

## OVERVIEW OF BOOK OF SONG OF SOLOMON -- CELEBRATION OF IDEALIZED ROMANTIC LOVE

The Song of Solomon is probably the most **neglected book** in the canon of Scripture. When was the last time you heard a sermon series covering these 8 chapters? It is not like this is some short document that can easily be overlooked. But it deals with a subject that makes many Christians **uncomfortable** – the graphic description of female beauty, romantic love and sexual passion.

Title:

Hebrew: The Most Beautiful Song of Solomon

**1 Kings 4:32** Solomon wrote many songs; this is the superlative

LXX and Vulgate – The Song of Songs; The Best Song

(Canticles = a song or hymn with words taken directly from the bible)

English: The Song of Solomon

Author: (Bill McRae) Generally Solomon has been accepted as the author:

- Very first verse attests to this
- References to the author being king over Israel in Jerusalem
- Several descriptive phrases that appropriately describe Solomon
  - o **1:11-13** the luxury of royalty or monarchy;
  - o great emphasis on natural science **1 Kings 4:33** – 21 varieties of plants and 15 varieties of animal life in the book
  - o **6:8-9** – large number of queens and concubines -- The king by this time had 60 queens and 80 concubines; Helps us to date the book in the early years of Solomon's reign because his harem grew substantially later as he fell into immorality and idolatry -- Solomon's harem at its fullest extent reached 700 queens and 300 concubines – **1 Kings 11:3**

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Aside: What is the difference between queens and concubines?

Reflects **status, legal standing**, and often **political significance** in the ancient Near Eastern royal system.

Queens:

- A **queen** (Hebrew: *malka*) typically referred to a **primary wife**—especially those of **royal or noble birth**, often from foreign nations.

**Role and Status:**

- **Official, legal wives**
- Often used to **form political alliances** (e.g., Pharaoh's daughter in 1 Kings 3:1)
- Lived in more **prominent quarters** of the palace
- Held more **political and social influence**

Concubines:

- A **concubine** was a **secondary wife**, legally recognized but of **lower status**—often not from royal or noble lineage.
- The Hebrew word is *pilegish*.

### **Role and Status:**

- Had **sexual and childbearing rights**, but not equal status with queens
  - Children of concubines might have inheritance rights—but not necessarily equal ones
  - Usually did **not have political influence**
  - Sometimes acquired as **slaves or captives**, or given as **gifts**
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Essentially this book is a **Love Song** written by Solomon abounding in metaphors and Oriental imagery; It depicts the wooing and wedding of a shepherdess by King Solomon and the joys and heartaches of wedded love. It extols the purity, beauty and satisfaction of physical love within the context of a romantic relationship.

**John MacArthur:** It is best taken as a unified piece of poetic, Wisdom literature rather than a series of love poems without a common theme or author.

There certainly are **challenges** when it comes to how we interpret the book:

- Large number of Hebrew words and phrases and Oriental imagery that are unique to Scripture – so it's difficult to grasp the cultural context and background
- Confusing to pinpoint who is speaking at any given point in the dialogue – the two main players are the bridegroom = Solomon and the bride = the Shulamite maiden – also you have a chorus designated as “*the daughters of Jerusalem*” that interjects some comments; one helpful constant is that the bridegroom refers to his bride as “*my love*” and the bride calls him “*my beloved*” – the NASB helps with some designations regarding who is speaking at particular points
- Commentators have taken different interpretative approaches to the book:
  - o Allegorical – no basis in historical events
  - o Typological – moving beyond the historical events to the intended focus
  - o Literal – but still with spiritual applications – keeps the focus on the actual historical relationship while still benefiting from the value of spiritual illustration

On a literal level, the Song of Solomon is a **celebration of romantic and physical love** between a man and a woman. It explores themes of:

- Desire and longing
- Beauty and attraction
- Courtship and marriage
- The joy and intimacy of love

I don't follow the view of a strict historical drama between King Solomon and the Shulamite, but I do see a general progression from Courtship topics to Marriage with its physical consummation to the subsequent ongoing Nurturing of Marriage. Maybe these topics are viewed more from the perspective of **reflecting back** rather than advancing a strictly chronological narrative.

Perhaps the biggest stumbling block for readers today would be how to treat this poem with any integrity given the large number of sexual liaisons attributed to Solomon. Why should we listen to what he has to say regarding the purity and ecstasy of the one-flesh union between husband and wife?

It may be that this relationship was his first serious romance and the only full-orbed marriage relationship that he experienced. Most of his queens resulted from political alliances. Certainly there is an **idealistic nature** to the presentation of love here between a bridegroom and his bride.

Despite these interpretative challenges, God has included this book in the canon for our investigation and benefit. With all of the sexual confusion promulgated by our culture today and the profaning of God's good gift of sex, it is important to study a biblical perspective on the topic. We want to avoid the two dangerous extremes:

- Labeling physical intimacy as somehow less than spiritual and something to be minimized and never discussed
- Abusing God's gift of physical intimacy outside of the boundaries of marriage as we see so graphically in our culture today

Need a balanced perspective.

Certainly in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve experienced God's good gift of a romantic relationship in idyllic fashion. This same sense of recovered idealistic romantic love and God-blessed sexual passion is portrayed in the love song penned here by Solomon. We do well to pause from our analytical studies to stop and **smell the roses**.

The book is intended to be read and heard as poetry – as a drama – as something that impacts not primarily our mind but our emotions.

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#### DRAMATIC READING [KJV]

##### **1:9-17**      Dialogue back and forth (between Male and Female)

Expresses mutual admiration, romantic desire and the joy of being together

**M:** *I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots. <sup>10</sup> Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold. <sup>11</sup> We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver.* He desires to honor and cherish her

**F:** *While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof. <sup>13</sup> A bundle of myrrh is my well beloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts. <sup>14</sup> My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of Engedi.* She treasures his presence like one treasures precious perfume.

**M:** *Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes.* He is enamored by her – particularly her eyes.

**F:** *Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed is green. <sup>17</sup> The beams of our house are cedar, and our rafters of fir.* They enjoy being together in nature (green couch, beams of cedar, rafters of pine), possibly symbolic of a peaceful, natural, private place where their love flourishes.

##### **2:1-6**      Dialogue back and forth expressing admiration

**F:** *I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.* Declaration of beauty

**M:** *As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.* Uniqueness of her beauty

**F:** *As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love. Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love. His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.* She celebrates being cherished and loved and is overwhelmed with desire – remembering or imagining a moment of physical intimacy.

**4:1-7** Solomon expresses admiration for the physical beauty of the woman – often referred to as a **wasf** – a traditional Arabic/Ancient Near Eastern style of poetry that praises a person's physical features in detail – progressing from head to breasts – uses metaphors from nature and architecture – expressing deep desire, respect and adoration

**M:** *Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair;*

*thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks: Gentle / Pure  
thy hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead.* Flowing/Dynamic beauty

<sup>2</sup> *Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing; whereof every one bear twins, and none is barren among them.*

<sup>3</sup> *Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely:*

*thy temples [cheeks] are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.* Rosy, fresh

<sup>4</sup> *Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.* Stately / Strong / Adorned

<sup>5</sup> *Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies.*  
Soft / youthful / symmetrical

<sup>6</sup> *Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense.* <sup>7</sup> *Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.*

**4:16 – 5:1** Heart of the Love Song – Climax of the Love Poem  
Mutual desire, invitation and the consummation of love

**F:** *Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.*

- She invites her beloved to come to her "garden"—a metaphor for her body and intimacy.
- The "north" and "south" winds may symbolize the stirring of passion.
- This is a poetic and bold invitation to **consummate their love**.

**M: 5:1** *I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk:*

- He responds, confirming he has **entered the "garden"**—another poetic way of saying they have consummated their love.
- The repetition of sensual imagery (myrrh, spice, honey, wine) evokes a sense of **abundance, pleasure, and fulfillment**.

- Calling her “my sister, my bride” is an ancient Near Eastern term of **affection and intimacy**, not literal.

**Affirmation of God:** *eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.*

God blessing the union -- It’s a **celebratory exclamation**, affirming that their love is good, right, and worth rejoicing in.

## 5:10-16 Bride expresses admiration

**F:** *My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.*

- He is **outstanding, strong, and set apart**—no one compares to him.
- "Radiant and ruddy" suggests **vitality, health, and masculine beauty**.

<sup>11</sup> *His **head** is as the most fine gold, noble / precious*

*his **locks** are bushy, and black as a raven. Youthfulness / strength*

<sup>12</sup> *His **eyes** are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set. Purity / tenderness*

<sup>13</sup> *His **cheeks** are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers: inviting and lovely*

*his **lips** like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh. Sensual and sweet*

<sup>14</sup> *His **hands** are as gold rings set with the beryl: strength and elegance*

*his **belly** is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires. “*

<sup>15</sup> *His **legs** are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: Stability / Dignity*

*his **countenance** is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. Majestic /Impressive*

<sup>16</sup> *His **mouth** is most sweet: Sensual and sweet*

*yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.*

- She sums up all his traits by saying he is completely desirable—not just physically but as a person.
- She calls him her beloved and her friend, emphasizing emotional intimacy alongside romantic love.

## 7:1-9 Solomon expresses admiration of the woman’s beauty

From feet upward

**M:** *How beautiful are thy **feet** with shoes, O prince's daughter!*

*the **joints of thy thighs** are like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman. <sup>2</sup>*

*Thy **navel** is like a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor:*

*thy **belly** is like an heap of wheat set about with lilies.*

<sup>3</sup> *Thy **two breasts** are like two young roes that are twins.*

<sup>4</sup> *Thy **neck** is as a tower of ivory;*

*thine **eyes** like the fishpools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bathrabbim:*

*thy **nose** is as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus.*

<sup>5</sup> *Thine **head** upon thee is like Carmel,*

and the **hair** of thine head like purple; the king is held in the galleries.

- **Celebration of Sensual Love**

- The physical body of the woman is described in detail, not shamefully but **reverently and joyfully**.
- Love includes **pleasure**, and this passage does not shy away from **eroticism within committed relationship**.

<sup>6</sup> *How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!* <sup>7</sup> *This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes.* <sup>8</sup> *I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples;*

This is **bold sensual imagery**—expressing **physical desire** in the context of **love and delight**, not lust or exploitation.

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**Bill McRae** does a good job of summarizing the scenes that comprise the book: Walk thru the story with me:

**I. 1:2 – 2:7 Description of the Wedding day**

Mutual affection  
Approach to the palace  
Coming into the banquet hall  
Entrance into the bridal chamber

**II. 2:8 – 3:5 Reminiscence (Recollection) of the Courtship period**

Bride recalls the first appearance of her suitor – Remember when we met – and meditates on the love that she has for him

**III. 3:6 – 5:1 – The Betrothal Day**

The bridal procession – the king comes to her home to pick her up and take her to the wedding  
Some description of the wedding night

**IV. 5:2 – 6:13 A troubled dream;** she is very anxious – she sees him come and she is slow to respond and he leaves – she thought she had almost lost him – Have you seen my beloved?  
Describes him

**V. 7:1 – 8:4 – Solomon returns and the bride is praised** – description of his love and appreciation for his wife

**Bride invites her husband** to go back home into Lebanon with her in the country – homesick bride

## **VI. 8:5-14 they go back to Lebanon; renewal of love relationship in their old home**

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Now that we are familiar with the **story line** we are going to work through these same major sections with a concentration on learning some **Love Lessons** as we celebrate Idealized Romantic Love.

But we must caution that this is not a “How to do it Manual” for either Courtship or Marriage Relationships. Still we can derive some applications that should be practical in our life and circumstances.

### **I. The Courtship Begins — Attraction and Desire (1:1 – 2:7)**

#### **LOVE LESSONS RELATED TO PREPARING FOR MARRIAGE**

*Key Text: Song 1:2 – “Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth!”*

##### **A. Mutual Attraction (1:1–11)**

- The Shulammitte and the beloved express desire

**(1:2-4) Perspective of the Bride: The Incomparable Ecstasy of Romantic Love Makes It Desirable**

##### **1. (:2) THE LONGING FOR ROMANTIC LOVE**

- i. Passion: *“May he kiss me with the kisses of his mouth!”*
- ii. Intoxication: *“For your love is better than wine.”*

##### **2. (:3) THE ATTRACTION OF ROMANTIC LOVE**

- i. Attraction based on the senses: *“Your oils have a pleasing fragrance,”*
- ii. Attraction based on Character: *“Your name is like purified oil;”*
- iii. Attraction based on Judgments of Others: *“Therefore the maidens love you.”*

##### **3. (:4a) THE COMPANIONSHIP OF ROMANTIC LOVE**

- i. *“Draw me after you and let us run together!”*

##### **4. (:4b) THE REJOICING IN ROMANTIC LOVE**

Inward Rejoicing -- *“We will rejoice in you and be glad;”*

Outward Boasting -- *“We will extol your love more than wine.”*

Rejoicing is Appropriate -- *“Rightly do they love you.”*

### (1:5-6) Women Can Struggle with Insecurities Regarding Physical Appearance – Dark-Skinned But Lovely

*"I am black but lovely, O daughters of Jerusalem, Like the tents of Kedar, Like the curtains of Solomon. <sup>6</sup> 'Do not stare at me because I am swarthy, For the sun has burned me. My mother's sons were angry with me; They made me caretaker of the vineyards, But I have not taken care of my own vineyard.'"*

- Beauty and character are both emphasized
- Application: Attraction matters, but godly character sustains love

### **B. Growing Affection and Longing (1:12–2:7) Mutual expressions of admiration**

- Romantic imagery and emotional intimacy
- The refrain: *"Do not arouse or awaken love until it pleases"* (2:7)
- Application: Patience and purity are virtues in courtship

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## **II. The Pursuit of Love — Seeking and Finding (2:8 – 3:5)**

*Key Text: Song 2:16 – "My beloved is mine, and I am his."*

[Application: Ways that I belong to Jesus and Jesus belongs to me]

### **A. The Call to Deeper Relationship (2:8–17)**

**Tom Gledhill:** The verses of this poem have such simple evocative power that any comment seems almost superfluous. The text is so marvelously alive, that any comment will appear to be very pedestrian. Beautiful poems can too often be reduced to dust and ashes by dry academic analysis. But, for the purposes of our exposition, we can divide the poem quite naturally into the girl's eager anticipation (**verses 8–9**) and the boy's urgent invitation (**verses 10–14**).

**(2:8-9)** Eager Anticipation on the part of the bride – Here comes my stud  
**(2:10-13)** Male responds with urgent Invitation to intimacy and commitment

**Trevor Longman:** Springtime is the universal time for love: warmer weather, the fragrance of flowers—a time to go outside, a time for the removal of clothes and intimacy. The couple can leave the urban setting and go out to the countryside, the place of lovemaking and union.

**(2:14)** Longing for Intimacy expressed by the male  
**(2:15)** Obstacles to love must be eradicated – *"Catch the foxes"*  
**(2:16-17)** Satisfy your sexual passion in the context of mutual relationship



- Christological insight: Christ calls His Bride to communion and intimacy

(:16) “*My beloved is mine, and I am his*” **Key phrase in the book**

**David Guzik:** These lines have been repeatedly allegorically applied to the relationship between Jesus and His people. **Charles Spurgeon** preached eight sermons on Song of Solomon 2:16–17, and in one of them titled *The Interest of Christ and His People in Each Other*, he meditated on the meaning of each aspect.

Ways that I belong to Jesus; ways that “*I am my beloved’s*”:

- I am His by the gift of His Father.
- I am His by purchase, paid for by His own life.
- I am His by conquest, He fought for me and won me.
- I am His by surrender, because I gave myself to Him.

Ways that Jesus belongs to me; ways that “*He is mine*”:

- He is mine by connection in the same body; He is the head and I am part of His body.
- He is mine by affectionate relationship; He has given me His love.
- He is mine by the connection of birth; I am born again of Him.
- He is mine by choice; He gave Himself for me.
- He is mine by indwelling; He has decided to live inside me.
- He is mine personally, He is mine eternally.

## **B. Love Tested by Separation (3:1–5)**

**Henry Morris:** The experience described in **Song 3:1-5** is evidently a **dream**, perhaps brought on by her concern over the “*little foxes*” which might eventually separate them

- The woman seeks the one her soul loves – her dream of losing her lover leads to an anxious search and recovery mission
- Application: True love endures hardship and seeks reconciliation

## **III. The Wedding and Consummation — The Joy of Marriage (3:6 – 5:1)**

### **LOVE LESSONS RELATED TO ENTERING INTO MARRIAGE**

*Key Text: Song 4:7 – “You are altogether beautiful, my darling; there is no blemish in you.”*

#### **A. The Royal Wedding Procession (3:6–11)**

- Solomon’s wedding day is a grand occasion -- **THE IDEALIZED BRIDAL PROCESSION WOVES EVERYONE WITH ITS DISPLAY OF ROYAL WEALTH AND POWER**

**David Guzik:** It was clear from this that the beloved (Solomon) could do the two essential things a man must be able to do before he is ready to be married: he must be able to **protect** and **provide** for his maiden. The protection was shown in the armed men who surrounded this procession; the provision was shown in the opulence of Solomon's entourage.

## **B. Bridal Beauty and Groom's Delight (4:1–15)**

### **PRAISE FOR YOUR BRIDE'S FLAWLESS BEAUTY OPENS THE DOOR FOR CELEBRATING THE SENSUALITY AND EXHILARATION OF INTIMACY**

- Detailed, poetic admiration of physical beauty – we read this earlier

**4:7** *"You are altogether beautiful, my darling, And there is no blemish in you."*

- Intimacy within marriage is holy, not shameful – Celebration of biblical sex

**(Heb. 13:4)** *"Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge."*

**4:9** Your love is alluring and exciting – You drive me crazy

*"You have made my heart beat faster, my sister, my bride;*

*You have made my heart beat faster with a single glance of your eyes,*

*With a single strand of your necklace."*

## **C. (4:16 – 5:1) The Consummation of Sexual Union in Marriage**

- The marriage is consummated with mutual joy

**Iain Duguid:** In this poem, the man and the woman discover the true meaning of marriage as a union of heart, soul and flesh. The long period of waiting comes to an end, and their sexual union is a moment of great delight and joy, not merely for them but for the wider community. The garden that was once carefully sealed and locked is now open so that the pleasures of its paradise can be explored and enjoyed. The Song joyfully affirms that the context for the richest of human relationships is within God's design for marriage, which is between a man and a woman.

- Application: Sex is God's gift for marital intimacy and bonding

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## **IV. Love in Conflict — Trials and Reconciliation (5:2 – 6:13)**

### **LOVE LESSONS RELATED TO NURTURING THE MARRIAGE**

*Key Text: Song 6:3 – "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine."*

## **A. Tension between the contrasting sex drives of the Male and the Female (5:2 – 6:3)**

We are wired differently. We must understand how to relate to one another.

There is a struggle for sexual compatibility.

- Application: Marital love must overcome pride and selfishness

This section which is difficult to interpret ends with a reaffirmation of mutual commitment:

**6:3** *“I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine, He who pastures his flock among the lilies.”*

### **B. Reconciliation and Renewed Delight (6:4–13)**

- **(6:4-10)** Love is restored; beauty is reaffirmed

**Richard Hess:** As noted, the theme of this address (**6:4–10**) is different from the first hymn of praise to the female. There the emphasis was upon the desirable features of her face and body. Here the words summarize and generalize the beauty of the female to emphasize the **power of that beauty**, a power that can overcome her lover's defenses with a gaze of her eyes and that can evoke praise from the finest women in the land. The central statement, that of **v. 9**, emphasizes how unique and therefore how special the female is. None can compare to her. Her lover learns this, not only from his own senses, but also from the praise of others. Together they observe in the female one whose beauty is a great power that can be used for good or evil.

- **(6:11-13)** Expression of beauty and passion in the nut grove and in the palace

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## **V. Mature Love — Deepening Intimacy and Mutual Joy (7:1 – 8:4)**

*Key Text: Song 7:10 – “I am my beloved's, and his desire is for me.”*

Nourishing marriage passion requires intentionality and feeds on mutual praise.

**Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible:** In order for something to be sustained, there must be some force at work that overcomes the item's natural tendency toward deterioration. Simply stated, **everything in life must be maintained and nourished**. Nothing ever reaches a point where it is permanently self-sustaining. Fires must be fed or they will burn out. Structures and machines must be maintained and improved or they will wear out or erode. People must be continually nourished or they will become weak and eventually die. Marriages are no different. If wood is not added and the flame is not fanned, the fire in marriage will go out. If a marriage is not nurtured and nourished, it will die. Some marriages are starved—wasting away and barely existing. God does not want it to be this way.

### **A. Physical Intimacy Celebrated (7:1–9)**

- The man delights in his wife's body
- Application: Sexual intimacy within marriage is sacred and fulfilling

### **B. Relationship of Mutual Possession (7:10) Female**

*“I am my beloved's, And his desire is for me.”*

### **C.Planning a Romantic Getaway (7:11-13)**

### **D. Pining for Freedom of Sexual Expression (8:1-4)**

**Richard Hess:** The poem has clearly seen the love of the couple aroused. However, they have explored it for reasons other than purely as a satisfaction of desire. Instead, their bodies with their desires, like the beauty of nature and the blessing of family, are traced back to an Artist who brings all these things into being. This unexpressed key provides for the **integration of beauty, desire, and commitment**. It thus allows the lovers to give themselves fully to one another without fear (1 John 4:18) and without oppression (Eph. 5, especially v. 21).

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## **VI. The Power and Permanence of Covenant Love (8:5-14)**

### **CLIMAX AND EPILOGUE**

*Key Text: Song 8:6 – “Love is as strong as death...”*

### **A. Love’s Invincible Strength (8:5–7)**

CLIMAX: CELEBRATION OF THE UNQUENCHABLE FLAME OF LOVE —  
ONCE AWAKENED, ROMANTIC LOVE PROVES POWERFUL AND PRICELESS

1. (:5) Remembering the Awakening of Romantic Love
2. (:6-7) Celebrating the Power and Value of Romantic Love (Female)

- True love is exclusive, enduring, and priceless
- Application: Biblical marriage is a covenant, not a contract

### **B. Purity and Protection of Love (8:8–12)**

1. (:8-10) Importance of Guarding the Gift of Virginity
2. (:11-12) Incomparable Value of Exclusive Love Commitment– Recalling Her Initial Commitment

### **C. Final Invitation and Fellowship (8:13–14)**

Intimacy of Sexual Union is an Unending Journey – Reveling in Their Ongoing Journey

- The lovers express longing and satisfaction

(vs. 14) *“Hurry, my beloved, And be like a gazelle or a young stag On the mountains of spices.”*

**Iain Duguid:** The open-ended conclusion to the Song reminds us that love is not a destination at which we arrive, but a **journey** to be undertaken together, a song that

truly never ends (Munro 1995: 89). . . Love is a journey, not a destination. It is two people united into one, travelling together, but confident enough to be apart when necessary. At the centre of this union is a delightful physical relationship, but this is merely one aspect of knowing each other completely. The man longs to hear the woman's voice, as well as to hold her in his arms. Her desire to kiss him, with which the poem began, has been fulfilled but not satisfied: it never can be. The note of **yearning** and **longing** persists in their relationship, wonderful as it is. This longing is intended to remind us all of a love greater than any human love, a love for which marriage provides the best picture that the world affords. This jealous love of God for his people has triumphed over death and Sheol through the cross, and now invites his bride into his eternal embrace, to embark on a journey together that stretches beyond our own deaths and the grave, onwards and upwards forever.

- Illustration: Anticipation of Christ's return and eternal union with His Bride

**Rev. 22:17-20** *"And the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come.' And let the one who hears say, 'Come.' And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost. . .*

<sup>20</sup> *He who testifies to these things says, 'Yes, I am coming quickly.' Amen. Come, Lord Jesus."*