

# The Book of Song of Solomon

## Introduction

The Song of Solomon, as this book is called in the King James Version, is the third book of which Solomon is the author, preceded by Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. In the Hebrew Bible it occupies a different place. It is found there in the section called "Kethubim," the Hagiographic division. It belongs to the so-called "Megilloth" or rolls and is placed first among them--Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes and Esther. In the synagogal service it has been appointed to be read on the eighth day of Passover, the feast of redemption. This is suggestive, for, as we shall see, this Song is a love-song, expressing the love of Messiah for His people.

A better title for this book is "the Song of Songs." It corresponds to the Hebrew beginning of the book in Hebrew--Shir Ha-shirim. It is called "Song of Songs" in the Septuagint (Asma Asmaton) and also in the Vulgate (Canticum Canticorum). This title expresses most fully the spiritual meaning of this little book.

Needless to say that this beautiful Song has suffered much from the hands of the men who claim to be critics of the Word of God. We do not care to repeat the charges which have been made against this Song as being sensuous, if not immoral, in its suggestions. Such is the verdict of the natural man, who, by such criticism, reveals the state of his own heart.

The Solomonic authorship has likewise been attacked, and it is claimed that the book was written long after Solomon's day. Wellhausen, the German critic, declares that "the most original of the Hagiographic writings is the song of Solomon; the names and things which occur in it assign it clearly to the second half of the Persian period. We see from it that the law had not yet forbidden love-poetry to the Jews, and had not made the enjoyment of life impossible." Nearly all the other critics have placed the date after the exile. The objections against the composition of the book in Solomon's period are mostly on account of a few words, which critics think were unknown to the people during Solomon's reign. What we have stated on these philological objections in the introduction to Ecclesiastes holds good in the case of this book also. While Wellhausen and others have denied the Solomonic authorship and date, other scholars have declared that the song itself has all the marks of Solomon. Among these marks Professor Delitzsch mentions "the familiarity with nature, the fulness and extent of the book's geography and artistic references, the mention of so many exotic plants and foreign things, particularly of such objects of luxury as the Egyptian horses."

Neither the Jews nor the early church doubted the authenticity of Solomon's Song. It formed part of the Hebrew Canonical Scriptures from very ancient times, and there is no valid reason why it should be rejected or the Solomonic authorship be denied.

Another question which has been raised is as to the unity of the contents. Inasmuch as different voices are heard speaking in this little book, and it being composed of dialogues as well as monologues, some critics claim that the book is not a unity, but rather a collection of love poems, similar to those written by Burns and Heine. One critic (Budde) endeavors to prove that the book is a collection of folk-songs sung at weddings, which some unknown hand collected. But the unity of the book in tone and its language disposes of this theory, nor is there any ground to call it, as some have done, a Hebrew drama.

## The Story of the Song

It is the story of the love of King Solomon for Shulamith, the bride, who by turns is a vinedresser, shepherdess, midnight inquirer, etc., while the king is described in all his beauty, as the beloved one. In this way the Jewish interpreters as well as the vast majority of Christian commentators have

understood the story of the Song.

But there is also a different explanation of the story, the so-called "literalist." It was first proposed by an expositor by name of Jacobi in 1771, and was later adopted by Herder, Umbreit, the critic Ewald, and the French infidel Renan and others. In England it found an able defender in Dr. Ginsburg. Briefly stated this literalist explanation is as follows:

There lived somewhere at Shulem a widowed mother, several sons and a beautiful daughter. They were farmers. One day while the damsel tended the flocks, while resting under an apple tree, she met a beautiful young shepherd to whom she was later espoused. One morning this youth invited her to accompany him into the field, but as her brothers were anxious for her reputation they sent her away to take care of the vineyards. She then requested him to meet her in the evening, and, as he did not keep his appointment, and fearing that he might have had an accident, she searched for him and found him. One day she met accidentally King Solomon, who happened to be on a summer visit to that neighborhood. Enraptured by the beauty of the damsel, the king took her to his royal tent, and there, assisted by court ladies, endeavored with alluring flatteries and promises, to gain her affections, but without effect. Released from the presence of the king, the girl sought her beloved shepherd. But the king took her with him to Jerusalem in great pomp, in the hope of dazzling her with his splendor; but neither did this prevail; for even while there she told her beloved shepherd, who had followed her to the city that she was anxious to be with him.

The shepherd, on hearing this, praised her constancy, and such a mutual demonstration of their love took place, that several of the court ladies were greatly affected by it. The king was still determined to win her affections and watched for a favorable opportunity, and with flatteries and allurements, surpassing all former ones, tried to obtain his purpose. He promised to give her the highest rank, if she would comply with his wishes, but she refused, declaring that her affections were pledged to another. The king then was obliged to dismiss her, and the shepherdess with her beloved returned to her native place.

There are at least three reasons why this view must be rejected. In the first place, it makes havoc with the order of the book. The text must be cut up, and a veritable "grasshopper-method," jumping from one place and chapter to another, must be employed in order to put such a story together. In the second place, it is contrary to all the Jewish and Christian interpretation of the past; they all must be branded as erroneous if this literalist explanation is the true one. And finally it makes King Solomon, who as King of Peace, and in the glory of his kingdom, is a type of Christ, the Messiah, a vile tempter, who tries his utmost to seduce the shepherdess.

We therefore believe that it is the story of Solomon's love for his bride, the Shulamith, as believed by the vast majority of Jewish and Christian expositors.

### **The Allegorical Meaning**

That this song has a deep, mystical and spiritual meaning has always been recognized. The Jews have looked upon it in this light and some orthodox Jews forbade it to be read till a person had reached the thirtieth year. It has been called by them "the Holy of Holies." Jewish interpretation has rightly explained this love-song as typifying the love of Jehovah for his people Israel and His union with His people. We believe this is the correct interpretation, only it is not Israel, the whole nation, but rather the godly remnant. The Song of Songs shows forth the affections which the King-Messiah creates in the heart of this remnant at the time of the re-establishment of their relationship with Himself, when once more they enter into that blessed relationship, which has been severed for such a long time. Here, then, is a blessed revelation in a mystical form of Christ's devoted love for the remnant of His people and Jerusalem, and the heart response which comes from that remnant.

### **The Larger Application**

This interpretation does not exclude another and larger application to Christ and the Church.

Such an application is fully warranted by the teaching of the New Testament. While the Messiah loves the remnant of His people Israel, whose love and heart devotion He will animate in the future, when they are taken back into His favor, He also loved the Church and gave Himself for it. Both Israel's union with the Messiah, the Lord God, and the greater union of the Church and Christ, are typified in both Testaments by the marriage relation. The following passages will demonstrate this fully: Isa. 54:5, 52:5; Jer. 3:1; Ezek. 16:23 and many others; in the New Testament: Matt. 9:15, 22:2, 25:1; John 3:29; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:23, 32; Rev. 19:7, 22:17.

The teaching of some that only Israel is the bride of Christ must be rejected. It is true that the Church, as the body and bride of Christ, is unrevealed in the Old Testament, but it is anticipated, and we have a perfect right therefore to apply the precious statements in this song of love to ourselves.

This has been done in the past. The history of the application to the Church is of much interest. We touch upon it briefly.

Hippolytus (225 A.D.) was the first commentator of Solomon's Song and he states that the primary application is to Israel and next to the Church. Origen developed this application to the Church and her union with Christ more fully. After him the identification of the bridegroom and the bride with Christ and the Church became the predominant one. Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa and Jerome followed more or less the interpretation and application made by Origen. Jerome's view was that the bride and the bridegroom were Christ and the Church, or Christ and the soul. Augustine agreed with him also, but restricted the meaning to the union of Christ and the Church.

Theodore of Mopsuestia, a great expositor of the Word of God, gave the Song a more literal explanation. Chrysostom, Theodoret and nearly all the great exegetes of the early Church teach that the Song typifies the love of Christ for His Church.

In the Middle Ages the mystical school made great use of this portion of the Word of God. Thus Bernard of Clairvaux preached not less than eighty sermons on the first two chapters. To mention all the expositors of the Middle Ages and more recent ones would fill pages.

The critical school has broken away completely from the spiritual application to Christ and the Church. "The admixture of this carnal imagery," says Dr. Harper in the Cambridge Bible, "With the more spiritual passion of the bride and her lover has grown repulsive to us as it could not be formerly."

### **The Division of the Song**

Different divisions of this song have been made; none appears to be satisfactory. We believe the best way to study the Song of Songs is to take it up verse by verse without attempting a detailed division and analysis.

### **Annotations**

### **SONG OF SONGS**

In studying this Love Song the primary application to the remnant of Israel must not be lost sight of. It is to be kept in mind that we are on Jewish ground and that the perfect assurance of that perfect love, which we know as members of His body, is lacking. The deeper spiritual applications which the individual believer may make in heart communion with the Lord, must be left to each person. In a certain sense we are here in the "Holiest" of all, for love-communion with our Saviour-Lord is the most precious thing. It produces that worship and adoration which is so acceptable in His sight, the worship in the Spirit. Our annotations will therefore be more of a general nature, but, we trust, under God, helpful to a deeper study of the book.

### **CHAPTER 1**

The bride speaks first. She is occupied with the Beloved One. What He is, and all His kindness and loveliness have produced in her heart the love and admiration she expresses. The first rapturous outburst is, "Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth; for Thy love is better than wine." She does not mention the Beloved by name; for her there is but One, beautifully illustrated by Mary when she came to the sepulchre and seeking Him said to the one she supposed to be the gardener, "If thou has borne Him hence." The kiss expresseth reconciliation (Luke 15:20), it is the token of peace, and above all, of affection. Thus the remnant of Israel will long for Him, for reconciliation, peace, and His affections. But true believers, the members of Himself, know in fullest assurance their reconciliation in Him; that He is peace and enjoy His affection. His love is better than wine. Wine is the symbol of earthly joys and pleasures; far better than anything under the sun is His love.

In verse 3 His worthy Name is described as "ointment poured forth." It is because of all He is and all He gives. Well do we sing, "How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." The passage reminds us of Mark 14:3. For all who know Him His Name is the Name above every other name. But while we know His Name in all its preciousness, His own people Israel, the godly among them, will know Him likewise in the future. The virgins mentioned here, loving Him, are those separated ones in Israel who refuse to fall in line with the antichristian delusion of the great tribulation. We find them mentioned in Rev. 14:1-5.

The bride desires to be drawn by Him and knows that if He draws all will run after Him. Then the King appears and brings her into His chambers, typifying full communion of love. Joy and rejoicing are the results. Verses 5-6 are the bride's confession. She confesseth she is black, which does not denote at all, as some have taken it, that she was an Ethiopian. It means sunburnt, as she declares, "Look not upon me because I am black, because the sun has looked upon me." She passed through the scorching heat of affliction and sorrow, yet she is comely (Ezek. 16:10); through His mercy and kindness not forsaken. The daughters of Jerusalem the bride addresses are those of the nation, who do not yet share her knowledge of the Beloved, the Messiah. Israel had been called to be "the keeper of the vineyards," that is, the keeper of nations and to be a blessing to them; but she had failed; not even her own vineyard did she keep. It is her confession to Him whom she now knows and longs for.

And she wants to belong to Him only, and be with Him where He is. She seeks shelter in the place where He makes His flock to rest at noon; for her soul loves Him. For her He is become the shepherd of Israel, who has found His sheep (Isa. 49:10; Ezek. 34:13-15). And if the remnant of Israel thus longs for Him and His precious fellowship, how much more should we, His heavenly people, love Him and be attached to Him only! Then He speaks in verse 8. Because of her confession He calls her the fairest among women. She is to go forth "by the footsteps of the flock." What He says of her, what she is, He Himself has produced in her and for her. The horses imply energy and swiftness (same as in the New Testament); the ornaments the gifts of His love (Ezek. 16:11). Interesting is verse 11, "We will make beadrows of gold with studs of silver." The Jews believe that both God and the Messiah are Kings. "We" denotes the Father and the Son; the beadrows of gold and studs of silver denote the joy and the nuptial crown for the bride (Esther 2:17; Ezek. 16:12). Thus Messiah will crown His faithful ones in Israel, while His church will be crowned in glory.

Then the bride speaks again of her affections in the rest of the chapter. While the bridegroom calls her fair, she in return cries out, Behold, Thou art fair, my Beloved, yea, pleasant.

## CHAPTER 2

The voice of the bride is heard again in the opening verses of this chapter; some understand it as meaning the Messiah speaking of Himself as the Rose and the Lily of the valley, but it is rather the bride. She is in her purity and separation like the lily among thorns, among the apostates of the nation during the end of the Jewish age. Of the Messiah she speaks as the apple-tree. She has no

fruit of herself, but rests under Him as the blessed fruit-bearer. Under Him she finds her shelter, while He protects her and she can enjoy His fruit under His shadow. There she, and all true believers have rapture and rest and enjoy His fruit, which is sweet to the taste. The Bridegroom has brought her to His own place. She is in the house of wine (the better translation, instead of banqueting house). Unlimited joy and gladness are now her portion; the banner of love is over her; while she revels in His love, and He, too, rests in His love, for all His gracious purposes towards the godly remnant of Israel are accomplished. The spiritual application to the church is easily made. In verse 7 she charges the daughters of Jerusalem not to disturb in any way the love-relations she enjoys, till He please, till the rest of the daughters of Jerusalem, too, shall know Him, according to His own purpose. It is interesting to note that several times the phrase, "I charge you daughters of Jerusalem" is found in this song. Each time it is followed by His coming. Here we read, "The voice of my Beloved! Behold He cometh!" It is His coming as Messiah revealing Himself to the bride. In chapter 3:6 He comes as King Messiah; His Name is revealed as Solomon, the Prince of Peace. Then once more the same phrase, "I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, is found in chapter 8:4-5, and here the bride is coming out of the wilderness with Him, leaning on her Beloved, not the supposed shepherd lover, but King Messiah.

The rest of this chapter bears witness to the correctness of the Jewish interpretation. All shows that it refers to the time when the remnant of Israel knows Him and is enjoying the blessings and the glories promised unto them. The winter is past, the time of death and coldness; the rain is over, spring-time is at hand. The morning without clouds is breaking! Flowers appear; the birds begin their song; the cooing of the bird of love, the turtle dove, is heard. Furthermore, the fig tree putteth forth her green figs (the national fruit-bearing of the once cursed fig tree); the vines, too, begin to give the tender grapes. Who cannot see in the imagery of all these statements that millennial times are about to begin! Then there is His call to her, "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." Be wholly for Me! He calls her "My dove." She is in the clefts of the rock, and He Himself is that rock, where His people are hidden away and find shelter. He longs for her and she longs for Him. His eyes are upon her, His beloved bride, and her eyes upon Him. Joyfully the bride cries out, as the assurance of His great love stirs her soul, "My Beloved is mine and I am His." Yet the fullness has not yet come. It is all still in blessed anticipation of the time of fullest manifestation--"until the day dawn and the shadows flee away." "Turn my Beloved," she calls to Him, "Be Thou like a gazelle or a young hart," swift in Thy coming, upon the mountains of Bether, the mountains of spices and frankincense, when the time of worship begins.

### CHAPTER 3

The scene changes. The bride is now alone and in the darkness of the night. She is seeking her Beloved and is unable to find Him. Her heart is filled with the same love she exhibits in the previous chapter, but the joy and comfort she lacks. We see her walking through the streets and in the broadways, looking for Him whom her soul loveth; she sought Him but found Him not; Then the watchmen of the night which pass through the street came across the seeking one and she eagerly inquires, "Have ye seen Him whom my soul loveth?" They have no answer for her, probably they knew not what she meant. No sooner had she passed them by, when she found Him. All this is prophetic, as it reveals the soul exercise of that godly remnant of Israel during the night of tribulation. There is no need of giving a meaning to every detail.

As already stated, His coming described in verses 6-11 is His coming as King Messiah. In the last verse we have the key. "Go forth, daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon, with the crown wherewith His mother crowned Him, in the day of His espousals, and in the day of the gladness of His heart," His mother is Israel. Israel gave birth to Him according to the flesh, as it is also seen in the great vision of the Apocalypse (Rev. 12). In that day when He comes up from the wilderness, like pillars of smoke, in the Shekinah cloud, when He comes the mighty victor, yet the true Solomon, the Prince of Peace, who speaks peace to the nations, His mother Israel will crown Him Lord of all.

## CHAPTER 4

The King, the Bridegroom speaks of her, who is "perfect through His comeliness put upon thee" (Ezek. 16:14). He tells out all she is in His sight and loving estimation. He has called her from the lions' den, from the mountains of the leopards (verse 8); she has passed through the fires of persecution and tribulation and now His heart expresses His delight in her. There are eight descriptions of her beauty. He tells her, "Behold thou art fair, my love, behold thou art fair." And after the description of the beauty He beholds in her, whom He has brought out of the wilderness and out of the lions' den, He says, "Thou art all fair, MY love; and there is no spot in thee." He assures her of His delight in her. It is all His own workmanship; she has not made herself fair without a spot. His grace and power have accomplished it for her. And what is true of the bride-remnant of Israel is also true of the Church. In Him we have our completeness and perfection; His own comeliness and glory is bestowed upon us. The happy day is coming for Him and for us when He will present the church to Himself, "a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:27).

In verses 12-15 we have a beautiful description of the garden, the land of Israel in which His beloved is now planted once more. Here are found the precious fruits, as well as the spikenard and all the trees of frankincense. There is the fountain, the well of living waters; this as well as the north wind and the south wind, typifies the Holy Spirit. And she invites Him to come to His garden. "Let my Beloved come into His garden and eat its precious fruit."

## CHAPTER 5

The Bridegroom answers the invitation extended to Him when the bride had said, "Let my Beloved come into His (not her) garden." He says, "I am come into My garden, My sister, My spouse." She is both "sister and spouse." When He speaks of her as sister, He owns the national relationship. In Matthew 12:46-50 He disowned that relationship because they rejected the offer of the kingdom, but now it is reestablished and the godly portion of Israel becomes the spouse. In His garden, the product of His love and His death, He finds now His enjoyment, His joy and His satisfaction. He invites others to come and partake. "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, beloved ones."

But there is no response here from the side of the bride. She exhibits slothfulness. He is seen now standing outside; His head is filled with the night dew and standing at the door He knocks (See Rev. 3:20). The comment on this difficult portion of the Song, as given in the Synopsis of the Bible, is especially helpful.

"Alas, what hearts are ours! We turn again to ourselves as soon as we are comforted by the testimony of the Lord's love. The Bridegroom's sensitive and righteous heart acts upon her word, and He retires from one who does not listen to His voice. She arises to learn of her own folly, and the just delicacy, with respect to herself, of His ways whom she had slighted. How often, alas! do we act in the same manner with regard to the voice of His Spirit and the manifestations of His love! What a dreadful loss, but, through grace, what a lesson! She is chastised by those who watch for the peace of Jerusalem. What had she to do in the streets at night, she whom the Bridegroom had sought at home? And now her very affection exposes her to reproof, the expression of its energy placing her in a position that proved she had slighted her Beloved. If we are not in the peaceful enjoyment of the love of Christ, where He meets with us in grace, the very strength of our affection and our self-condemnation causes us to exhibit this affection out of its place, in a certain sense, and brings us into connection with those who judge our position. It was right discipline for a watchman to use towards a woman who was wandering without, whatever might be the cause. Testimonies of her affection to her Beloved at home, the love of her own heart, do not concern the watchman. Affection may exist; but He has to do with order and a becoming walk. Nevertheless her affection was real and led to an ardent expression of all that her Beloved was to her--an expression addressed to others, who ought to understand her; not to the watchman, but to her own

companions. But if sloth had prevented her receiving Him in the visitations of His love, her heart, now disciplined by the watchman and turned again to her Beloved, overflowing with His praises, being taught of God, knows where to find Him."

The words recorded in verse 9 are no doubt addressed to the bride by the rest of the nation. How beautiful is her answer! She speaks of Him as "the chiefest among ten thousand." Here is symbolical language. White tells us of His holiness; ruddy reminds us of His love, so fully expressed in the shedding of His blood. His cheeks were once smitten; Grace is in His lips; the belly speaks of His bowels of mercy; His eyes are the eyes of love; the gold is the symbol of His Deity; the hair is the symbol of His perfect humanity. After giving ten features of His beauty, she has exhausted herself and in ecstasy cries out, as thousands upon thousands in every generation have done, "Yea, He is altogether lovely ... this is my friend." Blessed are all who can repeat these words and who can say, "This is my friend."

## **CHAPTER 6**

The description of Her Beloved was addressed to the daughters of Jerusalem. Their answer is recorded in the beginning of this chapter. Her outburst of praise, her glowing testimony of Him, created the desire in the hearts of others to become His. "Whither is thy Beloved gone? ... We will seek Him with thee." The bride answers and then in words of precious assurance she declares, "I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine."

Then the Bridegroom speaks in loving praise of her. He speaks of that which she is for Him. He owns that remnant as "the only one" of her mother (the nation Israel). Nor is she alone His dove, but she is fair as the moon and clear as the sun; glory covers her and she is like an army with banners displayed.

He went down into the garden, to look at the verdure of the valley, to see if His vine budded, and suddenly, before He is aware, His love makes Him like Ammi-nadib, which means "the chariots of my willing people" (Psalm 110:3). He leads them forth in triumph and in glory.

## **CHAPTER 7**

The rapturous outburst in praise of the bride, the saved and glorified remnant of Israel, with which this chapter begins, must not be put into the lips of the bridegroom, the Messiah-King. It is the praise of the daughters of Jerusalem, who now recognize her as the beloved of the King. Her highest confession is found in this chapter. He begins to speak of her with verse 6, "How fair and pleasant art thou, my love, in delights." She answers His expressions of love. "I am my Beloved's, and His desire is toward me." This is the highest--to know she possesseth Him and that His heart's delight is in her. This, too, is our happy knowledge. We know He belongs to us; we are Christ's and in us He has, and finds, His delight. Blessed is the scene with which this chapter closes. He calls on her to go forth with Him into the fields, to go to the vineyards, to see the budding and blossoming, the blooming pomegranates, the choice fruits new and old, all laid up for the Beloved.

This takes us into millennial times. It will be the time of fruit bearing and glory for Him in the fields, in the vineyards, among all the nations of the world. "For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all nations" (Isa. 61:11). "Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven. Yea, the LORD shall give that which is good and our land shall yield her increase" (Psa. 85:11, 12).

Israel restored in fellowship with the King will share in the fullest sense these coming blessings and glory.

## CHAPTER 8

The last chapter of the Song is a review of the whole. There is unquestionably a recapitulation of the entire book. The bride's desires are once more given to be loved and caressed by Him. For the last time we have the charge to the daughters of Jerusalem and once more the coming is announced. "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness leaning upon her Beloved?" She returns with Him. The Beloved is mentioned seven times in the book. There is the voice of the Beloved (2:8); the call of the Beloved (2:10); claiming the Beloved (2:16); opening the Beloved (5:5); praising the Beloved (5:9-16); leaning on the Beloved (8:5) and longing for the Beloved (8:14).

Here again the apple tree is found (2:3). It is Christ. There the Lord awoke her and manifested Himself to her. From Christ alone she derives her life. Thus only can Israel give birth to this remnant, which, at Jerusalem, shall become the earthly bride of the great King, which desires to be, and shall be, as a seal upon His heart, according to the power of a love that is strong as death, that spares nothing and yields nothing. The little sister of verse 8 has been interpreted as meaning Ephraim, the ten tribes, who will then also come into remembrance and blessing. Solomon's vineyards at Baal-hamon (master of multitudes) points clearly to the converted nations in the millennium and then His own vineyard. Israel is mentioned in verse 12.

The Song of Songs ends with a prayer, "Haste my Beloved, and be Thou like a gazelle or a young hart upon the mountain of spices." Thus the remnant of Israel will plead in the future, that He may come and be manifested in His glory; but the bride of Christ, the Church, prays "Even so, Come Lord Jesus."

In conclusion, we mention the attempt made by some, to trace in this Song of Songs the entire history of the Church. We give the divisions made for those who desire to examine this interpretation. John the Baptist's Ministry is claimed to be covered by chapters 2:8--3:5. The Ministry of the Lord Jesus on earth is traced in chapters 3:6--5:1. From the agony in Gethsemane to the conversion of Samaria is thought to be in chapters 5:2--8:5. Then chapter 8:5-14 is said to be a picture of the times when the Gentiles were first called to the revelation and the coming of the Lord.

We think the safest interpretation is that which holds closely to the Jewish meaning, as we have done in these brief annotations