

## Song of Solomon Bible Study Notes

### Author

Jewish and Christian traditions hold to the view that King Solomon wrote the Song of Songs. First Kings 4:32 states that Solomon wrote one thousand and five songs. Song of Songs means the most excellent song. Internal evidence points to Solomon’s authorship (1:1). Solomon is identified as the author in the opening of the book and later identifies himself as the bridegroom (3:6-11). He is also the king of Israel (1:4, 12; 7:5).

### Interpretation

The Song of Solomon has been interpreted many ways. Some in church history have interpreted it as allegory, a drama, a collection of Syrian wedding songs, and a compilation of songs highlighting human love. Those who view the book as allegory seek to find hidden spiritual meanings in the words of the Song, as it relates to God’s love for Israel. Those who consider the Song as a type, see Solomon as a type of Christ and the Beloved (the Shulamite woman) as the Church. However, if the book is interpreted using a literal hermeneutic, it seems best to view the book as a lyrical poem with two main characters. The Song aims to teach the sanctity and beauty of marriage as God intended it.<sup>1</sup>

<b>Speakers in the Song of Songs</b>				
<b>The beloved</b>	<b>Friends of the beloved</b>	<b>Solomon (the lover)</b>	<b>God</b>	<b>The beloved’s brothers</b>
1:2-4a	1:4b			
1:4c-7	1:8*			
		1:9-10		
	1:11*			
1:12-14		1:15		
1:16-2:1*		2:2		
2:3-13		2:14		
2:15-3:11*		4:1-15		
4:16		5:1a-d	5:1e*	
5:2-8	5:9			
5:10-16	6:1			
6:2-3		6:4-9		
	6:10*			
6:11-12*	6:13a	6:13b-7:9a		
7:9b-8:4	8:5a			
8:5b-7				8:8-9
8:10-12		8:13		
8:14				

<sup>1</sup> Norman L. Geisler, *A Popular Survey of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1977), 221.  
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## Date and Place of Origin

Solomon wrote the book between 971 and 931 B.C., the year that Solomon died.<sup>2</sup> The book was most likely written in Jerusalem, the capital of Israel and Solomon's home. During this time of Solomon's rule, Israel was able to extend its borders and influence farther than at any other time in Israel's history. As a result, the nation enjoyed tremendous blessing, peace, and prosperity.

## Historical Background

The book was written during Solomon's rule over Israel. Fruchtenbaum states that the Song of Solomon is a lyrical poem revealing the following narrative summary:

In the story behind the song, Solomon owns a vineyard in Lower Galilee near the town of Shunem. One day, while visiting his vineyards, he meets a farm girl as she is taking care of her own family vineyard. The family consists of a mother, a younger sister, and at least two older brothers. The father is presumed to be dead for he is never mentioned. She is found working in the vineyards, because her brothers became angry with her and forced her to work in the family vineyard under the scorching hot sun, that in the course of time gave her a dark and swarthy complexion. Solomon falls in love with her and begins courting her and visiting her in her country home. She finally agrees to marry him. Shortly before the wedding, Solomon sends a wedding procession to bring the bride to his palace in Jerusalem. After her arrival, the wedding ceremony takes place, followed by the wedding banquet and then the wedding night, which is erotically described. Later the problems of sexual adjustment arise. One night Shulamit rejects Solomon's sexual advances, and so the king leaves. Shulamit repents and begins to search for him. After finding him, they have a loving reunion. After some time in the palace, Shulamit begins to yearn for a visit to her home, a request to which Solomon agrees. They make a visit to her home where they renew their love covenant, and the book closes with the enjoyment of sexual love in their mountain home. This is the historical background in chronological sequence.<sup>3</sup>

## Purpose Statement

The Song of Solomon was written to praise human love in the marriage relationship. Shulamit in Hebrew is merely the feminine form of the masculine name of Solomon. She is most likely called the Shulammitte because she came from an unidentified place called Shulem. Many scholars consider Shulammitte to be synonymous with Shunammite ("person from Shunem"). Shunem was a village in the territory of Issachar, north of Jezreel and south of Mount Gilboa. Other scholars link Shulem with Salem, believing Solomon's bride was from Jerusalem. One theory on the identity of the Shulammitte is that she is the daughter of Egypt's king, of African descent, whom Solomon married (1 Kings 3:1). Evidence for this view is based upon the woman commenting on her dark or black skin (1:5). However, there is no internal evidence supporting this theory in the Song of Solomon. What may be discerned is that Shulamit is to Solomon what Pauline is to Paul. Thus the story behind the song is the story of Solomon and Shulamit or "Mr. and Mrs. Solomon."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 220.

<sup>3</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Biblical Lovemaking: A Study of the Song of Solomon* (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries Press, 1983), 4–5.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 5.

## Outline

- I. The Introduction (1:1)
  - A. The quality of the song (1:1a)
  - B. The author of the book (1:1b)
  
- II. The Courtship (1:2-3:5)
  - A. The bride expresses her appreciation to the king (1:2-8)
  - B. The king and his bride exchange praises of love (1:9-2:6)
  - C. The bride's song of chastity (2:7-3:5)
  
- III. The Wedding (3:6-5:1)
  - A. The wedding procession (3:6-11)
  - B. The wedding night (4:1-5:1)
  
- IV. The Maturation of Marriage (5:2-8:3)
  - A. The resolution of marital conflict (5:2-6:13)
  - B. The loving marriage continues and matures (7:1-8:3)
  
- V. Conclusion: The Proper Progression of Love (8:4-14)

## Finding Mr. Right Song of Solomon 1:1-8

The text mentions two characteristics of attractiveness that can be found in every Christian.

### I. There was Physical Attraction (Outward)

A. She found him physically appealing. (v.2-3a)

### II. Spiritual Attraction (Inward)

A. She found his character as equally appealing as his physical attributes (v.3b)

a. Requires biblical discernment- What kind of character is to be valued? (Prov. 2:6-8, 10:9, 12:4)

- “According to Scripture, virtually everything that truly qualifies a person for leadership is directly related to character. It’s not about style, status, personal charisma, clout, or worldly measurements of success. Integrity is the main issue that makes the difference between a good leader and a bad one.”<sup>5</sup>

b. Requires observation of the person’s attitudes and actions- How does a person respond to the issues of life? Consider observable responses:

1. Behavior in stressful conditions- How does this person act when pressed upon? (anger, withdraws, vindictive, seek revenge)
2. One’s Reputation- How do other Christians view this person?
3. Obedient to authority- How do people respond to those in authority over them?

B. She found her value in her obedience (v.5-6)

- “We have other examples of hardworking women in the Scripture.” Ruth was a gleaner, Rachael was a shepherd, Zipporah was a shepherd and the woman in Proverbs 31 “strengthens her arms.” I tell young men routinely, “Marry a girl with some grit in her!”<sup>6</sup>

C. She had a genuine desire to be with the man she loved (v.7-8)

- “A more literal rendering might be, “whom my soul (my inner being) loves.” Here the young woman mentally addresses Solomon, her husband. She pictures him as the shepherd of Israel. one who veils herself: Solomon, as king, was busy with affairs of state. The young bride does not want to veil herself as a prostitute would in order to get his attention, nor does she want to be left alone. She desires to be his true companion.”<sup>7</sup>
- “The palace women, in response to her question, appear to say that she must just go and hunt for him—follow the sheep and you will find the shepherd. The main thrust of the whole paragraph speaks of both character and desire. She is a totally lovely person in that she is not afraid of hard work even if it spoils her body. And her one desire is for her royal lover.”<sup>8</sup>

### Points to Ponder:

1. Don’t assume the world’s standards in beauty. Outward beauty is fleeting but godly character endures.
2. There is nothing wrong with singleness or marriage but if you want to be married then be a person worthy of marriage.
3. Do not consider marrying a person who is not a Christian. Opposing worldviews will ultimately cause conflict.

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<sup>5</sup> Pamela Williams quoting John MacArthur, *Bible Verses About Integrity: 20 Important Scripture Quotes*. Accessed February 24, 2018. <https://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/bible-verses-about-integrity-20-important-scripture-quotes/#ixzz582VYv2zc>.

<sup>6</sup> Tommy Nelson, *The Book of Romance: What Solomon Says About Love, Sex, and Intimacy* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 14.

<sup>7</sup> Earl D. Radmacher, Ronald Barclay Allen, and H. Wayne House, *Nelson’s New Illustrated Bible Commentary* (Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1999), 795.

<sup>8</sup> John A. Balchin, “The Song of Songs,” in *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition*, ed. D. A. Carson et al., 4th ed. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 621.

## Marital Love God's Way Song of Solomon 1:9-2:7

Marriage is a God ordained institution. For it to be successful, it must be lived out according to God's prescriptions. Some of these actions and prescriptions are observed in Solomon and Shulamite's relationship.

- I. Praising Communication (1:9-17)
  - A. Solomon affirms her physical beauty [Job 39:19-25] (v.9-10).
    - "In ancient Egypt...mares were never used to draw chariots. Stallions, hitched in pairs, were the standard motive-power of both war-chariots and other royal vehicles...These factors suggest that the comparison here underscores the girl's attractiveness. A mare loose among the royal stallions would create intense excitement. This is the ultimate in sex appeal!"<sup>9</sup>
    - "Since the royal horses were well ornamented, verses 10–11 continue to describe the ornamental beauty of Shulamite in comparison to the royal steeds."<sup>10</sup>
  - B. Solomon affirms his desire to accentuate her beauty. (v.11,15)
  - C. Shulamite affirms Solomon's presence by comparing him to spices [John 12:1-5] (v.12-14, 16-17)
  
- II. Physical Communion (2:1- 6)
  - A. Shulamite is made to feel:
    - a. Protected- She rested in the shade of [Solomon's] the apple tree.
    - b. Loved- personal knowledge through physical intimacy with her husband.
    - c. Recognized- Everyone knew she was Solomon's wife in public because of his behavior around her. She was a his lily among thorns (among other women).
  
- III. Prudent Caution (2:7)
  - A. Sexual intimacy has a time and place but not before one is married.
    - The admonition is "do not allow your natural, youthful sexual desires to be quickly inflamed. Do not rush into a sexual encounter like an innocent gazelle is flushed from a thicket. Do not awaken sexual passions before they can be rightly expressed within the marriage relationship."<sup>11</sup>
  - B. Any sexual relationship outside the confines of marriage (man and woman) is sin.[Matt. 19:9]
    - a. Sexual immorality – *porneia*
      1. Any sexual behavior or act committed outside of a marriage relationship between a husband (male) and wife (female), who are married to each other.
      2. Sexual immorality also includes any sexual behavior or act before one is married.

### Points to Ponder:

1. Marriage is made to enjoy. Engage in activities together that enhance your relationship.
2. Be sensitive to your spouse's insecurities. Nothing will make your spouse feel greater than when they know you are their first priority.
3. If single, avoid situations that will excite sexual passions. Marriage is the only arena for lawful sexual engagement.

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<sup>9</sup> G. Lloyd Carr, *Song of Solomon: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 19, *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1984), 90.

<sup>10</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Biblical Lovemaking: A Study of the Song of Solomon* (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries Press, 1983), 16.

<sup>11</sup> Tommy Nelson, *The Book of Romance: What Solomon Says About Love, Sex, and Intimacy* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 39.  
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## Fireproofing Your Marriage Song of Solomon 2:8-17

To fireproof your relationships you must do the following:

- I. Pursue Similar Interests (v.8-9)
  - A. Both have a desire to be together (v.8)
  - B. Both have a desire to interact with each other (v.9)
    - a. Solomon wasted no time in getting to Shulamite's home.
    - b. Solomon was stricken with Shulamite's beauty, all he could do was stare.
      - "As Solomon arrives at her house, he stops to stand behind the wall. He does not barge in uninvited, as though she were his by right, but waits for her... [T]he focus of this verse on Solomon's looking in through the window from the outside is an inversion of a familiar O.T. motif of a woman looking out the window for the return of a warrior."<sup>12</sup>
- II. Practice Shared Interactions (v.10-14)
  - A. Solomon invites Shulamite on a Spring time date.
    - Solomon wanted this woman. He wanted to be alone with her in the "secret places" finding out everything he could about her. Their courtship brought them to the point of knowing that they were fully meant for each other and their mutual desire was to be husband and wife.<sup>13</sup>
    - "All too often we take for granted the ones we love. Perhaps we get caught up in the day-to-day process of living and working, and we neglect to share our true inner feelings. "She knows I love her," we tell ourselves. But we never tell our spouse."<sup>14</sup>
- III. Purge Separating Intrusions (v.15-17)
  - A. Learn to identify and remove intrusions that separate intimacy.
    - a. The foxes in the vineyard are reflective of obstacles that can separate marital objectives.
    - b. Solomon's shepherding duty was the obstacle that separated him from Shulamite. Other "little foxes" could include:
      1. Conflict- Having selfish opinions and desires. [James 4:1-3]
      2. Conversation- How we talk to each other or communicate. [Js 3:5-10; Eph. 4:29; Matt. 12:36-37]
      3. Callous- an attitude of indifference about a situation or person. [Matt. 13:15; Prov. 24: 30-34]

Points to Ponder:

1. Intimacy thrives while engaging in mutual activities. Plan to do something with your spouse this week. (Drive, Workout, Movie, Dinner)
2. Keep a pulse on your relationship by discussing it with your spouse. Determine the weak areas and make them stronger.
3. Remove obstacles "little foxes" together. You build relationships together, you must maintain them together.

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<sup>12</sup> A. Boyd Luter, *Song of Songs: Evangelical Exegetical Commentary*, ed. H. Wayne House and William Barrick (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013), So 2:9.

<sup>13</sup> Tommy Nelson, *The Book of Romance: What Solomon Says About Love, Sex, and Intimacy* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 67.

<sup>14</sup> David C. Egner *Song of Solomon 2 Commentary*, Accessed March 3, 2018.

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## Love Separated and Reunited Song of Solomon 3:1-11

- I. Love is separated by time and distance (3:1-5)
- A. Shulamite's separation causes anxiety, expressed in a dream. (1-5)
- a. She wants something she does not possess (Solomon's presence).
  - b. She seeks Solomon in the city streets at night.
  - c. She makes inquiries to the city's watchmen (possibly representative of her conscience).
  - d. When she finds him, she brings him to a secure place.
  - e. This is apparently a recurring dream.
    - "In verse one the Hebrew word translated "night" is found in the plural number, meaning that the dream came for a number of nights. She would be sleeping when a painful longing would seize her. Solomon had appeared to have forsaken her and withdrawn from her, and she was unable to recover him."<sup>15</sup>
- B. Scripture's insight on dreams:
- a. Biblically dreams fall into two categories: (1) Ordinary dreams, such as all people have during sleep. They can be frightening (Job 7:14); are transitory (Job 20:8; Isa. 29:7-8); and have natural causes (Ecc. 5:2). (2) God also used revelatory dreams or special revelation. This mode of communication conveys information, which could also be given when a person is awake...Both dreams and visions...were frequent modes of divine communication to the prophets of Israel.<sup>16</sup>
    - When one's waking life is characterized by keeping "sound wisdom and discretion" (doing God's will as revealed in His Word), then sleep will be "sweet," "pleasant."<sup>17</sup> (Ps 4:6-8; Prov. 6:20-22, 3:21-24)
    - "Sleep is the gift of God; and not a man would close his eyes, did not God put his fingers on his eyelids—did not the Almighty send a soft and balmy influence over his frame which lulled his thoughts into calm, making him enter into that blissful state of rest which we call sleep."<sup>18</sup>
  - b. Scripture gives comment to dreams of anxiety and nightmares
    - "The attitude or emotional tone of a dream may give evidence of a troubled conscience. "For in a dream, that which is natural to us or that which belongs to our very constitution becomes manifest, and much that is kept down during our waking hours by the power of our will...comes to light during sleep; for fancy then stirs up the ground of our nature and brings it forth in dreams, and thus exposes us to ourselves in such a way as oftentimes, when we waken, to make us ashamed and alarmed."<sup>19</sup> (Job 33:15-18; Matt 27:19)
    - "Under terrors of conscience, men have little rest by night, for the grim thoughts of the day dog them to their chambers and haunt their dreams, or else they lie awake in a cold sweat of dread. God's hand is very helpful when it uplifts, but it is awful when it presses down."<sup>20</sup>
    - "One application is obvious. While within the marriage bond sexual passion must not be aroused unless it can also be satisfied lest it lead to frustration, outside the marriage bond it can lead to fornication. Any kind of activity that tends to arouse the passions must be avoided by the courting couple. Sex is a beautiful thing and the wedding should mark the climax of courtship and the commencement of sexual life together. It should not be spoiled by allowing the passion to reach the stage of the point of no return."<sup>21</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Biblical Lovemaking: A Study of the Song of Solomon* (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries Press, 1983), 27.

<sup>16</sup> R. Laird Harris, *Theological Workbook of the Old Testament*, Vol. I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 290-91.

<sup>17</sup> Rich Thomson, *The Heart of Man and Mental Disorders* (Alief, TX: Biblical Counseling Ministries, 2004), 682.

<sup>18</sup> Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Exploring the Mind and Heart of the Prince of Preachers: Five-Thousand Illustrations Selected from the Works of Charles Haddon Spurgeon* (Oswego, IL: Fox River Press, 2005), 451."

<sup>19</sup> C.F. Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 6, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1973), 93.

<sup>20</sup> Charles Spurgeon, *Treasury of David Vol. I*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 82.

<sup>21</sup> Fruchtenbaum, *Biblical Lovemaking*, 27.

- II. Love is Reunited by closeness and intimacy (3:6-11)
- A. Happiness is revealed in the wedding processional and ceremony.
  - B. The wedding ceremony has finally taken place.
    - a. Ancient Jewish Wedding Ritual:
      1. The Betrothal—the time when the arrangement for the marriage was contracted.
      2. The Wedding Procession—this was accomplished when the groom went to the house of the bride to fetch her (e.g. Matthew 25:1, Psalm 45) or sent a wedding party to fetch her to his home in a festal procession, and he would go forth to meet her.
      3. The Wedding Ceremony—in which the two are recognized to be husband and wife in a legal sense.
      4. The Wedding Feast or Banquet—this follows the wedding ceremony and is found in the second reflection.
      5. The Wedding Night—in which the married couple become one in the flesh through the first sexual union.
        - "The entire section has been building to this climax, the announcement of a wedding. This is what brings joy to the heart of the king, rather than wealth or power or anything else. So significant is this happiness that the term *simchah* [gladness] occurs only here in the whole of the Song, despite its frequency elsewhere in the Bible (some 95 appearances) and the joyous tone of the Song. Contrary to some commentators, the Song does not portray sex as the great and final goal in order to experience true joy. Nor does it suggest that mutual admiration of the lovers, their physical bodies and sensuality, is the source of joy. Rather, the Song directly associates the joy of the heart with the final commitment of marriage. It is only within this commitment that all the joys of the male and female lovers come together...For the lover, the object of his or her love is one who exceeds everyone and everything else. We gaze upon the object of our love in desire, admiration, and ultimately joy because we want to do so, because we see there the fulfillment of all that we long for. In the Song it is the male and female lovers, the bridegroom and bride. For interpreters throughout history, it has been God and his people, and for Christians, Christ and the church."<sup>22</sup>

Points to Ponder:

1. As a believer, having a sense of peace is dependent on fellowship with God. Walk by means of the Spirit and you will not live out fleshly desires.
2. When one does not have peace in his life, it is because there is either no relationship or broken fellowship with God.
3. Like Solomon, Christ will one day come for His bride, be ready.

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<sup>22</sup> Richard Hess, *Song of Songs* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2005), 123.  
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## The Honeymoon of the King Song of Solomon 4:1-16

- I. The Expectation of Love ( 4:1-6)
  - A. Solomon praises the physical beauty of his wife (v.1-5)
    - a. Eyes- Her eyes, even behind a veil, revealed her calm and innocence. (v.1a)
    - b. Hair- Her hair was long, black and flowing. (v.1b)
    - c. Teeth- Her teeth were white and full. (v.2)
    - d. Lips- Her lips are red and formed. (v.3a)
    - e. Temples- Her facial structure was reddish and inviting (v.3b)
    - f. Neck- Her neck was strong and revealed a character of nobility. (v.4)
      - “By comparing her neck to the tower Solomon was emphasizing not so much her neck’s symmetry and beauty as he was making a statement about her person. She had a queenly bearing and appearance as awesome and majestic as King David’s tower.”<sup>23</sup>
    - g. Breasts- The sight of her breasts incited Solomon’s desire for physical lovemaking.
  - B. Solomon pronounces his intentions to his wife (v.6)
    - “Most commentators agree that in verse six Solomon is preparing for the act of intercourse. Aroused by his bride’s beauty and the sensual aroma of her perfumes, he stated that he wanted to make love with his bride all night long. He identified the fragrances of myrrh and frankincense, which were expensive, imported perfumes. “Mountain of myrrh” and “hill of incense” may be references to his wife’s breasts or possibly to a more private area. As Solomon proceeded to initiate personal relations with her, he may also have been referring to her body in its entirety.”<sup>24</sup>
- II. The Enticement of Love (4:7-9)
  - A. Solomon wants his wife’s complete trust (v.7-8)
    - “On their wedding night, Solomon desires to be with a wife who is “there” in every sense of the word, including especially in the emotional realm. The ability for the newly married couple to experience true intimacy is greatly hindered if her emotional focus is still back home in Lebanon.”<sup>25</sup>
  - B. Solomon respects his wife as a sister and bride (v.9)
    - “As if he could not express his near and dear relationship to her by any one term, he employs the two. ‘My sister’—that is, one by birth, partaker of the same nature. ‘My spouse’—that is, one in love, joined by sacred ties of affection that never can be snapped. ‘My sister’ by birth, ‘My spouse’ by choice. ‘My sister’ in communion, ‘My spouse’ in absolute union with myself.”<sup>26</sup>
- III. The Engagement of Love (4:10-16)
  - A. Solomon speaks of physical intimacy with his bride. [Prov. 5:1-6] (v.10-11)
  - B. Solomon extols his bride’s purity by comparing her to a garden (v.12-15)
- IV. The Endorsement of Love (5:1)
  - A. Solomon declares that his love is complete. (5:1a)

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<sup>23</sup> Jack S. Deere, “Song of Songs,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1018.

<sup>24</sup> *Preacher’s Outline and Sermon Bible: Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon*.

<sup>25</sup> A. Boyd Luter, *Song of Songs: Evangelical Exegetical Commentary*, ed. H. Wayne House and William Barrick (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013), So 4:8.

<sup>26</sup> Charles Spurgeon, *Song of Solomon Commentary 4*, accessed April 14, 2018.

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- “The gathering of myrrh and spices refers to the fragrant and enriching result of their union. The eating of honey and honeycomb suggests the sweetness of their relationship. The drinking of wine and milk focuses on the satisfaction derived from the relationship and the complete fulfillment of their sexual thirsts and appetites.”<sup>27</sup>

B. God then places His stamp of approval on the young lover’s union. (5:1b)

- “Given the intimate and private nature of sexual union, it seems difficult to understand anyone but God speaking these words. This is the divine affirmation of sexual love between husband and wife as holy and beautiful.”<sup>28</sup>

Points to Ponder:

1. Sex is wonderful but its proper place is within the context of marriage. Avoid sexual immorality.
2. Sex in marriage should not be withheld from one’s partner, except for a certain time.
3. Take time to date and know your spouse. Building a marriage of contentment takes work.

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<sup>27</sup> Paige Patterson, Song of Solomon Commentary 5, accessed April 14, 2018. [http://www.preceptaustin.org/song\\_of\\_solomon\\_commentary\\_5](http://www.preceptaustin.org/song_of_solomon_commentary_5)

<sup>28</sup> John MacArthur, Song of Solomon 5, accessed April 14, 2018. [http://www.preceptaustin.org/song\\_of\\_solomon\\_commentary\\_5](http://www.preceptaustin.org/song_of_solomon_commentary_5)  
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## **The Honeymoon is Over: The Anatomy of Marital Conflict**

### **Song of Solomon 5:2-6:3**

- I. A conflict in marriage. (v.2-3)
  - A. The conflict occurs in a dream (v.2)
    - “This dream...is caused by a problem in the marriage relationship resulting from a lack of sexual adjustment. Shulamite dreams of refusing Solomon’s sexual advances and of losing and finding him again. This is only a dream and all the particulars need not have actually occurred, but a very real problem makes itself evident in the dream.”<sup>29</sup>
  - B. The conflict is sparked by her rejecting Solomon’s sexual advances (v.3)
  
- II. A change of mind. (v.4-6a)
  - A. His persistence changes her mind (v.4)
  - B. Her procrastination causes Solomon to leave (v.5-6a)
    - “When he got no response, Solomon walked away. He no doubt felt rejected.”<sup>30</sup>
    - a. Conflict:
      - 1. Conflict results when two people do not think alike.
      - 2. How one deals with conflict reflects the motivation of the heart. [Prov. 15:26, 23:9, 23:7a]
      - 3. One will either respond maturely [biblically] or in anger. Anger is a volitional response [thoughts, words, or deeds] caused by blocked goals, motivated by selfishness. [Lk. 15:25-32]
  
- III. A correcting of misconduct. (v.6b-6:3)
  - A. Shulamite searches for Solomon to make amends (v.6b)
  - B. Shulamite runs into the first of two encounters (v.7-8)
    - o Watchmen (v.7)
      - “When she set out to look for him she was found and beaten by the city watchmen. In her first dream the watchmen helped her look for her lover (3:3), but this time they mistook her for a criminal. In her dream this action by the watchmen may indicate that she was to blame for her separation from her lover. More importantly the dream symbolized the pain of separation brought about through her selfishness and the dream dramatized her need of the lover for her well-being and protection.”<sup>31</sup>
    - o Daughters of Jerusalem (v.8-9)
  - C. Shulamite describes Solomon’s characteristics. (v.10-16)
    - “This is an admiration song, the longest in the book sung by the woman in praise of the man. In responding to the Jerusalem girls, she rediscovers her love for him.”<sup>32</sup>
    - a. She did not complain to anyone about Solomon [Phil. 2:14; Eph 4:29]
      - “Where love abounds in a fellowship of Christians, many small offences, and even some large ones, are readily overlooked and forgotten. But where love is lacking, every word is viewed with suspicion, every action is liable to misunderstanding, and conflicts abound – to Satan’s perverse delight.”<sup>33</sup>
  - D. Shulamite receives help (6:1)

<sup>29</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Biblical Lovemaking: A Study of the Song of Solomon* (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries Press, 1983), 42-43.

<sup>30</sup> Tommy Nelson, *The Book of Romance: What Solomon Says About Love, Sex, and Intimacy* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 67.

<sup>31</sup> Jack S. Deere, “Song of Songs,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1021.

<sup>32</sup> Duane A. Garrett, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, vol. 14, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993), 413.

<sup>33</sup> Wayne Grudem, Song of Solomon 5. accessed April 21, 2018. [http://www.preceptaustin.org/song\\_of\\_solomon\\_commentary\\_5](http://www.preceptaustin.org/song_of_solomon_commentary_5)  
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- “Shulamite’s description of Solomon has aroused their interest, and they are now eager to help her in her search for him. Indeed this is no ordinary husband! They now see why Solomon is so special to her above all the others.”<sup>34</sup>

E. Shulamite recovers her lover (6:2-3)

- Love does not consider personal rights. “Telling our wives or husbands that we love them is not convincing if we continually get upset and angry at what they say and do. Telling our children that we love them is not convincing if we often yell at them for doing things that irritate us and interfere with our own plans. It does no good to protest, “I lose my temper a lot, but it’s all over in a few minutes.” So is a nuclear bomb. A great deal of damage can be done in a very short time. Temper is always destructive, and even small temper “bombs” can leave much hurt and damage, especially when they explode on a regular basis. Lovelessness is the cause of temper, and love is the only cure.”<sup>35</sup>

Points to Ponder:

1. Conflict is inevitable in marriage. Be quick to seek reconciliation.
2. Have an attitude of contrition if you sinned against your spouse. If not conflict will likely continue.
3. Seek to embrace, encourage, and elevate those traits in your spouse that first drew you to them.

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<sup>34</sup> Fruchtenbaum, *Biblical Lovemaking*, 47.

<sup>35</sup> John MacArthur, 1 Corinthians, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1984), 346.

## Conflict Resolution: How to Fight Fair Song of Solomon 6:4-13

- I. Focus on positive communication (v.4-9)
  - A. He extols her physical beauty (v.4)
  - B. He values her and forgives her (v.5-7)
    - “Solomon still treats her the same, showing his love for her is not based on her performance. He loves her now as much as he loved her on the wedding night. To him she is still as beautiful as a bride, and his love is still unchanged.” She is not treated in an ill manner based on her rejection of him.”<sup>36</sup>
  - C. He prizes her above all others [Matt. 19:3-8] (v.8-10)
    - “In a nutshell, Solomon was conveying to his bride that in his eyes, she was the only woman in the world who mattered to him. She had no equal...He was forgiving his bride even before she had a chance to ask for forgiveness.”<sup>37</sup>
- II. Forgive and restore communion (v.10-13)
  - A. Couples should waste no time in restoring their relationship (v.11-12)
    - “These verses tell the story of the couple’s reconciliation from the beloved’s point of view. She knew that he had “gone down to his garden”. So she went there to see if their love was still in bloom (v. 11). As a person would look in the spring for new growth, buds on grape vines, and pomegranate blossoms, so she looked for fresh evidence of their love. When she found him there his first words were words of praise (vv. 4–10), indicating that their love was in fact flourishing.”<sup>38</sup>
    - “The Hebrew can be translated in several ways. One translation which has much to commend it is this: “I became enraptured, for you placed me on the chariots of the people of the prince.” When the husband’s first words in the garden were words of praise, she “became enraptured”; she was beside herself with joy. He then placed her on his own chariot at the head of his entourage.”<sup>39</sup>
  - B. Couples should completely satisfy each other’s intimate desires (v.13)
    - “More likely [the dance] refers to an erotic dance, for this is exactly what follows in the context. The Daughters of Jerusalem call Shulamit back for they wish her to perform an erotic dance. It must be remembered that the chorus is imaginary in the [song], and they are not really actors in the play. The imaginary chorus is brought in to explain a situation, to give a warning, or to allow for a dialogue to take place or, as is the case here, to set the stage for what follows. The request by the Daughters of Jerusalem for an erotic dance by Shulamit is really Solomon’s request, for as the following verses make clear, Shulamit is indeed dancing erotically.”<sup>40</sup>

### Points to Ponder:

1. Never speak rashly when emotionally upset. How and when you say something is just as important as what you say [Prov.27:14-16, 21:9, 15:1]
2. Never say “Always” or “Never” when arguing [Prov. 29:22, Ecc. 7:9, James 4:17]

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<sup>36</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Biblical Lovemaking: A Study of the Song of Solomon* (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries Press, 1983), 51.

<sup>37</sup> Tommy Nelson, *The Book of Romance: What Solomon Says About Love, Sex, and Intimacy* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 146.

<sup>38</sup> Jack S. Deere, “Song of Songs,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1022.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Fruchtenbaum, *Biblical Lovemaking*, 51.

- The tendency in conflict is to push an argument to the extreme. Very few things in life ‘always’ or ‘never’ occurs. When dealing with conflict, try to stay neutral in your emotions and cite specific examples of behavior or attitudes that need to be adjusted in the other person. Do not generalize and watch your words.<sup>41</sup>
3. Never demean your spouse [Gal. 5:22-23].
    - Never embarrass or demean your spouse. If telling the truth to a person clashes with expressing love to that person, err on the side of expressing love. Rather, focus on the good qualities and traits God has put in your spouse and build up those attributes.<sup>42</sup>
  4. Be quick to forgive and restore your relationship with your spouse.
    - “Love hopes for the best, even when disappointed by repeated personal abuse, hoping against hope and always ready to give an offender a second chance and to forgive him ‘seventy times seven’ (Mt 18:22).<sup>43</sup>
    - “If we fail to forgive our brother from the heart, God will bring severe divine discipline on us in time and withhold temporal forgiveness for fellowship in the family. The apostle John, in addressing his “little children” whose “sins are forgiven” (1 Jn. 2:12), nevertheless told them that to be forgiven by God was conditioned upon confessing their sins (1 Jn. 1:9). If we do not confess, we are not forgiven as far as temporal forgiveness is concerned. But as far as our eternal relationship and forgiveness is concerned, that is unchanging. The bitterness of an unforgiving heart has been discipline enough in many lives.”<sup>44</sup>
    - “The bottom line of what Jesus is saying is this: “Forgiven people forgive other people.” We dare not claim to be possessors of his life and nature and at the same time fail to exhibit that life and nature.”<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Nelson, *The Book of Romance*, 136-37.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> D. A. Carson, *Showing the Spirit: A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12–14* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987), 63.

<sup>44</sup> Joseph C. Dillow, *The Reign of the Servant Kings: A Study of Eternal Security and the Final Significance of Man* (Monument, CO: Paniym Group, 2011), 384.

<sup>45</sup> R.C. Sproul, *Following Christ* (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 1996).

## The Maturation of Marriage Song of Solomon 7:1-13

- I. The Lover's Dance (v.1-9)
  - A. Solomon describes Shulamite's features (v.1-7).
    - "This section portrays the maturing of the couple's marriage. The progress in their love is revealed in two ways. First, the imagery in these verses is much bolder and more intimate than the imagery the lover used on the wedding night (4:1-11). Such an increase in sexual freedom is a normal part of a healthy, maturing marriage."<sup>46</sup>
  - B. Solomon desires Shulamite's passions (v.8-9)
    - "Solomon is totally captivated by her. When the dance is over, they begin to make love. He compares her to a palm tree with clusters ready to be fertilized and speaks of his possession of that palm tree in sexual love. Solomon concludes that their love is like good tasting wine."<sup>47</sup>
  
- II. The Lover's Date (v.10-13)
  - A. Shulamite plans a date with her husband
    - "Shulamite asks Solomon to come with her to visit her home for two purposes: first, to renew the love covenant in the very place where their courtship began; and secondly, to make love there, which they could not do before since they were still unmarried."<sup>48</sup>
  
- III. Principles to Consider
  - A. Keep romance alive in your relationship by being active.
    - "Romance is rooted in the spontaneous and unexpected. A marriage relationship needs nourishing and "frequent feedings" is a good principle to follow."<sup>49</sup>
  - B. Continue to date your spouse.
    - "God desires for you to be romantic and its up to you to keep it alive. Early on it was your instinct...now it must become a discipline."<sup>50</sup>
    - "Never let [date time] become a "gripe at your spouse" time...Remember, dating is supposed to be fun and listening to your spouse whine and complain about you is not fun. You can discuss the issues during the other six and a half days of the week. If you are self employed, do not discuss your business during your date. You must protect your date time from personal problems."<sup>51</sup> [Prov. 18:19]
  - C. Do not take your relationship for granted by being lazy.
    - "Romance dies when couples forget the preciousness of their mates. Love must be shown...choose to make the effort to show your spouse frequently how much you love, honor, and cherish him or her."<sup>52</sup> [1 Tim. 4:7]

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<sup>46</sup> Jack S. Deere, "Song of Songs," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1022.

<sup>47</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Biblical Lovemaking: A Study of the Song of Solomon* (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries Press, 1983), 57-58.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>49</sup> Tommy Nelson, *The Book of Romance: What Solomon Says About Love, Sex, and Intimacy* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 158.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

<sup>51</sup> Doug Weiss, 5 Rules for Dating Your Spouse. Accessed May 19, 2018. <http://www.drDougWeiss.com/blog/marriage/5-rules-for-dating-your-spouse/>

<sup>52</sup> Nelson, *The Book of Romance*, 155-56.

Points to Ponder:

1. Romance is an activity. Be active in maintaining intimacy.
  - “No matter who your spouse is, you can learn to love each other. In contrast to the prevailing idea that love is something that just happens, Paul commanded husbands to love their wives (Ephesians 5:25) and wives to love their husbands (Titus 2:4). Scripture doesn't even recognize the possibility of incompatibility between two marriage partners—God simply commands both the husband and the wife to love each other.”<sup>53</sup>
2. Remember to take time to get away and be together. Mutual activities and objectives are opportunities to love your spouse.
3. Rekindle your marriage through spontaneity. Keep your relationship fresh by trying something new and different.
  - If you focus on developing your love for Christ, your inner qualities of godliness will mature, develop, and strengthen your marriage.

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<sup>53</sup> John MacArthur, What can my spouse and I do to build a strong marriage? Accessed May 19, 2018.  
<https://www.gty.org/library/questions/QA113/what-can-my-spouse-and-i-do-to-build-a-strong-marriage>  
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## Pressing On in Marriage Song of Solomon 8:1-14

- I. Grow in love. (v.1-4)
- A. Shulamite's desire is to be able to show public affection for Solomon. (v.1)
- "[Shulamite] is not wishing that they were literally brother and sister, but that they had the freedom of public expression of their love. What was not in good taste even for husband and wife was perfectly permissible between brother and sister."<sup>54</sup>
- B. Shulamite desires to be taught by Solomon [2 Cor. 6:14] (v.2-4)
- "Shulamite wishes that she might participate in Solomon's wisdom. She recognizes how much she still comes short of being to him all that she could be. Thus there is a beautiful marriage balance in the passage. Solomon has already made it clear in the previous reflection that he is totally satisfied with Shulamite as she is. But she does not let this satisfaction keep her from trying to become a better wife."<sup>55</sup>
  - "The apparent rationale for repeating this adjuration here is so that the unmarried daughters of Jerusalem would again be reminded that they were not yet at a time in their lives when the awesome power of sexual desire should be awakened. As a married woman, the Shulamite had arrived at that point, and she knew by experience that it was worth the wait many times over, no matter the temptations and frustration before marriage."<sup>56</sup>
- II. Give your love. (v.5-7)
- A. Solomon reminisces about the first time they met. (v.5)
- B. Shulamite and Solomon renew their covenant love (v.6-7)
- "With these words the love covenant is renewed. The seal or signet ring was the emblem of authority worn on the right hand or against the heart by a string from the. It was a jewel from which one did not separate himself. Shulamite thus signifies that she wants to be Solomon's most prized and precious possession. He should possess her in such a way so as to never separate himself from her."<sup>57</sup>
  - "Love of the right kind is not a flame kindled by man but by God. This is the only place in the book where God is mentioned. He is the source of this love, and before Him the love covenant is renewed. No amount of adverse circumstances can extinguish this kind of love, for the flame of Jehovah is inextinguishable. Nor can this love be bought, and any attempt to buy it would be scorned and viewed as madness. Thus nothing can change Shulamite's love for the king."<sup>58</sup>
  - "With this homily, the bride has delivered the great moral lesson of the book....She was prepared to be a loyal and faithful wife, but Solomon ultimately had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines. No wonder she, not he, delivers the moral lesson of the book. He was totally unqualified to speak on the issue of godly dedicated love. He knew the physical side of it, but apparently he did not know the love she cherished."<sup>59</sup>
- III. Guard your love. (v.8-12)
- A. The basis for commitment in love starts with the family (v.8-9)

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<sup>54</sup> G. Lloyd Carr, *The Song of Solomon* (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries). Accessed May 25, 2018.

[http://www.preceptaustin.org/song\\_of\\_solomon\\_commentary\\_8](http://www.preceptaustin.org/song_of_solomon_commentary_8)

<sup>55</sup> Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Biblical Lovemaking: A Study of the Song of Solomon* (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries Press, 1983), 60.

<sup>56</sup> A. Boyd Luter, *Song of Songs: Evangelical Exegetical Commentary*, ed. H. Wayne House and William Barrick (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2013), So 8:4.

<sup>57</sup> Fruchtenbaum, *Biblical Lovemaking*, 63.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>59</sup> J. Paul Tanner, *The Message of the Song of Solomon BSac*. 154 (April-June 1997): 142-61.

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- B. Shulamite was grateful for her upbringing & relationship with Solomon [Prov. 22:6] (v.10-12)
- “Each tenant was to grow enough grapes to make 1,000 shekels (about 25 pounds) of silver for the landowner. And each tenant would receive 200 shekels (about 5 pounds) of silver as his wages. As stated near the beginning of the book (1:6), the beloved worked in the vineyard, submitting to her brothers’ discipline. While there she met Solomon and he fell in love with her. My own vineyard is a metaphor for the beloved’s own person. Only she could give herself to another (she said her own vineyard was hers to give) and she freely chose to give herself to Solomon. Even her possessions (including her income, 1,000 shekels) were his.”<sup>60</sup>

#### IV. Go in love. (v.13-14)

##### A. Solomon and Shulamite retire to the countryside to enjoy their love.

- “With this verse Shulamite begins her song as the Song of Solomon comes to an end. The Hebrew word translated “flee” refers to a sense of hastening. Here it means to flee away from all others in order to be alone. Now that they are married, the summons in 8:14 is unlimited. Thus they go outside to do that which they had planned to do in earlier reflections (7:12–13, 8:1) and disappear into the flowery hills.”<sup>61</sup>
- “There is a level of love far beyond sexual satisfaction, a love that is exclusive and possessive, having no room for intruders. Only two may ascend alone, but in so doing they will find that “its flashes are flashes of fire, the very flame of the Lord” (8:6). The Song of Songs hearkens back to God’s prototypical design in the Garden of Eden of one man and one woman, in marriage, a relationship God designed to be mutually exclusive. This book, then, presents a most relevant and urgent message for today.”<sup>62</sup>

#### Points to Ponder:

1. Having a biblical marriage takes hard work. Everything you do needs to be filtered through the grid of love (1 Cor. 13).
2. Your children’s attitudes towards sex and marriage will be based upon you. Model a biblical example in your speech and worldviews.
3. Flee from all sexual immorality. Do not place yourself in situations where you will be tempted to violate your marriage covenant.

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<sup>60</sup> Jack S. Deere, “Song of Songs,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1025.

<sup>61</sup> Fruchtenbaum, *Biblical Lovemaking*, 67.

<sup>62</sup> J. Paul Tanner, The Message of the Song of Songs. *BSac* 154:614 (Apr 1997) 161.