



## Process of Identifying Your Right Person: the Spiritual Parallel; Song of Solomon: Background: Cast; Solomon's Degeneracy; the Shulammitte's Faithfulness

**Channing, William Ellery. "Religion the Only Basis of Society." In *McGuffey's Fifth Eclectic Reader*. Rev. ed. William H. McGuffey (ed.). 284-86:**

William Ellery Channing (*b.* 1780, *d.* 1842), an eminent divine and orator, was born at Newport, R.I. He graduated from Harvard with the highest honors in 1798, and, in 1803, he was made pastor of the Federal Street Church, Boston, with which he maintained his connection until his death. Towards the close of his life, being much enfeebled, he withdrew almost entirely from his pastoral duties, and devoted himself to literature. Dr. Channing's writings are published in six volumes, and are mainly devoted to theology.

1. Religion is a social concern; for it operates powerfully on society, contributing in various ways to its stability and prosperity. Religion is not merely a private affair; the community is deeply interested in its diffusion; for it is the best support of the virtues and principles, on which the social order rests. Pure and undefiled religion is to do good; and it follows, very plainly, that if God be the Author and Friend of society, then, the recognition of him must enforce all social duty, and enlightened piety must give its whole strength to public order. (p. 284)
2. Few men suspect, perhaps no man comprehends, the extent of the support given by religion to every virtue. No man, perhaps, is aware how much our moral and social sentiments are fed from this fountain; how powerless conscience would become without the belief of a God; how palsied would be human benevolence, were there not the sense of a higher benevolence to quicken and sustain it; how suddenly the whole social fabric would quake, and with what a fearful crash it would sink into hopeless ruin, were the ideas of a Supreme Being, of accountableness and of a future life to be utterly erased from every mind.
3. And, let men thoroughly believe that they are the work and sport of chance; that no superior intelligence concerns itself with human affairs; that all their improvements perish forever at death; that the weak have no guardian, and the injured no avenger; that there is not recompense for sacrifices to uprightness and the public good; that an oath is unheard in heaven; that secret crimes have no witness but the perpetrator; that human existence has no purpose, and human virtue no unfailing friend; that this brief life is everything to us, and death it total, everlasting extinction; once let them *thoroughly* abandon religion, and who can conceive or describe the extent of the desolation which would follow?
4. We hope, perhaps, that human laws and natural sympathy would hold society together. As reasonably might we believe that were the sun quenched in the heavens, *our* torches would illuminate, and *our* fires quicken and fertilize the creation. What is there in human nature to awaken respect and tenderness, if man is the unprotected insect of a day? And what is he more, if atheism be true? (p. 285)
5. Erase all thought and fear of God from a community, and selfishness and sensuality would absorb the whole man. Appetite, knowing no restraint, and suffering, having no solace or hope, would trample in scorn on the restraints of human laws. Virtue, duty, principle, would be mocked and spurned as unmeaning sounds. A sordid self-interest would supplant every feeling; and man would become, in fact, what the theory in atheism declares him to be,—a *companion for brutes*. (pp. 285-86)

### The Process of Identifying of Your Right Person

#### I. The Spiritual Parallel

1. The most unlikely book to appear in the Bible is the Song of Solomon, or Song of Songs, or the Canticles.



2. Unlikely, because it is a musical composed by Solomon which depicts his attempts to seduce a young Shulammitite woman whose soul has been captured by her right man, the Shepherd Lover.
3. The intrigue centers on Solomon's attempts to lure her away from her right man. In essence he becomes a paramour driven by sexual desire to satisfy his own lust pattern.
4. In the play we find a beautiful expression of human sexual love between a husband and a wife, the temptations that the "wrong man" uses in his attempt to "have his way" with another man's right woman, and therefore an illustration of the interplay between Jesus Christ and His church and the temptations the believer encounters in the Angelic Conflict.
5. Marriage was instituted by our Lord in Genesis 2:18-25 and the first couple was mandated by the Lord to express their love for each other by means of sexual intercourse.
6. Thus physical sex is a ritual which commemorates the union of souls that occurs between a man and a woman who identify each other as being Mr. and Miss right.
7. The loyalty, affection, and permanence of this soul love follows the pattern of divine love for believers, first of all of true Israel and secondly of the universal church.
8. There is only one permanent client nation and that is true Israel and the loyalty, affection, and permanence of the Lord's love for her is unending and will be brought to its prophetic fulfillment in the millennial kingdom.
9. There is only one true church and the same unending love of the Lord is directed toward her and she is called His Bride which has its prophetic fulfillment at the Second Advent.
10. What we discover is that the love of God is the model for the love that defines the corporate marriage.
11. This interesting book is in the canon for a reason. It presents magnificent principles that reveal the proper mental attitude of those who have discovered true love and have the integrity to withstand outside pressures to betray the divine ideal of right man-right woman.

## II. *Song of Solomon*

- A. Background:
  1. This book is what we might refer to today as an opera. Italian operas are in three acts however this is Hebrew which was customarily in five acts.
  2. There are four characters plus a chorus:
    - King Solomon (KS)**, basso profundo: the paramour
    - Shulammitite Woman (SW)**, soprano: the right woman
    - Shepherd Lover (SL)**, tenor: the right man
    - Jealous Queen (JQ)**, alto: the jilted lover
    - Daughters of Jerusalem (DJ)**, chorus: the virgins of Solomon's harem



3. The Shulammitte woman comes from a very well-to-do family which owns a large vineyard and winery in the north of Israel. She is the daughter of a widow and therefore the responsibility for her protection and care falls to her two brothers who do not approve of her attraction to the shepherd. Apparently they do not think a sheep herder is an acceptable suitor for those in gentile society.
4. Solomon is the king of Israel having succeeded his father David. He has been out of country and on his ride back south toward Jerusalem he passes the Shulammitte's family vineyard where he sees her chasing foxes away from the vines where they've been eating the grapes.
5. As is evident in the book of Ecclesiastes Solomon was a rounder, a chaser, and a womanizer. He is said in 1 Kings 11:3 to have had a harem that included 700 wives and 300 concubines and there was an unknown number of virgins called the "daughters of Jerusalem."
6. Not only was this a violation of divine order but a large percentage of them were foreigners which was also against divine policy for Israel.
7. The prohibition was imposed because it was known to divine omnipotence that such associations would tempt Israel to become involved with these women's heathen religions which is exactly what happened to Solomon.
8. The thing that motivated Solomon to accumulate such a large and diverse harem was the pagan concept that a king should be the principle progenitor of his kingdom.
9. In Ecclesiastes 7:26-29 Solomon admits to the frustrations that came to him from his uncontrolled sexual lust for women and Song of Solomon is his account of how when finally finding what he believed was his right woman his soul was so distorted by his perversions that she had no desire for him.
10. Solomon wants to recruit the Shulammitte and uses deceit to lure her into his harem as a virgin with the intent of making her one of his queens later on. The Shulammitte is willing to function in the capacity of a virgin in order to neutralize the influence of her brothers with the intent of rekindling her relationship with the shepherd.
11. Every quality that God intended to provide in Solomon's right woman was represented in the Shulammitte woman. However, knowing of Solomon's sexual lust, the Lord provided this woman with a right man compatible with her: the Shepherd Lover.
12. Solomon never had the capacity to identify his right woman since his soul was so distorted by his involvement in pagan idolatry plus an insatiable sexual lust that could only be assuaged by his large harem.
13. Solomon's degeneracy is summarized in:

**1 Kings 11:1** - Now King Solomon loved [ **אָהַב** ] **'ahav: to give oneself over to polygamy** ] many foreign women besides the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the **Moabites** [ **Chemosh** ], **Ammonites** [ **Molech** ], Edomites, **Sidonians** [ **Ashtoreth** ], and Hittites.

**v. 2** - They were from the nations about which the Lord had warned to the sons of Israel, "You shall not intermarry with them, neither shall they intermarry with you, for they will surely turn your heart away after their gods." Nevertheless, Solomon maintained intimate relations with them.

**v. 3** - Solomon had seven hundred wives of royal birth plus three hundred concubines. His wives turned his heart away (from God).



**v. 4 -** It came about, when Solomon grew old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not wholly devoted to the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father had been.

**v. 5 -** For Solomon worshipped Ashtoreth \ash' to-reth\ the goddess of the Sidonians [ **same as the Babylonians' Ishtar** ] and after Milcom \mil' cum\ [ **or Molech \mō' lek\** ] the detestable idol of the Ammonites.

**v. 6 -** And Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and did not follow after the Lord fully, as David his father had done.