Proverbs is full of metaphors. The 5th chapter has many of the same words and pictures that are used in the Song Of Solomon. Once we accept that Solomon uses this kind of literary tool in his writings, it is not a big step to see that he could have written the Song in that same way.

Proverbs 5

My son, give attention to my wisdom,

Incline your ear to my understanding;

2 That you may observe discretion

And your lips may reserve knowledge.

*When we give attention to wisdom and understanding, knowledge comes from out lips.*

3 For the lips of an adulteress drip honey

And smoother than oil is her speech;

*The adulteress is what calls us away from wisdom and understanding. To what do we incline our ear?*

*Hosea 3:1 Yahweh said to me, "Go again, love a woman loved by another, and an adulteress, even as Yahweh loves the children of Israel, though they turn to other gods, and love cakes of raisins."*

*Israel was drawn away from God by other gods and the love of cakes of raisins.*

4 But in the end she is bitter as wormwood,

Sharp as a two-edged sword.

5 Her feet go down to death,

Her steps take hold of Sheol.

6 She does not ponder the path of life;

Her ways are unstable, she does not know it.

The

7 Now then, my sons, listen to me

And do not depart from the words of my mouth.

8 Keep your way far from her

And do not go near the door of her house,

9 Or you will give your vigor to others

And your years to the cruel one;

10 And strangers will be filled with your strength

And your hard-earned goods will go to the house of an alien;

11 And you groan at your final end,

When your flesh and your body are consumed;

12 And you say, “How I have hated instruction!

And my heart spurned reproof!

13 “I have not listened to the voice of my teachers,

Nor inclined my ear to my instructors!

14 “I was almost in utter ruin

In the midst of the assembly and congregation.”

*Solomon starts with telling us to keep far from the adulteress. Then he moves from a specific teaching on sexual purity to a more general teaching. Was the only teaching of the teachers and instructors on sexual purity? This refers to all the wise teachings to which they should have given attention and inclined their ears. The adulteress is whatever draws us from these wise teachings.*

15 Drink water from your own cistern

And fresh water from your own well.

16 Should your springs be dispersed abroad,

Streams of water in the streets?

17 Let them be yours alone

And not for strangers with you.

18 Let your fountain be blessed,

And rejoice in the wife of your youth.

19 As a loving hind and a graceful doe,

Let her breasts satisfy you at all times;

Be exhilarated always with her love.

20 For why should you, my son, be exhilarated with an adulteress

And embrace the bosom of a foreigner?

*This is a teaching on sexual purity. But, by moving from specific sin to general application, it seems to me that Solomon apparently adds a much greater meaning to the text.*

*He says to drink water from your own cistern and well. Whatever this water is, it is something to be taken in by the “sons.” This “water” should not be shared with strangers; it is his and his alone. Then Solomon says* “let your fountain be blessed and rejoice in the wife of your youth.” *I love the literal statement, but based on what he does with the water, both the fountain and the wife have another meaning. If he is to drink the water, I submit that this refers to the something related to the wisdom of the first verse. And the fountain is what it brings out of him. And the wife of his youth is God. If the adulteress is what draws us from God, the wife of his youth would be God, or the teaching and instruction that lead one to God.*

*Water, springs, well, and fountain are all found in Song of Solomon referring to the woman’s garden.*

21 For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the LORD,

And He watches all his paths.

22 His own iniquities will capture the wicked,

And he will be held with the cords of his sin.

23 He will die for lack of instruction,

And in the greatness of his folly he will go astray.

*Solomon ends with a general warning about sin and the importance of instruction. This goes beyond the idea of adultery. Our sin will find us out and bind us. Without instruction we go astray (in many ways, not just sexual promiscuity) and die.*