

#18. THE SONG OF SONGS

1. **The Song of Solomon is a love poem, celebrating the sexual love between husband and wife.** It is also known as *The Song of Solomon* or *Canticles*. It describes the unquenchable nature of true love and celebrates the longing that marital love engenders. It is a reminder that sexual love between husband and wife is good. It is God's idea, and should be embraced with fidelity and joy. In the language of Scripture, we see such appellations as *Holy of Holies* and *King of Kings*, which denote the exalted, superior status of the thing described. *Song of Songs* is used in the same way and gives proper recognition to God's gift of marital bliss.

2. **The author is Solomon.** He is mentioned by name seven times in the Song (1:1, 5; 3:7, 9, 11; 8:11, 12).

3. **The date is uncertain, but could have been written anytime during Solomon's reign (971-931BC).** It is probable that it was written very early in Solomon's reign, reflecting the passion of Ecclesiastes 9:9. With time, Solomon would take 700 wives and 300 concubines. Such specific, focused passion, as is found in the Song of Songs, would likely be forfeited by that point in Solomon's life.

4. **Key Chapters**
 - **Chapters 1 and 2** - deal with the wedding day.
 - **Chapters 2 and 3** - are memories of courtship.
 - **Chapters 3, 4, and 5** - may be reminiscences of the betrothal period.
 - **Chapters 6 and 7** - are descriptions of the Bride's beauty.
 - **Chapters 7 and 8** - deal with the Bride's passion for her loved one.

5. **Key Verses**
 - **Song of Songs 6:3 NASB** "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine."
 - **Song of Songs 8:7 NASB** "Many waters cannot quench love, nor will rivers overflow it; If a man were to give all the riches of his house for love, it would be utterly despised."

6. Key People

- **Solomon** - the king who appears as *The Beloved*.
- **The Shulamite Maiden** - probably an unknown girl from Shunem, a small village near Jezebel in Galilee. She was probably Solomon's first wife, and we may see reference to her in Ecclesiastes 9:9.
- **The Daughters of Jerusalem** - (1:4, 8, 11; 3:6-11; 5:9; 6:1, 10, etc.) may be a reference to the domestic servants in the House of Solomon (3:10).
- **The brother of the Bride also speaks** - (8:8, 9).

8. **Key Places** - the poem seems to take place in both the king's royal palace (3:6-7:13) and in or near the garden of the woman (6:13; Ecclesiastes 2:4-7).

9. Key Theme

- ***The Blessing and Passion of Marital Sex*** - Many well-meaning writers have tried to make this an allegory of Christ and the Church. While some logical parallels can be observed, this book belongs to a specific literature group called *Hebrew Poetry* or *Wisdom Literature*. Its purpose is to educate young couples in regard to marital bliss.

Worth noting

- The Song is written in the style of ancient Near Eastern lyric poetry. It is a love song showing young married couples the path of passion and romance. It is not an allegorical love song of Christ to His church. The Hebrews were very earthy, practical people, and there is no need to spiritualize topics that may cause discomfort for some. With that being said, there is an underlying spiritual component - the assumption that true love is founded upon God's Covenant.
- It is clearly the writing of a couple who adore each other and have found great satisfaction in marital union,
- This type of poetry and song were often used in wedding banquets.

When reading Song of Solomon:

- Remember this book is an endorsement of monogamous, heterosexual marriage. The Song brings to mind the command of Hebrews 13:4 - "Let the marital bed be kept honorable."
- Unlike many books in our modern culture, the emphasis is not on sexual techniques, but rather on the joy of embarking together on a lifetime of discovery and happiness.
- There are over three dozen terms of endearment used in the Song.