

Old Testament Literature

Session - **Song of Songs** - Dr. Chris Miller

“The Very Best Song” - “Solomon’s Most Excellent Love Song.”

Why would anyone take marital advice from Solomon? He was capable of citing wisdom and knowing what wisdom is.

NETBible “New English Translation” Dr Miller’s go-to for best study bible for: word studies, grammar and original language study. Free on the interNET.

HISTORY OF INTERPRETATION

- **Allegory** - Christ & The Church. Pseudo- spiritual approach avoids real issues.
- **Celebration** - Sex is good or fun!
- **Manual** - “Six E-Z Steps”

Meet the Cast of this “Readers’ Theater” or “Opera”

- Groom/Husband - Like a real wedding, necessary to the story, not the focal point.
- Bride/Wife - This is her story that she tells for the benefit of...
- Daughters of Jerusalem (DOJ) The younger, single girls in Israel

Clear progression:

Marriage - Courtship - Wedding - Honeymoon - Conflict Afterwards - Life Now

1:1 - 5:1 “Our joy in marriage and how we got there,”

Conversation between wife and DOJ about being married, 1:2-8

King is nuts about his wife, 1:9-10

“Oh, how I wish you would kiss me passionately!... Sos 1:2

Conversation between married couple, “I love being married to him!” 1:12-2:6

My beloved is to me a cluster of henna blossoms from the vineyards of En Gedi. How beautiful you are, my darling! Oh, how beautiful! My eyes are doves. How handsome you are, my beloved! Oh, how charming! And our bed is verdant. (green) The beams of our house are cedar; our rafters are firs. Sos 1:14-17

Life an apple tree among the trees of the forest is my beloved among the young men. I delight to sit in his shade, and his fruit is sweet to my taste. Let him lead me to the banquet hall, (and he looked at me lovingly) and let his banner over me be love. Strengthen me with raisins, refresh me with apples, for I am faint with love. His left hand caresses my head... Sos 2:3-6

Initial “charge of the Wife, 2:7-3:5

*I adjure you, (take an oath, promise me) O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles or the wild does: do not arouse or awaken love until it pleases! (the right time) Sos 2:7 *Do not do something that would have destructive consequences.*

2:7 BACK OFF!! Easy for YOU to say!!

Wife: Actually it wasn't easy for us to “not arouse love” because we had every excuse to be physically involved, but we didn't.

PHYSICALLY - 2:8-9

ROMANTICALLY - 2:10 - 3:4.

My beloved spoke and said to me, “Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, come with me. Sos 2:10

My dove in the clefts of the rock, in the hiding places on the mountainside, show me your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely. Sos 2:14

1. He initiated the relationship and invited me 10-13
2. Desired to know me 14
3. Resolved to avoid conflicts 15
4. Mutually committed 16-17
5. Always searched for one like him and finally found him 3:1-4

3:5 BACK OFF!!

Memory of the wedding day, 3:6-11

Because we “**backed off**” our wedding day is one that brings back really **good memories**.

The wedding night 4:1-5:2

*You have stolen my heart, my sister, my bride; you have stolen my heart with one glance of your eye, with one jewel of your necklace. You are a **garden locked up**, my sister, my bride; you are a **spring enclosed, a sealed fountain**. Sos 4:9,12*

Awake, north wind, and come, south wind! Blow on my garden, that its fragrance may spread everywhere. Let my beloved come into his garden and taste its choice fruits. I have come into my garden, my sister, my bride; I have gathered my myrrh with my spice. I have eaten my honeycomb and my honey; I have drunk my wine and my milk. Eat, friends, and drink; drink your fill of love. Sos 4:16, 5:1

The poetry allows us to see only what we need to see of the wedding night in a clear yet dignified way --

When these two come together to make love it is their very first time. But, since this is a Genesis 3 world (sin) not a Genesis 2 world (no sin) we're gonna have trouble, no matter what, when two sinners marry so...

There's gonna be bad blood, 5:2-6:13(Band-aids don't fix bullet holes you know)

Cause of the problem 5:2-7

I slept but my heart was awake. Listen! My beloved is knocking: "Open to me, my sister, my darling, my dove, my flawless one. My head is drenched in dew, my hair with the dampness of night." I have taken off my robe - must I put it on again? I have washed my feet - must I soil them again? My beloved thrust his hand through the latch-opening; my heart began to pound for him. I arose to open for my beloved, and my hands dripped with myrrh, my fingers with flowing myrrh, on the handles of the bolt. I opened for my beloved, but my beloved had left; he was gone. My heart sank at his departure. I looked for him. I called him but he did not answer. Sos 5:2-6

Her attempt to resolve it 5:8 - 6:3

Before I realized it, my desire set me among the royal chariots of my people Sos 6:12

Contentment and Security

They make up and mature; they solve their problems/become a stronger couple 7:1-8:3

The major point of her story becomes clear:

The kind of relationship which endures conflict (5:2-6:13) and continues to grow (7:1-8:3) is one founded on a committed and informed relationship marked by physical restraint 1:1-5:1; 8:4-14).

A Final Word of Counsel about the foundation of marriage 8:4-14

The Theme: Do not arouse love before the right time! 8:4 (marriage)

Why? Because of the uncontrollable power of (sexually-charged) love, 8:5-7

For love is as strong as death, its jealousy unyielding as the grave. It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame. Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot sweep it away. If one were to give all the wealth of one's house for love, it would be utterly scorned. Sos 8:6b-7 (only a blessing in a covenant relationship)

The understanding response of the DOJ, 8:8-9

We have a little sister, and her breasts are not grown. What shall we do for our sister on the day when she is spoken for? If she is a wall, (no entrance, then we will encourage her) we will build towers of silver on her. But if she is a door, ("loose" then we will barricade her) we will enclose her with panels of cedar.
Sol 8:8-9

Bottom line takeaway:

So, if you're a virgin you're OK

And if not then you're going to have trouble?

NO NO NO NO NO NO

This is not about God "punishing you" if you've made mistakes in the past.

This book is about the future and building a beautiful marriage now.

If you're "borrowing the future 'privileges'" of a *covenantal* relationship *before* you're in one then in Wisdom terms you're being a fool.

Why?

1. **Sex makes a solid "second story"** to a marriage house but as a "foundation" it's more like sand.
2. The "**foundation**" **has to be a solid relationship** that can only properly form without complication or intoxication of sex. You won't notice you're not compatible.

The proper order of things:

"Every man who knocks on the door of a brothel is looking for God"

-- GK Chesterson (English writer, philosopher, lay theologian, art critic. The "prince of paradox". Time magazine observed of his writing style: "Whenever possible Chesterton made his points with popular sayings, proverbs, allegories—first carefully turning them inside out." 1874-1936)

What you think you're looking for in sex, is intimacy and acceptance of a person.

The truth is... what you really need is intimacy and acceptance from God first. Jesus says the same thing to the woman at the well.

We glorify sex when we imagine it will satisfy our hunger for God. John 4

You were designed for intimacy with God *first* and then with another person in the bonds of a marriage covenant. Any other way is following the enemy's short-cut to failure (Prov 1-9)

do not arouse or awaken love until it pleases! (the right time) Sos 2:7

1) God

2) Marriage

3) Sex