

Christ in Prophecy
Jesus in the Old Testament 29
I Am My Beloved's (Song of Solomon)

© 2022 Lamb & Lion Ministries. All Rights Reserved.
For a video of this show, please visit <http://www.lamblion.com>.

Opening

Tim Moore: Welcome to another episode of Christ in Prophecy! I'm your host, Tim Moore, along with my co-host, Nathan Jones. We're picking up speed as we highlight Jesus through the Old Testament. We've seen Him in pre-incarnate Christophanies, types, symbols, and prophetic foreshadows. And we've even discerned Him as the Author behind the scenes weaving the historical narrative together.

Nathan Jones: And today, we're going to turn our attention to a book that celebrates one of God's good and perfect gifts. The Song of Songs or Song of Solomon records the very intimate dialogue between two human lovers, and for that reason, it is much spicier than we at times realize.

Tim Moore: The Bible records scenes of violence and human depravity that would merit an adults only rating if it were graphically presented as a movie. And, in spite of the archaic and poetic language of Song of Solomon, its sensual affirmation of romantic love is enough to make many Christians blush.

Nathan Jones: But in the context of a Christian marriage, love and sex is nothing to be ashamed of. And, the motif of husband and wife, bridegroom and bride, and even lovers longing to be together, is shamelessly presented as a picture of our relationship to the Lord. Solomon, the wise king, wrote this love song early in his reign about the 10th century BC.

Tim Moore: Solomon's Shulammite bride captures the attitude we should have toward our heavenly Bridegroom: "My beloved is mine, and I am his...I am my beloved's, and his desire is for me."

Part 1- Interview with Pastor Tommy Nelson of Denton Bible Church

Tim Moore: Our guest today is a pastor who has become famous for teaching and preaching on the Song of Solomon. Tommy Nelson, no relation to the book publisher, is the head pastor at Denton Bible Church here in Texas. Tommy we are so delighted you could come to Maranatha Acres to be on this episode of Christ in Prophecy.

Tommy Nelson: Thank you. People have often asked me, I've read your Bible. And I'd say, "No, that is the publisher."

Tim Moore: That is the publisher. A good name though.

Tommy Nelson: Yes, Tom Nelson.

Tim Moore: Well, we are very glad to have you. And I've got to tell you Tommy we've worked all the way through the other books of the Old Testament leading up to Song of Solomon. And we've discussed the Fall of man, the Global Flood, the outpouring of God's wrath on Sodom and Gomorrah, and the conquest of the Promised Land, which has some graphic scenes even there. But none of those other books, or subjects strike fear in the heart of most preachers like Song of Solomon.

Tommy Nelson: Right. Oh, I think Dr. Criswell at First Baptist Dallas, his wife had a Sunday School class and she said she taught every book except the Song of Solomon.

Tim Moore: Why the fear for this particular book?

Tommy Nelson: You know throughout the history of the church there are two sides of sex, there is, this is the will of God, your sanctification that you abstain from immorality. God hath given His Holy Spirit and so we are being called to be, let there not be anything named among you, we are called to be holy. And yet, on the other occasion, let her breast satisfy you at all times. A man does not have authority over his own body, but his wife does. Stop depriving of each other except by agreement for a time that you can devote yourself to prayer. Come together soon lest Satan tempt you. If you are not having proper relations in the home Satan knows it.

And so, you see this kind of, stay holy and pure, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, but it is a good thing for the enjoyment and the union. And I think we are quick to preach on this, we are scared to preach on this because sexuality, I guess, is one of the few sins that at any given time there can be a honeymoon and glory, and over here it can be an abomination.

Tim Moore: Yes.

Tommy Nelson: And so, we've got this drive that has to be directed rightly. And so, maybe we are just scared to get too close to this over here.

Nathan Jones: Yeah, and it seems like not are only pastors scared to preach on Song of Solomon, or Song of Songs, but they seem then to not know how to deal with it with their audience. They might glaze some of the erotic passages, or the imagery, or some seem to revel in it and get really raunchy. We even had a local pastor who preached from Song of Solomon on the top of his church in a bed. And so, what is the correct balance in how we approach the audience?

Tommy Nelson: You know I have taught the Song of Solomon, gosh, well over 100 times. And if you teach the book literally there is no raunch. There is an extreme delicateness. There is an appropriateness to it. It gives you imagery that is very easy to see. But I've never, and I've done a young person's Song of Solomon, we did it at First Baptist Dallas with Mac Brunson when he was there. And we had all the kids there and I taught it just like I did the adults. And you know what, I never had a problem anytime with anybody saying this is too whatever. I didn't mention body parts because the text is very, very appropriate. It is very dignified.

But I had a Jewish scholar once from Hebrew University she said, "Gentiles have always had this platonic division of the flesh being evil, and the spirit being good." She said, "In the Hebrew worldview in the beginning God made the heavens and the earth, it is everything. So, it is a holy thing but it is a thing to be greatly enjoyed." She said, "That book is probably more amorous than you think it is." And I just left it right there.

Tim Moore: Now, I would agree it is amorous. You know I love what you mentioned about God created. We know God created man and woman. And after declaring the entire Creation good He actually said it is not good for man to be alone. And so, he needed a complementary companion. And don't get me wrong I'm not saying that woman's role is to complement man, as a matter of fact they simply in a marriage relationship should complement and balance one another.

Tommy Nelson: Right.

Tim Moore: And represent kind of a harmonized and unified pair. But God did give us the gift of sex.

Tommy Nelson: Which is the most intimate thing you can do.

Tim Moore: Yes, within that marriage union. And so, why do Christians treat sex as it is a four letter word?

Tommy Nelson: Probably because you don't see in society the glorification of proper marital love.

Nathan Jones: No.

Tommy Nelson: What you do see is the perversion of marital love. So, sexuality in marriage is kind of guilt by association.

But I tell you in our culture we are in a Post-Christian world. Jean-Paul Sartre the existentialist said that if there is no infinite reference point, that all points are meaningless. He understood that if you don't have an infinite personal creator God, that man, morality, sex, marriage have no meaning. They have mathematics. They have material. They have matter but we don't what they mean. And he was right. He should have gone back to Genesis 1:1 and he would have been alright, but instead we are going to create truth.

And as a result of that, when our culture embraced that all points began to fall. The military. Maleness and femaleness, now we are not sure what they are. And one of them that fell was marriage. Another one was police. The military. A lot of things fell. But one of them was sexuality. That we no longer understood sexuality. But the problem is humans are still who they are, and they get into marriage and you may not discuss proper sexuality before marriage, but I'll guarantee you in marriage its an issue.

And so, all of these--I did it at Prestonwood Baptist, it was called Metro and I taught the Song of Solomon. And we had 200 people. At the end of it we had 800 people. We taught it a second time and on the opening night we had 4,000 people, and these were Dallas singles. And they needed to understand kind of what the heck is going on? What is sexuality? We had Ward and June Cleaver that you never saw their bedroom. We had "Father Knows Best" you never saw their bedroom. Rob and Laura Petrie had singles. Ricky and Lucy had singles. Matter of fact the first double bed was Bob Newhart and his wife. But we have gone from this great appropriateness to all of a sudden it is perversion.

And I would preach on through that and I had to stop, Tim at times because the girls would be doing this, wiping the tears. And the guys would be looking straight ahead like they had been poleaxed. And so, I would have to stop and say, this is why we have a Savior. This is why we have a Bible to guide us in things. So, when you get rid of God, you are either going to go

monastic that sex is evil, or you are going to go perverse that there are no rules whatsoever. To find that balance of glory, and of a goodness that is only in the Bible.

So, I taught Song of Solomon and everybody wanted to hear it. And I just thought man this is a book for our day because we are so cut from our moorings, adrift out there. And it is worse now than it ever was then. And when I did Song of Solomon the first time I did not have to address, I did not have to say the word homosexual because the 1990's that was still a given. Things have changed.

Tim Moore: Boy, it has.

Nathan Jones: Absolutely. Well, let's dive into the book of Song of Solomon.

Tommy Nelson: Alright.

Nathan Jones: But it is not our attention to put a parental warning label on this episode of Christ in Prophecy.

Tim Moore: Certainly not, and thankfully so, I would add.

Nathan Jones: No, but we are not ashamed of the Word of God. If God wants to teach us about marital sex, He is going to teach us about marital sex. And where it is silent we will be silent, and where the Bible talks about it we will talk about it.

Tommy Nelson: Right.

Nathan Jones: Do you think that should be the case for all of us when we approach this book?

Tommy Nelson: Yes. And if someone will merely take the book. In the first chapter you watch a couple attract, because a lot of trouble start in the type of person you marry, because there are some people that can't get married. There are some men that cannot be gentle. There are some women that can not be respectful. And once you get in a marriage you are going to have problems. And you find out this man is very gentle; this woman is extremely respectful and then you watch them eat together. They date. Then you watch them get deeper in their relationship. We call it courtship. Then you watch the honeymoon night. And you watch them. I got to tell you, one time I was teaching this at a fraternity in the Song of Solomon and there was a guy on the front row who is following along with me. And he does like this when we get to the honeymoon, and he goes.

Tim Moore: Is this the Bible?

Tommy Nelson: He had to make sure that this was in the Bible. And it doesn't use, you don't see a body part mentioned. But you see her saying, awake north wind, make my garden, her body, breath. May he come and eat its choice fruits and be delighted in me. Now, that is so amorous you just let it go into your heart as to what she is saying, and so, that.

And then you watch the couple have a fight. It gets the largest part of the book. And you watch them perfectly, his forgiveness, her I'm sorry, they come together well.

Then you watch sexuality later in the marriage, and it is more amorous, still respectful, but it is delightful. And then you watch them in a parting shot of saying write me like a seal on your arm, I don't want any other woman to have you. And it is this commitment to the death that they

have. So, you can walk a couple from high school all the way to the age of me and David Reagan, you know, and this is the way it is done. It is perfect for every age.

Nathan Jones: It is because He declared it as good. God made them male and female so they could be one and united, and sex would remain in the marriage covenant. You mentioned earlier that in the 90's we didn't talk about homosexuality. Now in the last five years it seems all we talk about is 70 different types of genders with all sorts of different kinds of weird sex and stuff. Do you see that as a sign of the end times? Is Satan trying to pervert as much as possible with this moral decline because we are in the end times?

Tommy Nelson: Yeah, I do. It says in 2 Thessalonians about the Antichrist, he will not come unless the apostasy comes first. The apostasia, standing away. God hath commanded all men to repent. But we are going to see that it is not going to work, and man is going to reject the entire.

When I was at seminary I had a professor named Lewis Johnson and he was a great guy. And he said, he felt that the apostasy comes first, and the 2 Timothy 3, in the last days hard times will come, men will be, and he goes down the list. And he said, Dr. Johnson said, "I think that this text is saying that in the end times there will be the formal rejection of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. There will be the rejection of it, and the rejection of the Bible and the rejection of truth." And then he said, "There will be the rejection of the western worldview, the Judeo-Christian Worldview, that gives meaning to man, to morality, and gave a great dignity to science, to whatever, to education." And when that is rejected its like cutting off the limb on which you sit. The military goes down. The work ethic goes down. Marriage goes down. Until finally gender is not something you are assigned, male and female, it is something that you determine. Nothing could be more bizarre.

And I think it started with Rousseau. I think it started way back in the Romantic Era the Enlightenment when we rejected priestcraft and the Bible, and we went inside of ourselves and came up with what we thought were the truths, and we don't have a means of knowing it. And so, we have collapsed in on ourselves.

Tim Moore: We call it cut flower culture. In other words, we are cut flower, cut off from our roots of the Judeo Christian heritage. Aside from the physical aspect of a marriage relationship, which is a great blessing given to a husband and wife by God and not just for procreation, there is even a deeper significance of a man and woman being joined together as one flesh. So, the Bible actually teaches that this is a picture of our unity with Christ, and the spiritual consummation that we look forward to with our Bridegroom. And there is nothing to snicker about here, we are not trying to get into some kind of perverted Freudian analysis but is another beautiful promise of God.

Tommy Nelson: You know in the same way salvation, the Gospel is called the seed, in 1 Peter, the seed of God. And it says in Hebrews "that it didn't profit them, it was not united with faith." That you have belief, you have the nature of God is the Word of God comes to us and is united with faith, and that you were born again, you are a new creation. When Paul talks to the Corinthians, "Do you not know that when a man goes into a prostitute he is one body with her? When a man joins himself to the Lord he is one spirit with him." Paul says, this has a higher counterpart than just male and female, that our salvation as we are one with our Bride.

Matter of fact you go back to Adam, it is not good for man to be alone. Adam, go to sleep. Opens his side, takes out his body and makes a mate who is the body of Adam. This one is bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh. Where else in the Bible do you see a man going to sleep, his side opening up, and from it comes a bride? That is the cross with Christ. Adam, the last Adam. Oneness to conceive, oneness to conceive.

And there is intimacy, this woman loves this man. He presents himself in the Song of Solomon as a shepherd king. He comes as Shepherd but He is the King of the earth. If you were the richest man on earth how would you call a woman to marry you? I wouldn't show her my wealth; I would show her my heart and have her believe for the right reasons. And then I would show her a new heavens and a new earth, here is the Bridegroom come down. Here is the house I have for you. And that is exactly what he does, he shows her the shepherd and he shows her the king. Christ came to us a wounded king and He returns in glory.

Tim Moore: Yes, He does.

Nathan Jones: Wow. First Kings 4:32 says that Solomon wrote 1,005 songs and he called this the Song of Songs which makes it the primacy, in other words to him this was the most important song. And it was about the physical attraction that a husband has for his wife, and vice versa. Do you see that as the Israelites in the Old Testament looked at that and say well, that is a relation between God and His people, and can the Church take that that it is between us and Christ?

Tommy Nelson: Yes. Hosea and Gomer. You have this man loving his wife like Christ loved Israel. The book of Ezekiel sees God as the Bridegroom taking his mate. And of course, they rejected their Bridegroom. And so now He comes to reclaim her. They said to Jesus, "Why are all your people so happy eating with these people?" He said, "When you are at a wedding the Bridegroom is joyful there is no place for grief." He is taking the Jew and the mystery, He's taking Tim, and Nathan and me and God help us, David Reagan, I'm taking these Gentiles to become the bride. It is God reclaiming His bride. But low and behold, that God so loved the world, He is inclusive of all of us now. So, yeah, God and Israel, Christ and His Church, it is the same love.

Tim Moore: So, we talk about looking forward to being gathered to our Bridegroom, the bride being the Church, and united with our Savior. And I've already talked about this being an anticipation of unity that we can't hardly put into words. This consummation is too holy for mere words. And yet, it is kind of like the Old Testament referring to a man knowing his wife. There is a beauty in that word because it is an intimate knowledge, it is an intimate relationship and a oneness. And so, how would you describe the beautiful spiritual unity that we should anticipate? In other words, what are we looking forward to?

Tommy Nelson: You know, the Bible says that when it talks about Heaven it never goes into the delights of Heaven. That is hypothetically. Islam tries to do that; you get 72 virgins.

Nathan Jones: Voluptuous virgins.

Tommy Nelson: Yes. So, it looks at the sensual. With us you get Revelation 21 and about 5 verses in 22 that is the slender of it. Paul said, "I got caught up to the third heaven and I can't tell you what I saw, but it was unbelievable." "Today you will be with Me in paradise, it is marvelous." And yet, it is always we will see His face, we will see His face. "Now we see in a

mirror dimly, then face to face.” That there is a union of us. Whenever that Jewish man would come to get his wife, and she would look upon him and he would take her and they would go into the bridal chamber, and then go to the feast of joy. So, He will take us to be with Him. We will be one with our Savior in glory. And then He will return down to the feast.

And so, yes, and that’s why I think Tim the term knowing his wife, only God could have come up with that. Because the problem is when you remove God from marriage you objectify sex, like pornography. You don’t know who the girl is. You don’t know where she went to school. You don’t know anything, nor do you care, you want to be stimulated by watching her degrade herself. Fornication, you are using that woman. That is why living together before you get married, any male knows that is a line, okay, that I can have delight with no responsibility. You objectify the woman. Biblical sex it is subjectified, it is this is Teresa my wife, and we are the same theology, we are the same spirit, the same purpose in life. We have children that look like us both.

I mentioned one time I was a biology minor, and I said, “You know it is miracle you take these two cells and bring them together.” And a biology major came to me and said, “No, that I am not correct. It is more wonderful; you take two half cells and they become one.” Just like you have the Word of God and faith, and you got an individual that looks like Adam and looks like God.

Tim Moore: Amen.

Tommy Nelson: Only God could have done that.

Nathan Jones: That is amazing. As we go through this Jesus in the Old Testament series we are looking for Christophanies, pre-incarnate appearances of Jesus Christ, or symbols, or types, anything that points to Jesus. Would you say that there is anything more, other than the symbol of the Bride and the Church?

Tommy Nelson: Yes, there is. If I was a Psalm 127 guy like Solomon, “Unless the Lord builds the house they labor in vain. Less the Lord guards the city, it’s nothing.” Solomon knows, you better have God in your family, and you better have God in your nation. It’s like we say that the family is the base of the nation, that is Solomon, yeah, you better have it.

So, if I was Solomon and I saw what happened to my family with David, my family with my faux pas, I would do a book about man, woman, family, morality, it is a pure thing, that is what I would do. And I think that is why Solomon wrote it, that we can’t have a nation without Adam and Eve, it has to be done. Abraham and Sarah it’s got to be done right. And so, he says this is the way, and then he goes, Psalm 128, “Blessed is that man, his wife will be like..., his kids will be like...” They just fit right together.

And so, yeah, I think when you take a look at the Song of Solomon, I have been blessed with it in my own marriage. But I have looked at sometimes typologically and been swept away by the obvious higher persona of Solomon, and the higher persona of this woman, of the Church, of God’s people, of Israel how they should have been. And so, it has blessed me and always. Sometime I’ll have to teach the typology of the Song of Solomon, I’ve never done that. I’m going to do that.

Tim Moore: It preaches. Well, until He comes we will continue to encourage people to flee into the arms of our loving Savior, our Beloved, and to flee from the wrath of God. And so, for every person who is watching today I hope that by the end of even this episode they will be able to

testify about Jesus Christ, "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved's is mine." Words straight from the book of Song of Solomon.

Tommy Nelson: I am my beloved's. It is like the divine name, I AM, my beloved.

Tim Moore: Amen. Well, Tommy we were certainly glad to come to Denton Bible Church, but we appreciate you coming to Maranatha Acres today and blessing us.

Tommy Nelson: Delighted to be here.

Closing

Tim Moore: Nathan, I have to admit that I approached this book with a degree of trepidation. But I'm glad that Tommy was able to demystify the Song of Solomon and actually offer the plain sense meaning of this beautiful book.

Nathan Jones: Oh, yes. Well, Tommy Nelson's passion for Solomon's testimony of love within marriage is obvious. As he describes in the book, it is "so amorous and delightful, but respectful."

Tim Moore: The key is to recognize that God created man and woman and designed them to complement each other in a marriage relationship. He pointedly said it was not good for Adam to be alone. The Bible also declares that it is not good, actually, it is abominable in the eyes of God, to fulfill sexual desires outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

Nathan Jones: And yet all those unbiblical sexual relationships are not only condoned by the world today, they are actually celebrated! A spirit of rebellion and confusion is rampant in our society in particular. This has got to be a sign of the end times.

Tim Moore: Absolutely. Recall that in 2013 and again in 2015, President Barak Obama traveled to Africa and urged the nations he visited to embrace homosexuality, as America has. President Macky Sall of Senegal and President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya rejected Obama's pressure tactic, asserting that their nations were dedicated to upholding heterosexual marriage.

We've spoken about Romans 1 many times, but Paul's prophetic warnings are coming to pass before our very eyes. American culture is given over to lusts and impurity, degrading passions and homosexuality, and a depraved mind that not only indulges in abominations but also gives hearty approval to those who practice them.

Nathan Jones: We cannot emphasize enough that you need to protect your children and grandchildren, let alone your own heart and mind, from the influence and indoctrination of the evil one that is permeating every facet of our society. Practically speaking though, Tim, how can we do that?

Tim Moore: Well, Nathan I think, as I told my children they need to guard their hearts against rushing into romantic relationships. But I also took very seriously my responsibility to guard their hearts and their minds as they grew up by limiting their exposure to the culture. You know we cannot completely insulate our kids from the world, but we can inoculate them with the Word of God. And we can shield them from music, and movies, and books, and television designed to program their minds in ways that are contrary to biblical truth.

Nathan Jones: Well, our conversation has focused on warning about the world's false and destructive narrative about sex. But Song of Solomon is a love song that tells of good and godly love and it points us to Jesus Christ. Well, our key verses this week is Song of Solomon 2:4 and 6:3, they have clear messianic overtones. Collectively, Christians are called the Bride of Christ, the Church, and He is our Bridegroom. In the language of Song of Solomon, Jesus is our Beloved.

Tim Moore: On that note, we hope that you are eager to be joined with our heavenly Bridegroom and looking forward to His glorious return. If you would like to get a copy of my booklet, "Looking Forward to the Reign of Jesus Christ," just call the number on the screen. For a gift of only \$5 or more, we'll be glad to send it to you. Next week, we'll arrive at the first of the major prophets, Isaiah. Until then, this is Tim Moore.

Nathan Jones: And Nathan Jones, saying, "Look up, and be watchful, for the LORD, our Beloved Bridegroom, is drawing near!"