

# Song of Solomon

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**AUTHOR:** Solomon. He is specifically mentioned 7 times in the book.

**TIME WRITTEN:** Probably early in his reign, about 965 B.C.

**POSITION IN THE BIBLE:**

- 22nd Book in the Bible
- 22nd book in the Old Testament
- 5th and last of 5 Poetical Books
- 21 have preceded it. 44 to follow it.

**CHAPTERS:** 8

**VERSES:** 117

**WORDS:** 2,661

**KEY WORD:** Love in Marriage

**TWO KEY VERSES:**

1. **Song of Solomon 7:10** - "I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me."
2. **Song of Solomon 8:7** - "Many waters cannot quench love, nor call all the floods drown it. If a man would give for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly despised."

**KEY CHAPTER:** Since the whole book is a unity, there is no key chapter. Rather, all 8 chapters beautifully depict the love of a married couple.

**OBSERVATIONS ABOUT SONG OF SOLOMON:**

1. The Song of Solomon is a love song written by Solomon. It abounds in:
  - a. Metaphors
  - b. Oriental imagery.
2. Historically, it depicts:
  - a. The wooing and wedding of a shepherdess by King Solomon.
  - b. The joys and heartaches of wedded love.
3. Allegorically, it pictures:
  - a. Israel as God's espoused bride.
  - b. The church as the bride of Christ.
4. Just as human life finds its highest fulfillment in the love of man and woman, so spiritual life finds its highest fulfillment in the love of God for His people and Christ for His church.
5. The book is arranged like scenes in a drama with three main speakers:
  - a. The bride (Shulamite girl).
  - b. The king (Solomon).
  - c. A chorus (daughters of Jerusalem).
6. Solomon.
  - a. By this time he already had 60 queens and 80 concubines. (6:8)
  - b. Solomon's harem at its fullest had:
    1. 700 queens.
    2. 300 concubines.
  - c. At this time he still had 640 queens and 220 concubines to go.
  - d. 1 Kings 4:32 reveals that Solomon had:
    1. 1,005 songs
    2. Intimate knowledge of the plant and animal world.
  - e. This greatest of his songs alludes to:
    1. 21 species of plants.

2. 15 species of animals.
- f. It refers to fifteen geographical locations from Lebanon in the north to Egypt in the south.
 

1. Kedar (1:5)	6. Lebanon (3:9)	11. Tirzah (6:4)
2. Egypt (1:9)	7. Mount Gilead (4:1)	12. Heshbon (7:4)
3. En Gedi (1:14)	8. Amana (4:8)	13. Damascus (7:4)
4. Sharon (2:1)	9. Senir (4:8)	14. Carmel (7:5)
5. Jerusalem (2:7)	10. Hermon (4:8)	15. Baal-Hamon (8:11)
7. Because of poetic imagery, the Song of Solomon uses forty-nine words that occur nowhere else in Scripture.
8. In the minds of some, there is a problem regarding how a man with a harem of 140 women at the time (60 queens and 80 concubines 6:8) could extol the love of the Shulamite as though she were his only bride.
  - a. It may be that Solomon's relationship with the Shulamite woman was the only pure romance he ever experienced.
  - b. Remember that the bulk of his marriages were political arrangements.
9. It is significant that the Shulamite woman was a vineyard keeper of no great means.
10. The Song of Solomon was written before Solomon plunged into gross immorality and idolatry. **1 Kings 11:4** - "For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the Lord his God."
11. The Shulamite addresses the king as "my beloved."
12. The king addresses his bride as "my love."
13. The term "Shulamite" appears only once in the book, and that in 6:13.
  - a. The term may have been derived from the town of Shunem.
  - b. Shunem was located southwest of the Sea of Galilee in the tribal area of Issachar.
14. The purpose of this book depends on the viewpoint taken as to its primary thrust. Is it fictional? Is it allegorical? Or, is it historical?
  - a. FICTIONAL
    1. Some contend that the book is fictional.
    2. However, the book gives every indication that the story really happened.
  - b. ALLEGORICAL
    1. In this view, the primary purpose of the Song of Solomon is to illustrate the truth of God's love for His people whether the events are fictional or not.
  - c. HISTORICAL
    1. The Song of Solomon is a poetical record of Solomon's actual romances with a Shulamite woman.
    2. The various scenes in the book exalt the joys of love in courtship and marriage and teach that physical beauty and sexuality in marriage should not be despised as base or unspiritual.
    3. It offers a proper perspective of human love and avoids the extremes of lust on the one hand and celibacy on the other.
    4. Human sexuality is part of God's creation with its related desires and pleasures, and it is reasonable that He would provide us with a guide to a pure sexual relationship between a husband and a wife.
    5. Thus, Song of Solomon is a bold and positive endorsement by God of marital love in all its physical and emotional beauty.

## SUMMARY OF SONG OF SOLOMON

### INTRODUCTION:

- A. According to 1 Kings 4:32, Solomon wrote 1,005 songs.
  - 1. This is one of them.
  - 2. This one stands out among them as the “song of songs.” (1:1)
  - 3. It extols the purity, beauty, and satisfaction of love.
  - 4. It is never crass, but often intimate, as it explores the dimensions of the relationship between two lovers:
    - a. Attraction
    - b. Desire
    - c. Companionship
    - d. Pleasure
    - e. Union
    - f. Separation
    - g. Faithfulness
    - h. Praise
- B. Like Ecclesiastes, this book is not easily outlined. It abounds with sudden changes of speakers.
- C. There are two divisions in the book.
  - 1. The Beginning of Love. (1:1 - 5:11)
  - 2. The Broadening of Love. (5:2 - 8:14)

### THE BEGINNING OF LOVE. (1:1 - 5:11)

- A. King Solomon has a vineyard in the country of the Shulamite (6:13; 8:11)
  - 1. She works in the vineyard with her brothers. (1:6; 8:11-12)
  - 2. When Solomon visits the area, he wins her heart and eventually takes her to the palace in Jerusalem as His bride.
  - 3. Although she is tanned from hours of work outside the vineyard, she is “fairest among women.” (1:6-8)
- B. The song is arranged like scenes in a one-act drama with three main speakers—the bride
- C. Chapters 1-3 give a series of recollections of the courtship.
  - 1. The bride’s longing for affection at the palace before the wedding. (1:2-8)
  - 2. Expressions of mutual love in the banquet hall. (1:9 - 2:7)
  - 3. A springtime visit of the king to the bride’s home in the country. (2:8-17)
  - 4. The Shulamite’s dream of separation from her beloved. (3:1-5)
  - 5. The ornate wedding procession from the bride’s home to Jerusalem. (3:6-11)
- D. In 4:1 - 5:1, Solomon praises his bride from head to foot with a superb chain of similes and metaphors.
  - 1. Her virginity is compared to a “garden enclosed.” (4:12)
  - 2. The garden is entered when the marriage is consummated. (4:16 - 5:1)

### THE BROADENING OF LOVE. (5:2 - 8:14)

- A. Some time after the wedding, the Shulamite has a troubled dream (5:20 in the palace while Solomon is away.
  - 1. In her dream Solomon comes to her door, but she answers too late—he is gone.
  - 2. She panics and searches for him late at night in Jerusalem.

3. Upon his return, Solomon assures her of his love and praises her beauty. (6:4 - 7:10)
- B. The Shulamite begins to think of her country home and tries to persuade her beloved to return there with her. (7:11 - 8:4)
  1. The journey takes place in 8:5-7.
  2. Their relationship continues to deepen. Their love will not be overthrown by jealousy or circumstances.
  3. At her homecoming (8:8-14) the Shulamite reflects on her brothers' care for her when she was young. (8:8-9)
  4. She remains virtuous. "I am a wall." (8:10)
  5. She is now in a position to look out for her brothers' welfare. (8:11-12)
- C. The book concludes with a dual invitation of lover and beloved.
- D. And so closes this strange book which is different from any other in the Bible. It is a book about love between a man and a woman—one of God's most mysterious and satisfying gifts to us.