

a synopsis of SONG OF SOLOMON

The summer between my junior and senior year of college I wrote letters every week to young lady who had caught my attention the spring before. She let her mother read my letters—for a while. Evidently the tone of my writing had changed. (At that time she had little interest in me and our future together, and she didn't want her mother to think anything differently. She did eventually marry me!) I'm not sure what I said that she didn't want her mother to read, but I can tell you this: it was *nothing* compared to the conversation between Solomon and his bride in his Song of Songs (v.1). In Solomon's mind, this was probably the choicest of the 1005 songs that he wrote (1 Kings 4:32).

The Life Application Bible calls the Song of Solomon “an explicit statement on sex” and says that “the physical and emotional union of male and female should be a holy means of celebrating love, producing children, and experiencing pleasure”—all protected by the commitment of marriage. The Song of Solomon celebrates the passionate love that is “strong as death” (8:6).

For that reason the Song has been one of the most misunderstood books in all Scripture. Many try to “sanitize” the book, making it more appropriate for inclusion in the Bible The Jews read it at Passover as an allegory referring to the Exodus where God took Israel to Himself as His bride.

Christians have quite commonly regarded it as a Pre-nuptial song of Christ and the church (Ephesians 5:25-27, 31-33).

While there may be truth in some of these preconceived notions, it seems to me that the best way to read the Song of Solomon is as a love song that celebrates the ecstatic love between a man and woman that God intended from the beginning (Genesis 2:23-25). Marriage can deliver on its promise of a lifetime love!

John MacArthur outlines the Song of Solomon like this:

- I. Introduction (1:1)
- II. The Courtship (1:2—3:5)
 - A. The Lovers' Remembrances (1:2—2:7)
 - B. The Lovers' Expression of Reciprocal Love (2:8—3:5)
- III. The Wedding (3:6—5:1)
 - A. The Kingly Bridegroom (3:6-11)
 - B. The Wedding and First Night Together (4:1—5:1a)
 - C. God's Approval (5:1b)
- IV. The Marriage (5:2—8:14)
 - A. The First Major Disagreement (5:2—6:3)
 - B. The Restoration (6:4—8:4)
 - C. Growing in Grace (8:5-14)

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