

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### OT645/745.RW Song of Songs Introductory Analysis

Write a 1000+ word compilation of questions and observations about the Song of Songs based on a fresh reading of the English text. No secondary sources are to be read or consulted prior to this analysis. The point is to engage the book critically and inquisitively to surface any presumptions or understandings you already have and to inspire further study.

#### **Part 1: What do you know (or think you know) about the Song of Songs?**

First, prior to reading the book or any secondary literature, state your understanding of the book by answering all the questions below. If you have no clue, feel free to just say that. This is not about giving a right or wrong answer, it's about identifying your assumptions coming into this study. You do not need to employ a scholarly style with this particular assignment, though proper grammar and spelling is expected. You can use a conversational style, but you should run a spelling and grammar check prior to submission.

- How familiar are you with the Song of Songs, also known as Song of Solomon, *Shir Hashirim*, and Canticles?
- To what extent do you think this book was considered a controversial part of the Jewish and Christian canon of Scripture and why?
- What do you know about the different ways people have interpreted the book?
- What is your understanding about why this is part of the Bible?

#### **Part 2: What questions are sparked by your investigative reading of the book?**

Read or listen through the book afresh from beginning to end without stopping to get the overall feel.

I read or listened through the entire book from beginning to end:

Yes

No

I went back through a second time to address the questions below:

Yes

No

As go back through a second time, write down your questions or observations about the following:

1. **Author/audience:** what do you pick up about the author, audience, and/or genre?
  - Observation 1
  - Observation 2
  - Observation 3
  - Observation 4
  - Etc.
2. **Language/literary features:** what strikes you as intriguing about the language or style of writing? What metaphors pique your interest? What questions do you have about the original Hebrew?
  - Question 1
  - Question 2
  - Question 3
  - Question 4
  - Etc.
3. **Structure/organization:** how easily does the book “flow,” in your opinion? Where are there “seams” or “speed bumps” you “trip” over? What indications of organization do you see?
  - Comment 1
  - Comment 2
  - Comment 3
  - Comment 4
  - Etc.
4. **History/geography:** what historical, political, or geographical references do you wish you knew more about?
  - Example 1
  - Example 2
  - Example 3
  - Example 4
  - Etc.
5. **Culture:** where are there references to cultural things that intrigue you? What do you wish you knew about the cultural background so you could understand the context better?
  - Question 1
  - Question 2
  - Question 3
  - Question 4
  - Etc.
6. **Other:** what stands out as unusual? What do you want to research further?
  - Example 1
  - Example 2

- Example 3
- Example 4
- Etc.