

The Song of Solomon and Modern Preaching

Commentary for August 1, 2007 — A Long and a Short Article

There are two articles this month. The longer is from a taped lecture that Dr. Martin gave in 1981 titled "The Song of Solomon." The shorter second article is "The Folly of Modern Preaching" from 1983. As always, I recommend you first read the "[August 2007 Newsletter](#)" which has additional information and comments of my own about the articles.

The Song of Solomon

The Song of Songs (as the Song of Solomon is called) is the finest example of Middle Eastern love poetry. It was composed by Solomon some time around 950–900 B.C.E. during his reign over the united Kingdom of Israel. Solomon was selected by God to succeed his father King David to rule over the tribes of Israel, and he was given great wisdom by God to rule Israel (1 Kings 4:29).

It is not a kind of poetry with which many of us are familiar, rhymes are rare in biblical and Middle Eastern poetry, but literary images or word pictures are the building blocks of ancient poetry during Solomon's time. There is a great use of imagery in the Song of Songs which makes it somewhat difficult for us to understand exactly what Solomon meant in a particular phrase because of his frequent use of figures of speech that had significance to his audience.

King Solomon represents the finest, the highest achievement of thought of mankind in all his writing. His biblical writings are mostly secular and yet he deals with spiritual issues as evidenced by the proverbs attributed to him. The Book of Ecclesiastes is a work dealing with spiritual issues.¹

"I the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem. And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail has God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith."

• *Ecclesiastes 1:12–13*

Solomon deals with male/female relationships and physical love in the Song of Songs. It is an aspect of human life that Solomon discusses in Ecclesiastes 3: 1–8 which begins with the phrase, **"To every thing there is a season"** There is a season for physical love and passion.

The Folly of Modern Preaching

Modern preaching "majors on the minors." By that I mean that modern preaching, in all churches today whether Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, mainline evangelical, or even sectarian, do not focus on God's salvation for mankind through Jesus Christ. This may seem a strange statement, but it is true. They talk "around" the subject of salvation.

They do not focus on the fact that salvation is yours and mine and everyone's by virtue of the work and love of God the Father and Jesus Christ. There are no works of yours that can do anything to either gain salvation or maintain ultimate salvation. As Dr. Martin explained to people (and I heard him say it several times), God is in the creation business; He will not fail.

1. See Appendix 2, "[The Book of Proverbs: Its Structure, Design and Teaching](#)" from Dr. Martin's book *Restoring the Original Bible*. See also Dr. Martin's presentation "[The Book of Ecclesiastes](#)" which discusses more about King Solomon, his times and his thinking. DWS

This is correct. God will not fail because He cannot fail. God's will prevails always and ultimately, according to the purpose of His will (Ephesians 1:11 and 1 Timothy 1:9, 2:4).

More on Problems of the Catholic Church

The Roman Catholic Church is the largest Christian denomination. The hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church faces great problems of sexual abuse by members of its clergy as was discussed in the "[July 13, 2007 Commentary](#)."

You should be aware that shortly after I wrote that commentary further news developed regarding legal proceedings between the Los Angeles Catholic Archdiocese and 508 plaintiffs who claimed sexual abuse by Catholic clergy. The Los Angeles Archdiocese and the plaintiffs agreed to a settlement amounting to 660 million dollars. This is the largest ever settlement payout in what has become an international issue of sexual abuse of children by clergy of all religious denominations. This \$660 million is in addition to the other payouts I cited in my commentary. See also the News Feature article in the American Catholic website "[The Catholic Church and Sexual Abuse by Priests](#)" which discusses the background of this issue from several different aspects.

Sexual abuse by clergy against children is an issue of power over those who are weak and an issue of depraved criminal thinking by the perpetrators. It is not so much an issue of sexuality. It is surprising that so few of the alleged perpetrators are brought up on criminal charges, although criminal indictments and convictions have increased recently.

This issue will be a factor in the decline of the Roman Catholic Church, and it will reflect the decline in all organized churches. Reread my May 22, 2002 Commentary, "[The Decline of the Churches](#)." In that Commentary I list several of Dr. Martin's articles that give the reasons for that decline.

God Will Judge

Rest assured that God will reveal all:

"... in the day when God will be judging the hidden things of humanity, according to my evangel, through Jesus Christ."

• Romans 2:15–16, Concordant Version

Note that God will judge and reveal **"the hidden things of humanity,"** and he shall do that **"through Jesus Christ."** Read for yourselves Acts 17:31 and 2 Corinthians 5:10. Your actions, my actions, everyone's actions will be held to account before God by Christ. For us who are chosen and saved, who know our present predestined grace through Christ (and eventually that of all mankind), that accounting will have a direct relationship on our reward.²

Paul admonished the Thessalonians on how they should live. His advice applies to you also:

"See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil."

• 1 Thessalonians 5:15–22

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2. It will have no bearing or reference on our ultimate salvation. However, if anyone persists in sin, although he or she will ultimately be saved, that person may miss out (as God determines) on the glory of, and a place in, the Kingdom of God. *DWS*