



The Song of Solomon

True Romance

Introduction

- I. Who wrote the Song and when did he write it?**
- II. What is the Song?**
- III. What is the structure of the Song?**
- IV. What are the main themes of the Song?**
- V. What are the purpose and message of the Song?**

I. Who wrote the Song of Songs and when did he write it?

- Like the book of Ecclesiastes, the writer of the Song is not named, but it is traditionally ascribed to Solomon. He died ca. 930 B.C.
- The supposed linguistic evidence for a date later than Solomon is very weak.
- The Song has similarities to Egyptian love poetry of ca. 1300 to 1100 B.C.
- The internal evidence for Solomon as the author includes extensive knowledge of the plant & animal life of Israel & the ambience of wealth and luxury displayed.



II. *What is the Song?*

- What the Song is *not*:
 - Allegory
 - Drama
 - Historical Narrative
 - Wedding Ceremony
 - Marriage Manual



III. What Is the Structure of the Song?

- The Song has three interweaving parts: the lover (the man), the beloved (the woman), and the friends. The latter act as a “chorus,” offering encouragement & commentary.
- The Song is not a chronological story, but it is also not haphazardly arranged.
- The themes and symbols of the song cycle both toward & outward from the center of the Song at vv. 4:16-5:1, where the intimacy of the lover and the beloved is consummated within their marriage.



IV. What are the main themes of the Song?

- The central theme is the “love felt between a man and a woman as they approach & experience their wedding” (Garrett) and its consummation.
- Subordinate themes:
 - longing & anticipation
 - mutual desire, attraction, & admiration
 - the frustrations of love
 - the exclusivity of love
 - the beauty of love

V. What are the purpose and message of the Song?

- The Song of Songs establishes and celebrates the goodness, beauty, joy, and passion of physical love and intimacy in the context of marriage.
- The Song presents sexuality as a good gift of God “*protected by marriage and not as an evil thing made permissible by marriage*” (Garrett). This is true even after the Fall.
- In presenting marriage as it ought to be in its original design, the Song shows marriage as “an earthly institution that in itself images something greater than itself” (Kinlaw).