

## Episode #405 The Song of songs (Introduction)

I. The book we call the Song of Solomon is called in verse 1, “the Song of songs, which is Solomon’s.” Like the expressions “King of kings” and “Lord of lords,” the “Song of songs” means the greatest of all songs. If God says so, we must agree with Him. But what is so special about this song?

II. There are many different interpretations of the Song

A. The song is an allegory about something else entirely. But what?

1. Solomon having a conversation with wisdom?
2. A textbook on ecclesiastical history?
3. A philosophical discussion of Aristotelian thought?

B. A love poem about Solomon

1. A collection of love poems by Solomon. This does not make sense, since there are repeating themes, which does not make sense for a collection.
2. A love poem about Solomon and one of his wives. His first wife? Unlikely. She seems to be Pharaoh’s daughter, but the girl here is a country girl.

C. FOR Solomon. Not the genitive case (of). Lamed means “to” or “for.” Psalm 72 title, translated *lishelomoh* as “for Solomon.” Same as “for the chief Musician.” “Which” = Hebrew *’asher* can mean “which is concerning.” Jeremiah 49:1, 7, 23, 28. Therefore, Solomon may not be the author at all!

1. A poem about Solomon’s courtship of a country girl. (*Berean Searchlight* suggestion). Would God make a polygamist the hero of His greatest romantic book in Scripture? This would be like a man teaching his daughter to look for a man like Magic Johnson, who said he had a thousand women before he contracted Aids.
2. A love story between a country girl and country boy, and the girl idealizes her lover as Solomon (ESV solution). Why would God idealize a polygamist?
3. God is the ultimate Father. If a human father would not idealize love like Solomon’s, why would God be a worse Father than we would be?

D. Some try to wiggle out of it by claiming it doesn’t matter what it is. It is a figure of God’s love for his people.

1. If the illustration of God’s love for me is of Solomon’s love for one of his wives, I do not feel very secure in God’s love!
2. These views more or less neutralize the book. I have heard many girls state that their favorite book is Ruth or Esther. I have never heard one say Song of Solomon. Why? Because we don’t teach this book. We view it as an embarrassment! This should not be.

E. A drama in five acts. Telling of a love triangle between a country girl, a country boy, and Solomon, who tries to steal her away from him. (Dr. Christian D. Ginsburg, from his *The Song of Songs: Translated From the Original Hebrew, With a Commentary, Historical and Critical*) Yet he says the view was gaining traction in his day (150 years ago), so he was not the originator of the idea.

1. The Five Acts—Act 1: Song 1:1-2:7. Act 2: Song 2:8-3:5. Act 3: Song 3:6-5:1. Act 4: Song 5:2-8:4. Act 5: Song 8:5-14
2. Solomon deserves to be the villain of a love story, not the hero!
3. Arguments against (ESV Study Bible notes):

- a. Cannot tell when Solomon or the country boy is speaking. Sorry, ESV, but I can tell.
- b. Why would Solomon be portrayed as a villain in a book dedicated to his honor? But what makes them think it is in his honor? I believe this book to be a rebuke to Solomon.

4. This is the only view that makes the book worthy of God & His Word.

III. Who is the author? We cannot tell. Perhaps Nathan, or Gad, or Ahijah the Shilonite.

IV. In the third section of the Old Testament, called the writings or Psalms, after its first book (*Kethubim*.) 11 books, the middle five (*Megilloth*) were read at the five feasts.

- A. Song of Solomon (Canticles): virtue rewarded. Read at Passover, deliverance from Egypt.
- B. Ruth. The stranger gathered in to share in God's goodness. Read at Pentecost.
- C. Lamentations. Alas! Israel's woes. Read at the Fast.
- B. Ecclesiastes. The People gathered to learn this world's emptiness. Read at Tabernacles.
- A. Esther. Virtue rewarded, deliverance from Haman. Read at Purim.

V. Conclusion: The Song of Solomon is not a collection of pointless love poems, nor a lot of symbology with no literal meaning. Rather, it is a story about true love in the face of adversity. It is an example of God's ideal of romantic love. It is not an exaltation of polygamy, but a rebuke of it. In this story, we see the kind of faithfulness and dedication that we should have to our God, Whom we should truly love with the same kind of passion this young couple has for each other.