

# SESSION 6

## The Writings of Solomon

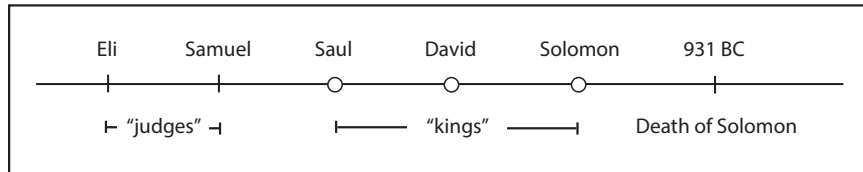
### I. PRAYER

### II. PANORAMA OF THE BIBLE

#### A. Movements 6-8: Biblical Books

KINGSHIP/MONARCHY		
MOVEMENTS 6-8		
Number	Title	Biblical Books
6	Kingship: United Monarchy	1-2 Samuel 1 Kings 1-2 Chronicles Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Songs
7	Kingship: Divided Monarchy	1-2 Kings 2 Chronicles Selected prophets
8	Exile	Ezekiel Daniel (Jeremiah)

**B. Timeline: Movement 6**



**III. BIBLICAL CONTEXT: WISDOM LITERATURE**

**A. Structure of the English Bible: Old Testament**

OLD TESTAMENT		
Narrative (17)	Wisdom (5)	Prophetic (17)
Torah (5)	Poetical (5)	Major (5)
History (12)		Minor (12)
Genesis–Esther	Job–Song of Songs	Isaiah–Malachi
Historical	Experiential	Predictive/Didactic

**B. Overview of the Wisdom Books**

Baxter (*Explore the Book, Vol III*, 13) summarizes the basic message of the wisdom books:

- The Book of Job ..... Blessing through Suffering
- The Psalms ..... Praise through Prayer
- The Proverbs ..... Prudence through Precept
- Ecclesiastes ..... Verity through Vanity
- Song of Solomon ..... Bliss through Union

## IV. WISDOM LITERATURE: SOLOMON'S CONTRIBUTIONS

### A. Psalms

King Solomon is attributed to authoring two psalms. Selections from each of the psalms follow.

#### 1. Psalm 72

Psalm 72:1-2

*Endow the king with your justice, O God, the royal son with your righteousness. <sup>2</sup>May he judge your people in righteousness, your afflicted ones with justice.*

Psalm 72:15-17

*Long may he live! May gold from Sheba be given him. May people ever pray for him and bless him all day long. <sup>16</sup>May grain abound throughout the land; on the tops of the hills may it sway. May the crops flourish like Lebanon and thrive like the grass of the field. <sup>17</sup>May his name endure forever; may it continue as long as the sun. Then all nations will be blessed through him, and they will call him blessed.*

Psalm 72:18-19

*Praise be to the LORD God, the God of Israel, who alone does marvelous deeds. <sup>19</sup>Praise be to his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen.*

#### 2. Psalm 127

Psalm 127:1-5

*Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain. <sup>2</sup>In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat— for he grants sleep to those he loves. <sup>3</sup>Children are a heritage from the LORD, offspring a reward from him. <sup>4</sup>Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one's youth. <sup>5</sup>Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their opponents in court.*

## B. Proverbs

1. Solomon authored many (“three thousand”) proverbs.

1 Kings 4:29-34

*God gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand on the seashore.<sup>30</sup> Solomon’s wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the people of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt.<sup>31</sup> He was wiser than anyone else, including Ethan the Ezrahite—wiser than Heman, Kalkol and Darda, the sons of Mahol. And his fame spread to all the surrounding nations.<sup>32</sup> He spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs numbered a thousand and five.<sup>33</sup> He spoke about plant life, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of walls. He also spoke about animals and birds, reptiles and fish.<sup>34</sup> From all nations people came to listen to Solomon’s wisdom, sent by all the kings of the world, who had heard of his wisdom.*

2. Solomon authored many Biblical proverbs.

- a. **Proverbs 1-9**

Proverbs 1:1

*The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel...*

- b. **Proverbs 10:1-22:1b**

Proverbs 10:1a

*The proverbs of Solomon...*

- c. **Proverbs 25-29**

Proverbs 25:1

*These are more proverbs of Solomon, compiled by the men of Hezekiah king of Judah...*

## C. Ecclesiastes

Many scholars accept the Solomonic authorship of the Book of Ecclesiastes under the title, “The words of the Teacher, son of David, king in Jerusalem” (Eccl 1:1; also see 1:12).

The Jewish Talmud attributes the book to Solomon (though perhaps with some later edits). Many conservative scholars see internal evidence (based on content) that Solomon could and most likely did author the book at a

later, reflective time in his life. This does not preclude the likelihood that later, Spirit-inspired editors contributed to the final form of the text.

Selective portions of the book follow.

1. Ecclesiastes 1:1-2  
*The words of the Teacher, son of David, king in Jerusalem: <sup>2</sup>"Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher. "Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless."*
2. Ecclesiastes 1:12-14  
*I, the Teacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup>I applied my mind to study and to explore by wisdom all that is done under the heavens. What a heavy burden God has laid on mankind! <sup>14</sup>I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind.*
3. Ecclesiastes 3:1  
*There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens...*
4. Ecclesiastes 6:12  
*For who knows what is good for a person in life, during the few and meaningless days they pass through like a shadow? Who can tell them what will happen under the sun after they are gone?*
5. Ecclesiastes 7:11-12  
*Wisdom, like an inheritance, is a good thing and benefits those who see the sun. <sup>12</sup>Wisdom is a shelter as money is a shelter, but the advantage of knowledge is this: Wisdom preserves those who have it.*
6. Ecclesiastes 12:9-10  
*Not only was the Teacher wise, but he also imparted knowledge to the people. He pondered and searched out and set in order many proverbs. <sup>10</sup>The Teacher searched to find just the right words, and what he wrote was upright and true.*

#### **D. Song of Solomon (or, Song of Songs)**

This most unique love song ascribes authorship to Solomon in its first verse ("Solomon's Song of Songs"—1:1). Further authorial testimony comes in vv. 1:4-5 ("the king"); 3:11

("King Solomon"); 6:12 ("royal chariots of my people"); 7:5 ("the king"); 8:11-12 ("Solomon" –2 times).

Like Ecclesiastes, many scholars have rejected Solomonic authorship due to certain linguistic concerns. Equally problematic is the interpretive approach to the song: should it be taken literally as an intimate love song? Or taken allegorically using a story as a vehicle for various truths? Or even as an extended type: Solomon as a type of Christ demonstrating Christ's love for His Church?

This writer leans into the Song of Songs as a man's (Solomon's) love for his beloved with other principles illustrated as well.

**E. Solomon's Authorship: Stages of Life**

It is possible (though hardly provable) that Solomon penned these separate works at various stages of his life. Regardless of when he actually wrote these books, they do seem to reflect what we know of his life. Consider the following chart.

<b>KING SOLOMON</b>		
<b>STAGES OF LIFE: WRITINGS</b>		
STAGE 1	STAGE 2	STAGE 3
Song of Songs	Proverbs	Ecclesiastes
Youthful, Younger Years	Mature, Middle Years	Pessimistic, Older Years
Love of Life	Love of Wisdom	Loss of Meaning
SS 1:15	Prov 1:7	Eccl 1:1-2; 12:13-14

## V. SOLOMON AND PROVERBS: OVERVIEW

### A. Proverbs: Introduction

#### 1. Definition

The Hebrew word translated “proverb” is **masal**, the basic meaning of which is “to be like” or “to be compared to” (though other meanings can be found). Thus, in wisdom literature, Proverbs takes everyday occurrences in life and summarizes the observations into short, pithy, and memorable sayings.

Wilkinson and Boa (161) point out that Proverbs teaches wisdom or skillful living. They note:

*In short pithy statements, maxims and stories, Solomon and other contributors set forth about nine hundred proverbs-inspired precepts dealing with wisdom and folly, pride and humility, justice and vengeance, laziness and work, poverty and wealth, friends and neighbors, love and lust, anger and strife, masters and servants, life and death.*

Thus, a proverb is a wise maxim about life that is generally true (though there may be exceptions). Proverbs are not ironclad promises but general principles (guides) to be considered by the wise (as opposed to the foolish). Yet, it is important to note that proverbs can also at times express absolute truth as well.

Proverbs 3:5-6

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; <sup>6</sup>in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.*

Note that this proverb is not simply a maxim about life, it is revelational truth (supported by other scriptures). When a proverb is supported by other relevant Biblical passages it can be considered both a general principle or maxim and also a Biblical promise or assertion.

**Insight:**

To summarize, a proverb is a wise saying about life. It describes wisdom (i.e. “skillful insights” on life) and folly and gives practical, down-to-earth counsel on how to conduct one’s life. The wise ponder the meaning of a proverb, the foolish ignore these insights on successful living.

## 2. Description

Trench (quoted by Constable, *Notes on Proverbs*, 5) has observed that all proverbs possess four characteristics:

- (a) “shortness” (i.e. brief, compact)
- (b) “sense” (wise, discerning)
- (c) “salt” (pithy, vigorous, meaty)
- (d) “popularity” (timeless, memorable)

## 3. Structure (form)

Proverbs are poetic in form and as such can be seen as containing “figurative language” (simile, metaphor, allegory, hyperbole, irony, and others). Proverbs also are constructed using poetic “parallelism” (as opposed to rhyme and meter as in English poetry). The primary types of parallelism (often found in Proverbs) include the following:

- (a) Synonymous parallelism: a thought in the first line is repeated in different words in the second.

Proverbs 3:1

*My son, do not forget my teaching,  
but keep my commands in your heart...*

Proverbs 3:11

*My son, do not despise the LORD’s discipline,  
and do not resent his rebuke...*

- (b) Antithetic parallelism: a thought in the second line is the opposite of the thought in the first line.



Proverbs 10:1

*The proverbs of Solomon: A wise son brings joy to his father,  
but a foolish son brings grief to his mother.*

Proverbs 11:6

*The righteousness of the upright delivers them,  
but the unfaithful are trapped by evil desires.*

- (c) Synthetic parallelism: the second line extends the thought of the first line without repeating or rephrasing the first.

Proverbs 12:9 ("better than")

*Better to be a nobody and yet have a servant  
than pretend to be somebody and have no food.*

Proverbs 17:7 ("how much worse" or "how much more")

*Eloquent lips are unsuited to a godless fool—  
how much worse lying lips to a ruler!*

- (d) Other parallelisms in Hebrew poetic form

Additionally, Hebrew poetic forms can also be integrative, comparative, emblematic, so forth. (For a scholarly treatment, consult Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs, 2 Vols.* Eerdmans, 2004).

## **B. Selected Solomonic Proverbs**

1. Solomon's contributions
  - a. Way of Wisdom: Proverbs 1-9
  - b. Proverbs of Solomon: Proverbs 10-22
  - c. Collected proverbs (men of Hezekiah) of Solomon: Proverbs 25-29
2. Way of Wisdom (Prov 1-9)
  - a. Proverbs 1:1-7 (purpose and theme of Proverbs)  
*The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel:  
<sup>2</sup> for gaining wisdom and instruction; for understanding words of insight; <sup>3</sup> for receiving instruction in prudent behavior, doing what is right and just and fair; <sup>4</sup> for giving prudence to those who are simple, knowledge and discretion to the young—*

<sup>5</sup> let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance— <sup>6</sup> for understanding proverbs and parables, the sayings and riddles of the wise. <sup>7</sup> The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

- b. Proverbs 3:1-2, 5-6 (benefits of wisdom)  
*My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, <sup>2</sup>for they will prolong your life many years and bring you peace and prosperity.*

<sup>5</sup> Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; <sup>6</sup>in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

- c. Proverbs 9:10-12 (basis of wisdom)  
*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. <sup>11</sup>For through wisdom your days will be many, and years will be added to your life. <sup>12</sup>If you are wise, your wisdom will reward you; if you are a mocker, you alone will suffer.*

3. Proverbs of Solomon (Prov 10-22)

- a. Proverbs 11:2-3 (pride and integrity)  
*When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom. <sup>3</sup>The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity.*

- b. Proverbs 15:1-2 (wise speech)  
*A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. <sup>2</sup>The tongue of the wise adorns knowledge, but the mouth of the fool gushes folly.*

- c. Proverbs 21:3 (reality over ritual)  
*To do what is right and just is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.*

Micah 6:6-8

*With what shall I come before the LORD and bow down before the exalted God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? <sup>7</sup>Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand*

*rivers of olive oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? <sup>8</sup> He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.*

- d. Proverbs 22:1 (legacy)  
*A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.*

4. Collected proverbs (men of Hezekiah) of Solomon:  
(Prov 25-29)

- a. Proverbs 25:1-2 (Kings cf. 16:10-15)  
*These are more proverbs of Solomon, compiled by the men of Hezekiah king of Judah: <sup>2</sup>It is the glory of God to conceal a matter; to search out a matter is the glory of kings.*

- b. Proverbs 25:28 (self-control)  
*Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control.*

- c. Proverbs 26:14-16 (laziness)  
*As a door turns on its hinges, so a sluggard turns on his bed. <sup>15</sup>A sluggard buries his hand in the dish; he is too lazy to bring it back to his mouth. <sup>16</sup>A sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven people who answer discreetly.*

- d. Proverbs 27:2 (humility)  
*Let someone else praise you, and not your own mouth; an outsider, and not your own lips.*

- e. Proverbs 28:13 (confession)  
*Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy.*

Psalm 32:1-5 (a psalm of David)

*Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. <sup>2</sup> Blessed is the one whose sin the LORD does not count against them and in whose spirit is no deceit. <sup>3</sup> When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. <sup>4</sup> For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was sapped*

*as in the heat of summer. <sup>5</sup> Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD." And you forgave the guilt of my sin.*

1 John 1:9

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*

## **VI. SOLOMON AND ECCLESIASTES**

### **A. Charted**

<b>ECCLESIASTES</b>
I. Author (1:1)
II. Theme (1:2-11): Meaningless/Vanity/Futility/Absurdity... "under the sun"
III. Wisdom is Meaningless (1:12-18).
IV. Pleasures are Meaningless (2:1-11).
V. Rewind: Wisdom is Meaningless (2:12-17).
VI. Toil (work) is Meaningless (2:17-26).
Philosophical Interlude: Time for All Things vs. Eternal Things (3:1-22)
VII. Five Issues of Life (4:1-5:6) and The Answer (5:7)
A. Harsh Oppression (4:1-3)
B. Unhealthy Envy (4:4-6)
C. Lonely Achievement (4:7-12); Answer (5:7)
D. Fleeting Popularity (4:13-16)
E. Superficial Religion (5:1-6)
VIII. Riches are Meaningless (5:8-20).
IX. Wealth, Possessions, Honor are Meaningless (fleeting) (6:1-12).
X. Wisdom Living in the Midst of Meaninglessness (7:1-12:8)
Theological Conclusion: Fear God and obey (12:9-14)

## B. Outlined

1. Statement of the problem (1:1-11)

Ecclesiastes 1:1-2

*The words of the Teacher, son of David, king in Jerusalem:*

<sup>2</sup> *"Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher.*

*"Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless."*

2. Study of the problem (1:12-12:8)

Ecclesiastes 1:12-14

*I, the Teacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup>I applied my mind to study and to explore by wisdom all that is done under the heavens. What a heavy burden God has laid on mankind! <sup>14</sup>I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind.*

3. Solution of the problem (12:9-14)

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

*Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. <sup>14</sup>For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.*

### Insight:

For a detailed outline of Ecclesiastes, see Appendix F, "The Book of Ecclesiastes", pp. 167-173.

## C. Notable Passages: Ecclesiastes

1. The theme

Ecclesiastes 1:2 NIV

*"Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher. "Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless."*

Ecclesiastes 1:2 ESV

*Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity.*

Ecclesiastes 1:2 AMP

*"Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher. "Vanity of vanities! All [that is done without God's guidance] is vanity [futile, meaningless—a wisp of smoke, a vapor that vanishes, merely chasing the wind]."*

2. Emptiness of wisdom and knowledge

Ecclesiastes 1:16-18

*I said to myself, "Look, I have increased in wisdom more than anyone who has ruled over Jerusalem before me; I have experienced much of wisdom and knowledge."*

*<sup>17</sup> Then I applied myself to the understanding of wisdom, and also of madness and folly, but I learned that this, too, is a chasing after the wind. <sup>18</sup> For with much wisdom comes much sorrow; the more knowledge, the more grief.*

3. Emptiness of pleasure

Ecclesiastes 2:1-3

*I said to myself, "Come now, I will test you with pleasure to find out what is good." But that also proved to be meaningless. <sup>2</sup> "Laughter," I said, "is madness. And what does pleasure accomplish?" <sup>3</sup> I tried cheering myself with wine, and embracing folly—my mind still guiding me with wisdom. I wanted to see what was good for people to do under the heavens during the few days of their lives.*

4. Emptiness of superficial religion

Ecclesiastes 5:1-7

*Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. Go near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, who do not know that they do wrong. <sup>2</sup> Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few. <sup>3</sup> A dream comes when there are many cares, and many words mark the speech of a fool. <sup>4</sup> When you make a vow to God, do not delay to fulfill it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfill your vow. <sup>5</sup> It is better not to make a vow than to make one and not fulfill it. <sup>6</sup> Do not let your mouth lead you into sin. And do not protest to the temple messenger, "My vow was a mistake." Why should God be angry at what you say and destroy the work of your hands?*

<sup>7</sup> Much dreaming and many words are meaningless.  
Therefore fear God.

5. Emptiness of riches

Ecclesiastes 5:10-12

*Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income. This too is meaningless. <sup>11</sup>As goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owners except to feast their eyes on them? <sup>12</sup>The sleep of a laborer is sweet, whether they eat little or much, but as for the rich, their abundance permits them no sleep.*

6. Emptiness of life

Ecclesiastes 6:12

*For who knows what is good for a person in life, during the few and meaningless days they pass through like a shadow? Who can tell them what will happen under the sun after they are gone?*

7. Emptiness of unfair life

Ecclesiastes 8:14

*There is something else meaningless that occurs on earth: the righteous who get what the wicked deserve, and the wicked who get what the righteous deserve. This too, I say, is meaningless.*

8. Emptiness and the conclusion

Ecclesiastes 12:9-14

*Not only was the Teacher wise, but he also imparted knowledge to the people. He pondered and searched out and set in order many proverbs. <sup>10</sup>The Teacher searched to find just the right words, and what he wrote was upright and true. <sup>11</sup>The words of the wise are like goads, their collected sayings like firmly embedded nails—given by one shepherd. <sup>12</sup>Be warned, my son, of anything in addition to them. Of making many books there is no end, and much study wears the body. <sup>13</sup>Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. <sup>14</sup>For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.*

## VII. SOLOMON AND THE SONG OF SONGS

### A. Chart: Broad Overview

Wilkinson and Boa (176) have captured the structure of the Song of Songs in a helpful, creative way. The following chart largely reflects their work.

SONG OF SONGS			
Beginnings of Love		Broadening of Love	
1:1	5:1	5:2	8:14
Falling in Love 1:1                      3:5	United in Love 3:6                      5:1	Struggling in Love 5:2                      7:10	Growing in Love 7:11                      8:14
Courtship	Wedding	Problem	Progress
Fostering of Love	Fulfillment of Love	Frustration of Love	Faithfulness of Love

### B. Chart: Outlined (Key Scriptures)

The following outline with selected Scriptures from the Song of Songs follows the preceding chart. This outline presents this Biblical book as an historical account (not “pious fraud”) of young Solomon’s love for the Shulamite woman. This does not mean that the Song cannot also illustrate Christ’s love for the Church. But this approach sees that as more an applicational truth than a straightforward reading of the text. For Jewish readers it has been traditionally read at the Feast of Passover (recall that Israel was referred to as the bride of YHWH—eg. Isa 54:5-6; Jer 2:2; Hos 2:16-20; in the New Testament the Church is seen as the bride of Christ—2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:23-25; Rev 19:7-9; 21:9).



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## “SONG OF SONGS”

### I. BEGINNINGS OF LOVE (1:1-5:1)

#### A. Courtship: Falling in Love (1:1-3:5)

1. Beloved speaks (bride)

Song of Songs 1:2-3

*Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth—for your love is more delightful than wine.<sup>3</sup> Pleasing is the fragrance of your perfumes; your name is like perfume poured out. No wonder the young women love you!*

2. Friends speak (others)

Song of Songs 1:4b

*We rejoice and delight in you; we will praise your love more than wine.*

3. Beloved speaks (bride)

Song of Songs 1:5

*Dark am I, yet lovely, daughters of Jerusalem, dark like the tents of Kedar, like the tent curtains of Solomon.*

4. Lover speaks (king)

Song of Songs 1:9-11

*I liken you, my darling, to a mare among Pharaoh's chariot horses.<sup>10</sup> Your cheeks are beautiful with earrings, your neck with strings of jewels.<sup>11</sup> We will make you earrings of gold, studded with silver.*

Further conversations between the bride and the king ensue. The bride is praised for her beauty; the bride exults in the king's love for her.

5. Beloved's (bride's) soliloquy (cf. 2:3-13)

Song of Songs 2:7-8

*Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you by the gazelles and by the does of the field: Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires.<sup>8</sup> Listen! My beloved! Look! Here he comes, leaping across the mountains, bounding over the hills.*

6. Beloved speaks (bride)

Song of Songs 2:16

*My beloved is mine and I am his; he browses among the lilies.*

Song of Songs 3:5

*Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you by the gazelles and by the does of the field: Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires.*

**B. Wedding: United in Love (3:6-5:1)**

1. Wedding procession

Song of Songs 3:6-8

*Who is this coming up from the wilderness like a column of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and incense made from all the spices of the merchant? <sup>7</sup>Look! It is Solomon's carriage, escorted by sixty warriors, the noblest of Israel, <sup>8</sup>all of them wearing the sword, all experienced in battle, each with his sword at his side, prepared for the terrors of the night.*

Song of Songs 3:11

*...come out, and look, you daughters of Zion. Look on King Solomon wearing a crown, the crown with which his mother crowned him on the day of his wedding, the day his heart rejoiced.*

2. Wedding night (king speaks)

Song of Songs 4:1, 7

*How beautiful you are, my darling! Oh, how beautiful! Your eyes behind your veil are doves. Your hair is like a flock of goats descending from the hills of Gilead. <sup>7</sup>You are altogether beautiful, my darling; there is no flaw in you.*

**C. Problem: Struggling in Love (5:2-7:10)**

After the wedding, the Shulamite bride failed to respond to her husband's affections. As a result the king withdrew from her.

The bride realizes her mistake and calls upon others to tell the king of her love for him. She extols his physical beauty, "My lover is radiant and ruddy, outstanding among ten thousand" (5:10).

Intimacy is restored and each communicates love for the other.

**D. Progress: Growing in Love (7:11-8:14)**

1. Beloved speaks (bride)

Song of Songs 7:11

*Come, my beloved, let us go to the countryside, let us spend the night in the villages.*

Song of Songs 8:6-7

*Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm; for love is as strong as death, its jealousy unyielding as the grave. It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame. Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot sweep it away. If one were to give all the wealth of one's house for love, it would be utterly scorned.*

2. Beloved's final word

Song of Songs 8:14

*Come away, my beloved, and be like a gazelle or like a young stag on the spice-laden mountains.*

While the Song of Songs is a love story, it also illustrates the intimacy of love that Christ has for His bride, the Church. The last verse of the Song closes with a call for the king (bridegroom) to return to his beloved (bride). Note the similarity in the final chapter and closing verses of Revelation 22:20, "He who testifies to these things says, 'Yes, I am coming soon.' Amen. Come, Lord Jesus."



## VIII. SESSION TAKEAWAYS

### A. Solomon's Story: Shared Heart

Solomon shared his heart for God by attempting to mix pagan worship with YHWH worship. The end-result was a poor finish to his life.

Proverbs 4:23

*Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.*

Exodus 20:3-4

*"You shall have no other gods before me. <sup>4</sup>You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below."*

1 John 5:21

*Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.*

### B. Book of Proverbs

The complexities of life cry out for applied wisdom. Solomon asked for wisdom, received it, but did not always follow it.

Proverbs 7:1-5

*My son, keep my words and store up my commands within you. <sup>2</sup>Keep my commands and you will live; guard my teachings as the apple of your eye. <sup>3</sup>Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart. <sup>4</sup>Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," and to insight, "You are my relative." <sup>5</sup>They will keep you from the adulterous woman, from the wayward woman with her seductive words.*

### C. Book of Ecclesiastes

From the reflections of a king who made both good choices and bad comes a review of all that he has pursued and experienced ("been there, done that"). After pronouncing all to be emptiness (or vanity or meaningless), he finally finds the solution to life.

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

*Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. <sup>14</sup> For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.*

#### **D. Song of Songs**

The song depicts the joys of intimacy in marriage. It also illustrates proverbial wisdom for marriage from the Book of Proverbs.

Proverbs 5:15-18

*Drink water from your own cistern, running water from your own well. <sup>16</sup> Should your springs overflow in the streets, your streams of water in the public squares? <sup>17</sup> Let them be yours alone, never to be shared with strangers. <sup>18</sup> May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth.*