

Lecture 24: SONG OF SONGS

“The God who oversees male and female sexuality”

Jason S. DeRouchie, PhD

I. Introduction

II. Different Interpretations

- A. Allegorical:** The book portrays the intimate love relationship between God and Israel or Christ and his church.
- B. Cultic:** The book describes a sacred marriage between the gods.
- C. Lyrical:** The book includes a series of love songs that celebrate the love between a man and a woman under God.
- D. Dramatic:** The song unpacks a developing love story between a man and a woman.
 - 1. Two-character drama:** The two-character dramatic interpretation, portraying the developing love of Solomon and the Shulamite woman.
 - 2. Three-character drama:** The three-character dramatic interpretation, portraying the love triangle of the villain Solomon, the Shulamite woman, and Shulamite shepherd.

III. Characterization and Structure:

- A. Characters**
- B. Key use of the refrain as an oath curse**

IV. Interpretation:

- A. Superscription (1:1):**
- B. True Love Declared While the Maiden Is among Solomon’s Virgins in Waiting (1:2–2:7 [embrace, 2:6; refrain, 2:7])**
- C. True Love Longed For: The Maiden’s Desire and Dream of Loss (2:8–3:5 [refrain, 3:5])**
- D. True Love Contrasted and Testified (3:6–8:4) [refrain, 8:4]**
 - 1. True Love Contrasted and Challenged (3:6–5:8)**
 - a. Solomon’s arrival as a foil for true love (3:6–11)
 - b. Solomon’s sinful advances, the harem’s urging, yet the woman’s refusal (4:1–5:1)

- c. The maiden's desire for her beloved and dream of loss (5:2–8 [partial refrain, 5:8])
- 2. False Love Combatted and True Love Testified (5:9–8:4)
 - a. The maiden's testimony of her beloved's greatness (5:9–16).
 - b. The maiden's testimony of her beloved's distance (6:1–3)
 - c. Solomon and the harem's praise for the maiden, yet her refusal (6:4–13)
 - d. Solomon's final advance, and her refusal (7:1–10)
 - e. The maiden's expressed longing (7:11–8:4 [embrace, 8:3; refrain, 8:4])

E. Conclusion: True Love Affirmed and Solomon Rejected (8:5–14)

V. Message

A. Song of Songs is likely a commentary on Genesis 1–2

B. The Song of Songs as Typology for Christ's Relationship with the Church

VI. Summary:

- A. Long:** The Song of Songs celebrates how Yahweh's flame of love between husband and wife wards off intruders, is constant and unquenchable, and generates a garden of Eden-like intimacy that helps the relationship endure every struggle as it anticipates the Messiah's marriage with his people.
- B. Short:** A husband and his wife should celebrate the love Yahweh gives to fight off intruders and to enjoy a garden of Eden-like intimacy that hopes in the new creation and looks forward to the Messiah's marriage with his people.