

INTERACTIVE TRAVEL GUIDE

DESTINATION: *Song of Solomon 1-8*

The Song of Solomon is a moving love story between Solomon and a shepherdess, set in a poetic form. Where Ecclesiastes focuses on the intellect of man, The Song of Solomon focuses on the emotions of man, specifically the emotion of love. This story tells of the intimacy and love between a bridegroom and his bride, and the passion they share in a marriage relationship.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

1. Bride muses about her courtship days
2. The Wedding
3. Troubled dream of Separation
4. Mutual love of husband and wife
5. The seal of their love

TRIP PLANNER:

Historically, the Song of Solomon depicts the wooing and wedding of a country girl to King Solomon and the emotions that ensue in their wedded lives. Many believe The Song of Solomon depicts more than Solomon and his bride, and allegorically speaks of Israel being espoused to God and the Church espoused to Christ. Just as human life finds its highest fulfillment in the love of a man and woman, so does spiritual life find its greatest joy in the love of God for His people and Christ for His church. The Song of Solomon can be divided into two parts.

1. The beginning of love 1:1- 5:1
2. The broadening of love 5:2- 8:14

PLACES OF INTEREST:

Jerusalem - In the Bible, Jerusalem is described as the city of God. It was the city in which the temple was built and the center of the Jewish religion. It was from Jerusalem that Solomon reigned as the king of Israel, and Jerusalem is the setting of the Song of Solomon.

En Gedi - En Gedi is the largest Oasis on the western shore of the Dead Sea. The abundant springs and temperate climate provided a perfect atmosphere for agriculture, and in The Song of Solomon, Solomon compared his lover to “a cluster of henna blossoms from the vineyards of En Gedi.” En Gedi was also where David fled when escaping from King Saul in 1 Samuel 23. The name literally means “the spring of the kid.”

The Banquet House - The banquet house spoken of in Chapter 2:4 is also referred to as the “House of Wine.” The banquet house symbolizes the vineyard where Solomon took his bride.

Lebanon - A country in southwest Asia on the Mediterranean Sea. Lebanon is bordered by Syria on the north and the east and Israel on the south. Lebanon is referred to seven times throughout the Song. It is sometimes mentioned symbolically, and at other times it appears to be a literal reference.

Tirzah - The name Tirzah means “she is friendly.” Tirzah was a mound of extraordinary size located 7 miles northeast of Shechem. It held an important road and thus controlled all the traffic between Beth Shan and Shechem. In the Song of Solomon, Solomon compares her beauty to that of Tirzah.

Mount Carmel - The 1500-foot high limestone mountain impeded armies and merchants traveling to the Jezreel Valley. It holds great significance as the location where Elijah destroyed the prophets of Baal. In the Song of Solomon, he praises his love saying “your head crowns you like Mount Carmel.”

PEOPLE OF INTEREST:

Shulamite - The Shulamite woman mentioned in The Song of Solomon is the love interest of King Solomon. She is not mentioned by name anywhere, but we see the beauty she possessed on the inside as well as the outside. The name is probably derived from a place called Shunem, located a short distance from Jezreel in the plain of Meggido.

The Beloved - The beloved is mentioned 32 times in The Song of Solomon. In this song, most believe the beloved to be Solomon himself. The name comes from the Hebrew word “dod” which is a variation of the name David, which means “Beloved One.”

The Daughters of Jerusalem - The daughters of Jerusalem speak six times throughout this short song. Their identity is not disclosed, but they were most likely companions of the bride. They were perhaps attendants in the king's palace or may have just been casual onlookers.

FUN FACTS:

The Song in the Hebrew Bible - In our English Bible, this book appears as the final book in the Wisdom or Poetic Literature, but in Hebrew it is actually the first of the five rolls. The order was:

1. The Song of Solomon
2. Ruth
3. Lamentations
4. Ecclesiastes
5. Esther

Portions of it were sung at the great feasts. The Hebrews likened Proverbs to the outer court of the temple, Ecclesiastes to the Holy Place, and the Song of Solomon to the Holy of Holies.

Title of the Book - In verse 1 the title of the book is given “The Song Of Songs, which is Solomon's.” This is the Hebrew way of expressing the superlative; that is, of the 1,005 songs that Solomon wrote, this was his best or most important.

The Shulamite - There is question how a man with a harem of 1000 women could speak of one woman as though she were his only bride. It may be that the love that he experienced with the Shulamite was the only true love Solomon ever had. The majority of his marriages were all political arrangements. It is significant that this woman was a vineyard keeper of no great social stature.

Myrrh - Derived from the word “mara,” it describes a taste that is bitter. Myrrh is made from the gum or sap of an Arabian balsa tree. The resin was pressed and mixed with oil to make perfume, incense, and lotion. Chapter 3:6 depicts Solomon’s arrival “perfumed with myrrh and frankincense.” Myrrh was also used as a gift at Jesus’ birth and an embalming spice at His burial.

MAPS:

