



SERMON REFLECTION GUIDE

Song of Songs, Part 1: The Best Song - Songs of Songs 1:1-4 - April 26, 2026

SERMON OUTLINE

Intro - 15 years! Longer than I waited for Revelation or Romans - the Song of Songs requires a lot of patience and care.

The Main Theme of Song of Songs: **Desire** to Love and to be Loved

The Narrative Arc: Desire (Stirred - Frustrated - Consummated - Complicated - Enduring)

Title: שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים (*Shir Hashirim*) "Song of Songs" - meaning "**The Best of Songs**"

All of Scripture is breathed out by God and useful (**2 Tim. 3:16**), and yet we note that Song of Songs is immediately sexual by **v. 2**, and therefore dangerous in casual hands.

While we might note the content is abnormal in the Bible, we might also note that there are several key Old Testament themes missing!

There is **no**: use of the name YHWH, Temple/Sacrifice imagery, Covenant/Prophetic language

Identifying Our Three Main Characters (a good place to start)

1. SHE

This character is also called the "*lover*", and after the wedding in chapter 3, she is called "*my bride*" by the male character.

She may be of lower class and perhaps a worker in the fields or vineyards.

"*The Shulamite*" (**6:13**) - a strange name that is simply the Hebrew feminine form of Solomon.

This title communicates their union and one-ness and complementarity.

Note: this character would fit NEITHER the "**liberated**" nor "**suppressed**" woman that is caricatured by modern definitions.

2. HE

Easiest interpretation is that **Solomon** is writing at least somewhat autobiographically, though in poetic verse. He is a king, a shepherd, and a Son of David. Called "beloved" by the woman.

3. OTHERS

At times, this group of onlookers will be called "*virgins*" or the "*daughters of Jerusalem*". They appear to be a group of young ladies that are unmarried who are celebrating the love of the lover and the beloved.

They help to serve two purposes for us:

- a) reveals that the book speaks to **singleness** as well as relationships
- b) reveals that all godly relationships have a **corporate** nature - they don't stand alone!

Why study a topic that makes us all a bit uncomfortable - especially in church?

We need to realize: **The reason that we are uncomfortable** is that we all have already been shaped sexually in a distorted way by a sinful world.

Look where *not talking about* it has gotten us!

"The world wants to say that sex is nothing more than a leisure activity, but we know that it is more than that, because when a leisure activity goes badly, we give it a one-star review, but when sex goes badly, we call the cops" - Glen Scrivener

Interpretive Options for Song of Songs

1. **Literal** - a straightforward description of human sexuality.
2. **Allegorical** - every piece is a metaphor for God's love.
3. **Combination** of 1 & 2

The Song of Songs should shock us out a sexual slumber AND showcase God's love for us!



SERMON REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Have you read through the Song of Songs before? Have you heard it taught or preached before? What were your initial impressions?
2. How does a piece of writing that shares almost zero themes with the Old Testament somehow find its way into the book?
3. How does identifying the characters/speakers help with interpretation?
4. Does the prospect of studying this book make you uncomfortable? Why do you think that is the case?
5. Which of the interpretive options seems to make the most sense to you? If you agree with Josh that it is a “combination” - how can you read it with both in mind?