

| Sexuality before the fall | Sexuality in Song of Songs | Sexuality in the New Testament |
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| <p>1. Sex is God's creation not his nature (although, He is a unity of persons).</p> <p>2. Sex is for a monogamous, heterosexual marriage Gen.2:22-24 is the pattern set forth at creation. Gen.2:18-23 singular nouns & pronouns used throughout 'a helper as his partner' Gen.2:24 a man and his wife (both nouns are singular)</p> <p>3. Spouses are equals Genesis 1:26-28 same blessing and responsibilities. Genesis 2 - is from incomplete to complete not from superior to inferior. Genesis 2:18 'ezer kenegdo 'a helper fit for him' – 'helper' does not mean 'assistant'; in fact most of the 21x 'ezer is used, in the Bible outside of this passage, it is used of God toward Israel</p> | <p>1. Like Eden, sex takes place in creation but is not God's nature. There are no divine re-enactments or efforts to arouse God to produce fertility.⁵</p> <p>2. Sex is for a monogamous heterosexual marriage They are a monogamous, heterosexual couple. There are no references to other wives. Solomon was apparently monogamous for many years with his first wife - Pharaoh's daughter. Solomon married her before he started building. The building of the temple took 7 years (1Ki.6:38) and the building of his wife's house took another 13 (7:1) – a total of 20 years (1Ki.9:10) before Pharaoh's daughter moved into her own home (1Ki.9:24). Throughout this account, there is no mention of other wives and the home for Pharaoh's daughter is for her alone.</p> <p>3. Spouses are equals They belong to one another (2:16; 6:3; 7:10) They echo each other's words, which does not happen with passive, dependent women in other literature of the time.⁶ They are equally capable, independent, self-reliant, self-assured and engaged in meaningful work.⁷ They both are portrayed in similar</p> | <p>1. Sex is not God's nature but it is his creation. (Mat.19:4; Mk.10:6)</p> <p>2. Sex is for a monogamous heterosexual marriage (Ro.1:24ff; 1 Cor.7:2ff)</p> <p>3. Spouses are equals 1 Cor.7:5 they are not to deprive one another of sexual contact. Gal.3:28 neither male nor female Eph.5:21 submit to one another</p> |

⁵ Fertility rites assume that human sexual activity, especially that done outdoors, serves as pornographic enticement to deities whose resultant sexual activity would cause rain, sun, vigorous crop growth as well as animal & human fertility.

⁶ 1:2 = 4:10 love better than wine; 1:4 = 3:4 they bring one another into the bedroom; 1:7,8; 3:1-4 & 5:6-7 = 2:9,14f they both search for one another; 1:12-14 = 4:6,13 they are both the same fragrant herbs & spices; 1:15 = 1:16 they are both beautiful and on & on it goes.

⁷ I am black and beautiful (1:5); I am the rose of Sharon (2:1; meaning I am unique amongst the flowers, not one amongst many); My breasts are like towers (8:10); blow on my garden (4:16); she works in the fields (1:6,7); even after marriage she has her own vineyard (8:11-12); she is every bit as competent as the wife described in Proverbs 31:10-31.

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| <p>(16/21) or toward military allies (3/16), which do not carry the idea of inferiority but a willing helper.</p> <p>Genesis 2:21 Derivation of Eve from Adam does not suggest superiority else the ground is superior to Adam Genesis 2:7.</p> <p>Adam's expression 'bone of my bone & flesh of my flesh' means equal to, the same as, corresponding with.</p> <p>Gen.2:23; 3:20 Adam naming 'woman' & 'Eve' is not an indicator of his superiority but his discernment, any more than Jacob's naming of Bethel makes him superior to the presence of God. Also, in 2:23 the use of passive voice suggests that it is God not Adam who names her 'woman'.</p> <p>4. Sexuality is for oneness and wholeness</p> <p>Genesis 1:27 implies that male + female = image of God.</p> <p>Genesis 2:23 "Adam in effect exclaims at his first sight of Eve, "At last, I'm whole! Here's the complement of myself!"</p> <p>Gen.2:24 <i>'azab</i> – he leaves¹;</p> <p>Gen.2:24 <i>dabaq</i> – he clings (strong personal attachment) & <i>wēhāyû lēbāsār 'ehād</i> – he becomes one flesh with her.²</p> | <p>ways unlike the radical differences in other ANE cultures where the descriptions are quite polarized.⁸ In fact, the woman is described using terms more typical for men.⁹</p> <p>She sexually arouses him (8:5) just as he does her (2:3-4; 5:2-5).</p> <p>They both invite the other out into nature (7:11ff; 2:10ff)</p> <p>The woman's voice predominates. She opens and closes the song; she speaks much more often; she interacts with the other characters in the song.</p> <p>In spite of her strength she is not domineering but craves his leadership (1:4) and enjoys him body & soul (2:3 he is an apple tree providing shade and sustenance and erotic pleasure; 8:5 she leans on him)</p> <p>Just as in Eden there were egalitarian equals <i>ish</i> and <i>ishha</i>, here there are <i>shelomoh</i> and <i>shulammit</i>.</p> <p>4. The couple describes their oneness & wholeness</p> <p><u>physical intimacy</u> - kissing (1:2; 8:1); touching (1:8); cradling/embracing (2:6; 8:3; 8:5); hugging (3:4); visual flirtation (4:9; 6:5); fondling (2:17; 7:7-8); sexually arousing (8:2); intercourse (4:16; 5:1; 7:12-13); smelling (1:3;) mouthing/licking or tasting (2:3-4, 16; 6:2; 7:9; 8:3); watching (4:5)</p> <p><u>emotional intimacy</u> – overwhelmed</p> | <p>4. Sexuality is for oneness and wholeness.</p> <p>Mat.19:5f; Mk.10:8; Eph.5:31; 1 Cor.6:16</p> |
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¹ In the ANE, when Moses wrote this passage, it was unheard of for the man to leave his family in marriage

² note: 'becoming one flesh' is a preferred translation over 'be one flesh' b/c the Hebrew phrase carries the idea of a process of development rather than an instantaneous event; Becoming one flesh is not a poetic description of intromission; else, Paul would not have said that intercourse with a prostitute was the act of joining Christ with a prostitute. The term *bāsār* translated 'flesh' is not simply a term for bodies but carries the idea of a unique relationship (Gen.29:14 (Laban identifying with Jacob); 37:27 (Judah's argument to not kill Joseph); Lev.18:6 (refs. to close relatives); Lev.25:49 (close relative); 2 Sam.19:13-14 (relatives)).

⁸ eyes like doves (4:1; 5:12); tall like trees (5:15; 7:7)

⁹ lion, leopard (4:8); military (6:4,10)

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| | <p>(2:5; 4:9; 5:6,8; 6:5); yearning (5:4); desire (7:10); delight (1:8,15,16; 2:10,13; 4:1,7,10; 5:9, etc.)</p> <p><u>friendship</u> – (5:1,16); enjoying things aesthetically together (enjoying beauty 2:10-13; 6:11; 7:11-13); dates (1:16f; 2:3-4, 10-14; 7:11-13); physical activity (2:8,17; 4:6; 8:14) and other kinds of recreation (4:8; 8:5); working together (1:6; 8:11-12; 1:7-8); problem solving (3:1-4; 5:6-8; 2:15); commitment (2:16; 3:6-11; 6:3; 7:10); communication including praise, longing, epithets (my love 9x; my bride 6x; my sister 5x; my dove 3x; fairest among women 3x; my beautiful one 2x; Shulammite 2x; my perfect one 2x; loved one 1x; my beloved 26x; whom my soul loves 5x; my friend 1x); loving each other's company (2:6; 8:3; 3:1-5; 5:2-8).</p> <p>Set me as a seal (8:6) communicates a hunger for interdependence. She is both independent of him and yet wishes to be exclusively part of him.</p> <p>In SS sensuality is not a discrete act but involves the whole person, physically¹⁰, emotionally, intellectually & volitionally. The imagery used evokes a whole range of reactions.</p> <p>They are not just lovers but friends (5:1,16).</p> <p>They are not just erotically stimulated by each other, their entire being is on the mind of their lover (1:3; 6:9; 5:2; 4:7)</p> <p>Even the names say <i>shalom</i> meaning wholeness,</p> | |
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¹⁰ Every sense is employed and every part of the body.

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| <p>5. This bond is permanent, exclusive and the 'way it should be' for all humans who marry. Gen.2:23 the third person reference translated 'this' implies that Adam was not just describing but vowing. Gen. 2:24 is a pronouncement by Adam to God The term 'therefore'³ at the head of v.24 points out that what follows is normative for marriage:</p> <p>6. This bond produces children but this is not the primary focus. But, Genesis 1:27 shows the first outcome of sexual intimacy to be one in the sense that God is one (c.f. Gen.2:24), v.28 shows that it also produces children. Oneness takes precedence over procreation. Unlike all other ANE literature which indicate that procreation is the primary function of marriage.</p> <p>7. Sex is wholesome, holy and beautiful. "Wow! At last! This is the one who fits me!" That they were 'not ashamed before one another'⁴ isn't merely a reference to their lack of self-</p> | <p>completeness in body, mind and soul.</p> <p>5.Their union is permanent and exclusive She is his 'only one' (6:9); the flower amongst thorns (2:2); he is an apple amongst the other trees (2:3); they are one another's (2:16; 6:3); her fruits are for him alone (7:13); she expects him to set her as a seal on his heart/arm (8:6). They are monogamous. 3:6-11 wedding procession 4:1-5:1 wedding ceremony (with the groom offering a public <i>wash</i> to his wife; ala modern Syrian weddings). There are 111 lines on either side of this section, showing it to be the pivot for the entire song.</p> <p>6. Children are not the focus. It emphasizes what Genesis emphasizes – the priority of the relationship. They are foremost to become one and from this unity - children. SS stands in contrast the other cultures where procreation is the focus of marital sexuality and/or the sexual arousal of the gods to cause enhanced fertility of nature.</p> <p>7.Sex is wholesome, holy and beautiful. Sexuality in SS is 'very good' like it was in the beginning. It is beautiful - the term 'beauty' is used over and over again (1:15,16; even the name for</p> | <p>5. Their union is permanent and exclusive Mat.5:31f; 19:5f</p> <p>6. Children are implied but not the focus of sexuality.</p> <p>7. Sex is wholesome, holy and beautiful Heb.13:4; it's used as the illustration of Christ with his 'bride'</p> |
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³ To what is 'therefore' pointing? Probably something like this, "Since God created man and woman to be one, Therefore, men and women will enter into the same kind of relationship: leaving others, clinging to one another and becoming one flesh"

⁴ a better translation of the Hebrew of Genesis 2:25.

consciousness about their nudity but their erotic enjoyment of one another in the presence of God (according to Davidson)... as well as their complete ease around one another

gazelle *sebi* means beauty.
It is sensuous – tastes, smells, touches, sights and sounds are filled to overflowing
It is exuberant – extolling one another, their experiences together and the command (by God?) that they should eat, drink and be drunk with love (5:1)
It is erotic – 1:13; 2:3-4; 2:16 (c.f. 4:5; 7:2); 2:17; 4:5; 4:12—16; 5:1-6; 6:2-3; 7:3, 8-9, 11-13; 8:2,5,14 (bārah ‘make haste’ may ‘mean come into me’ since the root of the Hebrew word *brh* is used elsewhere to mean penetrate)
It is unashamed and uninhibited
It is restrained and in good taste – the eroticism is couched in imagery, euphemism and double meanings; it is not vulgar in the sense of other ANE material (i.e. there are no explicit descriptions of genitals or sexual practices whereas ANE texts repeatedly talk about erect penises and plowing the vulva)
It is light hearted and playful – they tease, play on words and have fun together
It involves full blown love not merely eroticism
It is increasingly passionate
It is mysterious in some ways (prov.30:18-19; SS 8:6-7)