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Origen on the Song of Songs As the Spirit of Scripture: The Bridegroom's Perfect Marriage-Song (Oxford Theology and Religion Monographs)

J. Christopher King

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Christian exegesis of the Song of Songs has long interacted creatively with - and, more recently, reacted critically against - the allegorical interpretation developed by Origen of Alexandria (*c*.185-*c*.254) in his *Commentary* and two *Homilies* on the Song of Songs. Interest in Origen's exegesis of the Song's narrative elements has dominated past scholarship, which has almost entirely ignored how Origen assesses the Song itself, in its unity as a revealed text. This study aims to show that the *Commentary* and *Homilies* - when read in light of Origen's hermeneutic, his nuptial theology, his understanding of the prophetic mediation of inspired texts, and his doctrine of last things - clearly portray the Song of Songs itself as the divine Bridegroom's perfect marriage-song. As such, it mediates Christ's eschatological presence, as the `spirit' of Scripture, in and through the intelligible structures of the text itself.

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