

May 26

Psalm 127

Song of Songs 1-8

There is only one more Book in the Bible written by King Solomon. It is the Song of Songs. Orthodox Jewish men are not allowed to read it until they have reached an age of maturity, and that is for obvious reasons. It is, well, it is sensuous -- that is the best word I can find to describe it. While it is not nearly as graphic as some of the stuff that is written today about love and marriage, this Book is without question erotic. It is a love poem that stirs both the imagination and the blood of the people who read it.

This book is different than any other book in the Bible. The earliest Jewish rabbis tried to explain the presence of this in the Canon of the Old Testament was by interpreting it allegorically, so that the two major characters here, Solomon and his bride-to-be, are seen as merely unimportant players. The real meaning lies much deeper. They said it is a poem that helps us to understand God's love for His people Israel. Christian writers later said "nope, it is about Christ and the church."

While that may be an underlying sentiment, I have to say "did u read the same thing as I did? The book starts out with kissing and gets hotter from there! You've got a wedding and honeymoon stuff. There is symbolic language to be sure, but if you don't get the symbols, go ask your Dad... Cuz I am not explaining it here.

Guys, this book is about human love and S-E-X - Sex. It highlights that sex is good in the marital context. Yearning is good. Playfulness is good. Pet names are good. Highlights of body parts are good.... The act itself is good. And not just for procreation... For pleasure.

This flies in the face of what so many think of sex in the church. Usually the warnings against extramarital sex are so strong that Christians get scared of sex or think it's gross. You know, sex is gross so save it for the one you love....

Song of Songs combats that fiercely. A great book, but the freaky thing is that it made the cut into the Bible.

Song of Songs is actually a compilation of songs. We really don't know the plot line or who is singing each line of the song. Interpreters write those Lover, Beloved and Friend titles into your translation to help, but we don't know. So it is kind of like watching a musical, but only seeing the songs. Cool, eh? Here is one way tread between the lines.

In Wilmington's Complete Guide to Bible Knowledge, the author suggests that we see the Book as a three-act play. In Act 1 we meet the Cinderella, who lived with

her family in the town of Shulam, a town about 50 miles north of Jerusalem. There they maintained a vineyard, which apparently was owned by King Solomon, and this maiden was made by her family to spend a great deal of time working in that vineyard. She pruned the vines, she set traps for the little foxes and she kept the flocks, and she was deeply tanned because of her exposure to the sun.

One day a mysterious stranger came to the vineyard and he won the heart of the Shulammitite girl. She didn't know he was really Solomon because he was disguised as a shepherd. She asked about his flocks and he answered rather evasively, but was very definite about his love for her.

Solomon, had many wives and concubines, but maybe he was troubled wondering if he could ever really earn the love and loyalty of a woman if she didn't know who he was.

Act 2 begins when this mysterious stranger professes his love for the maiden and then leaves, but promises that he will return. During his absence she dreams about him, on two occasions. In the first dream she dreams that they were already married, and that one night she awakened to find him missing from the bed, and quickly she dressed and went out looking for him.

In the second dream, she dreamed that her beloved had returned and sought her to open the door and let him in, but she refused because she was unwilling to bestir herself and soil her feet by going to the door. Soon, however, her heart and her conscience got the best of her, and she leaped for the door, but he was already gone. She then frantically searched the city for her lover and during that search the guards of the city mistreated her. The watchman on the wall tore off her veil. She pleaded with the women in Jerusalem to aid her in finding her lover and inform him of her love for him. Then she discovers him. "My beloved has gone down to his garden, to the beds of spices, to browse in the gardens and to gather lilies. I am my lover's and my lover is mine; he browses among the lilies."

Those are the two dreams that she has concerning this mysterious shepherd lover, but why did he leave her, and where did he go and would he ever return?

Then comes Act 3. The mighty monarch arrives. One day this little town of Shulam receives the electrifying news that King Solomon himself is approaching the city. This lovesick and lonely maid isn't even interested and takes no further notice until word is brought that the powerful king wants to see her. She is puzzled until she is brought into his presence and she recognizes her beloved shepherd. Then he explains to her that although he already has sixty wives, and 80 concubines, and unnumbered virgins, she is going to be his choice bride, his true love. He invites her to come with him and promises to care for her little sister. She is placed in the king's chariot which is made from the wood of Lebanon, with silver posts, a golden canopy, and purple seating, and goes off to

the royal palace, accompanied by 60 mighty swordsmen and experienced bodyguards and they live happily ever after.

Well, that is one possible way to read the story between the lines. But the underlying message is that sex in marriage is really good. So if you are married, obey the Bible and have more sex. If not, look forward to marriage to experience the thrill!

God bless you all! I don't think you'll hear me say that in another accelerator all year!