

Song of Solomon Conclusion

07/12/2015

Hymns: 50 Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross 48 Jesus Loves Me 51 Love Lifted Me
54 Oh, How I Love Jesus

Psalm 22:1-22; 19

You may recall when we started this series on the Song of Solomon, we began with a little “Name That Tune” quiz. I thought it might be appropriate to end our study of that book with something similar. What we'll do is give you the first word of a very famous saying and see if you can get it. If not, we'll try adding the second word and so on. Okay, here's that first word:

Ask ... Can anybody complete that? Okay, we'll try another.

Ask not That's right.
what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country.
And who said it? President John F. Kennedy, in his 1961 inaugural address

The form of this expression is called a *chiasm*. We're going to study that today as it relates to the Song of Solomon. Let's take a look at how that quote was arranged.

*Ask not what **your country** can do for **you**.*
*Ask what **you** can do for **your country**.*

Notice the reversal. The first sentence says *your country* followed by *you*.
The second says *you* followed by *your country*.

Here's another one.
America needs **God** more than **God** needs **America**.

Can anybody guess who said that one?
He was one of our more recent great presidents and was godly enough to make a statement like that.
President Ronald Regan given at Prayer Breakfast in Dallas, Texas August 23, 1984

Notice the form again **America God** reverses to **God America**.

So as we listen to politicians, we can now be aware of one of their literary devices. It needs to be short and to the point. If it's good enough, it may stick.

Regan also added:
If we ever forget that we are one nation under God, then we will be a nation gone under.
While it's not quite the same pattern, it still may qualify as what we're calling a chiasm.

So let's get the full definition of this term taken from GotQuestions.org – a good Bible answers website:

Chiasm

A chiasm (also called a chiasmus) is a literary device in which a sequence of ideas is presented

and then repeated in reverse order. The result is a “mirror” effect as the ideas are “reflected” back in a passage. Each idea is connected to its “reflection” by a repeated word, often in a related form. The term chiasm comes from the Greek letter chi, which looks like our letter X.

Some chiasms are quite simple. The common saying “When the going gets tough, the tough get going” is chiasmic. The words **going** and **tough** are repeated, in reverse order, in the second half of the sentence. ... Other chiasms are more complex, even spanning entire poems.

...

[That's what **we'll see** demonstrated today with our study of the Song of Solomon.]

Many passages in the Bible exhibit chiasmic structure. For example, Jesus' words in:

[27] And he said unto them, The **sabbath** was made for **man**, and not **man** for the **sabbath**: (Mark 2:27)

are in the form of a chiasm: ... , the words **Sabbath** and **man** are repeated in reverse order. ...

The Song of Solomon was divided into eight chapters. Chapters 1-4 represent the first half and chapters 5-8 are the second half. The climax of the story occurs at the boundary between the end of chapter 4 and the beginning of chapter 5.

We actually started this study at the end of January in anticipation of Valentine's Day. For the benefit of those of you who missed some of those studies or just need a refresher, here's a broad outline **as I see it** of this song--a love story of Solomon and his bride the most beautiful of women. It has the following six scenes:

1. Bride waits for groom – sharing her dreams and longings
2. Groom arrives and takes his bride home
3. Couple unites and consummates their marriage
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4. Bride drifts into an elaborate dream
5. Groom and bride ride off together into the sunset
6. Bride speaks of the power of love and her commitment to it.

You may note even from this very broad outline the repetition and mirror image of ideas present in this song. The word *deja-vous* comes to mind. As you read through this song you recall that you have seen that before.

What I did was go through this song and match **like passages** from the first half to **like passages** in the second. The level of correlation is striking. While my assignments may not match exactly those of the next person, many of the same passages will likely be correlated by people doing this exercise.

While I covered them all, we don't have time for them all today. Instead, we'll cover a large representative sample. We will start at the beginning and end and work our way to the center that crossing point of the X. Let's get started:

1:2	The woman says, “Let him kiss me, with the kisses of his mouth...”	8:1; 7:9	I would kiss thee [publicly] and not be despised.
1:3-4	She dreams of making love with him	8:12, 14	Gives herself, described as a vineyard, totally to him and invites him to make love with her.
1:5-10	She speaks of her skin darkened by the sun . She says she is shunned by her brothers. But Solomon says that she is the fairest.	6:4-10	He describes her as undefiled and the choice one of her mother. Then she is described as fair as the moon and bright as the sun .
*1:6	She describes her appearance as her vineyard .	8:12	Calls her self as my vineyard and gives it to him.
1:10-11	Speaks of decorating her with gold and silver .	8:8-9	Describes decorating her with silver jewelry (if she be a wall)
*1:1-6-17	She describes their beautiful future home together	8:6	Love is greater than palaces and possessions .
*2:4	He announced his love for her .	8:6a	She asks him to place a seal upon his body to proclaim his love for her .
2:3	She describes her beloved as an apple tree in the midst of a forest.	8:5b	She awoke him under the apple tree .
3:4	She refers to the bedroom where her mother conceived her.	8:5b	Refers to the apple tree under which he was born
2:5a	Strengthen me with raisins, refresh me with apples	8:2	Envisions giving refreshing spiced wine to her beloved
*2:5b	She is lovesick	8:6b-7	Love is enduring and precious
2:6	His left hand is under her head and his right hand embraces her.	8:3	Same
2:7 3:5	“stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please”	8:4	Same
*2:8, 14	Each speaks of the voice of their lover	8:13	Solomon asks to hear her voice .
*2:9, 17	She describes him as virile	8:14	Same
*1:1-2-14	She envisions a passionate embrace	7:1-8	He speaks of her delightful embrace
2:10-13	He says, Come away...come away for it is springtime	7:11-13	She says, Come away into the vineyards, the fields, and villages and make love.
2:15	He says, Guard our vineyard from sly intruders.	8:10, 12	She says, I am a wall with towers for protection . I preserved it for and give it to

	“Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil our vines: for our vines have tender grapes.”		you, Solomon.
2:16	My beloved is mine and I am his. He feedeth among the lilies. [group with below 3:6]	6:3 7:10	Same
*2:1 -2	She is compared to a lilly .	6:2	The lilly is in his garden (referring to her)
3:6	Who is this who comes out of the wilderness?	8:5	Identical
3:11	Solomon's mother crowned him and approved of both him and his betrothed wife.	6:9	The beautiful woman is her mother's only daughter and favorite child.
3:6- 11	Solomon arrived in a royal lintel to pick up his bride and take her home.	6:12- 13	Solomon's royal chariot came and whisked the couple away
3:1- 4	Dream: couldn't find Solomon. Finally in her dream she did find him in her hometown.	5:2- 7;6:1	Dream: couldn't find Solomon. Searched as a stranger in Jerusalem. Was beaten and robbed. She finally awoke and found him next to her.
1:15; 4:1- 15	She is fair and without flaw . He is madly in love with her.	5:10- 16	He is the best, altogether lovely, her beloved and her friend.
4:9	She has raished his heart	5:8	She is lovesick for him.
4:16	She invites him to make love to her.	5:1	He responds indicating that they have united physically .

With that, we can see that this chiasitic structure permeates the Song of Songs. Hopefully, this will help you better understand, the Song of Solomon, the Bible, and literature in general.

Application

You may have heard Saint Andrew's cross in the news this past week. Andrew, Simon Peter's brother and one of the 12 disciples, is the patron saint of Scotland. The Scottish national flag honors him with the image of Saint Andrew's cross. Tradition has it that he was crucified differently than Jesus at his request because he didn't feel worthy of dying like his Lord. His cross was shaped like an X rather than a T.

Many flags of the Confederate States included that cross as well. That is the flag that has been in the news. It flew over the capitol building in South Carolina for fifty-five years before being taken down just last Friday because it is **now** considered a symbol of **hate** by some in this country. It's interesting that in the name of higher moral ground, symbols of: our history, states rights, individual liberty, and our godly heritage are being systematically demonized and removed.

Anyway, this cross is the same cross we have been examining today. Could it be that through the literary pattern of chiasm that this great love story the Song of Songs could also be pointing to the cross

of Jesus Christ? After all, **His story** is the greatest love story of **history**.

John 3:16 begins, “For God **so loved** the world that He gave his only begotten Son...”

II Corinthians 5:14 says “For the **love of Christ** constraineth us...” and goes on to say He gave His life for us [there's that cross again] that we might in return give our lives for Him.

What's your sign? Has anyone ever asked you that? A wise and godly pastor once told me this:

If anyone ever asks you “What's your sign? You tell them it's the sign of the **cross**.” We need to be confident in our faith and unrelenting in our allegiance to the **cross** of Christ.

Benediction

Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. (Revelation 1:5b-6)

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