

Numerical Features of the Song of Songs

A New Approach to its Structural Design

Please read the [General Introduction](#)

Introductory Observations regarding its architecture

- The Song of Songs is a numerical composition in its own right in which the layout markers **P** and **S** have proved to be essential structuring devices. In this respect it is important to keep in mind that some of them do not always have a delimiting function, because they are also used to draw special attention to what follows. This is the function of the **S** after 2,13, 4,11 and 6,9. The **S** after 7,11 is problematic.
- Having taken the remaining layout markers seriously as delimiting devices, I detected altogether **18** paragraphs. Moreover, the numerical features brought to light that the first **15** paragraphs constituting the main body of the Song (1,1-8,4) have been finalized and sealed by **1118** (43x26) words. The remaining three paragraphs in 8,5-14 can be regarded as Epilogues which are integral within the Song.
- The text of the Song is generally speaking in a good state of repair, but there is a serious textcritical problem in 8,6c, because the second colon of the line is evidently incomplete (a case of haplography):
 שלהבתיה רשפיה רשפי אש שלהבתיה 'Its blaze is a blaze of fire, its flames.....' and should be read:
 שלהבתיה רשפיה רשפי אש שלהבתיה שלהבתיה 'Its blaze is a blaze of fire, its flames (like) the flame of Yah.'
 This is in line with some Hebrew manuscripts and editions. See *The Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, Vol. 4, 1504f.) Surprisingly, this correction (two words added) brought to light that the Song, without the heading, has been finalized and sealed by **1248** (48x26) words.
- The book is concluded by **17** words, the very last utterances of the bridegroom and the bride (8,13-14). As for its beginning (§1: 1,1-4), it is made up of **35** (5x7) words, which is the first indication that **7**, the number of fulfilment, plays an important part in the book, because key words appear in strings of **7** or multiples of **7**: e.g., *Solomon* in the Song *as such* (1,5; 1,7; 3,7; 3,9; 3,11; 8,11; 8,12), the words *king(5x)/queens(2x)* (1,4; 1,12; 3,9; 3,11; 6,8; 6,9; 7,6), *daughters of Jerusalem* (1,5; 2,7; 3,5; 3,10; 5,8; 5,16; 8,4), *Lebanon* (3,9; 4,8 (2x); 4,11; 4,15; 5,15; 7,5), and, apart from Jerusalem and Lebanon, there are **14 additional geographical names** (Kedar, En-Gedi, Sharon, Tirzah, Zion, Gilead, Amana, Senir, Hermon, Heshbon, Beth-rabbim, Damascus, Carmel, Ba'al-hamon).
- The word *דוד*, '*beloved*', appears **34x**: 1,13; 1,14; 1,16; 2,3; 2,8; 2,9; 2,10; 2,16; 2,17; 4,16; 5,1; 5,2; 5,4; 5,5; 5,6 (2x); 5,8; 5,9 (4x); 5,10; 5,16; 6,1 (2x); 6,2; 6,3 (2x); 7,10; 7,11; 7,12; 7,14; 8,5; 8,14.

Detailed outline based on layout markers, content, and numerical features

1,1-4:	§1 The beginning of a loving relationship: S	35	} 1118 (43x26) words
1,5-8	§2 How do the bride and the bridegroom meet?: S	58 130 (5x26) words	
1,9-14	§3 The bridegroom's view of his beloved: S	37	} 208 (8x26) words
1,15-2,7	§4 The bride's view on awakening love: S	81	
2,8-14	§5 The bride's view on her beloved; his reaction: S	85 (5x17) w.	} 1248 (48x26) words
2,15-17	§6 The bride: "My beloved is mine!": S	31	
3,1-5	§7 The bride in search of her beloved: S	66	} 1118 (43x26) words
3,6-8	§8 The maidens speak about Solomon and his escort: S	33	
3,9-11	§9 They invite the maidens to come and meet him: S	34 (2x17)	} 208 (8x26) words
4,1-7	§10 The bridegroom's view on his beloved: S	75	
4,8-5,1	§11 The bridegroom invites his bride; their dialogue: S	124	} 1248 (48x26) words
5,2-6,3	§12 The bride dreams/opens to him and describes him: S	189	
6,4-10	§13 The bridegroom visualizes his bride; he delights in her: S	70	} 1248 (48x26) words
6,11-7,10	§14 The bridegroom's declaration to the maidens: S	120	
7,11-8,4	§15 The bride's invitation to her beloved: S	80	} 1248 (48x26) words
8,5-7	§16 Epilogue 1: the maidens and the bridegroom speak: S	58	
8,8-10	§17 Epilogue 2: they compare her with a wall; she agrees: P	35	} 1248 (48x26) words
8,11-14	§18 Epilogue 3: Solomon's vineyard: the final dialogue: Colophon	41	
1,1-8,14 The book as a whole, including the heading:		1252 words.	
1,2-8,14 The book as a whole, excluding the heading:		1248 (48x26) words.	

For more detailed particulars, see the table and the Observations below on p. 10.

Fourteen views on the structural design of the Song of Songs

In his analysis of the Song of Songs in his book *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament*, David A. Dorsey rightly remarked (p. 199) that “the Song’s structure is notoriously difficult to analyse. Among those who attempt to delineate the book’s constituent units there is little agreement in methodology or results.” See his analysis further below, which is based on the internal organization of the material. What makes it above all difficult to delineate the units is the complete lack of introductory formulae to the speeches. Most commentators analyse the book as comprising smaller literary units (up to 38). Others find larger sections: e.g., four to seven. Seeing the difficulty to find suitable captions, some scholars refrain from giving titles.

W. RUDOLPH (*Das Buch Ruth. Das Hohelied. Die Klagelieder*, in: KAT XVII 1-3, 1962, 77-182): *Thirty parts*.

1,1 Überschrift. 1,2-4 Sehnsucht des Mädchens

1,5.6 “Schwarz und doch hübsch”

1,7.8 Wo find’ ich dich?

1,9-17 Freude aneinander

2,1-3 Gegenseitige Bewunderung

2,4-7 Liebeskrank

2,8-14 Liebe im Lenz

2,15 Die böse Fuchse

2,16.17 “Ich bin dein, du bist mein”

3,1-5 Ein Traum von Suchen und Finden

3,6-11 Der Hochzeitszug

4,1-7 Die Schönheit der Geliebten

4,8 Glück im Winkel

4,9-11 Verzauberung

4,12-5,1 “Nur dir blüht mein Garten”

5,2-8 Bestrafte Sprödigkeit

5,9 Überleitung

5,10-16 Die Schönheit der Geliebten

6,1-3 Mischt euch nicht ein!

6,4-7 Zum Lieben und zum Fürchten schön

6,8-10 “Nur eine, aber meine!”

6,11.12 Begegnung im Garten

7,1-6 Der Hochzeitstanz der Braut

7,7-11 Stürmische Werbung

7,12-14 Gewährung

8,1-4 “O wärest du mein Bruder!”

8,5-7 Die Macht der Liebe

8,8-10 Die geschäftstüchtigen Brüder

8,11-12 “Ich tausche nicht mit Salomo!”

8,13-14 Wunsch nach ungestörtem Beisammensein.

G. GERLEMAN (*Ruth. Das Hohelied*, in: BKAT XVIII, 1965, 41-235):

1,1 Die Überschrift. 1,2-4 Wonne der Liebe

1,5-6 Die schwarze Gärtnerin

1,7-8 Der verschwundene Hirt

1,9-11 Die königliche Stute

1,12-14 Salbe des Wohlgeruchs

1,15-17 Baumgartenlied

2,1-3 Wie Lilie und Apfelbaum

2,4-7 Im Weinhaus

2,8-14 An der Tür der Geliebten

2,15-17 Fanget uns die kleine Fuchse

3,1-5 Suchen und Finden

3,6-8 Festzug aus der Wüste

3,9-11 Der König in seiner Thronhalle

4,1-7 Schönheit der Geliebten
 4,8 Mit mir vom Libanon
 4,9-11 Du hast mich gebunden!
 4,12-5,1 Der Garten
 5,2-8 Nächtliches Intermezzo
 5,9 Überleitung
 5,10-16 Der schöne Jüngling
 6,1 Überleitung
 6,2-3 Der Jüngling und sein Garten
 6,4-7 Die erschreckende Schönheit
 6,8-10 Die Unvergleichliche
 6,11-7,1 Begegnung mit Amminadib
 7,2-6 Die schöne Fürstentochter
 7,7-11 Der liebeliche Gartenbaum
 7,12-13 Feiere einen schönen Tag
 7,14-8,4 O wärest du mir wie ein Bruder!
 8,5 Fragment
 8,6-7 Die Macht der Liebe
 8,8-10 Die Schwesterlein
 8,11-12 Zweierlei Weinberge
 8,13-14 Die Gartenbewohnerin.

E. WÜRTHWEIN (*Die Fünf Megilloth: Ruth, Das Hohelied, Esther*, in: ATD 18, 1969²): *Twenty nine parts.*

1,1 Überschrift. 1,2-4 Botschaft
 1,5-6 Meinen eigenen Weinberg hüte ich nicht
 1,7-8 Sage mir doch, wo du weidest!
 1,9-17 Im Brautgemach
 2,1-3 Preis der Liebenden
 2,4-7 Die Braut am Hochzeitstag
 2,8-14 Das umworbene Mädchen
 2,15 Fangt die Füchse!
 2,16-17 Mein Liebster ist mein und ich sein!
 3,1-5 Mädchentraum
 3,6-11 Auf dem Weg zur Heimholung der Braut
 4,1-7 Du bist schön, meine Freundin!
 4,8 Komm vom Libanon, o Braut!
 4,9-11 Du hast mich gebunden!
 4,12-5,1 Mein Liebster komme in seinen Garten
 5,2-6,3 Vom Traum der Sehnsucht zur Wirklichkeit der Erfüllung
 6,4-7 Schön und schrecklich
 6,8-10 Die Vielen und die Eine
 6,11-12 Zum Nußgarten stieg ich hinab...
 7,1-6 Die schöne Schulammit
 7,7-10 Ich will die Palme besteigen
 7,11-13 Auf, mein Liebster
 7,14 Die Liebesäpfel duften...
 8,1-4 Wärest du mir doch ein Bruder!
 8,5 Zwei Fragmente
 8,6-7 Lege mich wie ein Siegel an dein Herz, denn allgewaltig ist die Liebe!
 8,8-10 Brüder und Schwester
 8,11-12 Der kostbarste Weinberg
 8,13-14 Fragment.

M.H. POPE (*Song of Songs*, in: *The Anchor Bible*, 1977): *He gives a useful survey of earlier structural analyses.*

M.A. BEEK (*Prediker. Hooglied*, in: POT, 1984): *Thirty one parts. My translation of the tiles.*

- 1.1.2-4 Glory of love
- 1,5-6 The maiden with the dark skin
- 1,7-8 In search of the shepherd
- I 1,9-11 The comparison with the horse
- 1,12-14 The odour of the beloved
- 1,15-17 In the orchard
- 2,1-3 The lily and the apple tree
- 2,4-7 In the wine house.
- 2,8-14 The approach of the lover
- II 2,15-17 The foxes play their role
- 3,1-5 Searched for and found.
- 3,6-11 The approach from the wilderness
- III 4,1-8 The beauty of the woman
- 4,9-11 The power of the woman
- 4,12-5,1 The comparison with the garden.
- 5,2-8 Night-time intermezzos
- 5,9 Connecting verse
- 5,10-16 The beauty of the young man
- 6,1-3 The young man in the garden
- IV 6,4-7 The stunning beauty of the maiden
- 6,8-10 She is incomparable
- 6,11-7,1 (6,11-13) In the nut garden
- 7,2-6 (7,1-5) Song of praise on the maiden
- 7,7-10 (7,6-9) The palm tree
- 7,11-14 (7,10-13) Invitation to go out together
- 8,1-4 The game of love
- 8,5 Fragment
- 8,6-7 The power of love
- V 8,8-10 The maiden and her brothers
- 8,11-12 The best vineyard
- 8,13-14 The woman who lives in the garden.

M. DECKERS-DIJS (*Hooglied*, in: Belichting van een Bijbelboek, 1989): *Five parts.*

1. 1,2-14 Introductory song
2. 1,15-4,1a Song of beauty
3. 4,1b-6,7 Bridal song
4. 6,8-8,7 Love song
5. 8,9-14 Concluding song.

H.P. MÜLLER (*Das Hohelied / Klagelieder / Das Buch Esther*, in: ATD 16/2, 1992⁴, 3-90): *Thirty eight parts.*

1,1. 1,2-4; 1,5-6; 1,7-8; 1,9-11; 1,12; 1,13-14; 1,15-17; 2,1-3; 2,4-5; 2,6-7; 2,8-14; 2,15; 2,16-17; 3,1-4(5); 3,6-11; 4,1-7; 4,8; 4,9-11; 4,12-5,1; 5,2-8; 5,9; 5,10-16; 6,1; 6,2-3; 6,4-7; 6,8-10; 6,11-12; 7,1-7; 7,8-10; 7,11; 7,12-13; 8,1-2(-4); 8,5a; 8,5b; 8,6-7; 8,8-10; 8,11-12; 8,13-14. *No titles available.*

R.E. MURPHY ("Song of Songs, Book of," in: *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* VI, 1992, 150-155): *Ten parts.*

- 1,1.2-6 Introduction: a woman's yearning for her lover
- 1,7-2,7 A sustained dialogue between the man and the woman
- 2,8-17 The woman describes a visit from her lover
- 3,1-5 The woman describes to the Daughters of Jerusalem the search for and the discovery of her beloved
- 3,6-11 The solemn procession of Solomon and his retinue
- 4,1-5,1 The man describes the physical charms of the woman
- 5,2-6,4 The dialogue between the woman and the Daughters of Jerusalem
- 6,5-12 The man delivers a poem in admiration of the woman, her beauty, and uniqueness
- 7,1-8,4 This dialogue issues into a description of the woman's beauty
- 8,5-14 These verses are not united by dialogue, they are separate units: 5, 6-7, 8-10, 11-12, and 13-14.

R.E. CLEMENTS (*The Song of Songs*, in: New Century Bible, 1993): *Twenty-four parts*.

- 1,2-4 The girl's desire for her partner
- 1,5-8 The girl's embarrassment
- 1,9-17 Compliments exchanged
- 2,1-7 Hightening compliments
- 2,8-17 The lover shut out
- 3,1-5 A happy dream
- 3,6-11 A royal wedding?
- 4,1-7 Admiration of the lover
- 4,8-5,1 Away to the delights of love!
- 5,2-8 Another nocturnal search
- 5,9 A link verse
- 5,10-16 Admiration of the lover
- 6,1-3 Another link passage
- 6,4-7 Less fulsome admiration
- 6,8-10 The incomparable one
- 6,11-13 Another link passage
- 7,1-5 Renewed admiration of the beloved
- 7,6-9 A fragmentary poem of admiration
- 7,10-13 A country walk for lovers
- 8,1-4 Back to mother's house
- 8,5 A fragment - or two?
- 8,6-7 The power of love
- 8,8-10 A dialogue of playful banter
- 8,11-12 Two different vineyards.

D.A. DORSEY, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament*, Baker Academic, 1999, 199-213: *Seven parts*.

Detailed outline of 1,1-8,14

- a 1,2-2,7 **Opening words of mutual love and desire**
- b 2,8-17 **Young man's invitation to the young woman** to join him in the countryside
- c 3,1-5 **Young woman's night-time search** for the young man
 - d 3,6-5,1 **CENTER: their wedding day**
- c' 5,2-7,11 **Young woman's night-time search** for the young man, and their speeches of admiration and longing
- b' 7,12-8,4 **Young woman's invitation to the young man** to join her in the countryside
- a' 8,5-14 **Closing words of mutual love and desire.**

Detailed outline of 1,2-2,7

- a 1,2-7 **Young woman's** long speech, expressing the desire to be with the young man in his home
- b 1,8-11 **Young man's** words of admiration for his beloved
- c 1,12-14 **Young woman's** short speech of admiration and desire
 - d 1,15 **CENTER: Young man's exclamation**
- c' 1,16-17 **Young woman's** short speech of admiration and desire
- b' 2,1-2 **Young man's** words of admiration for his beloved
- a' 2,3-7 **Young woman's** long speech describing union with the young man in his home.

Detailed outline of 3,1-5

- a 3, 1 **In bed, the young woman yearns for her absent lover**
- b 3,2 **She leaves her home** to search for him
- c 3,3a **She is found by the guards**
- d 3,3b **Her desperate question**
- c' 3,4a **She leaves the guards and finds** her lover
- b' 3,4b **She returns to her home** with him
- a' 3,5 **Refrain: The lovers are united, presumably back in her bed.**

Detailed outline of 3,6-5,1

- a 3,6-11 **Approach of the young woman in the wedding procession**
- b 4,1-5 **Young man's lengthy speech of admiration**
- c 4,6 **His short speech of desire**
- d 4,7 **CENTER: his very short speech of admiration**

- c' 4,8 **His short speech of desire**
- b' 4,9-11 **His lengthy speech of admiration**
- a' 4,12-5,1 **Union of the lovers.**

Detailed outline of 5,2-7,10 (5,2-7,11)

- a 5,2-8 **Their separation and her night-time search**
- b 5,9-16 **Her praise of her body, from the head down**
- c 6,1-3 **Her declaration to the daughters of Jerusalem**
- d 6,4-9 **CENTER: His praise of her unique beauty**
- c' 6,10-12 **Her declaration to the daughters of Jerusalem**
- b' 6,13-7,7 (7,1-8) **His praise of her body, from the feet up**
- a' 7,8-10 (7,9-11) **Their union.**

Regarding 7,11-8,4 (7,12-8,4) "The book's sixth unit consists entirely of a speech by the young woman... The internal organization of the unit is tripartite:

- (1) Her invitation to him to accompany her to the countryside (7,11-13 [7,12-14])
- (2) Her wish that he were her brother (8,1-2)
- (3) A closing refrain, alluding to their union (8,3-4)."

Detailed outline of 8,5-14: Closing words of love

- a 8,5a **Introductory rhetorical question**
- b 8,5b **Young man's(?) short speech**
- c 8,6-7 **Young woman's longer speech**
- d 8,8-10 **CENTER: The brothers and their sister**
- c' 8,11-12 **Young woman's longer speech**
- b' 8,13 **Young man's short speech**
- a' 8,14 **Concluding refrain.**

DAS BIBELWERK (*Das Hohelied*, in: <https://www.bibelwerk.de/mitgliederbereich.34501.html>): *Seven parts.*

- A 1,2-2,7 Gegenseitige Liebe und Sehnsucht
- B 2,8-17 Einladung des Mannes an die Frau zur Liebe in der freien Natur
- C 3,1-5 Traum der Frau und Zusammensein der Liebenden
- D 3,6-5,1 Hochzeit: "Esst, Freunde, trinkt, berauscht euch an der Liebe!" [Hld 5,1]
- C' 5,2-7,11 Traum der Frau; Ausdruck gegenseitiger Bewunderung und Zusammensein der Liebenden
- B' 7,12-8,4 Einladung der Frau an den Mann zur Liebe in der freien Natur
- A' 8,5-14 Gegenseitige Liebe und Sehnsucht: "Stark wie der Tod ist die Liebe" [8,6].

T. LONGMAN (*Song of Songs*, in: NICOT, 2001): *Twenty-three poems.*

- 1,2-4 Poem One: The woman's pursuit
- 1,5-6 Poem Two: Dark but beautiful
- 1 7-8 Poem Three: An invitation to a Tryst
- 1,9-11 Poem Four: A beautiful mare
- 1,12-14 Poem Five: Intimate fragrances
- 1,15-17 Poem Six: Outdoor love
- 2,1-7 Poem Seven: Flowers and trees
- 2,8-17 Poem eight: A poem of spring
- 3,1-5 Poem Nine: Seeking and (not) finding
- 3,6-11 Poem Ten: A royal wedding procession
- 4,1-7 Poem Eleven: From head to breasts
- 4,8-9 Poem Twelve: The invitation
- 4,10-5,1 Poem Thirteen: Eating in the garden of love
- 5,2-6,3 Poem Fourteen: To search and (not) find, once again
- 6,4-10 Poem Fifteen: Awesome as an army under banners
- 6,11-12 Poem Sixteen: A surprise in the nut grove
- 7,1-11 (6,13-7,19) Poem Seventeen: A description of the dancing Shulamite
- 7,12-14 (7,11-13) Poem Eighteen: I will give you my love
- 8,1-4 Poem Nineteen: Yearning for love
- 8,5-7 Poem Twenty: Like a seal
- 8,-10 Poem Twenty-One: Protecting the sister
- 8,11-12 Poem Twenty-Two: Who owns the vineyard?
- 8,13-14 Poem Twenty-Three: Be like a gazelle.

D. GARRETT (*Song of Songs*, in: WBC, 2004): *Thirteen Songs for Soprano, Tenor, and Chorus*.

- I. 1,2-4 Chorus and soprano: The entrance
- II. 1,5-6 Soprano: The virgin's education I
- III. 1,7-8 Soprano and chorus: Finding the beloved
- IV. 1,9-2,7 Tenor, chorus, and soprano: The first song of mutual love
- V. 2,8-17 Soprano and tenor: The invitation to depart
- VI. 3,1-15 Three wedding-night songs
 - A. 3,1-5 Soprano: The bride's anxiety
 - B. 3,6-11 Chorus: The bride comes to the groom
 - C. 4,1-15 Tenor: The flawless bride
- VII. 4 16-5,1 Soprano, tenor, and chorus: The consummation
- VIII. 5,2-6,10 Three wedding-night songs
 - A. 5,2-8 Soprano, tenor, and chorus: Pain and transformation
 - B. 5,9-6,3 Chorus and soprano: The bride recovers the groom
 - C. 6,4-10 Tenor and chorus: The flawless bride
- IX. 6,11-7,1 (6,13) Soprano, chorus, and tenor: Leaving girlhood
- X. 7,2(1)-8,4 Tenor and soprano: The second song of mutual love
- XI. 8,5-7 Chorus and soprano: Claiming the beloved
- XII. 8,8-12 Chorus and soprano: The virgins education II
- XIII. 8,13-14 Tenor, chorus, and soprano: The farewell.

Y. ZAKOVITCH (*Das Hohelied*, in: HThKAT, 2004): *Thirty-one parts*.

- 1,2-4: Wachtraum – Liebe besser als Wien
- 1,5-6: Die Swärzliche
- 1,7-8: Die Hirtin
- 1,9-14: Zwiegespräch – Gegenseitiges Rühmen
- 1,15-17: Zwiegespräch der Liebenden
- 2,1-3: Zwiegespräch der Liebenden
- 2,4-7: Wachtraum – Monolog des Mädchens
- 2,8-13: Wachtraum – Hinaus in die freie Natur
- 2,14: Meine Taube in den Felsklüften
- 2,15: Die Rätsel von den kleinen Fuchsen
- 2,16-17: "Der unter den Lilien weidet"
- 3,1-5: Nächtllicher Traum – "Auf meinem Lager"
- 3,6: "Umräuchert von Myrrhe und Weinrauch"
- 3,7-11: "Salomos Bett"
- 4,1-7: Die Schönheit der Geliebten
- 4,8-11: Rühmender Monolog
 - 4,12-5,1: Zwiegespräch – Der verschlossene Garten
- 5,2-6,3: Traumlied – Die nächtliche Suche nach dem Geliebten
- 6,10.4-9: Ruhm der Geliebten
- 6,11-12: Wachtraum – Abstieg ins Nussgärtlein
 - 7,1-7: Ruhm der Geliebten – "Kehr um, kehr um..."
 - 7,8-10: Ruhm der Geliebten – Vergleich mit der Palme
 - 7,11-14: Aufforderung – "Ich bin meines Freundes..."
- 8,1-4: Wachtraum – "Wärest du doch mein Bruder"
- 8,5a: "Wer ist es, die...?"
- 8,5b: "Unter dem Apfelbaum..."
- 8,6a: "Wie ein Siegel"
- 8,6b-7: Betrachtung zur Gewalt der Liebe
- 8,8-10: Spottlied – Die Brüder und ihre kleine Schwester
- 8,11-12: Spottlied auf Salomo
- 8,13-14: Zwiegespräch – Scheinbarer Abschluss.

Quantitative structural analysis of the Song of Songs

It cannot be excluded that some of the multiples of 17 and 26 are due to coincidence.

Vs	Text	Words	Letters	Sum words	S/P	Structural Design
						§1-3 The first contact between bride and bridegroom
1	Song 1,1	4 Heading	17	4		§1 The beginning of a budding, loving relationship
2	Song 1,2	7	31	11		
3	Song 1,3	10	38	21		
4	Song 1,4	14	68	35	S	
4	1,1-4	35	154	35		
5	Song 1,5	9	42	44		§2 How do the bride and the bridegroom meet?
6	Song 1,6	18	71	62		
7	Song 1,7	15	63	77		
8	Song 1,8	16	58	93	S	
4	1,5-8	58	234	58		
9	Song 1,9	5+	25	98		§3 The view of the groom and the bride on their beloved
10	Song 1,10	5+	26	103		
11	Song 1,11	7/17	24	110		
12	Song 1,12	6	23	116		
13	Song 1,13	7	23	123		
14	Song 1,14	7	25	130	S	§1-3 The first contact: highlighted and sealed by 130 words.
6	1,9-14	37	146	37		
14	1,1-14	130 (5x26)	534	130 (5x26)		
15	Song 1,15	7	27	137		§4 The bride's view on awakening love
16	Song 1,16	8	28	145		
17	Song 1,17	5	26	150		
18	Song 2,1	5	24	155		
19	Song 2,2	7	30	162		
20	Song 2,3	13	55	175		
21	Song 2,4	7	27	182		
22	Song 2,5	8	39	190		
23	Song 2,6	5	25	195		
24	Song 2,7	16	68	211	S	
10	1,15-2,7	81	349	81		
25	Song 2,8	11	37	222		§5 The bride's view on her beloved
26	Song 2,9	17	66	239		
27	Song 2,10	10	34	249		The paragraph is highlighted and sealed by 85 words.
28	Song 2,11	8	24	257		
29	Song 2,12	10	43	267		
30	Song 2,13	13	53	280	S	This S does not seem to have a demarcating function.
31	Song 2,14	16	70	296	S	It draws special attention to the bridegroom's reaction.
7	2,8-14	85 (5x17)	327	85 (5x17)		
32	Song 2,15	9	46	305		§6 The bride: "Catch us the foxes! My beloved is mine!"
33	Song 2,16	6	23	311		
34	Song 2,17	16	56	327	S	
3	2,15-17	31	125	31		1,2-2,17, excluding the heading: 323 (19x17) words.
20	1,15-2,17	197	801	197		
34	1,1-2,17	327	1335	327		Until this point the text is sealed by 34 (2x17) verses.
35	Song 3,1	10	44	337		§7 The bride in search of her beloved
36	Song 3,2	13	62	350		
37	Song 3,3	8	38	358		
38	Song 3,4	19	75	377		
39	Song 3,5	16	68	393	S	
5	3,1-5	66	287	66		
40	Song 3,6	13	50	406		§8 The maidens speak about Solomon and his escort
41	Song 3,7	9	38	415		
42	Song 3,8	11	43	426	S	
3	3,6-8	33	131	33		

43	Song 3,9	7	29	433		§9 The maidens invite the maidens to come and meet him
44	Song 3,10	12	54	445		
45	Song 3,11	15	63	460	S	The paragraph is highlighted and sealed by 34 words.
3	3,9-11	34 (2x17)	146	34 (2x17)		
46	Song 4,1	15	61	475		§10 The bridegroom's view of his beloved
47	Song 4,2	11	48	486		
48	Song 4,3	10	47	496		
49	Song 4,4	12	53	508		
50	Song 4,5	8	38	516		
51	Song 4,6	13	47	529		
52	Song 4,7	6	20	535	S	
7	4,1-7	75	314	75		
18	3,1-4,7	208 (8x26)	878	208 (8x26)		3,1-4,7 (§§7-10) highlighted and sealed by 208 words.
52	1,1-4,7	535	2213	535		1,1-4,7 sealed by 52 (2x26) verses.
53	Song 4,8	16	74	551		§11 The bridegroom invites his bride; their dialogue
54	Song 4,9	9	44	560		
55	Song 4,10	13	46	573		
56	Song 4,11	12	52	585	S	This S does not have a delimiting function, but serves to draw attention to what follows in vs. 12ff.
57	Song 4,12	8	27	593		
58	Song 4,13	9	37	602		
59	Song 4,14	14	50	616		
60	Song 4,15	8	31	624		
61	Song 4,16	14	58	638		
62	Song 5,1	21	81	659	S	
10	4,8-5,1	124	500	124		
63	Song 5,2	19	74	678		§12 In a dream the bride opens to him and describes him
64	Song 5,3	10	44	688		
65	Song 5,4	8	26	696		
66	Song 5,5	13	52	709		
67	Song 5,6	15	67	724		
68	Song 5,7	12+	56	736		5,7-8 The watchmen find her, beat and wound her: she has a message for her beloved: I am sick with love: 26 words.
69	Song 5,8	14/26	54	750		
70	Song 5,9	10	40	760		
71	Song 5,10	5	20	765		
72	Song 5,11	7	32	772		
73	Song 5,12	10	41	782		
74	Song 5,13	10	50	792		
75	Song 5,14	10	44	802		
76	Song 5,15	11	47	813		
77	Song 5,16	10	41	823		
78	Song 6,1	10	39	833		
79	Song 6,2	9	43	842		
80	Song 6,3	6	26	848	S	
18	5,2-6,3	189	796	189		
81	Song 6,4	8	37	856		§13 The bridegroom visualizes his bride; he delights in her
82	Song 6,5	11	49	867		
83	Song 6,6	11	47	878		
84	Song 6,7	5	22	883		
85	Song 6,8	8	38	891		
86	Song 6,9	16	73	907	S	This S does not have a delimiting function, but serves to draw attention to what follows in v. 10.
87	Song 6,10	11	43	918	S	
7	6,4-10	70	309	70		
87	1,1-6,10	918 (54x17)	3818	918 (54x17)		1,1-6,10 (§§1-13) sealed by 918 words.
88	Song 6,11	12	51	930		§14 The bridegroom's declaration to the maidens
89	Song 6,12	7	29	937		
90	Song 7,1	12	54	949		
91	Song 7,2	13	50	962		
92	Song 7,3	11	44	973		
93	Song 7,4	6	24	979		

94	Song 7,5	16	65	995		
95	Song 7,6	9	40	1004		
96	Song 7,7	6	25	1010		
97	Song 7,8	6	28	1016		
98	Song 7,9	13	60	1029		
99	Song 7,10	9	41	1038		
12	6,11-7,10	120	511	120	S	The S after 1,11 in MT is clearly out of place.
100	Song 7,11	4	18	1042		§15 The bride's invitation to her beloved
101	Song 7,12	6	25	1048		
102	Song 7,13	15	57	1063		
103	Song 7,14	13	53	1076		
104	Song 8,1	14	45	1090		
105	Song 8,2	11	45	1101		
106	Song 8,3	5	24	1106		
107	Song 8,4	12	49	1118	S	<u>1,1-8,4</u> (§§1-15) sealed by 1118 (43x26) words.
7	7,11-8,4	80	316	80		
107	1,1-8,4	1118 (43x26)	4645	1118 (43x26)		<u>1,1-8,4</u> The main body of the Song is sealed by 1118 words.
						§16-18 Three distinct Epilogues
108	Song 8,5	17	65	1135		§16 Epilogue 1: The maidens and the bridegroom speak
109	Song 8,6	20	77	1155		<u>8,5</u> The maidens visualize the bride and her beloved: 17 .
110	Song 8,7	21	74	1176	S	<u>8,6cβ</u> . Read שלהבתיה שלהבתיה - Haplography: see BHS. "Its flames are (like) the flame of Yah." (HALOT, 1504f.).
3	8,5-7	58	216	58		
111	Song 8,8	12+	44	1188		§17 Epilogue 2: She is compared with a wall; she agrees
112	Song 8,9	14/26	47	1202		<u>8,8-9</u> The brothers speak about their sister: 26 words.
113	Song 8,10	9	41	1211	P	
3	8,8-10	37	132	37		
114	Song 8,11	14	51	1225		§18 Epilogue 3: Solomon's vineyard: the final dialogue
115	Song 8,12	10	39	1235		
116	Song 8,13	6+	36	1241		<u>8,13-14</u> The last words of the the bridal couple to conclude
117	Song 8,14	11/17	39	1252	Col.	the book: 17 words.
4	8,11-14	41	165	41		
10	8,5-14	134	513	134		
116	1,2-8,14	1248 (48x26)	5141	1248		<u>1,2-8,14</u> Excluding the heading: 1248 (48x26) words.
117	1,1-8,14	1252	5158	1252		

Observation 1 The book as a whole, excluding the heading, is finalized and sealed by **1248** (48x26) words (according to the corrected text in 8,6c: two words extra - see BHS).

The main body of the Song (1,1-8,4), with **1118** words, constitute 89% of the text as a whole. In addition, altogether 404 words (34%) are highlighted by **17** and **26**.

Observation 2 The following larger passages - all delimited by **S** - stand out as additionally highlighted by multiples of the divine name numbers:

- 1,1-14 with **130** (5x26) words.
- 3,1-4,7 with **208** (8x26) words; 1,1-4,7 with **52** (2x26) verses.
- 1,1-2,17 with **34** (2x17) verses 1,2-2,17 with **323** (19x17) words.
- 1,1-6,10 with **918** (54x17) words.
- 1,1-8,4 with **1118** (43x26) words.
- §5 (2,8-14) stands out with **85** (5x17) words and §9 (3,9-11) with **34** (2x17).

Overview of the words spoken by the dramatis personae

No.	Verse(s)	Speakers	Addressees	Words	Sum words	Significant numbers
1	1,2a	Bride	Maidens	3	3	
2	1,2b-4a	Bride	Groom	17	20	Her first words to her lover: 17.
3	1,4b	Bride&Maidens	Groom/Maidens	11	31	
4	1,5-6	Bride	Maidens	27	58	The bride is dark and beautiful:
5	1,7	Bride	Groom	15	73	Speeches 4-8
6	1,8-11	Groom	Bride	33	106	102 (6x17) words.
7	1,12-14	Bride	Maidens	20	126	
8	1,15	Groom	Bride	7	133	
9	1,16a	Bride	Groom	5	138	
10	1,16b-17	Bride&Groom	Bride&Groom	8	146	
11	2,1	Bride	Groom	5	151	
12	2,2	Groom	Bride	7	158	
13	2,3-7	Bride	Maidens	49	207	
14	2,8-14	Bride	Maidens	85	292	Approach of the beloved:
15	2,15	Bride	Maidens	9	301	Speeches 14-17
16	2,16-17	Bride	Bride	22	323	182 (7x26) words.
17	3,1-5	Bride	Maidens	66	389	Sp. 1-16: 323=19x17 words.
18	3,6	Maidens	Bride/Maidens	13	402	
19	3,7-11	Maidens	Bride/Maidens	54	456	
20A	4,1-7	Groom	Bride	75	531	The groom describes the
20B	4,8	Groom	Bride	16	547	beauty, etc., of the bride:
20C	4,9-11	Groom	Bride	34	581	Speeches 20A-E
20D	4,12	Groom	Bride	8	589	156 (6x26) words.
20E	4,13-14	Groom	Bride	23	612	
21	4,15-16	Bride	Groom	22	634	
22	5,1	Groom	Bride	21	655	
23	5,2-8	Bride	Maidens	91	746	
24	5,9	Maidens	Bride	10	756	About the beloved's beauty and
25	5,10-16	Bride	Maidens	63	819	his whereabouts:
26	6,1	Maidens	Bride	10	829	Speeches 24-30
27	6,2-3	Bride	Maidens	15	844	187 (11x17) words.
28A	6,4-7	Groom	Bride	35	879	
28B	6,8-9	Groom	Bride	24	903	
29	6,10	Maidens	Maidens	11	914	
30	6,11-12	Groom	Maidens	19	933	
31	7,1a	Maidens	Bride	7	940	
32	7,1b	Groom	Maidens	5	945	
33	7,2-10	Groom	Bride	89	1034	
34	7,11-14	Bride	Groom	38	1072	

35	8,1-2	Bride	Groom	25	1097	
36	8,3-4	Bride	Maidens	17	1114	The bride's wish: 17 words.
37	8,5a	Maidens	Maidens	8	1122	1122 = 66 x 17 words.
38	8,5b	Bride	Groom	9	1131	
39	8,6-7	Bride	Groom	41	1172	
40	8,8-9	Brothers	Brothers	26	1198	Brothers about their sister: 26.
41	8,10	Bride	Brothers	9	1207	
42	8,11-12	Bride	Groom	24	1231	The last words spoken by the
43	8,13	Groom	Bride	6	1237	couple: 17 words.
44	8,14	Bride	Groom	11	1248	1248 = 48 x 26 words.

Observation 3 The specifically highlighted speeches and groups of speeches are self-evident. Strikingly, Speeches 1-16 are made up of altogether **323** (19x17) words. The fact that Speeches 1-37 have **1122** (66x17) words may perhaps be a matter of coincidence. Since there are no introductions to the speeches, the **1248** words of all the speeches correspond precisely to the total number of words in the Song without the heading.

I owe thanks to Klaas Eikelenboom for having prepared the list of speeches and checked my text.



Rembrandt van Rijn's "Jewish Bride" (Rijksmuseum Amsterdam)