

The Song of Songs (Solomon): An Overview

Song of Solomon 1:2 (NIV)

*☞ Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth –
for your love is more delightful than wine. ☞*

1. **Canonicity** – Should this book be in the Bible?

“Canon”:

- “rule”; “standard”; “measuring rod”
- Bible: of God and of humans
- Through a long process the Hebrew canon of scripture was closed right before or after 100 A.D.
- Hot debate surrounding “Song of Solomon.” After the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 A.D. the Song of Solomon was incorporated into the Jewish canon over the objections of some rabbis.
- It was a part of what were called “the writings.”
- Too steamy for scripture?

2. **Authorship and Date**

- Attributed to Solomon. No hint of actual authorship. This love poem links authorship to Solomon.
- The intense style of poetry belongs to the genre of love lyrics found in ancient Egyptian collections.
- Probably produced around 450-400 B.C.

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3. Structure and Nature

- Conversation between 3 parties:
 - “beloved” (a woman, “my darling”)
 - “lover” (the man)
 - “friends” (observers of the relationship)
- Full of imagery which appeals to the senses of smell, taste and touch.
- Contains detailed descriptions of the human body; fragrances; and, nature.

4. Interpretation

A. Allegorical

- “Allegory” – symbolic representation through characters.
- Can be read as an “allegory” of the Lord’s love for Israel, or Christ’s love for the church.

B. Literal – Historical

- A collection of love poems and lyrics celebrating human love, romance, and sexuality.
- Could be a collection of songs used in ancient weddings.
- Could be read as a song describing a shepherd’s courtship of a Shulammite woman.

5. Significance

- Perhaps divine love is analogous to human love.