

## Song of Songs Discussion Qs

1. The poetry of the *Song of Songs* contrasts dramatically with both our general sexual culture as well as our aesthetic and poetic culture. How then can we learn to appreciate this OT book that is a love poem about sex within marriage? Much in the poetic style is counter-intuitively and counter-culturally beyond our grasp. We must enter into its style and get a sense of the forms of analogy and image making used in the poems. Though difficult, the euphemism of this style is refreshing in our day of raw sexual images. Here, like so much of the biblical worldview, pleasure rests on the foundation of meditation. It is thereby put in balance within the wholeness of life for a wholesome and balanced wisdom in our walk with God (Gen 2.25 candidly and literally puts the nakedness of husband and wife in the context of their walk with God in the Garden of Eden).
2. What does it mean to say the Song is a summons to sexual bliss? It is a summons to righteousness of life before God, before whom all things are naked and exposed. It is a summons to enjoy the pleasures of sex as a gift of God to man and woman his image bearers on the earth; after all, He made us male and female. It is a summons to the mutuality of nakedness in marriage and the sharing of nakedness, intimacy, and affection.
3. What does it mean to speak of the joy of sexual love as a symbol? It is a pleasure that God gave for husband and wife as part of the fabric of their exclusive love for one another. Their sexual relationship tokens, represents, and symbolizes their love for each other in the totality of their existence together before the Lord. Now in our fallen world and as part of redemptive revelation, Songs teaches that the intimate love of husband and wife tokens man's true humanity and dignity as they, male and female, image God's righteousness and true holiness.
4. How does the message of the book of Songs tie into the big picture of the history of redemption? The Song presents the joy of sexual pleasure as a sign of the pleasure of paradise for God's image bearers, male and female, the pleasure compromised by sin but restored to fullness by the coming king, the greater Solomon (the greater than Solomon), Jesus Christ the risen Lord. Marriage, sex, and procreation have a historical-redemptive and symbolic role in the formation the human race. That role ends at the second coming of Christ. Then, the full power of the symbol of the new wine of fulfillment, the marriage celebration (Jn 2), and feasting in the presence of the bridegroom becomes reality. Marriage, sex, and procreation no longer exist at the end of the age (Lk 20.34-36). Then marriage will give way to what it pictures: the coming of Christ as the bridegroom to save His bride and form the new human family (Mat 9.14-17; Eph 5.25-27; Rev 19.1-9).