

# Song of Solomon 2 Commentary

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SONG OF SOLOMON 2  
COMMENTARY NOTES  
Compiled by Bruce Hurt

| SONG OF SOLOMON   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| Union and Communion   |  |  |   |
| The Courtship<br>(Falling in Love)<br>Song 1:2-3:5  | The Wedding<br>(United in Love)<br>Song 3:6-5:1    | The Maturing Marriage<br>(Struggling and Growing in Love)<br>Song 5:2-8:14 |   |
| Fostering<br>of Love  | Fulfillment<br>of Love                             | Frustration<br>of Love   | Faithfulness<br>of Love                               |
| Falling<br>in Love  | United<br>in Love                                  | Divided<br>in Love   | Devoted<br>in Love                                    |
| Cultivating<br>Love   |  | Acclaiming<br>Love   |   |
| Courtship<br>Before the<br>Marriage   | Procession for and<br>Consummation of the Marriage | The Honeymoon<br>is Over!<br>Song 5:2-6:13                                 | The Marriage Deepens<br>Love Matures<br>Song 7:1-8:14 |
| Chief Speaker:<br>The Bride<br>("Darling")  | Chief Speaker:<br>The Groom<br>("Beloved")         | Chief Speaker:<br>Both   | Chief Speaker:<br>"Duet"                              |
| Theme - The joy and intimacy of love within a committed marriage covenant.  |  |  |   |
| Song of Solomon foreshadows Christ, the Bridegroom's relationship with His Bride, the Church.<br>(Eph 5:32-note, Rev 19:7-8-note) |  |  |   |

**Date** - Circa 950-965BC  
Time Period estimated at about 1 year  
Before Solomon plunged into gross immorality and idolatry  
(Compare only 140 women in Song 6:8-note with 1Ki 11:1-4, 5-7, 8, 9-10)

Adapted from Charles Swindoll's book chart

#### **SELECT RESOURCES**

##### **Song of Solomon**

**See also main resource page for Song of Solomon**

#### **Adam Clarke -**

- [Song of Solomon 2 Commentary](#)

#### **Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges**

- [Song of Solomon 2 Commentary](#)

#### **Century Bible Commentary -**

- [Song of Solomon 2 Commentary](#)

#### **Thomas Constable -**

- [Song of Solomon Commentary](#)

#### **Gene Getz short videos**

- [Song of Songs 2:7-3:5 - Sexual Purity](#)

#### **Net Bible Notes**

- [Song 2 Commentary](#)

#### **Ellicott's Commentary**

- [Song of Solomon 2 Commentary](#)

#### **David Guzik**

- [Song of Solomon 2 Commentary](#)

#### **HOLMAN CHRISTIAN STUDY BIBLE - notes**

- [HCBS Notes](#)

#### **H A Ironside**

- [Song of Solomon 2 Commentary](#)

#### **Keil and Delitzsch - not always literal**

- [Song of Solomon 2 Commentary](#)

#### **Steve Kreloff - Mp3's**

- [Song of Solomon 2:8-15 Before You Get Married \(Pt 1\)](#)
- [Song of Solomon 2:16-3:5 Before You Get Married \(Pt 2\)](#)

**Lange** - Comments by verse at top of page literal. Doctrinal section at bottom is allegorical.

- [Song 2 Commentary](#)

#### **HENRY MORRIS - Defender's Study Bible Notes**

- [Song 2 Commentary](#)

#### **Reformation Study Bible Notes**

- [Song 2:1](#)
- [Song 2:4](#)
- [Song 2:5](#)
- [Song 2:7](#)
- [Song 2:8–17](#)
- [Song 2:14](#)
- [Song 2:15](#)
- [Song 2:16](#)
- [Song 2:17](#)

#### **Grant Richison -**

- [Theology of Sex - Recommended](#)

#### **Rob Salvato Sermon Notes**

- [Song of Solomon 1:1-4](#)
- [Song of Solomon 1:5-2:7](#)
- [Song of Solomon 2:8-17](#)

#### **DEREK THOMAS Sermons**

- [Song of Solomon 1:1-2:3 Love's Beginning](#)
- [Song of Solomon 2:3-3:5 Growing Love](#)
- [Song of Solomon 2:3 A Time to Embrace - Finding A Life Partner](#)

#### **TODAY IN THE WORD**

- [Song of Solomon 2:1-7](#)
- [Song of Solomon 2:8-9](#)
- [Song of Solomon 2:10-14](#)
- [Song of Solomon 2:15](#)
- [Song of Solomon 2:16-17](#)

**Bob Utley** - brief but insightful comments on Hebrew words and phrases

- [Song of Songs 2 Commentary](#)

#### **G I WILLIAMSON**

- [Song of Solomon 1:2-2:7 The Beginning of True Love](#)
- [Song of Solomon 2:8-3:5 Getting to Know You](#)

**Steve Zeisler** - sermon notes

- [Song of Songs 1:2-2:7 Your Love Is Better Than Wine](#)
- [Song of Songs 2:8-3:6 In Love, In The Springtime](#)

**Shulamite (young woman) speaks...**

**Song 2:1** "I am the [rose](#) of [Sharon](#), The [lily](#) of the [valleys](#)."

**Solomon (young man) speaks...**

**Song 2:2** "Like a lily among the thorns, So is my darling among the maidens."

**Shulamite (young woman) speaks...**

**Song 2:3** "Like an [apple](#) ([note](#)) tree among the trees of the forest, So is my beloved among the young men. In his [shadow](#) ([note](#)) I took great delight and sat down, And his fruit was sweet to my taste.

**2:4** "He has brought me to his banquet hall, and his banner over me is love.

**2:5** "**Sustain** (**imperative = command**) (Lxx = **sterizo** = conveys idea of stabilizing by supplying support) me with [raisin-cakes](#), **Refresh** (**imperative = command**) me with [apples](#) ([note](#)), because I am lovesick.

**2:6** "Let his left hand be under my head and his right hand embrace me."

**2:7** "I adjure (Lxx = **orkizo** = solemnly implore, give a command under oath) you, O daughters of Jerusalem([picture](#)), by the gazelles or by the hinds of the field, That you will not arouse or awaken my love, Until she pleases."

**Shulamite (young woman) speaks...**

**Song 2:1** "I am the [rose](#) of [Sharon](#), the [lily](#) of the [valleys](#)."

**NET Bible** - I am a meadow flower from Sharon, a lily from the valleys.

**NLT** - I am the spring crocus blooming on the Sharon Plain, the lily of the valley.

[Rose](#) ([note](#)) of [Sharon](#) ([note](#)) - (Rose = not actually a rose but a crocus - a small spring-flowering plant of the iris family, which grows from a corm and bears bright yellow, purple, or white flowers; see [Rose](#))

The **NET Note** adds in regard to **rose** "Early English translators knew that it referred to some kind of flower but were unsure exactly which type, so they arbitrarily chose "rose" because it was a well-known and beautiful flower....Appropriately, the rustic maiden who grew up in the simplicity of rural life compares herself to a simple, common flower of the field "

**Rose of Sharon** - This phrase is frequently interpreted as a description of Christ by commentators and hymn writers (eg, hymns like [Jesus, Rose of Sharon](#), but in **context** which is always "king" in interpretation the **Rose** is correctly interpreted as the Shulamite who is speaking. She mentions the region of [Sharon](#) which is in Northern Galilee near Nazareth between Tabor and the Sea of Galilee. Since the **rose** she referred to was a leafless meadow flower, most commentators suggest that she was being quite modest as she compared herself to two common wildflowers. Compare to her earlier more self deprecatory remarks in Song 1:5-6.

**POSB** - the Shulamite's statement betrayed her insecurity and sense of unworthiness in comparison to the king. Her beloved king was "a cluster of camphire [henna blossoms] in the vineyards of Engedi" (Song 1:14). She, on the other hand, was only average, like the common flowers plucked in the nearby plains and valleys and sold for a pittance in the local markets (Song 2:1). ([Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible- Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon](#))

**Constable** - The Shulamite described herself as a rather common though attractive person. The "rose of Sharon" probably refers to the crocuses (possibly narcissuses, lilies, or meadow saffrons) that grew on the plain of Sharon that bordered the Mediterranean Sea south of the Carmel mountain range. Lilies grew and still grow easily in the valleys of Israel. She did not depreciate her appearance here as she had earlier (Song 1:5-6), though she was modest. Perhaps Solomon's praise (Song 1:9-10) had made her feel more secure. ([Song of Solomon Commentary](#))

**Longman on rose** - The traditional translation, as found in the KJV, is "rose." However, this is surely incorrect since the rose was not introduced into the region until well after the OT period.

**Sharon** - This name is attached to the strip of fairly level land which runs between the mountains and the shore of the Mediterranean, stretching from Nahr Rubin in the South to Mt. Carmel in the North. There are considerable rolling hills; but, compared with the mountains to the East, it is quite properly described as a plain. The soil is a deep rich loam, which is favorable to the growth of cereals. The orange, the vine and the olive grow to great perfection. When the many-colored flowers are in bloom it is a scene of rare beauty. ([Sharon - International Standard Bible Encyclopedia](#))

**NET Note on Sharon** - It is well watered due to the Kurkar ridges running parallel to the shore which trapped the water run-off from

the Samaritan hills. The combination of low sandy hills and swampy lowlands produced heavy vegetation and an abundance of wild flowers in the area

**Lily** (shoshannah origin of name Susanna) ([note](#)) **among the thorns** - Solomon compliments her appearance as standing out among all other maidens even as a lily would stand out in a background of thorns.

The Hebrew word for **lily** occurs 8 times in the Song of Solomon (Song 2:1; 2:2; 2:16; 4:5; 5:13; 6:2; 6:3; 7:2) "The lily of the valleys is not our common white, bell-shaped plant of that name." ([G. Lloyd Carr](#))

Song 2:2 Like a **Joe Guglielmo** on the **rose of Sharon** - Many attribute the rose of Sharon to be Solomon, but it seems to be speaking of the Shulamite woman. And there are many pastors and many commentaries that speak of the **Rose of Sharon** being Jesus, that it is a picture of Christ. I am not going to argue with you over it because it is a beautiful picture, but it does not fit with our text here (**Ed: Nor with the context** Song 2:2 Like a ). This is speaking of the Shulamite woman. And thus, the Rose of Sharon, the Lily of the valleys were very common, and she did not see herself as anything special, especially to have a man like Solomon love her. Yes there was beauty to these flowers, but again, they were common. And yet Solomon saw her as more beautiful than anything he has ever seen and we will see him respond to what she said in the next verse. And think about that, I like the picture here because I think we see ourselves as being very common but God sees us as beautiful!

**Solomon (young man) speaks..**

**Song 2:2 "Like a lily among the thorns, so is my darling among the maidens"**

**NET Bible** - Like a lily among the thorns, so is my darling among the maidens.

**NLT** - Like a lily among thistles is my darling among young women.

**Lily among the thorns** - Her beauty like a lily far surpasses that of "thorns."

**NET Note on among the thorns** - The picture is of a beautiful flower growing in the midst of thorn bushes (1 Sam 14:11; 2 Kgs 14:9; 2 Chr 25:18; Job 31:40; Prov 26:9; Isa 34:13; Hos 9:6) rather than a beautiful flower growing in the midst of rocky outcroppings (1 Sam 13:6; 2 Chr 33:11)....The Lover accommodates her self-denigrating comparison, but heightens it to praise her: If she insisted that she was nothing more than a common flower of the field, then he insisted that all other women were like thorns by comparison. The term *nin* (khokh, "thorn") is often used as a figure for utter desolation and the cause of pain; it is the antithesis of fertility and beautiful luxuriant growth (Job 31:40; Isa 34:13; Hos 9:6).

**My darling** - my friend, my companion

**Darling** ([07474](#))(**rayah** - רעייה) refers to one's companion and is used only in Song 1:9, 15; 2:2, 10, 13; 4:1, 7; 5:2; 6:4. Every use is translated in the Lxx with the adverb **plesion** Song 2:2 Like a which means near or close and in the NT is used to describe a neighbor (as one near) (Mt 5:43). BDAG helps us get a sense of Solomon's use of darling in that **plesion** Song 2:2 Like a is a "marker of a position quite close to another position."

**POSB** - The king was quick to reassure his darling, reinforcing how pleased he was to be with her. He said that she was a "lily among thorns." If she was only a lily—a common, ordinary wildflower—then by comparison, the rest of the young women in the kingdom were not flowers at all, but thorns! Moore and Akin comment, "Such praise would not cause other women to applaud him. But it would cause his love [the young woman] to adore him. There was not another like her as far as he was concerned. This is how to fan the flames of love." ([Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible- Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon](#))

**Robert Rayburn** on **Song 2:2** - He says she is the fairest of ten thousand, a lily among the brambles. There is a lot of this characteristic language of love in the Song, by which I mean what is literally hyperbole, an exaggeration – the man wouldn't want to be taken to mean that all other women are actually ugly (brambles) – but as an expression of love such language is a literal expression of his feeling. A man doesn't have to believe that his beloved is literally the most beautiful woman in the world – and that objective observers would agree that she is, professional photographers, Hollywood casting directors, etc. – in order to say and mean that she is to him the most beautiful woman in the world. Beauty, like so many other things in life, is an effect, and the man's love for her makes any woman the most beautiful in the world! ([Song of Songs](#))

**Joe Guglielmo** - She sees herself as common but Solomon says that she is more than that. Solomon tells her that she is special, like a beautiful lily among all the thorns. ([Song of Solomon](#))

**Shulamite (young woman) speaks...**

Song 2:3 "Like an [apple \(note\)](#) tree among the trees of the forest, so is my beloved among the young men. In his [shadow \(note\)](#) I took great delight and sat down, And his fruit was sweet to my taste.

## **SHE "REPAYS" HIS COMPLIMENT**

**NET Bible** - Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest, so is my beloved among the young men. I delight to sit in his shade, and his fruit is sweet to my taste.

**NLT** - Like the finest apple tree in the orchard is my lover among other young men. I sit in his delightful shade and taste his delicious fruit.

**Carr** - Now she calls for aphrodisiacs on the one hand and requests on the other that love be not awakened until all is ready. After the request for his kisses (Song 1:2), her desires are given further expression. She continues the comparison with plants and animals, then quickly moves on to her own excited response to his presence....Some commentators have suggested that fruit is to be taken as equivalent to lovemaking. While the apple is frequently an erotic symbol, such an interpretation is unnecessary here. ([The Song of Solomon - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - G. Lloyd Carr](#))

**Like an apple tree** - (apple is a frequent word in this Song 2:3, 2:5, 7:8, 8:5) The actual fruit to which this refers is uncertain. The Hebrew word is found elsewhere only in Pr 25:11 and Joel 1:12 Song 2:2 Like a From Song 7:8 we know that this fruit was fragrant. And so the young woman uses this comparison to return Solomon's compliment (given in Song 2:2) She pictures him as standing out from other men, even as an **apple tree** from the **trees of the forest**. It would be unusual to find an apple tree in a common forest, so she is saying in essence that he is "one in a million." **Do you feel that way about your spouse beloved?** Be wary of the wandering eye!

**Like an apple tree** - Song of Solomon makes liberal use of terms of comparison // similes // metaphors. A **simile** is easily identified by a preceding "as" or "like." **As** is used in 9v - Song 5:6, 8, 11, 15; 6:4, 10, 13; 8:6, 10. **Like** is used 47x in 36v - Song 1:3, 5, 7, 9, 15; 2:2, 3, 9, 17; 3:6; 4:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11; 5:11, 12, 13, 15; 6:5, 6, 7, 10; 7:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9; 8:1, 6, 10, 14. Ask the Spirit, your Teacher to guide you in the correct interpretation of these terms of comparison and this should greatly assist your understanding of this great love letter.

**POSB** - He was like an **apple tree** among the trees of the forest, a rare sight bearing a unique treat. The apple tree did not grow in the forests of the region, and the rare one was usually the result of a seed dropped by a visitor or a passing bird. For an individual traveling through the woodlands, an apple was a refreshing treat. ([Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible- Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon](#))

**NET Note on apple tree** - Apple trees were not native to Palestine and had to be imported and cultivated. To find a cultivated apple tree growing in the forest among other wild trees would be quite unusual; the apple tree would stand out and be a delightful surprise. Like a cultivated apple tree, the Lover was unique and stood out among all other men. In ancient Near Eastern love literature, the apple tree was a common symbol for romantic love and sexual fertility (S. N. Kramer, The Sacred Marriage Rite, 100–101). The "apple tree" motif is used in the Song in a similar manner (e.g., Song 2:3; 8:5). Likewise, the motif of "apples" is used as a symbol of fertility (Joel 1:12) and sexual desire (Song 2:5, 7, 9).

**Robert Rayburn on Song 2:3** - Now, she responds with a like statement about him. Now, obviously the couple has met before and had the opportunity in some way to fall in love and to enjoy one another's company and attention and then to feel and in some way to express the mutual attraction. Their love cannot have been a secret to one another! You may be aware that there has been of late a movement of conservative Christians attempting to revive what they call the "courtship" model of choosing a mate. According to this model parents, especially fathers, play a much more active role in selecting a spouse for their children, especially their daughters. Now, it is fair to say that our American model of dating has been largely discredited by the results, however "obvious" it seems nowadays to American young people. Ours is about the dumbest approach to spouse selection – viz. young people trying out a series of possibilities, unprotected from sexual experience by parentally and societally erected barriers – that the world has ever contrived. No wonder we are, in this respect, the laughing stock of the world. However, it goes beyond the biblical evidence to say that parents are supposed to control the selection process. In the Song it is quite obvious that the couple made their own choice and the parents, or, in this case, the brothers are simply serving their younger sister by protecting her purity until the wedding. ([Song of Songs](#))

**Joe Guglielmo** - Finding a fruit bearing tree, not necessarily an apple tree because that was not common in that area, but a pomegranate or the orange tree and finding one in the forest was not common. And she is saying that her beloved is special, he is

one in a million! And she found contentment, satisfaction; joy in just sitting next to him, in his shadow. She did not want any recognition. And I like the way that **Glickman (Ref)** sums this up as he wrote, "Whereas before she came to him she worked long hours in the sun (Song 1:6), now she rests under the protective shade that he brings. And although formerly she was so exhausted by her work she could not properly care for herself, now she finds time for refreshment with him." (**Song of Solomon**)

**My beloved** - The young woman's term of endearment for the young man. This **specific phrase "my beloved"** occurs 24x in 23v - Song 1:13, 14, 16; 2:3, 8, 9, 10, 16, 17; 4:16; 5:2, 4, 5, 6 (twice), Song 5:8, 10, 16; 6:2, 3; 7:9, 11, 13; 8:14. (There are only 2 other uses in the entire OT - Isaiah 5:1, Jeremiah 11:15).

**Beloved (01730) (dod)** is translated two entirely distinct ways - uncle and love (beloved). The first 12 uses in the Pentateuch and historical books are all translated uncle. When one comes to the Wisdom literature we see that **dod** begins to be translated as love and is a key word in the book of Solomon which has 38 uses in 31 verses. Song 2:2 Like a Proverbs 7:18 clearly speaks of erotic (and in this context immoral) **love**. In Isaiah God uses **dod** metaphorically declaring "Let me sing now for my well-beloved A song of my **beloved** (**dod**) concerning His vineyard. My well-beloved had a vineyard on a fertile hill." (Isa 5:1)

In the first use in Song 1:2, **dod** is translated in the Septuagint (also in Song 1:4) with the noun **mastos** which means breast and can describe either sex (e.g., see John's description of Jesus in Rev 1:13) = "For your breasts are good beyond wine." Clearly this verse in Hebrew is depicting her longing for a physical relationship. One gets the picture of her placing her head on his chest (or desiring to do so). Here in Song 1:13 **beloved** is translated in Septuagint with the rare noun **apodesmos** which means breast-band or girdle. The English is rendered "brotherkin." In most of the other uses in Song where **dod** is used with the sense of beloved it is translated in the **Septuagint (Lxx)** with the noun **adelphidos** (Song 1:13f, 16; 2:3, 8-10, 16f; 4:16; 5:2, 4-6, 8-10, 16; 6:1-3; 7:9-11, 13; 8:1, 5, 14) which means beloved one, kinsman, brother. While this noun is not used in the NT, the related word **adelphos** is so that it is reasonable to see how **adelphos** is defined. **Adelphos** is derived from **a** = denotes unity + **delphus** = a womb and is translated brother or near kinsman. Zodhiates adds that "Song 2:2 Like a **Adelphos** generally denotes a fellowship of life based on identity of origin, e.g., members of the same family (Mt. 1:2; Lk 3:1, 19; 6:14); members of the same tribe, countrymen, and so forth (Acts 3:22; 7:23; Ro 9:3)." Jews used **adelphos** to describe fellow countrymen (Acts 3:22).

**Dod** conveys three thoughts (1) the name or address given by one lover to another (Song 5:4, 6:3, 7:9); (2) Love, where it speaks of the adulteress (Pr 7:18) and in a positive sense of the love between Solomon and the Shulammitte (Song 1:2, 4:10). Love is used symbolically of Jerusalem reaching the "age for love" (Ezek 16:8). **Dod** is used metaphorically to describe the (spiritual) adultery (KJV = their whoredom) of Jerusalem in Ezek 23:17. They should have loved God (Who loved them - Ezek 16:8), but instead choose gods who are no gods! This is a good "working description" of the deception (and apostasy) of one's heart! (3) As noted above **Dod** in some contexts means "uncle" (Lev 10:4, 1Sa 10:14-16, Esther 2:15).

**Dod** - 60x in 53 verses - **NAS Usage** = beloved (31), beloved's (1), beloved's and my beloved (1), love (8), lovers (1), uncle (11), uncle's (6), uncles' (1).

Leviticus 10:4 Moses called also to Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Aaron's **uncle** Uzziel, and said to them, "Come forward, carry your relatives away from the front of the sanctuary to the outside of the camp."

Leviticus 20:20 'If there is a man who lies with his **uncle's** wife he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness; they will bear their sin. They will die childless.

Leviticus 25:49 or his **uncle**, or his **uncle's** son, may redeem him, or one of his blood relatives from his family may redeem him; or if he prospers, he may redeem himself.

Numbers 36:11 Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad married their **uncles'** sons.

1 Samuel 10:14 Now Saul's **uncle** said to him and his servant, "Where did you go?" And he said, "To look for the donkeys. When we saw that they could not be found, we went to Samuel."

15 Saul's **uncle** said, "Please tell me what Samuel said to you."

16 So Saul said to his **uncle**, "He told us plainly that the donkeys had been found." But he did not tell him about the matter of the kingdom which Samuel had mentioned.

1 Samuel 14:50 The name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam the daughter of Ahimaaz. And the name of the captain of his army was Abner the son of Ner, Saul's **uncle**.

2 Kings 24:17 Then the king of Babylon made his **uncle** Mattaniah king in his place, and changed his name to Zedekiah.

1 Chronicles 27:32 Also Jonathan, David's **uncle**, was a counselor, a man of understanding, and a scribe; and

Jehiel the son of Hachmoni tutored the king's sons.

Esther 2:7 He was bringing up Hadassah, that is Esther, his **uncle's** daughter, for she had no father or mother. Now the young lady was beautiful of form and face, and when her father and her mother died, Mordecai took her as his own daughter.

15 Now when the turn of Esther, the daughter of Abihail the **uncle** of Mordecai who had taken her as his daughter, came to go in to the king, she did not request anything except what Hegai, the king's eunuch who was in charge of the women, advised. And Esther found favor in the eyes of all who saw her.

Proverbs 7:18 "Come, let us drink our fill of **love** until morning; Let us delight ourselves with caresses.

Song of Solomon 1:2 "May he kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! For your love is better than wine.

4 "Draw me after you and let us run together! The king has brought me into his chambers." "We will rejoice in you and be glad; We will extol your love more than wine. Rightly do they love you."

13 "My beloved is to me a pouch of myrrh Which lies all night between my breasts.

14 "My beloved is to me a cluster of henna blossoms In the vineyards of Engedi."

16 "How handsome you are, my beloved, And so pleasant! Indeed, our couch is luxuriant!

Song of Solomon 2:3 "Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest, So is my beloved among the young men. In his shade I took great delight and sat down, And his fruit was sweet to my taste.

8 "Listen! My beloved! Behold, he is coming, Climbing on the mountains, Leaping on the hills!

9 "My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Behold, he is standing behind our wall, He is looking through the windows, He is peering through the lattice.

10 "My beloved responded and said to me, 'Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, And come along.

16 "My beloved is mine, and I am his; He pastures his flock among the lilies.

17 "Until the cool of the day when the shadows flee away, Turn, my beloved, and be like a gazelle Or a young stag on the mountains of Bether."

Song of Solomon 4:10 "How beautiful is your love, my sister, my bride! How much better is your love than wine, And the fragrance of your oils Than all kinds of spices!

16 "Awake, O north wind, And come, wind of the south; Make my garden breathe out fragrance, Let its spices be wafted abroad. May my beloved come into his garden And eat its choice fruits!"

Song of Solomon 5:1 "I have come into my garden, my sister, my bride; I have gathered my myrrh along with my balsam. I have eaten my honeycomb and my honey; I have drunk my wine and my milk. Eat, friends; Drink and imbibe deeply, O lovers."

2 "I was asleep but my heart was awake. A voice! My beloved was knocking: 'Open to me, my sister, my darling, My dove, my perfect one! For my head is drenched with dew, My locks with the damp of the night.'

4 "My beloved extended his hand through the opening, And my feelings were aroused for him.

5 "I arose to open to my beloved; And my hands dripped with myrrh, And my fingers with liquid myrrh, On the handles of the bolt.

6 "I opened to my beloved, But my beloved had turned away and had gone! My heart went out to him as he spoke. I searched for him but I did not find him; I called him but he did not answer me.

8 "I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, If you find my beloved, As to what you will tell him: For I am lovesick."

9 "What kind of beloved is your beloved, O most beautiful among women? What kind of beloved is your beloved, That thus you adjure us?"

10 "My beloved is dazzling and ruddy, Outstanding among ten thousand.

16 "His mouth is full of sweetness. And he is wholly desirable. This is my beloved and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem."

Song of Solomon 6:1 "Where has your beloved gone, O most beautiful among women? Where has your



beloved turned, That we may seek him with you?"

2 "My beloved has gone down to his garden, To the beds of balsam, To pasture his flock in the gardens And gather lilies.

3 "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine, He who pastures his flock among the lilies."

Song of Solomon 7:9 And your mouth like the best wine!" "It goes down smoothly for my beloved, Flowing gently through the lips of those who fall asleep.

10 "I am my beloved's, And his desire is for me.

11 "Come, my beloved, let us go out into the country, Let us spend the night in the villages.

12 "Let us rise early and go to the vineyards; Let us see whether the vine has budded And its blossoms have opened, And whether the pomegranates have bloomed. There I will give you my love.

13 "The mandrakes have given forth fragrance; And over our doors are all choice fruits, Both new and old, Which I have saved up for you, my beloved.

Song of Solomon 8:5 "Who is this coming up from the wilderness Leaning on her beloved?" "Beneath the apple tree I awakened you; There your mother was in labor with you, There she was in labor and gave you birth.

14 "Hurry, my beloved, And be like a gazelle or a young stag On the mountains of spices."

Isaiah 5:1 Let me sing now for my well-beloved A song of my beloved concerning His vineyard. My well-beloved had a vineyard on a fertile hill.

Jeremiah 32:7 'Behold, Hanamel the son of Shallum your uncle is coming to you, saying, "Buy for yourself my field which is at Anathoth, for you have the right of redemption to buy it."

8 "Then Hanamel my uncle's son came to me in the court of the guard according to the word of the LORD and said to me, 'Buy my field, please, that is at Anathoth, which is in the land of Benjamin; for you have the right of possession and the redemption is yours; buy it for yourself.' Then I knew that this was the word of the LORD.

9 "I bought the field which was at Anathoth from Hanamel my uncle's son, and I weighed out the silver for him, seventeen shekels of silver.

12 and I gave the deed of purchase to Baruch the son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, in the sight of Hanamel my uncle's son and in the sight of the witnesses who signed the deed of purchase, before all the Jews who were sitting in the court of the guard.

Ezekiel 16:8 "Then I passed by you and saw you, and behold, you were at the time for love; so I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness. I also swore to you and entered into a covenant with you so that you became Mine," declares the Lord GOD.

Ezekiel 23:17 "The Babylonians came to her to the bed of **love** and defiled her with their harlotry. And when she had been defiled by them, she became disgusted with them.

Amos 6:10 Then one's **uncle**, or his undertaker, will lift him up to carry out his bones from the house, and he will say to the one who is in the innermost part of the house, "Is anyone else with you?" And that one will say, "No one." Then he will answer, "Keep quiet. For the name of the LORD is not to be mentioned."

The Lxx uses **agapao** to translate **dod** in Song 1:4. In most of the other uses in the Song of Solomon, the Greek noun **adelphidos** is used (Song 2:3, et al) and is a term of endearment meaning beloved one. It can also mean kinsman.

**NET Note** on delight - Alternately, "I desired" or "I took delight in." The meaning of this use of the verb חָמַד (khamad, "delight, desire") is debated. The root has a basic two-fold range of meanings: (1) "to take pleasure in, delight in" (Job 20:20; Pss 39:12; 68:17; Prov 1:22; Isa 1:29; 44:9; 53:2) and (2) "to desire passionately, to desire illicitly" (Exod 20:17; 34:24; Deut 5:21; 7:25; Josh 7:21; Prov 1:22; 6:25; 12:12; Mic 2:2) (HALOT 325 s.v. חָמַד; BDB 326 s.v. חָמַד). The related noun חֶמֶד (khemékhah) describes objects which are "delightful, precious, desirable" (HALOT 325 s.v. חֶמֶד). Commentators who adopt an erotic view of the extended metaphor in 2:3 opt for the sexual desire nuance: "I desired (sexually)." Those who adopt the less erotic approach favor the more general connotation: "I took delight in" or "I delight in."

**In his shade** - Pictures his protection as shadow is a well-known biblical metaphor for protection (Judges 9.15; Ps 17.8; 121.5).

**Carr on his shade** - His shadow (shade, NIV, JB) here suggests delight and comfort. The meaning protection, common elsewhere in the Old Testament for this word (e.g. Gen. 19:8; Judg. 9:15; Ps 17:8; 91:1), is out of place here. ([The Song of Solomon - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - G. Lloyd Carr](#))

**NET Note** disagrees with **Carr** regarding the meaning of **shade** - The term צל (tsel, “shade”) is used figuratively to depict protection and relief. This term is used in OT literally (physical shade from the sun) and figuratively (protection from something) (HALOT 1024-25 s.v. 1) : (צל) Literal: The physical shade of a tree offers protection from the heat of the midday sun (Jdg 9:15; Ezek 17:23; 31:6, 12, 17; Hos 4:13; Jonah 4:6; Job 40:22; 40:22). Similar protection from the sun is offered by the shade of a vine (Ps 80:11), root (Gen 19:8), mountain (Judg 9:36), rock (Isa 32:2), cloud (Isa 25:5), and hut (Jonah 4:5). (2) Figurative (hypocatastasis): Just as physical shade offers protection from the sun, the Israelite could find “shade” (protection) from God or the king (e.g., Num 14:9; Isa 30:2; 49:2; 51:16; Hos 14:8; Pss 17:8; 36:8; 57:2; 63:8; 91:1; 121:5; Lam 4:20; Eccl 7:12). The association between “shade” and “protection” is seen in the related Akkadian sillu “shade, covering, protection” (AHw 3:1101; CAD S:189). The epithets of several Akkadian deities are sillu and sululu (“Shade, Protector”). The motif of protection, rest, and relief from the sun seems to be implied by the expression וַיֵּשְׁבָהּ (véyashavti, “I sat down”) in 2:3b. During the summer months, the temperature often reaches 110–130°F in the Negev. Those who have never personally experienced the heat of the summer sun in the Negev as they performed strenuous physical labor cannot fully appreciate the relief offered by any kind of shade! Previously, the young woman had complained that she had been burned by the sun because she had been forced to labor in the vineyards with no shade to protect her (Song 1:5–6). She had urged him to tell her where she could find relief from the sun during the hot midday hours (Song 1:7). Now she exults that she finally had found relief from the scorching sun under the “shade” which he offered to her (Song 2:3). S. C.

**Glickman** writes: “Whereas before she came to him she worked long hours on the sun (Song 1:6), now she rests under the protective shade he brings. And although formerly she was so exhausted by her work she could not properly care for herself, now she finds time for refreshment with him” ([Solomon's Song of Love - Let a Song of Songs Inspire Your Own Romantic Story](#)).

**POSB** - His shade provided solace and protection for her. The shade of his branches was in stark contrast to the burning sun that had darkened her. The king had snatched her away from a life of hard, scorching labor, and was soon to place her within the secure environment of his palace. She was sheltered, safe, and even spoiled with him. He had rescued her. Note that she sat in his shade. This testifies of her commitment to him. No longer would she wander among the other trees of the forest. She had found her place under his tree and would remain there. ([Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible- Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon](#))

**Sweet to my taste** - The picture is that of intimate personal experience, even as the psalmist wrote “Taste and see that the LORD is good. (Ps 34:8).

**NET Note on his fruit** - The term פִּרְיוֹ (piryo, “his fruit”) is a figure for the young man himself or perhaps his kisses which the young woman delights to “taste” (e.g., Song 4:11; 5:13). It is possible to take the imagery of the young woman tasting his “fruit” as kissing. Likewise, the imagery of the gazelles grazing among the lilies is probably a picture of the young man caressing and kissing his beloved (Song 2:16; 6:3).

**NET Note on sweet** - The term מֵתוֹק (matoq, “sweet”) is used literally and figuratively. When used literally, it describes pleasant tasting foods, such as honey (Jdg 14:14, 18; Prov 24:13; Ps 19:11) or sweet water (Num 33:28; Prov 9:17). Used figuratively, it describes what is pleasant to experience: friendship (Job 20:12; Ps 55:15; Pr 27:9), life (Eccl 11:7; Sir 40:18), sleep for the weary (Eccl 5:11), eloquence in speech (Pr 16:21, 24), and scripture (Ps 19:11). Those who adopt the “hyper-erotic” approach opt for the literal meaning: his “fruit” tastes sweet to her palate. The non-erotic approach takes the term in its figurative sense: The experience of his love was pleasant.

**Carr on taste** - **Taste** ([chek 02441 - תָּחַ - lips, mouth, palate, roof of its mouth](#)) is more correctly palate, often including the lips, teeth, and the whole mouth. The Hebrew word for discipline or training (ānak) is derived from the same root. The first step in teaching a child is the anointing of his lips with honey so that learning is identified with sweetness. If this idea has any application in this text, the girl may be expressing her delight in the ways of love in which he has instructed her. Song 2:2 Like a Song 2:2 Like a Song 2:2 Like a ([The Song of Solomon - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - G. Lloyd Carr](#))

**NET Note on taste** - Heb “my palate.” The term כִּחִיקִי (khikki, “my palate”) is used metonymically in reference to the sensation of taste which is associated with a person’s palate. The idea of “tasting” is used as a metaphor in the OT for the experiential knowledge which is acquired through a person’s relationship with someone (e.g., Ps 34:9). Just as a person would learn whether a fruit was ripe and delicious by tasting it, so a person could learn of the quality of a person’s character by experiencing it through personal interaction. This extended metaphor compares the delights of his love to (1) the refreshment of sitting in the shade of a tree for refuge from the desert sun, and (2) the delight of tasting a sweet apple – a fruit that was not indigenous to Palestine.

**POSB** - The fruits of his love were sweet, compared to the bitter fruit she had been forced to endure before Solomon came into the picture. The rewards of being his darling were sweeter than anything she had ever known. He had changed her life. ([Preacher's](#)

**Shulamite (young woman) speaks...**

**Song 2:4 "He has brought me to his banquet hall, and his banner over me is love.**

**HIS BANQUET TABLE  
HIS HOUSE OF WINE**

**NET Bible** - He brought me (Alternately, "Bring me!") into the banquet hall, and he looked at me lovingly (Alternately "set love before me").

Lxx translates this as two commands - **Bring** me into the wine house; **set** love before me.

**NLT** - He escorts me to the banquet hall; it's obvious how much he loves me.

The garden or forest imagery now gives way to the house of wine (presumably the young man's vineyard)..

**Longman** notes that "The **NLT**, though perhaps overly interpretive, presents the meaning of this military image accurately. The point is that he is making public how much he loves the woman. He has taken out an advertisement, to use a related (but non-military) analogy...The "wine house" is a public place, though, and it is here that he makes his love for her manifest."

**His banquet hall** - In some Christian contexts (such as a popular modern chorus) this is one of the most frequently quoted verses from the Song. This phrase does not refer to a place of eating but is more literally a "house of wine", referring to a boot where wine was drunk. The exact meaning is uncertain. Unfortunately, because the meaning is uncertain, some invoke their imagination in an attempt to explain the picture. For example, the normally solid commentator **J Vernon McGee** postulates that this picture "probably looks forward to that day of the final banquet which is called the "marriage supper of the Lamb." You and I as believers will be there by the grace of God. That is when full satisfaction will be made. But already He has brought me to the table of salvation, and He has brought me to the table of fellowship with Him. He prepares the table before me, the table of the Word of God, and He tells me to eat and be full. He brings me to a table of good things. How good and gracious He is!"

**Carr** - The practice of setting this verse to music and using it as a chorus celebrating the believer's relationship with Christ is widespread in the contemporary church. It is no doubt well-intentioned and could be broadly defended on the grounds that the Song illustrates the relation of Christ to his church. But such an application runs into serious difficulty if the text is correctly understood. (House of wine). Song 2:2 Like a Song 2:2 Like a Song 2:2 Like a ([The Song of Solomon - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - G. Lloyd Carr](#))

**NET Note on banquet hall** - Heb "house of wine." The expression בֵּית הַיַּיִן (bet hayyayin, lit. "house of wine" or "place of wine") refers to a banquet house where wine is drunk or a vineyard where grapes to produce wine are grown (HALOT 409 s.v. יַיִן). G. L. Carr favors the vineyard view due to the agricultural metaphors in Song 2:1–5. However, most commentators favor the banquet house view because of the reference to "raisin-cakes" and "apples" (Song 2:4) which were served at banquets in the ancient Near East. Moreover, the expression בֵּית הַיַּיִן in Song 2:4 may be equivalent to בֵּית מִשְׁתֵּה הַיַּיִן (bet mishte hayyayin, "house of the drinking of wine") in Esther 7:8 (HALOT 409 s.v. יַיִן). Second, raisin cakes are mentioned in this context in Song 2:5, and they were often eaten to celebrate festive occasions (2Sa 6:19; Isa 16:7; Hos 3:1); therefore, the banquet motif finds support. Selected Bibliography: E. Würthwein, "Zum Verständnis des Hohenliedes," TRu 32 (1967): 205; G. L. Carr, Song of Solomon [TOTC], 90–91.

**Reformation Study Bible on banquet hall** - Lit. "house of wine." The setting is outdoors (see [note](#) on Song 1:12). The lovers' "house" to this point has been the forest (Song 1:16, 17). Now they move to a different "house," namely, the young man's vineyard, his "house" of wine. The expression continues the royal imagery of Song 1:4, 12 (the shepherd is a king), and the comparison of love and wine in Song 1:2. ([Song of Solomon](#))

**MacArthur** agrees that "The scene continues in the outdoors. This "house of wine" symbolizes the vineyard, just as the beams and rafters of Song 1:17 refer to the forest." ([MacArthur Study Bible](#))

His banner over me is love- **Banner** is used elsewhere for a flag or standard. And so just as a military flag indicates location of a battalion or possession of ground by a battalion, so Solomon's love flew over his beloved one (cf. Nu. 1:52; Ps. 20:5). In other words, everyone could see that Solomon loved her. Husbands, could this be said of your love for your beloved?

**Easton's Bible Dictionary on banner** - God's setting up or giving a banner (Ps. 20:5; 60:4; Song 2:4) imports his presence and protection and aid extended to his people.

**Reformation Study Bible** on **his banner over me is love** - Banners commonly adorned royal banquet halls, but this banquet hall, or “house of wine,” is different. It has only one banner, love, and that is also the only “wine” that will be consumed at the banquet. Song 2:2 Like a ([Song of Solomon](#))

**MacArthur** on **his banner over me** - As a military flag indicates location or possession, so Solomon’s love flew over his beloved one (cf. Nu 1:52; Ps 20:5).

Song 2:2 Like a **Robert Rayburn** notes that **banqueting house** “is literally “house of wine,” and since it occurs only here in the OT there is understandably some question as to its meaning. The other outdoor references suggest that it may well be a reference to the fellow’s vineyard, perhaps his family’s farm. But it could also refer to a meal that was shared in the family dining room, no doubt with others present but the couple having no eyes for anyone but one another. **Banner** is even more difficult. The word is found elsewhere, ordinarily referring to a flag or pennant, such as we read in Numbers identified each of the twelve tribes situated within the camp of Israel in the wilderness. But it is also possible that the word should be translated “look on,” – that is, he looked on me with love – or “wish,” that is, he wished to love me. [Eaton, TOTC, 91] ([Song of Songs](#))

Song 2:2 Like a **Joe Guglielmo** on **banner...is love** - Here we see the Shulamite woman speaking to the daughters of Jerusalem and telling them all that has happened to her. She speaks of how Solomon took this farm girl and brought her to his table, the King’s house. Now his banner over her was not, “Clean the house!”, “Try harder next time!”, or “Is that the best you can do?” No, his banner over her was “LOVE!” And because of that love it gave her encouragement, contentment, and peace, knowing that there was nothing she could do to earn more of his love or anything she could do to have him love her less. May we speak to our wives that way, that we build them up and not tear them down! As Christians we need to remember that in our relationship with the Lord. God can’t love you any more or any less. Don’t let Satan confuse you about that. Paul said, regarding the love of God in Ephesians 3:18-19, that we, “may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height; to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.” You can never make yourself more worthy of God’s love, HE ALREADY LOVES YOU! ([Song of Solomon](#))

**POSB** - The scene changes in verse four, and the young woman is no longer talking to her beloved, but to her friends about him. The stage shifts to the courts of the palace, after a special banquet where she was the honored guest (v.4). The king had held a special banquet to celebrate his engagement to his darling and to officially introduce and present her as his future queen. Banner may be figurative language, or it may be that the king had actually commissioned a flag or sign displaying his love for her for the occasion. Apparently, the young woman gathered her friends around her and excitedly told them about the banquet. All of them, giggling and giddy, were relishing the details of the greatest night of their friend’s life. Suddenly, the young woman swooned and pretended to faint—she was lovesick, overwhelmed by the gallant actions of her beloved (Song 1:5). ([Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible- Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon](#))

**Guzik** has these quotes related to banner...

“She is proclaiming that the love which the king has for her is evident to everyone. He does not say one thing to her in private and contradict that in public ... He is not ashamed of his love for her, so he is glad for all to see it.” (Glickman - [Solomon's Song of Love - Let a Song of Songs Inspire Your Own Romantic Story](#))

“ ‘His banner over me was love’ suggests that the hoisting of this banner by her focuses the whole attention on love. It is a love relationship.” (Nee)

“He is not ashamed to acknowledge her publicly ... The house of wine is now as appropriate as the King’s chambers were. Fearlessly and without shame she can sit at His side, His acknowledged spouse, the bride of His choice.” (Taylor)

([Song of Solomon 2 Commentary](#))

#### **Shulamite (young woman) speaks...**

Song 2:5 **Sustain (imperative = command)** (Lxx = **sterizo** = conveys idea of stabilizing by supplying support) me with **raisin-cakes**, **refresh (imperative = command)** me with **apples (note)**, because I am lovesick.

**NET Bible** - Sustain me with raisin cakes, refresh me with apples, for I am faint with love.

**NLT** - Strengthen me with raisin cakes, refresh me with apples, for I am weak with love. 6 His left arm is under my head, and his right arm embraces me.

**Guglielmo** - In verse 5 we see the idea of her being so in love with Solomon she is ready to pass out. She needs food to keep her

love going as raisins were symbolic of sexual passion.

**NET Note** on **sustain** and **refresh** in the imperative - The imperatives סַמְמֵךְנִי (sammékhuni, “sustain me”) and רַפְּדֵנִי (rappéduni, “revive me”) are both plural in address (Piel 2nd person masculine plural imperatives with 1st person common singular suffixes). Thus, some commentators suggest that the woman is speaking to a large audience, perhaps the banquet guests implied in 2:4 or the maidens mentioned in 2:7 (R. Gordis, *Song of Songs and Lamentations*, 82). However, the Hebrew plural can be used in reference to a single individual when functioning in an intensive sense (IBHS 122 §7.4.3a). Thus, the woman may be speaking to her beloved, as in the rest of 2:3–6, but with intense passion. Similarly, in Sumerian love literature the bride sometimes uses plural verbs in reference to herself or her bridegroom (S. N. Kramer, *The Sacred Marriage Rite*, 92, 99).

**Carr** on **sustain...refresh** (comfort me, av; restore me, jb; he revived me, neb; Heb. rappēdūnī) occurs only three times in the Old Testament. The meaning appears to be ‘stretch out’ or ‘spread’ (bedclothes) (Job 17:13; 41:30), and hence to prepare any kind of supporting couch or bed (i.e. a place of restoration from sickness, fatigue, etc., ([The Song of Solomon - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - G. Lloyd Carr](#)))

**Reformation Study Bible** on **raisin-cakes...apples** - Raisins or “raisin cakes” are associated elsewhere in the Old Testament with religious rites, sometimes even in a pagan context (2Sa 6:19; Hos 3:1). This has led some commentators to suppose that the Song of Solomon originated as the script of a pagan fertility rite involving ritual sex (cf. Hos. 4:11–14). **But the lovemaking in the Song has no obvious religious dimension.** The raisins here, like the apples, are simple [aphrodisiacs](#). The girl calls for raisins and apples to renew her strength. ([Song of Solomon](#)) (Bolding added for emphasis)

**NET Note** on **raisin cakes** - The term (‘ashishot, “raisin cakes,” from ‘ashishah) refers to an expensive delicacy made of dried compressed grapes (HALOT 95 s.v. ; BDB 84 s.v. ; Jastrow 128 s.v.). **Raisin cakes** were used as cultic offerings by many ancient Near Easterners, and were especially prominent in ancient Near Eastern fertility rites (e.g., Isa 16:7; Hos 3:1). In ancient Israel they were eaten during festive celebrations, being viewed as enhancing sexual fertility (2Sa 6:19; 1Chr 16:3). Scholars regard the “raisin cakes” as (1) literal food viewed as an [aphrodisiac](#) to “cure” her love-sickness; (2) a figurative expression ([Hypocatastasis](#)) for sexual passion or lovemaking; or (3) [Double entendre](#) referring to the literal food as an aphrodisiac and her desire for lovemaking.

**Guzik** - Some commentators associate these foods with pagan fertility rites or aphrodisiac qualities, but this seems unwarranted and unnecessary.

**Carr** on **raisin cakes...apples** - it is apparent that this is some sort of food associated with religious festivals (so 2Sa 6:19). The Isaiah and Hosea passages put these in the context of pagan cultic celebrations, and Jeremiah (Jer 7:18; 44:18f.) describes ‘cakes’ made to portray (ASV mg.) the ‘Queen of Heaven’. As is well known, the worship of the ‘Queen of Heaven’ (Ishtar) was essentially a fertility cult centered around the extensive sexual rites. It is apparent that these ‘cakes’ were made either in the shape of a nude female with exaggerated sexual organs, or frequently in triangular shape representing the female genitalia. Raisin-cakes are therefore a highly erotic symbol. **Apples** also are generally considered to have the powers of an aphrodisiac (cf. above on 2:3 and the bibliography there), and combined with the raisin-cakes, will restore her strength for more lovemaking, because, she says, I (emphatic) am sick (faint, NIV) with love. (Cf. Song 1:3.) ([The Song of Solomon - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - G. Lloyd Carr](#))

**Reformation Study Bible** - Raisins or “raisin cakes” are associated elsewhere in the Old Testament with religious rites, sometimes even in a pagan context (2Sa 6:19; Hos. 3:1). This has led some commentators to suppose that the Song of Solomon originated as the script of a pagan fertility rite involving ritual sex (cf. Hos. 4:11–14). But the lovemaking in the Song has no obvious religious dimension. The raisins here, like the apples, are simple aphrodisiacs. The girl calls for raisins and apples to renew her strength. ([Song of Solomon](#))

**NET Note** on **apples** - Or “apricots.” The term (tappukhim, “apples,” from, tappukha) occurs four times in the book (Song 2:3, 5; 7:9; 8:5) and twice outside (Prov 25:4; Joel 1:12). It is usually defined as “apples” (BDB 656 s.v.); however, some argue for “apricots” (FFB 92–93). The Hebrew noun (“apple”) is derived from the Hebrew root (nafakh, “scent, breath”) which is related to the Arabic root nafahu “fragrant scent” (HALOT 708 s.v.). Hence, the term refers to a fruit with a fragrant scent. This may explain why the mere scent of this fruit was thought to have medicinal powers in the ancient Near East (G. E. Post, *Flora of Syria, Palestine and Sinai*, 128). This imagery draws upon two motifs associated with apples. First, apples were viewed as medicinal in ancient Syro-Palestinian customs; the sick were given apples to eat or smell in order to revive them. Similarly, the Mishnah and Talmud refer to apples as a medication like wine and grapes. Second, apples were considered an aphrodisiac in the ancient Near East. Both motifs are combined here because the Beloved is “love-sick” and only the embrace of her beloved can cure her, as 2:6 indicates (T. H. Ratzaby, “A Motif in Hebrew Love Poetry: In Praise of the Apple,” *Ariel* 40 [1976]: 14).

**NET Note** on **lovesick** - The expression חֹלֵת אֲהָבָה (kholat ‘ahavah, “faint with love”) is a figure which compares physical or



medical illness caused by a physically draining disease to sexual desire which is so intense that a person is so physically drained that they feel as if they could faint. The term כֹּחַל (khol, “sick”) refers to the physical weakness which consumes a person who is suffering from a medical illness (Ge 48:1; 1Sa 19:14). It is used figuratively as a hyperbolic [Hypocatastasis](#) for being so consumed with sexual desire that it saps one of his/her physical and emotional strength (BDB 317 s.v. 2). This is commonly referred to as “**love-sickness**.” It was associated with such deep longing for physical and sexual fulfillment that it weighed so heavily upon a person that he/she was physically and emotionally drained (2Sa 13:2).

**Guzik** on **lovesick** - The maiden described a feeling familiar to many who have known the thrill of romantic love. She feels physically weak and perhaps even somewhat disoriented because of the strength of attraction and infatuation she has towards her beloved.

**NET Note** on **embrace** - The verb חָבַק (khavaq) has a two-fold range of meanings in the Piel stem: (1) to embrace or hug someone (Gen 29:13; 33:4; 48:10; Job 24:8; Prov 4:8; Eccl 3:5; Lam 4:5) and (2) to fondle or sexually stimulate a lover (Prov 5:20; Song 2:6; 8:3) (HALOT 287 s.v. חָבַק; BDB 287 s.v. חָבַק). **The verb designates an expression of love by the position or action of one’s hands** (TWOT 1:259). The term is probably used here as a [Euphemism](#). The function of the prefixed verbal form of תִּחְבֶּקֵנִי (tékhabbéqeni, “embrace me”) may be classified several ways: (1) ingressive: “His right hand is beginning to stimulate me,” (2) instantaneous: “His right hand is stimulating me [right now],” (3) progressive: “His right hand stimulates me,” (4) jussive of desire: “May his right hand stimulate me!” (5) injunction: “Let his right hand stimulate me!” or (6) permission: “His right hand may stimulate me.” Based upon their view that the couple is not yet married, some scholars argue for an imperfect of desire (“May his right hand stimulate/embrace me!”). Other scholars suggest that the progressive imperfect is used (“His right hand stimulates me”).

**Jack Deere** sums up this section - “These three things—protection by her lover, intimacy with him, and obvious displays and expressions of love from him—are crucial factors that enable a woman to develop a sense of security and self-worth and thereby to enjoy a stable marriage.”

**POSB** agrees that “A woman’s primary need is affection and affirmation. All that Paul writes about marriage in Eph. 5 is summarized by this one statement: “Let every one of you...so love his wife even as himself” (Eph. 5:33). Now notice the entire passage, followed by the specific actions given to the husband (Eph 5:25-33)...If husbands treated their wives like this, there would be very few wives who would not joyfully submit to their husband’s leadership and care. “He who loves his wife loves himself” (Eph. 5:28); likewise, the husband who does not provide his wife with protection, intimacy, and affection is injuring himself as well as her. The summary of the wife’s responsibility to her husband is given in Eph. 5:33: “The wife must respect her husband.” The primary need of a man is respect and admiration from his wife. All the things the young woman says about Solomon reveal her great respect for him. She never says anything that would tear him down, but every word she speaks about him builds him up in the eyes of others. This has a direct bearing on how others see and respect him. One of the most damaging things a wife can do to her husband and her marriage is to criticize and tear him down before others. Think how many women habitually complain and discuss their husbands’ shortcomings with their mothers, sisters, friends, or anyone else who will listen. Remember this: you must never make yourself look big by making your spouse look small. If there are serious problems in your marriage, there are appropriate ways to seek help confidentially, but broadcasting your spouse’s faults is never the right way. It harms your spouse, it harms you, and it inflicts wounds upon your marriage that could very well be fatal. Few and far between are the husbands—godly or otherwise—who, if their wives build up their esteem and respect them, will not love and cherish them. ([Preacher’s Outline and Sermon Bible-Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon](#))

**Shulamite (young woman) speaks...**

**Song 2:6 "Let his left hand be under my head and his right hand embrace me."**

**NET Bible** - His left hand caresses (is under) my head, and his right hand stimulates me.

**NLT** - His left arm is under my head, and his right arm embraces me.

**POSB** - All of these things—the king’s praise, his public displays of love, his protection—had made her desire him even more. She said, “His left hand is under my head, and His right hand doth embrace me.” As pointed out earlier, The Bible Knowledge Commentary notes that “since 2:5 is a request, verse 6 should probably be translated as a request also.” The position she described was only possible when two people were lying together, so she was dreaming and fantasizing about her wedding night when she would at last lie in her husband’s embrace.

**NET Note** on **his left hand is under my head** - Ultimately, the only cure for her **love-sickness** is the caress of her beloved. The ancient Near Eastern love songs frequently portray the embrace of the lover as the only cure for the speaker’s love-sickness. For example, one Egyptian love song reads: “She will make the doctors unnecessary, because she knows my sickness” (Papyrus

Harris 4:11). Similarly, "My salvation is her coming in from outside; when I see her, I will be healthy. When she opens her eye, my body is young; when she speaks, I will be strong. When I embrace her, she exorcises evil from me" (Papyrus Chester Beatty, C5:1–2).

**Embrace** - She began with a desire for his kisses and now longs for his embrace. Embraced does have sexual connotations in Solomon's usage in Proverbs 5:20, and could convey the sense of "caress."

**Carr on embrace** - The word is not frequent in the Old Testament, and is used both of friendly greeting (Ge 48:10) and of sexual union (Pr. 5:20). The position of the left hand under her head would suggest that the two are lying down and that with the right hand he is enfolding and caressing her. ([The Song of Solomon - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - G. Lloyd Carr](#))

**Kinlaw** - Since the maiden describes a dream or daydream, this describes her desire and not an action. "Here perhaps the RSV translation of Song of Solomon 2:6 is preferable: 'O that his left hand were under my head, and that his right hand embraced me' "

**Rayburn on Song 2:5** - Some take Song 2:4-5 to describe their love-making, which, of course, if true would disprove the view of the book I gave you last time. My sense is that it is precisely the strength of a desire that remains yet unfulfilled that explains the expressions of both Song 2:5 and

Song 2:7. Here too extravagant language is being used to express the strength of love and desire and the tension is created by the fact that these longings cannot yet be fulfilled.

Both apples and raisins are "pleasure foods." So speaking about them is another way of describing both the pleasure and the tension of a love that cannot yet be experienced. [Hess, 80]

The literature of the world is full of such extravagant expressions of love: I am "faint" [NIV] or "dizzy" or "sick" with love. Here is G. K. Chesterton, writing to his fiancée Frances, the night they were engaged: "*little as you may suppose it at the first glance, I have discovered that my existence until today has been, in truth, passed in the most intense gloom. Comparatively speaking, pain, hatred, despair, and madness have been the companions of my days and nights. Nothing could woo a smile from my somber and forbidding visage. Such (comparatively speaking) had been my previous condition. Intrinsically speaking it has been very jolly. But I never knew what being happy meant before tonight. Happiness is not at all smug; it breaks your speech and darkens your sight. Happiness is stronger than oneself and sets its palpable foot upon one's neck.*" [Cited in Michael Ffinch, G. K. Chesterton, 55-56]

The American Puritan minister and poet, Edward Taylor, wrote to his wife that his passion for her was a "golden ball of pure fire." ([Song of Songs](#))

**Guglielmo** - As we move into verse 6 we see that Solomon has pulled her close to him and with the gentleness of his left hand, he lifts her head up, reassuring her of his love for her. Think about our Christian walk and how at times we can become discouraged. David experienced this in his own life and he wrote in Ps 3:3, "But You, O LORD, are a shield for me, My glory and the One who lifts up my head." God will lift up the downcast soul, we just need to look to Him, seek Him! Also, maybe she was exhausted from all the work she was doing, the heavy burdens she was carrying, and Solomon is supporting her head, giving her rest. I think there is another picture of our walk as Christians. You see, have the burdens of life overwhelmed you? Jesus said in Matthew 11:28-30, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." Allow the Lord to draw you close to Him so that He might lift you up and give you rest.

### Shulamite (young woman) speaks...

Song 2:7 "I adjure (Lxx = *orkizo* = solemnly implore, give a command under oath) you, O daughters of Jerusalem ([picture](#)), by the gazelles or by the hinds (does - female deer) of the field (open country, not gardens), that you will not arouse or awaken my love, until she pleases."

(Compare similar words in Song 3:5 and Song 8:4)

**NET Bible** - I adjure you, O maidens of Jerusalem, by the gazelles and by the young does of the open fields:  
Do not awaken or arouse love until it pleases!

**NLT** - Promise me, O women of Jerusalem, by the gazelles and wild deer, not to awaken love until the time is right.

**POSB** - In the midst of this friendly chatter, the young woman suddenly became very serious (Song 2:7) By no means did she want her friends to get the wrong impression, nor did she want them to be negatively influenced by her forward-looking honeymoon

desires. The young woman was stressing that the temptation to have sex before marriage must be resisted. Her admonition to her friends was to flee temptation. The gazelle and the doe were extremely fast animals. Her friends should run from the temptation to have premarital sex, run as fast as the gazelle and doe bolt from any perceived threat to them. The soon-to-be bride was urging her friends to follow her example and pledge to remain chaste until they were married. Her excitement about her wedding night was so great because it would be a new, first-time experience with the man she had committed to love. "Promise me," she said to her friends, "that you will wait for the right person (your husband) and the right time (marriage) before you arouse the sexual desires of love. Let your passions sleep until you are married." The matter was so important to the young woman that she repeated the charge two more times in this short book (Song 3:5; 8:4). ([Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible- Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon](#))

**I adjure you-** This phrase translates the Hebrew verb normally associated with making an oath and here calls upon the maidens to make a solemn promise. In the Old Testament the person swearing an oath does so by calling on a divine being or power, or even some part of the body (cf Amos 8.14; Mt 5.36) in this way the oath-takers indicating how serious they are about fulfilling what has been promised. In this verse the Shulammite mentions two animals by which the daughters should swear. Why a gazelle and hind are chosen is not clear.

**Carr** notes that "**Adjure** or charge (AV, NIV, JB, NEB) is a common Old Testament word, and in the Hiphil form used here has the meaning 'beg urgently' rather than the idea of taking an oath. According to Deuteronomy 6:13; 10:2, oaths are to be taken only in the name of the Lord—anything else is idolatry and forbidden (cf. Mt. 5:33–37)." ([The Song of Solomon - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - G. Lloyd Carr](#))

**Webster** says our English word **adjure** means to command solemnly under or as if under oath or penalty of a curse.

This charge (**I adjure you**) is given three times (repeated before the wedding in Song 3:5 and after the wedding in Song 8:4) to the daughters of Jerusalem and is phrased in such a way as to most likely be an urging to them to pursue premarital chastity. The word *my* is not in the original, so the charge is really to "not arouse or awaken love until (it) pleases". There is right time for love but it should not be aroused by carnal means. True love isn't something one works up is a gift the Lord sends within us when we meet the right person at the right time. (cf James 1:17).

**NET Note on I adjure you** - Frequently, when oaths were taken in the ancient world, witnesses were invoked in order to solemnize the vow and to act as jurists should the oath someday be broken. Cosmic forces such as the "heavens and earth" were often personified to act as **witnesses** to an oath (e.g., Deut 32:1; Isa 1:2; Mic 1:2; 6:1–2; Ps 50:2). In this case, the **witnesses** are the "gazelles and stags of the field" (Song 2:7; 3:5). These animals were frequently used as symbols of romantic love in the OT (Pr 5:19). And in Egyptian and Mesopotamian love literature and Ugaritic poetry the gazelle was often associated with sexual fertility. For instance, in the following excerpt from a Mesopotamian incantation text the stag is referred to in the context of sexual potency in which a woman urges an ailing male: "With the love-[making of the mountain goat] six times, with the lovemaking of a stag seven times, with the lovemaking of a partridge twelve times, make love to me! Make love to me because I am young! And the lovemaking of a stag...Make love to me!" (R. D. Biggs, Ancient Mesopotamian Potency Incantations [TCS], 26, lines 4–8).

**Longman** explains that the young woman "turns to them explicitly with what in essence is a warning. She makes them promise not to engage in love and by implication the physical act of lovemaking until circumstances become appropriate. In essence, she becomes their teacher. They have just heard her speak of a beautiful, wonderful relationship filled with sensuality. She warns them not to jump into this type of relationship. As we will see elsewhere in the Song (Song 2:15; 5:2ff), love is beautiful, but painful as well. It is not to be treated lightly....It is a warning not to rush into intimate relationships. This refrain is also found in Song 3:5 and Song 8:4."

**Constable** on the significance of the use of **gazelles...hinds** - The gazelle is a member of the antelope family, and the hind is a female deer (generally less than 3 years old). Both animals are skittish, and anyone who wants to get close to them must wait patiently. One cannot approach them aggressively. Similarly a man cannot awaken a woman's love clumsily.

**Carr** on the phrase **my love** - Love, not **my love** (AV, JB, NEB), which could be misconstrued either as the girl's own feelings, or as her lover himself (cf. NEB). This is more general: love itself....This request to let love take its natural course concludes both the first and second major sections of the Song. ([The Song of Solomon - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - G. Lloyd Carr](#))

**Reformation Study Bible** on **I adjure you** - Here the refrain is a reminder that the lovemaking so far has been imagined rather than actual, despite the vivid language.

**MacArthur** on **I adjure you** - This refrain, which is repeated before the wedding (Song 3:5 [see [RSB note](#)]) and also afterward (Song 8:4 [see [RSB note](#)]), explicitly expresses her commitment to a chaste life before and during marriage. She invites accountability to the daughters of Jerusalem. **Rayburn** on **Song 2:6-7** - The position here described is a "classic position" for lovers; imagine them lying side by side in a field or vineyard. [Hess, 81]



Is she imagining being with him in this way or is she describing a time they had together alone, a kind of ancient Near Eastern date? It is hard to say. The RSV begins the verse "O that his left hand were under my head..." But the next verse suggests that she is aware that she must wait for love-making. The passions are great, but the time is not right. Love is a terribly powerful force and must not be misused. That is the major theme of the book. There is certainly nothing to suggest that there was elicit love-making and that Song 2:7 was a confession of sin. That interpretation would be contrary to the entire character of the poem. In fact, the same statements we find in Song 2:6-7 we find in Song 8:3-4 and there it seems clear that the love-making has not taken place, but is anticipated in the girl's imagination.

"I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem by the gazelles or the does of the field, that you not stir up or awaken love until it pleases." (Song 2:6) That statement further to indicate that the couple has not consummated their relationship. But it is a struggle to wait. ([Song of Songs](#))

The **BKC** concludes that "These three things—protection by her lover, intimacy with him, and obvious displays and expressions of love from him—are crucial factors that enable a woman to develop a sense of security and self-worth and thereby to enjoy a stable marriage."

**I am lovesick** - see note on Song 5:8 for more in depth discussion. She desired physical sustenance with raisin cakes for she was faint with love, a lovesick lover being a common picture in ancient Near Eastern love poetry. And so she expressed her desire for his strengthening and his embrace in the next verse.

**Guglielmo** - Now verse 7 is interesting. Some say Solomon spoke these words but I think the Shulamite woman did (**Ed**: I agree) and she is speaking to the daughters of Jerusalem. She is giving sound wisdom here. She is telling them not to push the issue of love. Allow love to happen, allow it to grow, allow the Lord to bring the person into your life. Wait before you get involved in a sexual relationship with another person, wait until you are married, "Do not stir up nor awaken love until it pleases."

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**Today in the Word** (Song 2:4) - The earliest use of the term picnic in the English language referred to feasts associated with medieval hunting outings, but today's picnics are often linked to romance. A basket filled with wrapped sandwiches and cheeses . . . a blanket to spread under a tree on a warm summer day. What better way to celebrate love? The description in today's passage uses the image of a picnic in the fields. The couple is drawn together and the presence of the man is a great comfort to the woman who delights in being in his presence.

She compares him to an "apple tree" (v. 3) in the forest. Unlike other trees that simply provide shelter, his love both shelters and nourishes her. Commentators note that in this society that depended on grains for nourishment, fruit was an unexpected and treasured delight. To eat fruit was not just a basic part of the four food groups, but a source of tremendous pleasure. It is interesting, then, to notice the number of times the lovers compare one another's love to fruits, including apples and raisins. Fruit was a symbol of sensual pleasure. The food here is not limited, but abundant; the banquet mentioned here suggests lavish and unlimited provision.

His love provides shelter or comfort in a calm and strong way to the woman. With him, she feels comfortable relaxing and sitting down. She depends on him for sustenance and is sheltered by his "banner" of love (v. 4). In all these ways and more, her lover offers security and protection.

Verse 4 is often used by believers to describe God's love for His people. Certainly, God speaks of His role in our lives as comforter and a shelter in the storm (Ps. 20:5; 32:7–8). While Song of Songs is not simply an allegory of God's love, it does reflect the perfect and all-consuming love God has for His children.

Apply the Word -What brings you comfort? Is it a good friend, a favorite place, a special meal? As humans, we crave comfort and safety and shelter. God has promised to be this place of shelter for you. He invites you to rest in Him and to allow His peace to pervade your life. Allow the God who loves you better than anyone to be your shelter today.

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**Today in the Word** (Song 2:13) - In their book *The Sacred Romance*, authors John Eldredge and Brent Curtis discuss the love between God and His people. They suggest that each of us has a desire in our heart for something more, a deep and consuming longing for romance and adventure. Our search for earthly love is a reflection of our created desire to love and be loved by God. Eldredge writes, "The true story of every person in this world is not the story you see, the external story. The true story of each person is the journey of his or her heart."

- Much of Song of Songs focuses on the anticipation of love by the man and the woman. Their desire for one another, in this passage, is depicted as a journey. The lovers demonstrate and speak of their longings for one another and their desire to be close to one another. In verses 8 through 13, the woman is sleeping and dreaming. In her slumber, she hears her lover coming to her

over the mountains and calling for her..

The passage depicts details of nature, of spring when the earth comes alive. The ripening fruit and blooming foliage suggest the blossoming of their love for one another. Twice her love beckons her to “Arise... come with me” (v. 13).

Lovers depend on time together, and a journey allows them rare moments to speak with and be physically close to one another. Like the woman, the man treasures these hidden opportunities to see one another. She compares her lover to a “gazelle” or a “stag” (v. 17), both animals in that part of the world that are able to run and flee from predators. Their love allows both of them to escape from their ordinary duties and to focus their attention on each other. Theirs is a journey of joy, longing, and adventure.

**Apply the Word** - As we saw in our study of Ecclesiastes, it is easy to get bored with the routine of life. God calls us to a purpose beyond the ordinary. If you feel restless in your soul, consider this a wake-up call. What might God want you to do for Him and His glory? What journey might He be calling you to take? Ask God to reveal His calling on your life.

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**TODAY IN THE WORD:** The British mathematician Charles Babbage wrote to Alfred Tennyson complaining that two lines from his poem “The Vision of Sin” were inaccurate. The lines went,

Every moment dies a man  
Every moment one is born

Babbage argued that if this were true, world population would never change. Instead, he wrote, the lines ought to read:

Every moment dies a man  
Every moment one and one-sixteenth is born

Babbage missed the point, though. He tried to analyze the poetic words of Tennyson in a way that missed their true meaning. Poets throughout the ages have used figurative language to make a point. The lovers in the Song of Solomon use poetic comparisons to express their love for one another. The bride compares herself to two flowers. The rose of Sharon was not a rose like we usually know it but a wildflower much like a crocus. The crocus was a common sight on the plain of Sharon, a region known for fertility (cf. Isa. 35:1–2). In the same way, the lily of the valley was not the white lily. The Hebrew word referred to a variety of flowers, including the blue lotus, the water lily, or almost any brightly colored flower. By employing such metaphors, the bride indicates that she sees nothing unique about her own beauty. Like the wildflowers in the field, she is just one among many. The groom, however, sees her differently. Compared to her, all the other flowers are thorns. She is like a beautiful flower growing in the midst of a bramble patch. The expressions of love in today’s passage occur on several levels. Both bride and groom use words to express how they feel. The groom also broadcasts his love by placing a banner over the bride. They express love to each other through private intimacy. **If you are married, what is the most effective way for you to express love to your spouse on each of these levels today?** If you are **Shulamite (young woman) speaks...** summarize (young woman) speaks... members or friends who need a word of appreciation or a hug or pat on the back.

Song 2:8 "Listen! My beloved! Behold, he is coming, climbing on the mountains, leaping on the hills!

"Listen! My beloved! Behold, he is coming, climbing on the mountains, Leaping on the hills!

Song 2:9 "Listen! My beloved! Behold, he is coming, climbing on the mountains, leaping on the hills!

"My beloved is like a [gazelle \(note\)](#) or a young stag (adult male deer). Behold, he is standing behind our wall, He is looking through the windows, He is peering through the [lattice \(note\)](#).

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**Shulamite (young woman) speaks...**

**Song 2:8 "Listen! My beloved! Behold, he is coming, climbing on the mountains, leaping on the hills**

**NET Bible** - Listen! My lover is approaching! Look! Here he comes, leaping over the mountains, bounding over the hills!

**NLT-** Ah, I hear my lover coming! He is leaping over the mountains, bounding over the hills.

In Song 2:8-14 we see the young woman's eager anticipation (Song 2:8-9) and the young man's urgent invitation (Song 2:10-14)

**POSB** - Some very significant benefits are gained from the dating relationship. For example, a couple is able to discern if there is something more between them than a physical attraction—something more lasting and real. They also grow to know each other better, and they identify potential problems that may arise in their relationship. These three reasons alone show how important a healthy dating relationship is in establishing a strong marriage. In the eastern world, marriages were often arranged and the man and woman did not get to know each other until after the wedding. However, this was not the case with Solomon and the Shulamite, for he was king, which meant he could do as he wished. In this passage, the reader is allowed to listen in on one of their

dates....The young woman excitedly described the king's arrival (Song 2:8-13). This particular date in their relationship probably took place before Solomon moved the young woman to the palace in preparation for their wedding. Most likely, it took place after some level of commitment to each other was established, perhaps the year after they had met in the vineyard and fallen in love. It was springtime, and the young woman was at home in the mountains of southern Lebanon. Suddenly, she heard a voice echoing through the hills (Song 2:8a). It was a welcome, recognizable voice—one she had not heard for several months. During the wet winter season, travel was difficult and rare in Palestine. As Solomon neared her home, he began to call out loudly to her out of excitement as well as to notify her of his arrival. The young woman ran to the window and spotted her beloved running toward her (Song 2:8b). "Here he comes, leaping and bounding...." It was the end of a long journey and Solomon got a fresh burst of energy when her house came into view. ([Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible- Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon](#))

**Reformation Study Bible** explains **Song 2:8–17** - The image of the shepherd-lover as a gazelle or a young stag on the hills introduces and concludes this section, another imagined rendezvous between the two lovers. After her brief address to the daughters of Jerusalem in v. 7, the girl has returned to her musings. ([Notes](#))

**Carr** writes that "The second major division begins with a response to the request of Song 2:7 and concludes with a reprise of the same plea. Although the lover is pictured as present and speaking to his beloved, his speeches are reported at second hand (see Song 2:10). A series of remembered, or perhaps imagined, exchanges that express their love are suddenly terminated as the beloved turns and finds that she is alone. The beloved's ruminations on her lover are interrupted by the sound of his approach. (Song 2:8-9)" ([The Song of Solomon - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - G. Lloyd Carr](#))

**NET Note** on **Listen...behold** - The exclamation קוֹל (qol, "Listen!") is an introductory exclamatory particle used to emphasize excitement and the element of surprise....The exclamation הִנֵּה-זֶה (hinneh-zeh, "Look!" "Behold!") is used of excited speech when someone is seen approaching (Isa 21:9).

**Listen! My beloved! Behold, he is coming** - (cf similar picture in Song 8:13-14) Most observers agree that although the bride is still speaking, this section marks a different occasion. We have just heard the refrain (Song 2.7), or adjuration formula, "I adjure you, daughters of Jerusalem," which serves as a marker in this book (repeated before the wedding in Song 3:5 and after the wedding in Song 8:4). This poem is clearly connected with the previous poem as noted by several key terms and images including gazelle, dove, vine, lily, my love, the one my soul loves, as well as the refrain addressed to the daughters of Jerusalem.

The old saying, absence makes the heart grow fonder, is reflected in the longing expressed in these verses.

**Gledhill** - The NIV (*Listen! My lover! Look! Here he comes, leaping across the mountains, bounding over the hills*) captures well the girl's thrill and excitement as she hears her lover approaching. Her sense of anticipation is almost tangible, as her boy leaps and springs over the hills towards her. He is as fleet on foot as a young gazelle, with boundless energy, an alert ear, a lightness of touch. ([The Message of the Song of Songs Bible Speaks Today- Tom Gledhill](#))

**Kinlaw** has a reasonable summary of this section - We have seen in the text thus far the beginnings of a very free expression of love between a maiden and a man. The courtship has begun, and the desire for each other is intense. She is weak with passion. It is at that point that the protagonist, the maiden, has appealed to the daughters of Jerusalem. She is concerned that the emotions of her and her lover not take them beyond the proper pace of pure love. So we now see them separated but longing for each other. Two poems (Song 2:8-17; 3:1-5) make up this section. Again we find at the close of this division a plea for restraint. ([Gaebelein, F. Editor: Expositor's Bible Commentary OT 7 Volume Set: Books: Zondervan Publishing](#))

**Longman** - The [gazelle](#) is known for its speed and agility. It is able to traverse geographical obstacles to get to its desired location. The image as applied to the man expresses excitement and eagerness. The woman wants him to be near her, so she wishes that he might be like the gazelle, or, in the parallel, a [stag](#).

Again one must guard from adding to the meaning (cp Pr 30:6) as does one commentator (who I greatly respect as he is usually very literal or normal in his interpretative approach) who to my surprise speculates on the phrase "**Behold, he cometh**" (KJV) = "Although the bride is still speaking, the occasion is different. She is no longer in Jerusalem, but perhaps in their country palace, and her beloved is away. But then she cries: "Behold, he cometh," and she rises to meet him, as she sees him rapidly approaching (**Ed**: This would be an accurate interpretation but he goes on to add). This perhaps speaks, in type, of the signs of the imminent return of Christ, after His long absence (compare Mt 25:6; 24:33)". ([Henry Morris. Defender's Bible](#)) (**Comment**: This is a true statement [that Christ's return is always imminent] but is not what the Shulammitte woman was looking forward to if one holds firmly to the **context** to guide accurate **Interpretation**! Notice Dr Morris says "**in type**" -- while there is a legitimate role of types in interpretation of the Bible, one needs to be very careful how this term is applied - see **Study of Biblical types**)

**Climbing...leaping** - She knows Solomon is on his way to her, and uses exaggerated metaphor here to emphasize the desire she knows he has to see her.

### Shulammite (young woman) speaks...

**Song 2:9 - "My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Behold, he is standing behind our wall, He is looking through the windows, He is peering through the lattice.**

- Song 2:17, 8:14

**NET Bible** - My lover is like a gazelle or a young stag. Look! There he stands behind our wall, gazing through the window, peering through the lattice.

**NLT** - My lover is like a swift gazelle or a young stag. Look, there he is behind the wall, looking through the window, peering into the room.

Notice the **behold he is coming** is quickly replaced by **behold he is standing**.

**Reformation Study Bible** summarizes Song 2:8–17 - The image of the shepherd-lover as a gazelle or a young stag on the hills introduces and concludes this section, another imagined rendezvous between the two lovers. After her brief address to the daughters of Jerusalem in v. 7, the girl has returned to her musings. ([Notes](#))

**Gazelle (note)...stag** - She sees Solomon as like (introduces a **simile**) a gazelle or a young stag in his energy and in his passionate desire to be with her. The picture is clear - No obstacle could keep him from his love. How does this picture of Solomon contrast with that of many husbands who barely drag home after an exhausting day at work and just want to be left alone!

**NET Note** - Gazelles are often associated with sensuality and masculine virility in ancient Near Eastern love literature. Gazelles were often figures in Hebrew, Akkadian, and Ugaritic literature for mighty warriors or virile young men (e.g., 2Sa 1:19; 2:18; Isa 14:9; Zech 10:3). In ancient Near Eastern love literature gazelles often symbolize the excitement and swiftness of the lover coming to see his beloved, as in an ancient Egyptian love song: "O that you came to your sister swiftly like a bounding gazelle! Its feet reel, its limbs are weary, terror has entered its body. A hunter pursues it with his hounds, they do not see it in its dust; It sees a resting place as a trap, it takes the river as its road. May you find her hiding-place before your hand is kissed four times. Pursue your sister's love, the Golden gives her to you, my friend!" ("Three Poems" in the Papyrus Chester Beatty 1 collection).

**Our wall** - refers to the wall of the house and is the only use of this Hebrew word in the OT.

**Carr** - Windows and lattices are both plurals, perhaps suggesting the lover flitting from window to window to get a better view. ([The Song of Solomon - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - G. Lloyd Carr](#))

**Peering through the lattice** - In the ancient Near East the windows of the houses were made of latticework closely set together so that a person outside could not see what was taking place within, and yet those inside could see what went on outside.

**Peer** ([06692](#)) ([sus/tsuts](#) - [𐤔𐤕𐤕](#)) has two distinct senses (a) blossom, bud, flourish (Ps 72:16, 90:6-7, 103:15 most used metaphorically) or as used in Song 2:9 (b) to peek, to peer referring to a person taking a sensitive, inquisitive look at someone or something, often through some obstacle. The Septuagint translates [sus/tsuts](#) with the verb [ekkupto](#) (present tense = continually) which means to peep through or out of a place (also used in Song 6:10 = "grows [peeps] like the dawn"). Solomon is NOT a "peeping tom" but is a sensitive seer of his beloved!

**Gledhill** - Within no time at all, he (the young man) is at her wall, peering through the windows, eager to catch a first glance of her before she comes out to him. And then he invites her to come away with him to enjoy the explosion of nature in the springtime (Song 2:10-14). The girl reports his speech as something in the past, thus indicating that it is her remembrance of a past event. She reports her anticipation in the present tense, to give immediacy and excitement to the statement of her feelings. Another way of dividing up the poem is to note the rural-domestic-rural sequence. The rural countryside motif is an expression of untrammelled freedom and exhilaration, of energetic enthusiasm and adventure. The countryside represents the thrilling liberty of the natural order of things, of excitement, or potential for new growth, new experiences and new relationships. It represents adventure, traveling new and unexplored pathways, taking the risks that a new liberty entails. ([The Message of the Song of Songs Bible Speaks Today- Tom Gledhill](#))

**Smith's Bible Dictionary** has this note on **lattice** - The latticed window is much used in warm eastern countries. It frequently projects from the wall (like our bay windows), and is formed of reticulated work, often highly ornamental, portions of which are hinged so that they may be opened or shut at pleasure. The object is to keep the apartments cool by intercepting the direct rays of the sun, while the air is permitted to circulate freely.

**POSB** - When she did not run out to meet him, he peeked through the lattice-laced windows, trying to see if she was home. He caught a glimpse of her as she hurried to make herself presentable for him. He then called out to his darling and assured her that

she was beautiful just as she was (v.10). He wanted her to get up and come with him, for it was springtime and they could now spend time together in their favorite spot out in nature (Song 2:11). Notice the details of his description of the glorious day: The winter is past (Song 2:11a). The rains are gone (Song 2:11b). These would be the late rains of March and April. The flowers are blooming (Song 2:12a). The birds are singing (Song 2:12b). The turtledove was a migratory bird, and its return marked the arrival of spring. The figs are ripening (Song 2:13a). Green figs (pag) are those that had remained on the tree from the previous summer and were now turning green in the spring sun. The vines are blossoming (Song 2:13b). They were releasing their sweet fragrance into the fresh, crisp air. Eagerly, he pleaded. "Come, My love, What are you waiting for?" ([Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible- Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon](#))

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**TODAY IN THE WORD** -According to an old saying, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder." But another saying warns that separation can have the opposite effect: "Out of sight, out of mind." Which of these is true? It often depends on the situation. Sometimes being with those we love causes us to take them for granted. Once we are apart, we realize how much their presence means to us. On the other hand, sometimes being separated may cause us to become distracted with other things to the point that we scarcely think of our loved one at all.

In today's verses from the Song of Solomon, the bride waits with expectation for the groom's arrival. She hears and sees the groom from afar. The groom comes seeking the bride with such intensity that the obstacles (the hills) seem like nothing. The bride compares him to a gazelle or a young stag. Gazelles were known for their grace and speed. The stag was famous for its ability to leap. The bride's portrait depicts the groom as one who is in eager pursuit.

However, this portrait also reveals the potential for separation in the relationship. Despite his eagerness, the groom can only see the one he loves from a distance. He gazes longingly upon her through the window and the lattice. This portrays separation and desire. The groom has exerted considerable effort to seek the one he loves. He initiates this relationship and does whatever he must to maintain it.

Like many exchanges described in the Song of Solomon, the scene in today's passage has something to say to us on two levels. As an example of human love, it is a good reminder that love cannot be maintained without a measure of effort. In particular, it provides a model of the kind of initiative the husband should take in his love relationship with his spouse.

**In a love relationship we must take initiative on two levels. We must take the initiative to show others that we love them, and we must respond to the love that others show to us**

**Shulamite (young woman) speaks** but seems to be quoting the young man's words ("My beloved responded and said to me" -- who is "me"? Is this not the young woman. Then the remainder of the discourse in Song 2:10-13 would be the young man's words which are related to us by the young woman)...

**Song 2:10** "My beloved responded and said to me, '**Arise (imperative = command)**, my darling, my beautiful one, and **come (imperative = command)** along. ("Come away with me" = KJV)

**11** 'For behold, the winter is past, The rain is over and gone.

**12** 'The flowers have already appeared in the land; The time has arrived for pruning the vines, And the voice of the turtledove has been heard in our land.

**13** 'The [fig \(note\)](#) tree ([picture](#)) has ripened its figs, and the vines in blossom have given forth their fragrance. **Arise (imperative = command)**, my darling, my beautiful one, and **come** along!" ("Come away with me" = KJV)

**Solomon (young man) speaks**

**14** "O my dove, in the clefts (crag) of the rock (cliff), In the secret place of the steep pathway, **Let me see (imperative = command)** your form (appearance), **Let me hear (imperative = command)** your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your form is lovely."

**Solomon (young man) speaks but seems to be relating the young man's invitation to arise and come)**

**Song 2:10** "My beloved responded and said to me, '**Arise (imperative = command)**, my darling, my beautiful one, and **come (imperative = command)** along. ("Come away with me" = KJV).

**NET Bible** - My lover spoke to me, saying: "Arise, my darling; My beautiful one, come away with me!

**NLT-** My lover said to me, "Rise up, my darling! Come away with me, my fair one!

**My beloved responded** - Here the Shulamite is speaking but is quoting Solomon's words of invitation for twice in this section he



invites her to "come along" (Song 2:10, 2:13).

**Beautiful one** (03303 - [יפה](#)) (**yapheh**) is an adjective meaning lovely, beautiful, describing beauty of women (Ge 12:11, 14, 2Sa 13:1, Esther 2:7). Good looking or handsome men (2Sa 14:25). Jerusalem was described as "beautiful in elevation." Note that 11/38 uses of **yapheh** are in the Song of Solomon = Song 1:8, 15, 16; 2:10, 13; 4:1, 7; 5:9; 6:1, 4, 10. Yapheh can describe a beautiful voice (Ezek 33:32). Finally, yapheh is used in one of my favorite verses...

He has made everything **appropriate** (**beautiful = yapheh**) in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart, yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end. (Eccl 3:11)  
(Listen to this great song [In His Time](#))

**Lxx** translates **yapheh** with the Greek adjective **kalos** (**word study**) which means good; beautiful, applied by the Greeks to everything so distinguished in form, excellence, goodness, usefulness, as to be pleasing; hence (according to the context) equivalent to "beautiful, handsome, excellent, eminent, choice, surpassing, precious, useful, suitable, commendable, admirable"; a beautiful to look at, shapely, magnificent.

**Yapheh** - 38x/38v - **Translated in NAS as** - appropriate(1), beautiful(28), beautiful one(2), fair(1), fitting(1), handsome(4), sleek(3).

Gen 12:11, 14; 29:17; 39:6; 41:2, 4, 18; Deut 21:11; 1 Sa 16:12; 17:42; 25:3; 2Sa 13:1; 14:25, 27; 1Kgs 1:3, 4; Esther 2:7; Job 42:15; Ps 48:2; Pr 11:22; Eccl 3:11; 5:18; Song 1:8, 15, 16; 2:10, 13; 4:1, 7; 5:9; 6:1, 4, 10; Jer 11:16; Ezek 31:3, 9; 33:32; Amos 8:13.

[See note at Song 2:10](#)

**Song 2:11 'For behold, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone**

**NET** - Look! The winter has passed, the winter rains are over and gone.

**NLT**- Look, the winter is past, and the rains are over and gone.

**Behold** (02009) (**hinneh**) is an interjection meaning behold, look, now; if. "It is used often and expresses strong feelings, surprise, hope, expectation, certainty, thus giving vividness depending on its surrounding context." (Baker) Hinneh generally directs our mind to the text, imploring the reader to give it special attention. In short, the Spirit is trying to arrest our attention! And so hinneh is used as an exclamation of vivid immediacy (e.g., read Ge 6:13)! Hinneh is a marker used to enliven a narrative, to express a change a scene, to emphasize an idea, to call attention to a detail or an important fact or action that follows (Isa 65:17, Ge 17:20, 41:17). The first use of hinneh in Ge 1:29 and second in Ge 1:31 - "And God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day."

**Spurgeon** reminds us that "**Behold** is a word of wonder; it is intended to excite admiration. Wherever you see it hung out in Scripture, it is like an ancient sign-board, signifying that there are rich wares within, or like the hands which solid readers have observed in the margin of the older Puritanic books, drawing attention to something particularly worthy of observation." I would add, behold is like a divine highlighter, a divine underlining of an especially striking or important text. It says in effect "Listen up, all ye who would be wise in the ways of Jehovah!"

**Garret** - The beauty of these verses as a portrait of the arrival of spring is universally acknowledged. (New American Commentary)

**Lloyd Carr** - The introductory conjunction **kî** (**for**) and the demonstrative **hinnēh** (behold) tie this colon to the preceding by drawing her attention to the reason for the invitation. (**Ed**: See value of observing terms of explanation)....Winter (Heb. *sētān*), a loan-word from Aramaic, occurs only this once in the Old Testament. It is used in the [Targum](#) on Genesis 8:22 as a comment on *ōrep*, 'winter, the time of sowing crops'. The parallel with *gešēm* (01653 - [גשם](#) - [downpour and the rain, rain, rains, rainy, shower](#)) 'heavy rain', in the last colon acknowledges that in Palestine winter is the rainy season. Snow is not common, except in the higher elevations. The three verbs almost personify the winter rains as a traveler who has passed through and has gone. ([The Song of Solomon - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - G. Lloyd Carr](#))

**The winter is past** - Here Solomon begins a beautiful description of the glories of Springtime, a perfect time for lovers. And thus his repetition to her "Come along!" Although he is describing a literal Spring, there is the sense that whenever a couple falls in love, the season is like the new growth of spring to them as they begin to experience this fresh, new relationship, irregardless of the actual season of the year. When lovers are truly in love, the world is seen from a different perspective, which is how Solomon felt when he was with his beloved. Note that some commentaries suggest a double meaning, with the coming of spring picturing the young woman also as "ripe" and ready for marriage.

**Deere on winter** - winter (setaw, used only here in the OT) refers to the cloudy season of March and April with the “latter” rains.”

**The rain is over and gone** - Solomon stresses that there is no reason why she cannot join him in the natural beauty of Spring.

**See note at Song 2:10**

**Song 2:12** 'The flowers have already appeared in the land; The time has arrived for pruning the vines, And the voice of the turtledove has been heard in our land.

**NET** - The pomegranates have appeared in the land, the time for pruning and singing has come; the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.

**NLT**- The flowers are springing up, the season of singing birds has come, and the cooing of turtledoves fills the air.

**Appeared** (07200)(**ra'ah**) was used in Song 1:6 (**stare**) and is used in Song 2:14 (**let me see**). Other uses of ra'ah in Song are - Song 3:3, 11 (**gaze**), Song 6:9, 11, Song 7:12.

**For pruning** - This could be translated "for singing" (KJV). The **NET Note** explains "The homonymic root זָמַר (zamar) means “song, singing” (HALOT 273 s.v. I זָמַר; DCH 3:117 s.v. זָמַר a), while זָמַר II means “pruning, trimming” (HALOT 273 s.v. II; DCH 3:117 s.v. II).

**Ryrie** - Solomon is inviting the Shulammite outside to enjoy a beautiful spring day. Similarly, God invites His people to share the delights of His company (v. 13).

**Turtledove** - This is a small bird of the pigeon family whose appearance in Israel was a sign of spring and which figuratively speaks of that which is soft and gentle.

**Carr on turtledove** - “This species is primarily a migratory spring/summer resident of Palestine (cf. Jeremiah 8:7), whose distinctive cooing call is one of the signs of spring.” ([The Song of Solomon - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - G. Lloyd Carr](#))

Notice Solomon's description of sights (**flowers**), sounds (**voice of the turtledove**) and smells (**blossoms have given forth their fragrance**) of spring, all natural phenomena that stimulate one's senses, in a manner not dissimilar from what occurs when a couple is basking in the "springtime" of their love. How wonderful and therapeutic would it be for all marriages to hold fast and dear the memory of that time when the love was fresh and new.

**Glickman** writes that “Whenever any couple falls in love, it is spring for them because their lives are fresh; everything in life has a new perspective; what was black and white is now in color; what was dark is light.” ([Solomon's Song of Love - Let a Song of Songs Inspire Your Own Romantic Story](#))

**Jack Deere** - In a sense when one falls in love the feeling is like spring for everything seems fresh and new. The world is seen from a different perspective, which is how Solomon felt when he was with his beloved....So spring stimulates the senses of sight, sound, taste, and smell. (Bible Knowledge Commentary)

**See note at Song 2:10**

**Song 2:13** 'The [fig \(note\)](#) tree [\(picture\)](#) has ripened its figs, and the vines in blossom have given forth their fragrance. **Arise** (**imperative = command**), my darling, my beautiful one, and **come** along!" ("Come away with me" = KJV)

**NET Bible** - The fig tree has budded, the vines have blossomed and give off their fragrance. Arise, come away my darling; my beautiful one, come away with me!"

**NLT**- The fig trees are forming young fruit, and the fragrant grapevines are blossoming. Rise up, my darling! Come away with me, my fair one!" Young Man

**Arise my darling** - Similar to Song 2:10.

**Fig tree has ripened** - The fig tree was one an important fruit tree in the Near East as it produced two crops per year, the first being the best and sweetest. Solomon describes spring as just beginning, which presumably is a reference to the first crop of sweet figs which normally occurs in June.

**Gledhill** - There is a strong sense of temporal movement in the poem from the past through the present to the future. The cold winter rains of the drab gloomy weather are now completely gone. They are a thing of the past. And now the tiny spring flowers are sparkling forth amongst the new shoots of the undergrowth. The turtle doves are cooing, the time for singing (or alternatively 'pruning') has come ('pruning' probably breaks the parallelism—all the other activities are more of the natural order of creation, the singing being that of the birds). Some have suggested that the phrase 'our land' is not a natural usage for indigenous inhabitants, and therefore leads to the suggestion that the girl is a foreigner, a non-Israelite. Goulder makes much of this theme;<sup>2</sup> according to him the main message of the Song is to convey that marriage to foreigners is acceptable. So then the Song represents a counter thrust to the exclusive nationalism of Ezra and Nehemiah.

There is the hint of future blessings in the references to the fig tree and the vines in blossom. The sterile fig of early spring is the precursor of the edible fig which is produced on new growth and matures in the late summer. (A tree that does not produce this early fruit will not yield a crop of real figs either.) The vines in blossom are also a harbinger of the luscious grape harvest to follow. So we have a movement from seeming barrenness, to the full flower of fertility, from dark days of the past to the blossoming of new hope in the future.

Our lovers are part and parcel of this explosion of new life and new hope. Not that there is any explicit identification with any sexual element of fertility. For fertility and reproduction of the species are themes which barely surface in the Song. The renewal of nature is seen not in any sexual way (as was the case of the Baal fertility cult, which the prophets of Israel so forcefully opposed); rather the great Creator God, the covenant God of Israel, Yahweh of Hosts, stood over and behind the natural order, both transcendent and immanent. He is the sustainer and upholder of all that is. The way he works in the cycle of the seasons is a mirror of his workings in the lives of his people: from the secret growth in days of darkness, to the exuberance of new life. ([The Message of the Song of Songs Bible Speaks Today- Tom Gledhill](#))

#### **Solomon (young man) speaks**

**Song 2:14** "O my dove, in the clefts (crag) of the rock (cliff), In the secret place of the steep pathway, **Let me see (imperative = command) your form (appearance), Let me hear (imperative = command) your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your form is lovely."**

**NET Bible** - O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the hiding places of the mountain crags, let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.

**NLT-** My dove is hiding behind the rocks, behind an outcrop on the cliff. Let me see your face; let me hear your voice. For your voice is pleasant, and your face is lovely.

**My dove** - Solomon's "pet" name for the young woman (cp Song 1:15).

**NET Note** - The dove was a common figure for romantic love in ancient Near Eastern love literature. This emphasis seems to be suggested by his use of the term "my dove." Just as the young man heard the voice of the turtledove in Song 2:12, so now he wants to hear her voice. Doves were often associated with timidity in the ancient world. Being virtually defenseless, they would often take refuge in crevices and cliffs for safety (Jer 48:28). The emphasis on timidity and the need for security is undoubtedly the emphasis here because of the explicit description of this "dove" hiding in the "clefts of the rock" and in "the hiding places of the mountain crevice." Fortresses were sometimes built in the clefts of the rocks on mountainsides because they were inaccessible and therefore, in a secure place of safety (Jer 49:16; Obad 3). Perhaps he realized it might be intimidating for her to join him and communicate with him freely. She would need to feel secure in his love to do this. It would be easy for her to hide from such emotionally exposing experiences.

**In the clefts of the rock, in the secret place** ('the secure hiding-places in the crevices') - This expresses Solomon's desire to be alone with his love, a desire which is natural and legitimate but which far too often seems to disappear once couples are married!

**Jack Deere** - Another characteristic of genuine love is the desire to be alone with one's lover. This desire seems to be easily experienced during courtship, but unfortunately it often fades in marriage. Yet if love is to grow a couple must find time to be alone. Doves (cf. Song 2:12) hide in rock crevices, reluctant to leave. The lover likened his beloved to such a dove, hesitant to join him in the countryside. So again (cf. Song 2:10, 13) he urged her to leave her home and join him so he could enjoy her sweet-sounding voice and lovely face. (BKC)

**Constable** - The desire to be alone with one's lover is both natural and legitimate. Unfortunately it sometimes departs after marriage. ([Ibid](#))

**Lloyd Carr** - Just as the doves take refuge in the cliffs (cf. Jer. 48:28) and when frightened are reluctant to leave, so the girl shyly



waits in the secluded protection of the house (Song 2:9). Her lover's entreaty continues with the seeing/hearing motif in a chiasmus that encourages her to come out of hiding. ([The Song of Solomon - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - G. Lloyd Carr](#))

**Garrett** - The description of her as a dove in the clefts of the rocks suggests that she is inaccessible. This theme will be taken up in several of the man's songs. (New American Commentary)

**Dove (note)** (03123) (**yonah**) denotes a pigeon or a dove. **Dove** is used 6 times in Song 1:15; 2:14; 4:1; 5:2, 12; 6:9 and is clearly a **metaphor (note)**.

**Yonah** - 32x in OT - **Yonah** is translated as - dove(13), dove's(1), doves(8), pigeon(1), pigeons(9).

Gen 8:8ff; Lev 1:14; 5:7, 11; 12:6, 8; 14:22, 30; 15:14, 29; Num 6:10; 2 Kgs 6:25; Ps 55:6; 68:13; Song 1:15; 2:14; 4:1; 5:2, 12; 6:9; Isa 38:14; 59:11; 60:8; Jer 48:28; Ezek 7:16; Hos 7:11; 11:11; Nah 2:7.

**Guzik on your voice is sweet** - The maiden considered how sweet and meaningful the sound of one's voice is between two lovers. She imagined her beloved longing to hear her voice, and remembering how sweet the sound of it is. The human voice has the amazing ability to communicate and connect. "The voice can invite or discourage intimacy, without ever having to be verbally explicit, or even conscious of what it is doing ... We use our voices to repel and attract, encourage or undermine. As animals with smell, so are humans with voices." (Anne Karpf, The Human Voice). Just hearing a human voice can give us information about a person's height, weight, shape, sex, age, occupation, sexual orientation, health, sobriety, tiredness, social class, race, education, financial status, and truthfulness. With all this power wrapped up in the voice, no wonder the maiden imagined her beloved saying to her, "**your voice is sweet**."

**Carr on let me see your form** - He wants to feast his eyes on the loveliness of her whole person, and fill his ears with the pleasing sweetness of her voice. This is the same word used in v. 12 of the voice of the turtledove, the soft, gentle cooing. ([Ibid](#))

**Reformation Study Bible** - The switch to the feminine form of the possessive pronoun "**your**" suggests that this verse and the following one should be assigned to the shepherd, "**the beloved**." ([Song of Solomon](#))

**POSB** postulates that "The young woman was hiding from him! He playfully compared her to a dove holed up in the crevices of the mountain rocks, unwilling to appear and leave its place of safety (Song 2:14a). It had been months since Solomon had seen his love's pretty face and heard her sweet voice. He could not wait any longer (Song 2:14b). But for some reason, she was reluctant to appear before him and to go with him. Perhaps it was something more serious than suggested in the above scenario. As with the details of the setting, the reader can only speculate as to what was going on in her mind and in her tentative spirit." ([Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible- Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon](#))

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**SAY IT (Our Daily Bread)** - All too often we take for granted the ones we love. Perhaps we get caught up in the day-to-day process of living and working, and we neglect to share our true inner feelings. "She knows I love her," we tell ourselves. But we never tell our spouse. Maybe you grew up in a family where positive, loving feelings were never expressed in words, so you don't know what to say. Perhaps you're afraid you'll say the wrong thing, or that if you try to express your feelings you won't be able to control them. That's okay, even if you cry. An advertisement reads, "Say it with flowers!" Maybe that's how you tell that special someone of your love. Or perhaps you say it with a well-chosen card. My wife loves dark chocolates, so I often give her candy and a card on special occasions. She appreciates these tokens of love, but I've learned over the years not to let the card or the gift do all the work of saying what I really feel inside. I also need to say the words, "I love you." Everyone needs to hear words of love. In the Song of Solomon, the lovers frequently used endearing terms when speaking to each other. **Today, tell that special person "I love you," not just with candy or flowers but with words.** **THINKING IT OVER** - When was the last time you said "I love you" to a special person in your life? Think of a quality you appreciate in that person and tell him or her about it. — by David C. Egner

**A word of love can make a world of difference.**

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**TODAY IN THE WORD** - In "Morning Hymn," author Thomas Ken issues an invitation to himself: "Awake, my soul, and with the sun/Thy daily stage of duty run; Shake off dull sloth, and joyful rise/To pay thy morning sacrifice. Awake, lift up thyself, my heart, And with the angels bear thy part, Who all night long unwearied sing/High praises to the eternal King."

The hymnwriter's words are a reminder that, when it comes to experiencing fellowship with God, complacency may be one of the greatest obstacles we face. At times we are reluctant to seek God because we are too distracted by the cares of the day. At other times we are unwilling because it requires too much effort. During such moments we need more than a reminder of our duty. We also need a reminder of the joy that comes when we experience intimacy with God.

The bride in today's passage needed a similar reminder. The lover calls to the bride as he gazes through the lattice and invites her

to arise and come with him. Some commentators suggest that the Hebrew words emphasize the significance of the invitation for the bride. Like the hymn writer, the lover calls upon the bride to “shake off dull sloth” and enjoy the delights of spending time together with him.

The season alone is reason enough! Winter, the rainy season in Palestine, has ended. In fact, the Hebrew phrase that is translated “is past” literally means “is over and gone.” It is as if the lover meant to imply that it was high time for the two of them to be together.

The groom also declares that the time had come for flowers to appear, an event that marked the arrival of spring and occurred almost overnight. The early blossoming of the fig tree provided another sign of spring’s arrival.

Thomas Ken writes: “Glory to Thee, who safe hast kept, And hast refreshed me while I slept; Grant, Lord, when I from death shall wake, I may of endless life partake. Lord, I my vows to Thee renew: Scatter my sins as morning dew; Guard my first springs of thought and will, And with Thyself my spirit fill. Direct, control, suggest this day, All I design, or do, or say; That all my powers, with all their might, In Thy sole glory may unite.” Why not write your own morning prayer and read it aloud to the Lord? Or simply read this hymn aloud.

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**Say It!** - All too often we take for granted the ones we love. Perhaps we get caught up in the day-to-day process of living and working, and we neglect to share our true inner feelings. “She knows I love her,” we tell ourselves. But we never tell our spouse.

Maybe you grew up in a family where positive, loving feelings were never expressed in words, so you don’t know what to say. Perhaps you’re afraid you’ll say the wrong thing, or that if you try to express your feelings you won’t be able to control them. That’s okay, even if you cry.

An advertisement reads, “Say it with flowers!” Maybe that’s how you tell that special someone of your love. Or perhaps you say it with a well-chosen card. My wife loves dark chocolates, so I often give her candy and a card on special occasions. She appreciates these tokens of love, but I’ve learned over the years not to let the card or the gift do all the work of saying what I really feel inside. I also need to say the words, “I love you.”

Everyone needs to hear words of love. In the Song of Solomon, the lovers frequently used endearing terms when speaking to each other.

Today, tell that special person “I love you,” not just with candy or flowers but with words. — David C. Egner [Our Daily Bread](#). Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

### THINKING IT OVER

When was the last time you said “I love you” to a special person in your life? Think of a quality you appreciate in that person and tell him or her about it.

**A word of love can make a world of difference.**

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**EYES ONLY FOR HER** - READ: Revelation 19:6-10 **O my dove, . . . let me see your face, let me hear your voice. -Song of Solomon 2:14**

I was privileged to officiate at Steve’s marriage to Karen. God had brought this couple together, and it was obvious that they were deeply in love. When the wedding day finally arrived, all preparations had been made. The bridesmaids’ dresses were ready, the flowers were in place, the rehearsal was complete. As the ceremony began, Steve and I walked in first. We stood at the front as the bridesmaids came down the aisle and took their places. The flower girls came next, dropping petals as they walked. They were cute as could be, and all eyes were on them—all except Steve’s. Then I heard him sigh. Karen had stepped into his vision. He hadn’t been concerned about the bridesmaids, or even the flower girls. He was watching for his bride. He had eyes only for her.

The church is Jesus Christ’s fiancée—His betrothed. He loves her with a sacrificial, unending love. He died to redeem her. And the day is nearing when Christ will return to earth to take His bride unto Himself. The joyous marriage supper of the Lamb will follow (Re 19:7, Re 19:8, Re 19:9).

As part of the church, we are the bride of Christ. He loves us. He has eyes only for us.

Do we have eyes only for Him? — David C. Egner

From heaven He came and sought her  
To be His holy bride;  
With His own blood He bought her,

And for her life He died. —Stone

**God loves every one of us as if there were but one of us to love.**

**Daughters of Jerusalem to the Shulammite** (Speaker is Uncertain—Augustine) Some say the young woman's brothers as in the NKJV = "O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, In the secret places of the cliff, Let me see your face, Let me hear your voice; For your voice is sweet, And your face is lovely." **HER BROTHERS**)..

**Song 2:15 " Catch (imperative = command)** (take hold, seize) the foxes for us, the little foxes that are ruining the vineyards, while our vineyards are in blossom."

#### **Speaker is Uncertain**

**Song 2:15 " Catch the foxes for us, the little foxes that are ruining the vineyards, while our vineyards are in blossom. (take hold, seize) Catch (imperative = command)**

**NET Bible** - Catch the foxes for us, the little foxes, that ruin the vineyards— for our vineyard is in bloom.

**NLT-** Catch all the foxes, those little foxes, before they ruin the vineyard of love, for the grapevines are blossoming! Young Woman

**Carr** writes that " "This verse is a problem. The verb form is imperative, masculine plural, but there is no indication whether the speaker is male or female. All that is clear is that 'for us' is plural." ([The Song of Solomon - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - G. Lloyd Carr](#))

**Catch** (0270) (**achaz**) means to grasp, take hold, take possession. The Septuagint translates with the verb **piazō** (**aorist imperative** = Don't delay! Do this now! Do this effectively!) which means to take firm hold of or to grasp (eg, Acts 3:7, or of fish Jn 21:3).

This is not a suggestion, but is imperative. It lends itself to a very practical application to all believers for we are so prone to wander and allow "little sins" (~"foxes") into our heart and mind, but the result may be ruin.

**Longman on foxes** - The fox (or jackal; the Heb. word **shu'al** [07776 - shu'al - שועל](#)) is ambiguous) is a "very small and light carnivore". It is a predator and in a garden setting would have been seen as a dangerous nuisance. Most think that the fox here stands for some kind of threat to the love relationship. The identity of the threat is difficult to determine but may refer to rival suitors. That foxes were pests in a vineyard is attested by a poem of Theocritus of Comatas from approximately 275 BC: "I hate the brush tail foxes, that soon as day declines / Come creeping to their vintaging mid Goodman Micon's vines" (quoted in Keel 1994:109–110). Perhaps more relevant to the Song, Keel also alerts us to the fact that the fox represents a *mischievous lover* in ancient Egyptian love poetry, citing Papyrus Harris 500, group A, no. 4: "My heart is not yet done with your lovemaking, / my (little) [fox]! / Your liquor is (your) lovemaking."

**POSB** - Foxes are notorious for damaging vineyards. This was especially true in the ancient world. They were a common nuisance and threat to the success of a crop. Silently attacking at night, they both ravaged the fruit and burrowed beneath the vines to destroy their root systems. Farmers often camped in the fields in an attempt to protect their crops from their sly creatures' destruction. "Our vines have tender [blooms]" Solomon compared their relationship to the vineyards all around them that were either in bloom or just beginning to bear the earliest grapes. His metaphor is obvious: whatever was troubling the young lady needed to be caught and dealt with before it destroyed their blossoming relationship. ([Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible- Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon](#))

**NET Note** - The term "foxes" is used metaphorically. Foxes are always spoken of in a negative light in the OT and in the ancient world were particularly associated with their destructive tendencies with regard to vineyards (Judg 15:4; Neh 4:3; Ps 63:10; Lam 5:18; Ezek 13:4). The description of these foxes as being destructive here seems to confirm that this is the point of comparison in mind. In ancient Near Eastern love literature it was common to use wild animals to symbolize potential problems which could separate lovers and destroy their love. For instance, in Egyptian love songs it is the crocodile, rather than the foxes, which were used as figures for obstacles which might threaten a couple's love. Here the "foxes" are probably used figuratively to represent potentially destructive problems which could destroy their romantic relationship and which could hinder it from ripening into marriage.

**Ruining** ([02254](#))(**chabal** - חבל) means to act corruptly, to destroy, to spoil, to ruin.**Chabal** is translated in the Septuagint by **aphanizo** (present tense = continual effect) which means primarily to make something disappear and so to ruin or destroy (as in Mt 6:19 "moth and rust **destroy**").

**MacArthur** on **catch the foxes** - Perhaps, as she literally did in the vineyards, Solomon wanted her to do by analogy in their relationship, i.e., to remove those things in their relationship that would spoil their blossoming love. ([Ibid](#))

**Reformation Study Bible** - The foxes are the one negative element in the otherwise ideal spring setting of Song 2:10–15. The imperative with no specific subject is like a passive ("May the foxes be caught"), and the whole verse is a wish by the lovers that nothing should be allowed to interfere with their lovemaking. ([Study Notes](#))

**Hudson Taylor** thought of the "**little foxes**" that may ruin our relationship with Jesus Christ. "The enemies may be small, but the mischief done great ... And how numerous the **little foxes** are! Little compromises with the world; disobedience to the still, small voice in little things; little indulgences to the flesh to the neglect of duty; little strokes of policy; doing evil in little things that good may come; and the beauty, and the fruitfulness of the vine are sacrificed! (**Ed: Woe is me!**)

**Glickman** lists several "little foxes" that may trouble couples:

- Uncontrolled desire that drives a wedge of guilt and mistrust between the couple.
- Mistrust and jealousy that strains or breaks the bond of love.
- Selfishness and pride that refuses to acknowledge wrong and fault to one another.
- An unforgiving attitude that will not accept an apology.

"These foxes have been ruining vineyards for years and the end of their work is not in sight"

([Solomon's Song of Love - Let a Song of Songs Inspire Your Own Romantic Story](#))

**Jack Deere** - Even in ideal courtships and marriages most couples encounter some potentially destructive problems. Their willingness to solve them together is an evidence of their maturity.

**Spurgeon** applies Song 2:15 to the lives of believers - "If you have any sign of spiritual life, if you have any tender grapes upon your branches, the devil and his foxes will be sure to be at you; therefore, endeavor to get as close as ever you can to two persons who are mentioned hard by my text, namely, the King and his spouse. First, keep close to Christ for this is your life; and next, keep close to his Church, for this is your comfort."

As **Guzik** says "It is helpful to remember the wording of the verse: catch us the foxes. The job of catching foxes is teamwork. One partner in the relationship can't expect the other do it all."

**NET Note** on **vineyards** - The term "vineyard" is also a figure. In Song 1:6 she used the **vineyard** motif as a metaphor for her physical appearance, but here it is "**our vineyards**" which is probably a figure for their romantic relationship. The phrase **in bloom**" makes the metaphor more specific, so that the phrase "**our vineyards are in bloom**" means that their romantic love relationship was in its initial stages, that is, before it had ripened into marriage.

**TODAY IN THE WORD** - Although the Hebrew word translated "**foxes**" in today's reading can also refer to the jackal, the reference to its size suggests that the small Fennec Fox is in view. Grapes were one of their favorite foods and they were capable of doing considerable damage to the vineyard. The fact that the invitation in the previous verses contains a loving challenge for the bride to stir herself in response to the lover's call suggests that the groom is speaking here. The Jewish Targum, an oral translation of the Hebrew Scriptures in Aramaic, interpreted the foxes as an allusion to the Amalakites (**Ed comment:** This is pure speculation as is the comment from the Midrashim). Hebrew commentaries known as Midrashim interpreted the **foxes** as a reference to other enemies of Israel, such as the Assyrians, the Amorites, and the Edomites. Christian interpreters have interpreted the **foxes** as a picture of those things that hinder the believer's fellowship with Christ.

**H. A. Ironside** commented on this verse, "**What are the little foxes that spoil the vine?** I can tell you a good many. There are the little foxes of vanity, of pride, of envy, of evil speaking, of impurity (I think this though is a wolf instead of a little fox). Then there are the foxes of carelessness, of neglect of the Bible, of neglect of prayer, of neglect of fellowship with the people of God. These are the things that spoil the vine, that hinder spiritual growth."

Neglect is also a problem in human relationships. A little neglect can cause a once-thriving relationship to go into decline. They are often "little foxes," choices and actions that seem insignificant at the time, but whose cumulative effect destroys the relationships we cherish most. They may take the form of allowing our jobs to consume our attention so that we neglect those we love, or allowing a passing attraction to someone else to go unchecked.

Remember, a fox may seem cute and harmless when viewed from a distance, but if left unchecked it will eventually destroy the vineyard. Can you identify the "little foxes" that cause problems in your spiritual life? What about in your friendships and family relationships? If you have trouble identifying them, ask someone you trust for a candid opinion. Talk together about a practical

strategy to help you to “catch” the foxes. You may also want to agree to meet later for accountability on following through with your strategy. (Today in the Word)

**Morris** offers an **applicational** comment on “**little foxes**” - Evidently both bride and bridegroom here realize there is a need to “**take**”—that is, “**capture**”—the little foxes infesting the vineyards before the grapes have ripened. There are “little” things that can come in and destroy even the happiest marriage if they are allowed to remain, just as “little” sins (ingratitude, impatience, etc.) may hurt our relationship with the Lord. Sadly, Solomon himself soon allowed the little sins of political expedience, preoccupation with business affairs and, finally, the greater sins of lust and idolatry, to ruin his idyllic relation with his first love.

**Spurgeon** applies Song 2:15 “If you have any sign of spiritual life, if you have any tender grapes upon your branches, the devil and his foxes will be sure to be at you; therefore, endeavor to get as close as ever you can to two persons who are mentioned hard by my text, namely, the King and his spouse. First, keep close to Christ for this is your life; and next, keep close to his Church, for this is your comfort.”

**W A Criswell** feels that “The “**foxes**” represent the problems which would beset and the destroyers who would attack the “vines,” i.e., the covenant of love between Solomon and the Shulamite. In Palestine the keepers of the vineyards continually sought to withstand the destruction of the foxes. Likewise, the task of working through problems and differences within a marriage requires determination and responsibility.”

**POSB** - Every couple must guard their relationship against little foxes—the small things that can become big issues. Both partners must foster an atmosphere that is open to honest communication. Both partners must be willing to acknowledge wrongs done and to make changes. Both partners must be willing to forgive offenses and not carry a grudge. On the other hand, many little foxes are not wrongs at all, but are simply differences in background, preferences, and ways of doing things. In these cases, both partners must be willing to make concessions and to compromise in order to live happily and peacefully. The words “I do” are not magic words that instantly make both spouses perfectly compatible. A couple that cannot communicate about the differences and work them out before they are married will not be able to do so after they are married. The little foxes teach us a very important lesson: Solomon did not discuss with others the details of what was bothering his darling, the things that were threatening the vineyard of their love. Likewise, every couple should be careful about. The element of trust is absolutely essential in marriage. A married couple will know each other intimately in every imaginable way; God designed it to be so. Therefore, husbands and wives must be able to trust each other to keep their relationship, as well as their shortcomings, private. Publicly discussing problems makes a couple vulnerable to the attacks of the enemy. Someone with impure motives who becomes aware of problems within a marriage may see an open door to initiate contact with one of the spouses. At times, marriages need outside help. When couples cannot resolve a problem in their marriage, they should seek godly counsel and not wait too long to do so. However, they should be very careful not to broadcast their situation, but to seek counsel from someone who truly knows the Lord and is trustworthy and discreet....Foxes are sly creatures. They creep up on their prey without being noticed. Many of us Christians do not recognize the little foxes that are hindering and ultimately damaging our relationships with the Lord, our spouses, or other individuals. We must be on guard against the little foxes and catch them before it is too late and their damage is done. ([Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible- Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon](#))

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**Tiny Evils, Big Fall** - READ: Ecclesiastes 9:16-10:10 - Dead flies putrefy the perfumer's ointment, . . . so does a little folly o one respected for wisdom and honor. --Ecclesiastes 10:1

It started as a seedling on the slopes of the Colorado Rockies some 500 years ago. For centuries it had stood tall, enduring violent winds, lightning strikes, blizzards, even avalanches. Now, however, the once-towering tree is just a mound of decaying wood. What caused its demise? A horde of beetles had attacked it, gnawing away until that skyscraper of nature surrendered to those tiny pests and toppled over. **That's also the tragic story of many Christians.** For long years they stood tall for God. They resisted temptations, weathered crises, and were bold in the strength divinely provided (cf Eph 6:11-12). But little sins began to eat away at their lives—little lies, little compromises with greed or lust, sins that gradually eroded their character. **And suddenly they fell.** Song of Solomon 2:15 states, “Catch us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines.” **This colorful Old Testament verse should sound a loud alarm in our consciences.** We must not tolerate the little evils that eat away at the roots of our lives. Otherwise, our once-strong witness for Christ will become a silenced casualty of sin. Let's confess those “tiny” evils to God now, before they lead to a big fall. — by Vernon C. Grounds (Our Daily Bread)

Nothing between, like worldly pleasure,  
Habits of life, though harmless they seem,  
Must not my heart from Him ever sever—  
He is my all! There's nothing between.  
—Tindley



**THE LITTLE FOXES - AT THE END** of the last canticle the bride was left enjoying the sweetness of communion in the arms of her beloved. Such communion, so deep and blessed, would surely never be interrupted. Alas, experience shows how easily communion with one's Lord may be broken. Our union with Him is eternal, and cannot be broken. But just as the young deer may be disturbed by the crackle of a twig, Song 2:7, so a chance look, a hasty word, a foolish tale, may disturb and mar our peace and communion. The Shulamite has returned to her own home, and has moved away from nearness to her beloved. He comes seeking her. The canticle has two movements, viz. Song 2:8–17, the seeking bridegroom and the unresponsive bride, and Song 3:1–5, the seeking bride and the responsive bridegroom. The affections of the bride are spoken to by the voice of her beloved. She knows his voice, cf. John 10:4, and the voice proclaims he is coming. Could anything awaken the affections of the believer like the news that his Lord is coming? Her affections, however, are not sufficiently awakened to go out to meet him. He tries to draw her forth to himself. He does so first by self-revelation, Song 2:9. He reveals himself to her bit by bit, as the Lord did to those two on the Emmaus road, until their hearts burned within them, Luke 24:1ff. He then tells her of deepest affection, she is his "love, his fair one", v. 10. He speaks of a new creation, Song 2:11–13a, based on spring resurrection, of which she is a part. He appeals to his loved one to stand on resurrection ground. He assures her of her secure position, Song 2:14, she is in the clefts of the rock. Yet all these, her blessings, do not draw her forth in gratitude to him. What is wrong? Ah, there is broken communion which prevents her yielding fruit, the little foxes have done their damage, Song 2:15. The fox's tail had touched the delicate vine blossom, and when, later, the farmer came seeking fruit, there was none. Oh the little foxes that mar our fruitfulness for our Beloved! Sad her response, Song 2:16, 17. She comforts herself by reminding her own heart of her union with him, v. 16. She is saved and secure, she cannot be lost. Furthermore, she knows where to find him if she needs him. So, careless of his longings, she lightly dismisses him, and the grieved bridegroom departs. (Hocking, C. E. - Day by Day Through the Old Testament)

**Shulamite (young woman) speaks ...**

**Song 2:16** "My beloved is mine, and I am his; He pastures his flock among the lilies.

**Song 2:17** "Until the cool of the day when the shadows flee away, **Turn** (imperative = command), my beloved, and **be** (imperative = command) like a gazelle Or a young stag on the mountains of Bethel."

**Shulamite (young woman) speaks ...**

**Song 2:16** "My beloved is mine, and I am his; He pastures his flock among the lilies

**NET Bible** - My lover is mine and I am his; he grazes among the lilies.

**NLT**- My lover is mine, and I am his. He browses among the lilies.

**POSB** - What Solomon does not say at this point is as important as what he does say. Certainly, something transpired between verses fifteen and sixteen, but it is not recorded. Solomon does not reveal what their problems were, their discussion of them, or how they resolved them. He only reveals that they were resolved, and that they went on to have a glorious, unforgettable day. As they spent the beautiful spring day together, the Shulamite made a strong statement about their mutual possession of one another (Song 2:16a). ([Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible- Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon](#))

Although the prince of preachers C H Spurgeon approached the text primarily from an allegorical viewpoint, he clearly loved these two verses preaching 8 different messages on them!

**My beloved** - This specific phrase is found 24x in 23v in the Song of Solomon - Song 1:13, 14, 16; 2:3, 8, 9, 10, 16, 17; 4:16; 5:2, 4, 5, 6 (twice), Song 5:8, 10, 16; 6:2, 3; 7:9, 11, 13; 8:14. (There are only 2 other uses in the OT - Isaiah 5:1, Jeremiah 11:15).

**Beloved** (01730) (**dod**) means beloved, loved one. 32 of 53 OT uses are found in the Song of Solomon. **Dod** conveys three thoughts (1) the name or address given by one lover to another (Song 5:4, 6:3, 7:9); (2) Love, where it speaks of the adulteress (Pr 7:18) and in a positive sense of the love between Solomon and the Shulamite (Song 1:2, 4:10). Love is used symbolically of Jerusalem reaching the "age for love" (Ezek 16:8). Dod speaks of the adultery of Jerusalem in Ezek 23:17. (3) **Dod** in some contexts means "uncle" (Lev 10:4, 1Sa 10:14-16, Esther 2:15).

**Dod** - 53v - **NAS** as beloved(31), beloved's(1), beloved's and my beloved(1), love(8), lovers(1), uncle(11), uncle's(6), uncles'(1).

Lev 10:4; 20:20; 25:49; Num 36:11; 1 Sam 10:14ff; 14:50; 2 Kgs 24:17; 1 Chr 27:32; Esther 2:7, 15; Pr 7:18; Song 1:2, 4, 13f, 16; 2:3, 8ff, 16f; 4:10, 16; 5:1f, 4ff, 8ff, 16; 6:1ff; 7:9ff; 8:5, 14; Isa 5:1; Jer 32:7ff, 12; Ezek 16:8; 23:17; Amos 6:10.

The Lxx uses **agapao** to translate **dod** in Song 1:4. In most of the other uses in the Song of Solomon, the Greek noun **adelphidos**

is used (Song 2:3, et al) and is a term of endearment meaning beloved one. It can also mean kinsman.

**My beloved is mine and I am his** (similar declaration also found in Song 6:3, Song 7:10) - These words are reminiscent of the covenant formula ("I will be their God, and they will be my people"—see Jer 7:23; 11:4; Ezek 34:30). In this context this phrase clearly speaks of the complete giving of the future marital partners to one another, which in turn speaks of the supernatural oneness of the marriage covenant (See **The Oneness of Covenant; Oneness Notes; Covenant: As It Relates to Marriage**). This phrase speaks of mutual commitment and trust. The relationship of the husband and wife is to be one of complete giving of each to the other (Although the context is different, the following verses re-enforce the principle of **selfless giving** in marriage rather than **self-centered taking** - see Php 2:3, 4-notes. **Are you listening husbands?** I'm a man so I can pick on our species! I'm afraid we deserve it!). In Proverbs Solomon emphasizes the vital importance of the husband and wife's commitment to fidelity and loyalty to each other "Drink water from your own cistern, And fresh water from your own well. Should your springs be dispersed abroad, Streams of water in the streets? Let them be yours alone, And not for strangers with you." (Pr 5:15-17-note)

**My beloved is mine and I am his** is often interpreted allegorically as referring to Christ and His Bride, the church, and there are even some beautiful songs that convey this same interpretative sense. However, if one is true to the text, the speaker is literally the Shulamite and not Christ. **Please do not misunderstand** -- The Church is indeed Christ's "beloved" and He is ours. These are timeless, ineffable truths that surely speak of the oneness of the covenant of creatures (New creatures - 2Cor 5:17) with their blessed Creator, a supernatural bond wrought by the payment of His blood to effect an eternal redemption and a "re-creation" of those creatures who by grace through faith receive Him as Savior.

**John MacArthur** comments that the phrase **My beloved is mine, and I am his** "clearly expresses the sanctity of a monogamous relationship that is built on mutual love (cf. Song 6:3; 7:10)." ([Ibid](#))

**Glickman** - Many people think the key to love is finding the perfect person; it is more a matter of finding the person who belongs to you, and you belong to them. "You don't look at the other person as a status symbol who will raise your prestige ... you look at that one as your counterpart, the one who completes you, the one with whom you can joyfully affirm your belongingness." ([Solomon's Song of Love - Let a Song of Songs Inspire Your Own Romantic Story](#))

**Paige Patterson** comments on mutual possession of the other in marriage - Mutual ownership [was the theme] of Shulamith's affirmation that her lover belonged to her and she to him. This sense of mutual possession is a critical feature for any happy marriage. One might have expected this oriental maiden to stress the king's claim on her exclusively. What is unusual in the text is that she clearly understood that Solomon also belonged to her. The same mutuality was expressed by Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:3-4 where the husband is told to render 'due benevolence' unto his wife, and the wife is instructed to treat her husband similarly. Furthermore, Paul indicated that the wife does not have authority over her own body; rather the husband exercises that authority—such a state would be thoroughly anticipated in a first century context. Surprisingly, however, the apostle also declared that the husband does not have authority over his own body, but rather the wife exercises that authority...This willingness both to possess and to be possessed, to enmesh one's life thoroughly in the life of the spouse, is surely something of what was intended in God's original design for marriage given in Genesis 2:24. ([Song of Solomon](#))

**Guzik** observes that the young woman clearly is "confident in the bond that joins her and her beloved. He belongs to her, and she belongs to him. In this sense they are one, joined together with mutual bonds of affection, and not one partner clinging to another more reluctant partner. It is also a statement of exclusivity and preference. They are not saying, "My beloved is mine, and I belong to him and a few other guys," nor "I am my beloved's and he is mine and he also belongs to 999 other women."

**Husbands, does your wife have this verse emblazoned on her heart because of your fervent love for her?**

**Guzik** writes - These lines have been repeatedly allegorically applied to the relationship between Jesus and His people. Charles Spurgeon preached eight sermons on Song of Solomon 2:16–17, and in one of them titled The Interest of Christ and His People in Each Other, he meditated on the meaning of each aspect.

Ways that I belong to Jesus; ways that "I am my beloved's":

- I am His by the gift of His Father.
- I am His by purchase, paid for by His own life.
- I am His by conquest, He fought for me and won me.
- I am His by surrender, because I gave myself to Him.

"Blessed be God, this is true evermore—'I am his,' his to-day, in the house of worship, and his to-morrow in the house of business; his as a singer in the sanctuary, and his as a toiler in the workshop; his when I am preaching, and equally his when I am walking the streets; his while I live, his when I die; his when my soul ascends and my body lies mouldering in the grave; the whole personality of

my manhood is altogether his for ever and for ever.” (Spurgeon)

Ways that Jesus belongs to me; ways that “He is mine”:

- He is mine by connection in the same body; He is the head and I am part of His body.
- He is mine by affectionate relationship; He has given me His love.
- He is mine by the connection of birth; I am born again of Him.
- He is mine by choice; He gave Himself for me.
- He is mine by indwelling; He has decided to live inside me.
- He is mine personally, He is mine eternally.

“It certainly does seem a great thing to call him mine; to think that he should ever be mine, and that all he is, and all he has, and all he says, and all he does, and all he ever will be, is all mine. When a wife takes a husband to be hers, he becomes all hers, and she reckons that she has no divided possession in him; and it certainly is so with thee, dear heart, if Christ be thine.....“Which is the greater miracle—that he should be mine, or that I should be his?” (Spurgeon)

**NET Note on pastures his flock among the lilies** - This line may be translated either as “the one who grazes among the lilies” or as “the one who feeds [his flock] among the lilies.” The latter would picture him as a shepherd pasturing his flock among a bed of flowers which they were eating, while the former would be picturing him as a gazelle feeding among a bed of flowers. Because of the occurrence of the gazelle motif in the following verse, it is most likely that this motif is present in this verse as well. Although it seems likely that he is therefore being pictured as a gazelle eating these flowers, it is far from clear as to what this figurative picture denotes. It is possible that it conveys the peaceful nature of his relationship with her because she was earlier portrayed as a lily (e.g., Song 2:1).

**Guzik** has an interesting interpretation on **pastures his flock among the lilies** - He feeds his flock among the lilies: Lips are called lilies in Song 5:13; the maiden probably dreamt of being smothered by kisses all through the night (until the day breaks). i. “She is ready for him to ‘graze’ on her lips as sheep ‘browse’ on the lush grasses ... Perhaps this is to be related to the opening wish of our young lady (Song 1:2).” (Kinlaw) ii. Other commentators see something far less physically intimate: “She is drawing attention to his shepherd role wherein he would pasture his flock. And by this she emphasizes his shepherd-like qualities of strength and gentleness.” ([Glickman](#))

**Carr on lilies** - Lilies, cf. Song 2:1f. If Song 5:13 can be borrowed here, the ‘feeding in the lilies’ may be a circumlocution for sharing kisses or more intimate behaviour. ([The Song of Solomon - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - G. Lloyd Carr](#))

**Reformation Study Bible** on **pastures his flocks among the lilies** - In view of the context, this is most likely a metaphor for lovemaking. See note on [Song 2:15](#) and [Song 6:12](#).

#### Shulammitte (young woman) speaks ...

Song 2:17 Until the cool of the day when the shadows flee away, **Turn (imperative = command)**, my beloved, and **be (imperative = command)** like a gazelle or a young stag on the mountains of Bether.

**NET Bible** - Until the dawn arrives and the shadows flee, turn, my beloved— be like a gazelle or a young stag on the mountain gorges.

**NLT-** Before the dawn breezes blow and the night shadows flee, return to me, my love, like a gazelle or a young stag on the rugged mountains.

**POSB** - The longer she and Solomon were together, the greater their desire was for each other. By evening, the couple’s passion was stirred to a dangerous point. Do not miss what the young woman did: she stood against temptation and ended their date. She implored her beloved to leave and not return until morning. She did not want him to linger but to leave swiftly—like a gazelle or a young stag. Earlier in the day she had described him in these terms as he dashed through the mountains to visit her; now she was entreating him to depart in the same manner, before their passions ran wild and they lost control. ([Preacher’s Outline and Sermon Bible- Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon](#))

**NET Note** observes that “**until the dawn arrives**” (NET Bible) in Hebrew is literally “until the day breathes,” which is figurative (personification) for the morning, that is, the time when the day begin its “life” (e.g., Song 4:6). Likewise, “the shadows flee” is figurative (personification) for the dawn, i.e., the time when the dark shadows of the night disappear, or the shadows of the evening



which lengthen and are just as fleeting."

**Gazelle...stag** - This section ends with words similar to the beginning -- the woman's call for her lover to be like a gazelle and a young stag—a refrain that marks the end of the book (Song 8:14).

**Like a gazelle** - The Song of Solomon makes liberal use of **terms of comparison // similes // metaphors**. A **simile** is easily identified by a preceding "as" or "like." **As** is used in 9v - Song 5:6, 8, 11, 15; 6:4, 10, 13; 8:6, 10. **Like** is used 47x in 36v - Song 1:3, 5, 7, 9, 15; 2:2, 3, 9, 17; 3:6; 4:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11; 5:11, 12, 13, 15; 6:5, 6, 7, 10; 7:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9; 8:1, 6, 10, 14. Ask the Spirit, your Teacher to guide you in the correct interpretation of these terms of comparison and this should greatly assist your understanding of this great love letter.

**NET Note on turn...be** - Scholars offer three interpretations of her figurative request: (1) The Beloved desires her Lover to embrace her breasts, like a gazelle romping over mountains (mountains are figurative); (2) The Beloved entreats her Lover to leave and go back over the hills from whence he had journeyed (mountains are literal); and (3) As her Lover prepares to leave her country village, the Beloved asks him to return to her again in the same way he arrived, like a gazelle bounding over the mountains in Song 2:8–10 (mountains are literal).

**Constable** favors interpretation #1 - Verse 17 probably looks forward to their wedding and to its physical consummation. "Bether" is a transliteration rather than a translation. Since no Bether mountains exist in this part of the Middle East, it seems preferable to translate the Hebrew word (bater) as "cleavage" or "separation." The mountains of cleavage then may be an allusion to the Shulammitte's breasts. ([Ibid](#))

**Longman** - The poem comes to a close with a final expression of yearning and desire. She wants him to return to her like a gazelle or a young stag (Song 2:17).

**Guglielmo** - In verse 17 the idea here is these mountains of Bether or mountains of separation! And her cry is that like a gazelle or like a young stag, don't let those mountains separate you from me! And as much as the things he was doing caused a separation, she too had some struggles. She wanted him to come when the timing was better. Maybe it was too early in the morning to get up, or it was too cold out, or she was just too comfortable and just rolled back over in bed. Maybe the timing was bad and as much as she wanted to go, she also wanted to wait until she felt like going. Now we are going to see next time that Solomon does go and he doesn't come back right away, and she is scarred. It is like a nightmare to her. But we will deal with that more next time. Make no mistake about it; difficulties will come in regards to our marriage relationship. It is how we handle them that will make all the difference. Don't let those mountains of separation keep you apart. Do everything you can to spend time with your wife. Don't let circumstances, don't wait for a more convenient or opportune time to get together with your husband. I would think most people, if they had an opportunity to go to a Green Bay Packer game they would do everything possible to get there. What about in your marriage, you should have more determination to spend time with your spouse then some football game or whatever. The time you invest in your marriage will pay back with great dividends you might say! One more point as I close this evening and that deals with our spiritual life, our walk with the Lord. Spurgeon sums it up like this, "The spouse speaks of 'mountains' dividing her from her Beloved: she means that the difficulties were great. They were not little hills, but mountains, that closed up her way . . . It is plain, from this sacred Canticle [song], that the spouse may love and be loved, may be confident in her Lord, and be fully assured of her possession of him, and yet, there may for the present be mountains between her and him." Don't let anything or anyone get in your way of your relationship with the Lord and don't let anyone or anything get in your way of your relationship with your spouse! (**Song of Solomon**)

## EXAMPLE OF ERRONEOUS ALLEGORICAL ANALYSIS

Commenting on **Until the cool of the day when the shadows flee away**, the twentieth century commentator, **A W Pink** (see a brief critique) gives us an example of a **grossly non-literal (and thus grossly inaccurate) interpretation** of this passage writing...

Who can fail to perceive both the aptness and the sublimity of the parallel between that allusion from the natural realm and its antitypical realization: "**Until the day break, and the shadows flee away**" (Song 2:17), where the reference is to both the first (John 8:56) and second appearing of God's Son in the flesh (Phil. 1:6, 10)? (**Pink, A. W. Interpretation of the Scriptures**)

Clearly Messiah came and will come again. That is truth, but that truth is not even remotely taught in this passage. Pink's rather far fetched interpretation points out once again that although an expositor may be highly respected, that does not given them *carte blanche* and necessitate that the student "blindly" accepts of all of the commentators comments. This type of comment should motivate you to seek to become facile with the skill of **inductive Bible study**, so that you might be able to comment on the commentaries! Every time you read a commentary (including the one you are now reading) it is imperative that you come with a

## Berean-like mindset...

Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so. (Acts 17:11-note)

**Comment: Who were the Bereans "checking out"?** The great apostle Paul! Every comment needs to be compared with what the text actually says and remember the two most vital elements are to read the text **literally** and in **context**).

Clearly the respected expositor **A W Pink** is applying allegorical methods to his so-called typological interpretation (he uses the word "*antitypical*" interpretation of Song 2:17 - see discussion of **Typology**). The discerning student will also observe that although one of the dictums assuring accurate **interpretation** is to utilize other Scripture, A W Pink makes the mistake of appealing to cross references that have no bearing on the parent passage in Song 2:17 (See **Compare Scripture with Scripture**). It follows that just because one gives Scriptural cross references to seemingly "buttress" their interpretation, this does not necessarily validate the accuracy of their interpretation. Be a Berean! As an aside Pink is occasionally quoted on this website as he has some excellent comments on other passages. The old adage applies "Don't throw the baby out with the bath water!" Just make sure the bath water is clean and healthy (cp sound [hugiaino ~ hygienic] doctrine)!

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**TODAY IN THE WORD** - One of the most beloved characters in J. R. R. Tolkien's trilogy The Lord of the Rings is Treebeard, an ancient creature known as an Ent, a shepherd of the trees. Treebeard tells how in their wandering the Ents forgot where the Entwives had settled. "The Ents," Tolkien writes, "gave their love to things they met in the world, and Entwives gave their thought to other things." Eventually the wandering Ents forgot where the Entwives lived.

Tolkien's story may be fantasy, but the problem he describes is not. People who once loved each other deeply can become so preoccupied with other things that they drift apart. In time, like the Ents, they forget how to find their way back to a place of intimacy.

The groom in the Song of Solomon is also a shepherd who "pastures his flock among the lilies." Commentators are divided in their opinion about this statement. It could be taken literally, describing the groom by his profession. On the surface this seems out of place with the indication given elsewhere in this book that the groom was actually King Solomon (cf. Song 3:11; 8:11,12). However, elsewhere Scripture characterizes Israel's leaders as "shepherds" (cf. Jer 3:15). It has even been suggested that Solomon took time off from his royal responsibilities to spend time as a shepherd in the Baal-hamon area.

Others see the lilies as an allegory. In one of his sermons St. Bernard said that the lilies in verse 16 represent Christ's truth, meekness, and goodness. If this were the case, though, we would expect the bride to be the one browsing among the lilies.

It is more likely that the phrase is simply the bride's poetic way of describing the groom's manner. Unlike the Ents, who forgot their wives, he is a tender shepherd who will gently care for the one he loves. Physical expressions of love have an important place in their marriage relationship.

In his commentary on the [Solomon's Song of Love - Let a Song of Songs Inspire Your Own Romantic Story](#) S. Craig Glickman observes that it is a mistake to think that we can only be happy in a relationship when our partner is "the best looking, most intelligent, most sensitive person in the world. You don't look at the other person as a status symbol who will raise your level of prestige," Glickman writes. "You look at that one as your counterpart, the one who completes you, the one with whom you can joyfully affirm your belongingness."

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**Song of Solomon 2:16, 17 (Editorial Comment: While literally spoken between the bride and bridegroom, we can APPLY the general truth to our lives today as the Bride of Christ)**- Surely if there be a happy verse in the Bible it is this—"My Beloved is mine, and I am his." So peaceful, so full of assurance, so overrunning with happiness and contentment is it, that it might well have been written by the same hand which penned the twenty-third Psalm. Yet though the prospect is exceeding fair and lovely—earth cannot show its superior—it is not entirely a sunlit landscape. There is a cloud in the sky which casts a shadow over the scene. Listen, "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away." There is a word, too, about the "mountains of Bether," or, "the mountains of division," and to our love, anything like division is bitterness. Beloved, this may be your present state of mind; you do not doubt your salvation; you know that Christ is yours, but you are not feasting with him. You understand your vital interest in him, so that you have no shadow of a doubt of your being his, and of his being yours, but still his left hand is not under your head, nor doth his right hand embrace you. A shade of sadness is cast over your heart, perhaps by affliction, certainly by the temporary absence of your Lord, so even while exclaiming, "I am his," you are forced to take to your knees, and to pray, "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my Beloved." "Where is he?" asks the soul. And the answer comes, "He feedeth among the lilies." If we would find Christ, we must get into communion with his people, we must come to the ordinances with his saints. Oh, for an evening glimpse of him! Oh, to sup with him to-night! (Spurgeon - Morning and Evening)

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