human soul. Some examples:

1. "O my love, you are as beautiful as Tirzah, lovely as Jerusalem, awesome as an army with banners." Songs 6: 4
This description is more fitting of the church which has the ability to terrify Satan and his kingdom.
2. "I am dark, but lovely, O daughters of Jerusalem, like the tents of Kedar, like the curtains of Solomon" Songs 1: 5.
This description is of the Church of the Gentiles which confesses being dark as the curtains of Kedar (Kedar is the son of Ishmael and his tents were dark due to smoke from cooking inside and sun outside) due to her separation from God.
3. "Because of the fragrance of your good ointments, your name is ointment poured forth; therefore the virgins love you." Songs 1: 3

The Virgins are all the souls who have not given themselves over to the world but dedicated themselves to God.

Why is it a love Story?

From the beginning God wanted the relationship between Him and us to be a love relationship.

- ✠ "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength." Deuteronomy 6: 5
- ✠ "You shall love the Lord ...and You shall love your neighbor On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.." Matthew 22: 36- 40
- ✠ "God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him." 1 John 4:16
- ✠ "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her ... that He might present her to Himself a glorious church... Without blemish ... This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." Ephesians5: 25- 27 & 32

Note:

The love of the Lord Christ to His church is really a great mystery. God accepted to compare His love to us to the love of a groom to his bride because it is the only love we know that involves all the senses, it is a strong and different kind of love than the parental love or the love of relatives and friends.

We all know the love of the groom the Lord Jesus Christ to His bride the church/human Soul. In this book, the bride also shows great love to the groom. Why does she love Him that much?

1. His love is her joy and delight
 - ✠ "Your love is better than wine." Songs 1: 2
 - ✠ "I sat down in his shade with great delight" Songs 2: 3

- ✠ All those who lived with God enjoyed His love. David found it better to sit on the steps of the house of the Lord than to dwell in a palace. St Paul said that nothing can separate him from the love of the Lord and that even to suffer for Him is a privilege
2. There is no one like Him
 - ✠ “My beloved is white and ruddy, Chief among ten thousand.” Songs 5: 10
 - ✠ Even among ten thousand she finds Him very distinguished. He is distinguished by His white and red color. He is distinguished by His wonderful work, by His love, by His humbleness, by everything.
 - ✠ David says in Psalm 86: 8 “Among the gods there is none like you, O Lord; nor are there any works like your works”
 3. He is handsome and pleasant (Songs 1: 16)
 - ✠ “His mouth is most sweet, yes, he is altogether lovely” Songs 5: 16
 - ✠ One of the fathers said: Holiness is the exchanging of a desire with another. It is to replace the love of the world with the love of God, to find your rest and your pleasure in Him and to say with David the king: “Whom have I in heaven but You? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides You” Psalm 73: 25
 4. He is her shepherd
 - ✠ “Tell me, O you whom I love where you feed your flock” Songs 1: 7
 - ✠ “ I am my beloved’s and my beloved is mine; He feeds among the Lilies” Songs 6:3
 - ✠ Psalm 23: 1& 2
 5. He is strong
 - ✠ Who is this coming up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? Songs 8:5
 - ✠ The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe Proverbs 18: 10
 - ✠ God is strong you can lean on Him without hesitation. In His care the soul feels a super power. He is mighty but in favor of us to protect us.

Conclusion

The Song of Songs is a beautiful poetic book that describes the wonderful relationship between us and our Lord. Once we taste the beauty of the Lord we will be able to experience the happiness that the bride in this book expresses.

Activities/Discussion Points

1. Break out into groups and discuss various excerpts from this book.