

Song of Solomon I — “Mutual Praise & Affirmation Between Two Lovers”**Introduction:**

The capacity to delight in physical beauty, to be attracted by members of the opposite sex, the desire to form secure and intimate relationships, and to express love and affection in demonstrably physical ways --- these are all a very fundamental part of our common humanity. THE SONG OF SONGS is an unabashed/unashamed celebration of these deeply rooted urges.” (Tom Gledhill)

WE desperately need this SONG today.

FREEDOM from the filth of this evil (of this age) comes in the desire for a MORE powerful & a MORE satisfying pleasure.

There’s a reason why so much of the book is about the couple getting away into garden-like settings -- which is intended to take us back [to woo us] to the Eden-like settings of Genesis 1-2.

- ✓The creating of marriage + God’s design [Garden of Eden] = **perfect!**
- ✓The present marriage + God’s gift [the present] = **picture!**
- ✓The future marriage + intimacy with Christ [future glory!] = **culmination!**

Introductory Points Regarding this “Supreme Song”...**1) Some Features to Understand:**

1. It’s a **SONG** - a poem, figure of speech, erotic, full of language, pictures, --- it’s not a sort of anthology of brief poems of love but a unified piece of Spirit-given poetry.
2. It’s in the **BIBLE** -- this isn’t scribbled on a wall of a NYC subway as dirty & filthy; it’s inspired, authoritative, binding, relevant, needed, sufficient, for **ALL** of us, and it’s part of the unfolding of God’s plan of REDEMPTION.
3. It’s about **LOVE** -- it’s about human, marital love & its satisfying physical delights. It’s relished *only* in the context of a heterosexual marriage, the Bible’s **ONLY** authorized context for expressions of physical intimacy between a man and a woman.
4. It’s to give **WISDOM** -- it’s the **wisdom genre** of Scripture (capping off the poetic writings: Job, Pss, Prov, Eccl & Song of Songs). The refrain gives wisdom: Don’t arouse/awaken love till it pleases (2:7; 3:5; 8:4)
5. It’s about the **SON OF DAVID** -- it’s about Solomon -- David’s Son and yet there is another Son of David who came & who is the ultimate BRIDEGROOM (John 3:29; 2 Cor 11:2; Rev 19:6-9; 22:17)

2) A word on the genre of literature:

It’s **wisdom**. A unified love-song penned by Solomon. [to teach! & to give skill for living life in a God-honoring way!]

3) Some interpretive frameworks [hermeneutic]!

1. FICTIONAL - some believe this is a fictional drama that portrays Solomon’s courtship and marriage to a poor but beautiful girl from the country.

Song of Solomon I — “Mutual Praise & Affirmation Between Two Lovers”

2. ALLEGORICAL - the primary purpose of the book is to illustrate God’s truth of God’s love for His people.

Some think it was fictional but others see it as real. But regardless, these would say the primary purpose is typical -- to present Yahweh’s love for his bride Israel and or Christ’s love for His Church

3. *HISTORICAL* -- the Song of Songs is a poetic record of Solomon’s actual romance with a woman. This view exalts the joys of love and marriage and teaches that physical beauty and sexuality in marriage should *NOT* be despised as BASE or UNSPIRITUAL. *This is the *best view that takes the text at face value.*

***The question is often asked: ‘how in the world could ‘Solomon’ write this?’ = It was written early when he was married to ONE-woman before he fell into great sin/immorality. Exclusive, heterosexual, monogamous, intoxicating joys of marriage delights, lovemaking & pleasure.**

And it’s to be read *grammatical, historical* unified poem of love.

4) The Key Verse

7:10 - I am my beloved’s and his desire is toward me.

5) Significant Pointers of the Song

The SONG illustrates the reality that...

▶ A husband & wife are to passionately love each other - Prov 5, Heb 13, 1 Cor 7

▶ The song illustrates love for Israel as the Bride of Yhwh - Isa 54.5-6; Jer 2.2; Ezek 16;8-14; Hosea 2.16-20

▶ The song illustrates love for the Church as the Bride of Christ - 2 Cor 11.2; Eph 5.23-25; Rev 19.7-9; 21.9

John Murray shows the difficulties of the allegorical method of hermeneutics & advocates normal rendering:

“I cannot now endorse the allegorical interpretation of the Song of Solomon. I think the varieties of interpretation given in terms of the allegorical principle indicate that there are no well-defined hermeneutical canons to guide us in determining the precise meaning and application if we adopt the allegorical view.

However, I also think that in terms of the **biblical analogy** the Song could be used to *illustrate* the relation of Christ to His Church. The marriage bond is used in Scripture as a **pattern** of Christ and the church. If the Song portrays marital love and relationship on the highest levels of exercise and devotion, **then surely** it may be used to exemplify what is transcendently true in the bond that exists between Christ and the Church.”

OUTLINE: *The BIG PICTURE OF THE BOOK*

INTRO (1:1)

1. COURTSHIP [*leaving*] (1:2-3:5)

beginning of love (1:2-11)

growth of love (1:12-3:5)

2. WEDDING [*cleaving*] (3:6-5:1)

procession (3:6-11)

consummation (4:1-5:1)

3. MATURITY [*weaving*] (5:2-8:4)

fighting apathy (5:2-6:13)

communicating affection (7:1-10)

initiating love (7:11-13)

intoxicating intimacy (8:1-4)

CONCL (8:5-7)

EPILOGUE (8:8-14)

THESIS — We’ll study this chapter & organize it according to the one who is speaking (the man/the woman).

Begin with Verse 1 = **the Song of Songs**

**Song of Songs is a treatise fleshing out. Heb 13.4 — ‘marriage is honorable among all and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge’*

To review: What is the ultimate purpose / reason for this book?

➔God's primary purpose in inspiring this book of the Bible was to give us revelation concerning the way love between a man and a woman should look. But there's more... As human life finds its highest fulfillment in the love of man and woman (in marriage), so spiritual life finds its highest fulfillment in the love of God for His people and Christ for His church.

➔I believe God gave it to us so we could understand the nature of love primarily. I think God wanted us to apply that understanding: both in our love for our spouses, and in our love for our Savior. In other words, I believe the purpose is "both ... and," rather than "either ... or." This is also the view of many contemporary evangelical scholars.

➔And Song of Songs reveals something about the meaning of the ‘mystery of marriage’ (Eph 5.32).

I. WIFE: VERBAL AFFIRMATION OF HUSBAND & ATTRACTION TO HIS CHARACTER (2-7)

II. HUSBAND: VERBAL REASSURANCE & UTMOST PRAISE OF HER EXCELLENCIES (8-11)

III. WIFE: THE ATTRACTION TO HER MAN AND THE PLEASANT DELIGHTS THAT HE IS TO HER (12-14)

Now she responds with praise to him. Trying to ‘*out-praise*’ each other!

Proverbs 16.24 — pleasant words are a honeycomb; sweet to the taste and health to the body

1. I desire you (12)

2. I love you (13)

3. I need you (14)

IV. HUSBAND: COMMUNICATING OF LOVE, DEVOTION & TENDERNESS (15)

Now the man responds -- again. **Simple. Terse. Short. Brief.**

V. WIFE: FOLLOWING HIS LEAD & LONGING FOR INTIMACY (16-17)

Some Concluding Thoughts & Observations from ch.1 —

1) Gender roles are given by God & must be known & obeyed to have a God-glorifying & joyful marriage.

We find in this chapter a text that **INSISTS** that male female relationships when lived out in **FULFILLMENT** of God's creation purposes, are about mutuality and not about sheer domination.

- > the woman speaks first
- > the woman initiates
- > the woman is honored, prized, spoken delightfully about

Song of Solomon I — “Mutual Praise & Affirmation Between Two Lovers”**2) The desire for sexual pleasure is created by & given by God & is good.**

- *The desire for sex is NOT demonic -- the intimacy desires are God-given, God-designed, good & to be enjoyed
- > all sexual pleasure must *only* be enjoyed in the manner, way & context for which God designed (=marriage).
 - > but guard -- watch for immoralities in *all* its forms! Col 3.5, 6; 1 Cor 6.19-20

3) Don't focus merely on external appearance. Focus also on character/reputation.

NOTE in this chap how both attraction & reputation/character are important

She loves him for his HANDSOME/ATTRACTIVENESS

And she loves him for his good reputation (=His “NAME”)

>> both matter.

>> don't settle for ONE without the other.

And the man's NAME [reputation] must be a sound character:

And we must look to Christ as our ultimate example!

He is attractive; He has a reputation that's trustworthy, faithful.

So, MEN = emulate Christ.

4) Keep the passionate fire of love burning hot in marriage.

In all marriages, the fuel & fire of love need not fizzle out -- it must not fizzle out.

Desire your spouse

Remember your spouse; remember what first fueled the flame

Pray about it, see how Christ passionately loves you; then do likewise!

Men must take the lead to ensure that the flaming fires of passionate love still exist!

5) Never justify sinful, reckless, improper behavior.

NOTE how true love never allows/justifies reckless behavior (see 1:7)

There is nothing improper, immoral, dirty, shameful about this Song.

Indeed, there's nothing sleazy or shady -- nothing seedy or wicked or dirty or shameful or evil.

6) It is important to verbally affirm and encourage your mate.

HUSBANDS -- men -- verbally compliment your wives

Her beauty, her body, her delights, her love. **Communicate!**

=====

One more thought by way of application: *did you* NOTE how *passionate* the WOMAN was for her MAN.

- The Bride's LOVE and AFFECTION and VERBAL PRAISING and LONGING for him
- that should be the CHURCH's love for the BRIDEGROOM.
- how eager should be our affections to COMMUNE with Him & be WITH Him!

Song of Songs paints a picture of marital love that reflects the love that instructs us in God's good design and points us to our faithful Shepherd-King, JESUS.

This song points us to the Bridegroom King whose name is JESUS who loved the Church & died for Her.

Like the bride who speaks of her dazzling husband -- “**So** let us LOOK SO LONG upon our **Bridegroom**, the Son of David, **till** our eyes are SO dazzled with His astonishing & breathtaking glory!”

SONGS FOR SONG OF SOLOMON I**O THE DEEP, DEEP LOVE OF JESUS**

O the deep, deep love of Jesus, vast, unmeasured,
boundless, free!
Rolling as a mighty ocean in its fullness over me!
Underneath me, all around me, is the current of Thy
love
Leading onward, leading homeward to Thy glorious
rest above!

O the deep, deep love of Jesus, spread His praise
from shore to shore!
How He loveth, ever loveth, changeth never,
nevermore!
How He watches o'er His loved ones, died to call

them all His own;
How for them He intercedeth, watcheth o'er them
from the throne!

O the deep, deep love of Jesus, love of every love
the best!
'Tis an ocean full of blessing, 'tis a haven giving rest!
O the deep, deep love of Jesus, 'tis a heaven of
heavens to me;
And it lifts me up to glory, for it lifts me up to Thee!
— S. Trevor Francis

ON CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

To the tune of: There is a fountain filled with blood

Our Jesus freely did appear
To grace a marriage feast;
And, Lord, we ask thy presence here
To make a wedding-guest.
Upon the bridal pair look down;
Who now have plighted hands;
Their union with thy favour crown,
And bless the wedding bands.

With gifts of grace their hearts endow;
(Of all rich dowries best!)
Their substance bless, and peace bestow,
To sweeten all the rest.
In purest love their souls unite,

And linked in kindly care,
To render family burdens light,
By taking mutual share.

True helpers may they prove indeed,
In prayer, and faith, and hope;
And see with joy a godly seed,
To build thy household up.
As Isaac and Rebecca give
A pattern chaste and kind;
So may this new-met couple live,
In faithful friendship joined.
— John Berridge

MY GOD THE SPRING OF ALL MY JOYS

To the tune of: Amazing grace

My God, the spring of all my joys,
The life of my delights,
The glory of my brightest days,
The comfort of my nights!
In darkest shades, if Thou appear,
My dawning is begun:
Thou art my soul's bright morning star,
And Thou my rising sun.

The op'ning heav'ns around me shine
With beams of sacred bliss,
While Jesus shows His mercy mine,
And whispers I am His.
My soul would leave this heavy clay,
At that transporting word,
And run with joy the shining way
To meet my dearest Lord.
— Isaac Watts