

SONG OF SONGS

a series on:

SEX • ROMANCE • MARRIAGE • LOVE



Parental Advisory Explicit Scriptures
Why Does Marriage Matter?
Song of Songs 3:6–5:1

What are we reading?

The Marriage Procession – 3:6–11

6 What is that coming up from the wilderness
like columns of smoke,
perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,
with all the fragrant powders of a merchant?

7 Behold, it is the litter of Solomon!
Around it are sixty mighty men,
some of the mighty men of Israel,

8 all of them wearing swords
and expert in war,
each with his sword at his thigh,
against terror by night.

9 King Solomon made himself a carriage
from the wood of Lebanon.

10 He made its posts of silver,
its back of gold, its seat of purple;
its interior was inlaid with love
by the daughters of Jerusalem.

11 Go out, O daughters of Zion,
and look upon King Solomon,
with the crown with which his mother crowned him
on the day of his wedding,
on the day of the gladness of his heart.

- Who is coming?
 - “She is saying, ‘Ladies, think of Solomon’s coming to town with all its grandeur and gladness. Well, my love and my man are greater than Solomon in all his glory’” (Douglas Sean O’Donnell, *The Song of Solomon*, 71).
- Solomon is a contrast
 - Now King Solomon loved many foreign women, along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, 2 from the nations concerning which the Lord had said to the people of Israel, “You shall not enter into marriage with them, neither shall they with you, for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods.” Solomon clung to these in love. 3 He had 700 wives, who were princesses, and 300 concubines. And his wives turned away his heart (1 Kings 11:1–3).
- This is the man and woman’s wedding processional.
 - What was a wedding like in ancient Israel?
 - Betrothal (*kiddushin*): usually lasting a year and more binding than today’s engagement. During that year the man prepared the home for his bride.
 - Nuptials (*chuppah*):
 - Arrival of Groom
 - Wedding Feast
 - Consummation
 - Seven Blessings

The Marriage View – 4:1–7

Behold, you are beautiful, my love,
behold, you are beautiful!

Your eyes are doves
behind your veil.

Your hair is like a flock of goats
leaping down the slopes of Gilead.

2 Your teeth are like a flock of shorn ewes
that have come up from the washing,
all of which bear twins,
and not one among them has lost its young.

3 Your lips are like a scarlet thread,
and your mouth is lovely.

Your cheeks are like halves of a pomegranate
behind your veil.

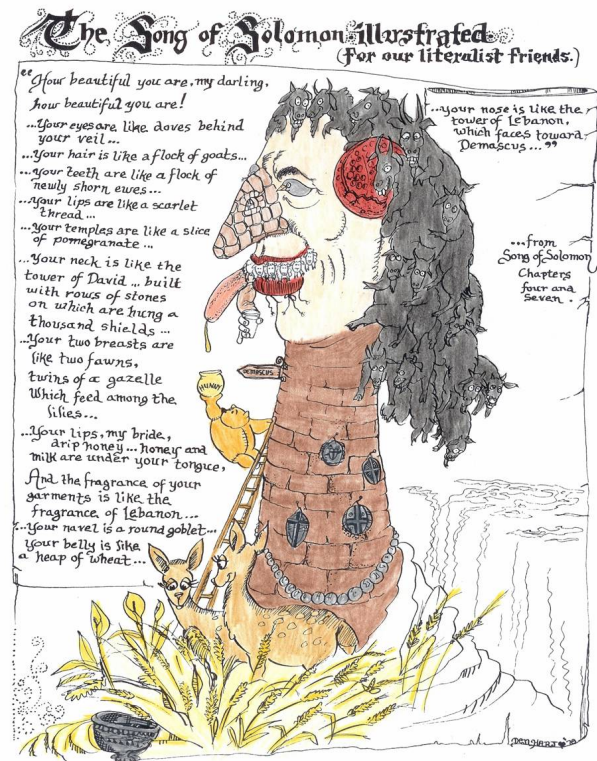
4 Your neck is like the tower of David,
built in rows of stone;
on it hang a thousand shields,
all of them shields of warriors.

5 Your two breasts are like two fawns,
twins of a gazelle,
that graze among the lilies.

6 Until the day breathes
and the shadows flee,
I will go away to the mountain of myrrh
and the hill of frankincense.

7 You are altogether beautiful, my love;
there is no flaw in you.

- What does he see?
 - The Groom sees his beautiful bride.
 - *Wāsf* is an Arabic love song in which the lover praises the physical attributes of the partner” (Richard Hess, *The Old Testament*, 502–503).
 - The groom thinks each part of his bride is beautiful, and that she is altogether beautiful.
- This is the man and woman’s wedding.



The Marriage Pronouncement – 4:8–11

8 Come with me from Lebanon, my bride;
come with me from Lebanon.
Depart from the peak of Amana,
from the peak of Senir and Hermon,
from the dens of lions,
from the mountains of leopards.

9 You have captivated my heart, my sister, my bride;
you have captivated my heart with one glance of your eyes,
with one jewel of your necklace.

10 How beautiful is your love, my sister, my bride!
How much better is your love than wine,
and the fragrance of your oils than any spice!

11 Your lips drip nectar, my bride;
honey and milk are under your tongue;
the fragrance of your garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon.

- What’s happened?
 - “Come away with me”
 - He invites her to intimacy

- “I promise that I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey” (Exodus 3:17).
- “My bride”
- She is now his wife.
- The wedding ceremony is over.

The Marriage Anticipation – 4:12–15

12 A garden locked is my sister, my bride,
a spring locked, a fountain sealed.
13 Your shoots are an orchard of pomegranates
with all choicest fruits,
henna with nard,
14 nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon,
with all trees of frankincense,
myrrh and aloes,
with all choice spices—
15 a garden fountain, a well of living water,
and flowing streams from Lebanon.

- What does he want?
 - Garden – His bride’s body.
 - Fruit to eat – Sex
 - The problem – The garden has been locked.
 - He wants to have sex with his wife.
- Their marriage is about to be consummated.

The Marriage Consummation – 4:16–5:1

16 Awake, O north wind,
and come, O south wind!
Blow upon my garden,
let its spices flow.
Let my beloved come to his garden,
and eat its choicest fruits.
1 I came to my garden, my sister, my bride,
I gathered my myrrh with my spice,
I ate my honeycomb with my honey,
I drank my wine with my milk.

- What does she invite?
 - “Awake!”
 - “I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles or the does of the field, that you not stir up or awaken love until it pleases” (Song of Songs 2:7; also see 3:5; 8:4).

- “In the Song of Songs sex is at the center. I mean that literally. It’s at the exact center of this Song. . . . There are ‘111 lines from 1:2 to 4:15 and 111 lines from 5:2 to 8:14.’ So 4:16–5:1 is ‘the centre of gravity,’ ‘the heart of the Song . . . the central pivot around which the rest of the Song revolves,’ ‘the centerpiece and crescendo’” (Douglas Sean O’Donnell, *The Song of Solomon*, 80).
- She invites her husband to have sex with her.
- “My garden - His Garden”
 - “He is ‘entering’ his garden, which is *my* garden. . . . The garden is their mutual possession” (Tom Gledhill, *The Message of the Song of Songs*, 153).
 - “For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does” (1 Corinthians 7:4).
 - “Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Genesis 2:24).
 - “Every sex act is supposed to be a *uniting act*” (Tim and Kathy Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage*, 225).
- Sex unites them in marriage.

Why Does Marriage Matter?

Marriage is the ultimate goal and full realization of love.