

negatives

In various biblical love stories and marriages, the brothers of the bride or would-be bride are involved in some way. They do not come through as noble characters in the process, however.

Rebekah's brother, Laban, was obviously covetous and deceptive (Genesis 24 and 29). Dinah's brothers, Simeon and Levi, deceived and killed Shechem and all the males in his city (Genesis 34). Tamar's brother, Absalom murdered their half-brother, Amnon (Second Samuel 13). Since rape was involved in two of these cases, the brothers' anger is understandable.

Interestingly, the first thing we read about the Shulamite's brothers (in 1:6) was that they were angry at her. Was their anger justified? We do not know, but for some reason she called them her mother's sons rather than her brothers. There probably was some conflict between the brothers and the Shulamite early on, but this disappears completely in chapter eight.

The biggest negative about the Shulamite's brothers is that they are not prominent compared to most other characters in the Song of Solomon. Even the "daughters of Jerusalem" are mentioned many more times.

Mark the points below as correct (C), incorrect (X), or partly correct (▲).

A	() We do not know much about the Shulamite's brothers.
A-1	() She did not say much about them (1:6, 8:1).
A-2	() Like everyone, except Solomon, they are unnamed.
A-3	() Their figurative speech is difficult to understand (8:8-9).
A-4	() They probably were silversmiths and carpenters (8:9).
B	() The Shulamite's brothers were secondary characters.
B-1	() They did not say very much (8:8-9).
B-2	() She did not speak well of them (1:6, 8:1).
B-3	() They were uncertain about what to do (8:8-9).
B-4	() They did not live in Jerusalem (1:6, 8:11-12).
B-5	() She, rather than they, had the last word (8:10, 14).
B-6	() They were opposed to their sister's romance (1:6, 8:7-9).
B-7	() If they were omitted, it would not change chapter eight much.
B-8	() They had more authority only because they were older (1:6, 8:8).
B-9	() She interacted more with other women (1:4-6, 2:7, 5:8-9, 6:1-2, 8:4).