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Song of Songs

Chapter 1

¹This is King Solomon's most beautiful song.

The woman speaking to herself

²I wish he would kiss me on my lips,

The woman speaking to the man she loves

because how you love me is more delightful than wine.

³The fragrance of the perfume on your skin is very pleasing.

More and more people are honoring you,

just as the fragrance of the perfume that you have put on your skin is spreading farther and farther.

That is why the other young women are attracted to you.

⁴Take me quickly;

take me to your home.

The woman speaking to herself

He is like a king to me;

I desire him to bring me into his bedroom.

The women of Jerusalem speaking about the man

We are very happy about you;

we say that how you love is better than wine.

It is not surprising that the other young women adore you.

The woman speaking to the women of Jerusalem

⁵You young women of Jerusalem,

I am brown but beautiful;

my dark skin is like the tents in Kedar,

and I am beautiful like the curtains in Solomon's palace.

⁶But do not stare at me because the sun has made my skin dark;

my brothers were angry with me,

so they forced me to work outside in the sunshine in the vineyards,

so I was not able to take good care of my skin.

The woman speaking to the man she loves

⁷You whom I love, where will you take your flock of sheep today?

Where will you allow them to rest at noontime?

I want to know because it is not right for me to wander around like a prostitute,
looking for you among the flocks that belong to your friends.

The man answering the woman he loves

⁸You who are the most beautiful of all the women,
if you search for me and do not know where I will take my sheep,
follow the tracks of the sheep.

Then allow your young goats to eat grass near the shepherds' tents.

⁹You are beautiful, my dear one, like one of the young female horses
that pull the chariots belonging to the king of Egypt.

¹⁰Your cheeks are lovely with jewelry,
and your neck is lovely with strings of beads around it.

¹¹We will make for you some gold earrings
that are inlaid with silver.

The woman speaking to herself

¹²During the time that he who is like a king to me was on his couch,
the smell of my perfume spread around the room.

¹³The man whom I love stays between my breasts during the night like a bag of sweet-smelling perfume tied
around my neck.

¹⁴The man whom I love is like a bunch of the fragrant flowers that are in the grape farms of the city of En Gedi.

The man speaking to the woman he loves

¹⁵My dear one, you are beautiful;
you are very beautiful!

Your eyes are as gentle and beautiful as doves.

The woman speaking to the man she loves

¹⁶You whom I love, you are very good-looking,
you are delightful!

The green grass will be like a bed where we lie down.

¹⁷Branches of cedar trees will shade us;

branches of pine trees will be like a roof over our heads.

Chapter 2

¹I am like an insignificant flower on the plains,
like an insignificant lily growing in the valleys.

The man speaking to the woman he loves

²Among all the other young women,
you, my dear one, are like a lily growing among thorns!

The woman speaking to herself

³Compared to other men, you, the one whom I love, are like an apple tree that produces delicious fruit and grows in the forest among common trees.

You are like a tree whose shadow protects me from the sun,
and your being close to me is delightful, like eating sweet fruit.

⁴I want you to lead me to the place where we can make love,
and it is evident that you love me very much.

The woman speaking to the man she loves

⁵Strengthen and refresh me with fruit,
because the way you love me makes me feel lovesick.

The woman speaking to herself

⁶The man whom I love has placed his left arm under my head
and he holds me close with his right arm.

The woman speaking to the women of Jerusalem

⁷You young women of Jerusalem,
I want you to solemnly promise me, while the female gazelles and female deer are listening,
that you will not cause people to love romantically
until it is the right time.

The woman speaking to herself

⁸Listen! Look! The man whom I love is coming.
It is as though he is leaping over the mountains
and skipping over the hills,

⁹like a gazelle or a young male deer.

Look! There he is! He is standing outside the wall of our house,

peering in through the window,
and looking intently through the wooden strips inside the window frame.

¹⁰The man whom I love spoke to me and said,

“My dear one, get up;

my beautiful one, come with me!

¹¹Look, the cold season has ended;

the rain has stopped.

¹²The flowers are blooming throughout the country.

It is now time to sing;

we hear the doves cooing throughout our land.

¹³There are new figs on the fig trees,

and there are blossoms on the grapevines

and their fragrance fills the air.

My dear one, get up;

my beautiful one, come with me!

¹⁴You are like a dove that is hiding far from me in an opening in the rocky cliff.

Allow me to see your form,

and allow me to hear your voice,

because your voice sounds sweet,

and your form is comely.”

The woman speaking to the man she loves

¹⁵There are harmful things that are like little foxes that ruin vineyards;

do not allow these things to ruin our growing relationship.

¹⁶You whom I love, you are mine, and I am yours.

You have pleasure when you kiss my lips,

as a gazelle does when eating among the lilies.

¹⁷You whom I love, come and be like a gazelle or a young male deer on the mountains in Bethel,

until the evening breeze blows and the sun sets.

Chapter 3

The woman speaking to herself

¹At night while I lay on my bed,
I searched for the man whom I love.
I searched for him,
but could not find him.

²So I said to myself,
"I will get up now and walk around the city,
through the streets and plazas,
to search for the man whom I love."
So I got up and went out to search for him,
but I could not find him.

³The city watchmen saw me
while they were walking around the city.
I asked them,
"Have you seen the man whom I love?"

⁴As soon as I walked past them,
I found the man who I love.
I clung to him and would not release my hold on him
until I brought him to my mother's house,
to the bedroom of my mother who had conceived me.
The woman speaking to the women of Jerusalem

⁵You young women of Jerusalem,
I want you to solemnly promise me, while the female gazelles and female deer are listening,
that you will not cause people to love romantically
until it is the right time.
The woman speaking to herself

⁶Look! See what is coming up from the dry and uninhabited area.
Look at what is stirring up dust like clouds of smoke,
and like billows of smoke from burning myrrh and incense,
which are from the fragrant powders imported by traveling traders!

⁷Look! Solomon has sent his portable royal chair
and it is surrounded by 60 bodyguards

chosen from the greatest soldiers in Israel.

⁸They all have swords,

and they all know how to use them.

Each one has his sword strapped to his side

and is prepared to defend against dangers that might occur during the night.

⁹King Solomon commanded his servants to make that royal portable chair for him;

it was made with wood from Lebanon.

¹⁰The canopy that covered it was held up by posts made with silver,

and the base of the palanquin was made with gold.

The seat was covered with purple cloth,

and the inside of the palanquin was lovingly decorated by the women of Jerusalem.

¹¹You young women of Jerusalem,

come and look at King Solomon

wearing the headdress that his mother put on his head

on the day when he was married,

on the day when he was very happy.

Chapter 4

The man speaking to the woman he loves

¹My dear one, you are beautiful,

you are very beautiful!

Beneath your veil, your eyes are as gentle and as beautiful as doves.

Your long black hair moves from side to side like a flock of black goats

moving down the slopes of Mount Gilead.

²Your teeth are very white,

white like a flock of sheep whose wool people have just cut off

and which have just come up from washing in a stream.

You have all of your teeth on both sides of your mouth;

none of them is missing.

³Your lips are the color of bright red thread,

and your mouth is beautiful.

Beneath your veil,
your cheeks are round and rosy like the halves of a pomegranate.

⁴Your long neck is beautiful, like the tower of King David
that was built using layers of stone.

The beauty of your jeweled neck is like a thousand shields hanging on the walls of a tower;
like the beauty of a thousand warrior's shields hanging from a tower.

⁵Your two breasts are as beautiful as two young twin gazelles
that eat grass among lilies.

⁶Until the evening breeze blows,
and the sun sets,
I will go to your breasts,
because they are like two hills that smell like pleasant spices.

⁷My dear one, you are completely beautiful;
your body is perfectly formed and has no blemish!

⁸Come back to me, my bride. It is as though you are in Lebanon
far away, where I cannot reach you.
Come back to me.

It is as though you are inaccessible on the top of Mount Hermon
or the nearby peaks, where I cannot go to you.
Come from the mountains, where the lions have their dens
and where the leopards live.

⁹You who are as dear to me as a sister, my bride,
by only once quickly looking at me with your eyes, and by one strand of jewels in your necklace,
you have obtained my full affection.

¹⁰You who are as dear to me as a sister, my bride,
your love for me is delightful!
It is more delightful than wine!
The fragrance of your perfume
is more pleasing than any spice!

¹¹When you kiss me, my bride, it is as delightful as eating honey.
Your kisses are as sweet as milk mixed with honey.

The aroma of your clothes
is like the aroma of cedar trees in Lebanon.

¹²You who are as dear to me as a sister, my bride, you are like a garden that the owner keeps locked
so that other men cannot enter it;
you are like a spring or a fountain that is covered
so that others may not drink from it.

¹³You are like an orchard of pomegranate trees
full of delicious fruit,
and plenty of plants that produce henna and nard spices,

¹⁴and saffron and calamus and cinnamon
and many other kinds of incense,
myrrh and aloes,
and many other fine spices.

¹⁵You are like a spring in a garden,
like a well of fresh-flowing water,
and like streams that flow down from the mountains of Lebanon.

The woman speaking to the man she loves

¹⁶I want the north wind and the south wind to come,
and blow on me,
so that the fragrance of my body will spread through the air and attract the man I love.
You whom I love, I am like your garden.
I want you to come and enjoy my body,
like someone comes into a garden and enjoys eating the delicious fruit that grows there.

Chapter 5

The man speaking to the woman he loves

¹You who are as dear to me as a sister, my bride,
I am ready to go away with you now and enjoy making love with you.
It will be delightful, delightful like when I gather my myrrh with my other spices,
as wonderful as eating my honey and honeycomb,
and as enjoyable as drinking my wine with milk.

The women of Jerusalem speaking to the newly married couple

Friends, enjoy making love;

fully enjoy all that you do with each other.

The woman speaking to the women of Jerusalem

²I was asleep, and I had a dream.

In it I heard the man I love knocking at the door.

He said, "You who are as dear to me as a sister, my dear one, you who are like a dove, my flawless one.

Open the door for me

because my hair is wet from the dew,

from the mist that has fallen during the night."

³But I had already taken my robe off;

I did not want to put it on again to open the door.

I had already washed my feet;

so I did not want them to get dirty again by answering the door.

⁴The man I love put his hand through the opening in the door,

and I was thrilled in my inner being that he was there.

⁵I got up to open the door for the man I love,

but first I put much myrrh on my hands.

The liquid myrrh was dripping from my fingers

while I unlatched the bolt.

⁶I opened the door for the man I love,

but he had left.

He had turned away and was gone!

I greatly despaired because he was not there.

I searched for him, but I could not find him.

I called out for him, but he did not answer.

⁷The city watchmen saw me while they were walking around the city.

They struck me and bruised me

because they thought I was a prostitute;

those watchmen who were guarding the city walls took my shawl that was on me.

⁸You young women of Jerusalem,

if you see the man I love, what will you tell him?

I want you to solemnly promise me that if you see him,
you will tell him that the way he loves me makes me feel lovesick.

The women of Jerusalem speaking to the woman

⁹You who are the most beautiful of all the women,
why do you think that the man you love is better than other men?

In what way is he better than other men
that would cause you to want us to solemnly promise that we will tell him that?

The woman speaking to the women of Jerusalem

¹⁰It is because the man I love is handsome and healthy,
outstanding among an uncountable number of other men.

¹¹His face is beautiful and gleams like gold; he is as precious as purest gold.
His hair is wavy
and as black as a raven.

¹²His eyes are as gentle and beautiful as doves
which are beside streams.
His eyes are as white as white doves
which are sitting beside pools of water.

¹³His cheeks are like a garden where spices grow,
and like towers where spices are kept.
His lips are like lilies
that have myrrh dripping from them.

¹⁴His arms are like round gold rods,
that are decorated with precious stones.
His abdomen is like ivory
that is decorated with sapphires.

¹⁵His legs are like alabaster columns
that are set in bases made of pure gold.
He is majestic, like the mountains of Lebanon.
He is tall and strong and outstanding like the cedar trees that grow there.

¹⁶His kisses are very sweet;

he is completely attractive.

You young women of Jerusalem,

this is what the man I love, who is my friend, is like, and this is why he is better than all other men.

Chapter 6

The women of Jerusalem speaking to the woman

¹You who are the most beautiful of the women,

where has the man you love gone?

Tell us which direction he went,

and we will go with you to search for him.

The woman speaking to herself

²The man who I love has come to me.

I am like his garden where pleasant spices grow.

He has come to enjoy my body as a gazelle enjoys grazing in a garden and as a person enjoys picking lilies. ³I belong to the man I love, and he belongs to me.

He feels pleasure when he is near me,

as a gazelle does when eating among lilies.

The man speaking ⁴My dear one, you are beautiful.

You are as beautiful as the city of Tirzah and as lovely as the city of Jerusalem.

You are as exciting and majestic to look at as an army with banners.

⁵Stop looking at me like that,

because your eyes excite me very much.

Your long black hair moves from side to side like a flock of black goats

moving down the slopes of Mount Gilead.

⁶Your teeth are very white,

white like a flock of sheep

that has just come up from being washed in a stream.

You have all of your teeth on both sides of your mouth;

none of them is missing.

⁷Beneath your veil,

your cheeks are round and rosy like the halves of a pomegranate.

⁸Even if a king had 60 queens and 80 concubines

and more young women in his court than anyone can count,

⁹none of them would be as special as she is. She is like a dove; she is flawless.

Her mother considers her to be very special;

she is her mother's favorite child.

When the young women of the king's court see her, they say that she is fortunate,

and the queens and concubines praise her.

¹⁰Look at this woman who appears like the dawn,

who is as beautiful to look at as the moon,

who is radiant like the sun,

who is as exciting and majestic to look at as an army with banners!

¹¹I went down to the walnut tree orchard

to look at the new plants that were growing in the valley.

I wanted to see if the grapevines had budded

and if the pomegranate trees were blooming.

¹²All of a sudden

I imagined that I was among the chariots of my noble people.

The women of Jerusalem speaking

¹³Come back to us, beautiful woman from Shulam,

come back to us, in order that we may see you!

The man speaking

Why do you want to look at the beautiful woman from Shulam,

as if she were a dancer who dances to entertain armies?

Chapter 7

¹You who are the daughter of a prince,

have very lovely feet in your sandals!

Your curved hips are like jewels

that have been made by a man who shapes jewels very well.

²Your navel is like a round bowl

that is always full of wine mixed with spices.

Your belly is like a pile of wheat

with lilies growing around it.

³Your breasts are as delicate as two young twin gazelles.

⁴Your neck is long and beautiful, like a tower made of ivory.

Your eyes sparkle like the pools of water in the city of Heshbon,

near the Bath Rabbim gate.

Your nose is beautiful like the tower in Lebanon

that faces Damascus.

⁵Your head is majestic like Mount Carmel.

Your long hair is shiny and black;

it is as though I, your king, am captured by your tresses.

⁶You are very beautiful and very lovely!

Loving you is very delightful!

⁷You are tall like a palm tree,

and your breasts are full and round like date clusters that hang from palm trees.

⁸I said to myself, "I will climb that palm tree

and take hold of those clusters of dates."

I want your breasts to be like sweet bunches of grapes that I can enjoy;

I want your breath to be like the sweet fragrance of apples. ⁹I want your kisses to be like very good wine.

The woman speaking to the man she loves

When I kiss you, the man whom I love,

I want my kisses to be as if you are freely drinking wine,

and as if wine is flowing over our lips as we sleep together. ¹⁰I belong to the man I love,

and he desires me.

¹¹You whom I love, come with me, and let us go to the countryside,

and sleep in one of the villages.

¹²And let us go early to the vineyards

to see if the grapevines have budded

and if there are blossoms on them that have opened,

and to see if the pomegranate trees are blooming,

and there I will have sexual relations with you.

¹³The mandrake plants are producing a fragrant scent,

and the pleasures we will experience as we express our love for each other will be like choice fruits that have been stored,

new ones and old ones.

You whom I love, I have reserved my love for you as if I were storing choice fruit.

Chapter 8

¹I wish that you were like my brother,

my own brother, who nursed from my mother's breasts when he was a baby.

Because then, whenever I met you outside the house, I could kiss you,

and no one would criticize me.

²I would like to bring you to my mother's house,

to where my mother, who taught me so many things, lives.

I would like to take you to my mother's house so I could have sexual relations with you there.

Having sexual relations with you would be as if I were giving you spiced wine to drink, as if I were giving you sweet pomegranate wine.

³The man I love has placed his left arm under my head

and he holds me close with his right arm.

The woman speaking to the women of Jerusalem

⁴You young women of Jerusalem,

I want you to solemnly promise me,

that you will not cause people to love romantically

until it is the right time.

The women of Jerusalem speaking

⁵Look at this woman who is coming up from the wilderness,

the woman who is leaning on the man she loves!

The young woman speaking to the man she loves

I woke you up when you were under the apple tree

at the place where your mother was in labor with you,

the place where you were born.

⁶Keep me close to you,

like a seal that rests against your chest as it hangs down from its cord,

or like a seal worn on your bracelet.

The strength with which I love you is as powerful as the strength of death;
it is as strong as the grave.

It is as though our love for each other bursts into flames,
and as though our love is the lightening that Yahweh creates.

⁷We love each other so deeply,
that how we love each other can be compared to a strong fire that no river or flood can put out.
If a man tried to cause a woman to love him by saying he would give her everything that he owns,
she would refuse.

The young woman's brothers speaking among themselves

⁸We have a young sister,
and her breasts are not large yet.
What should we do for her at the time that we promise some young man that he can marry her?

⁹We will protect her virginity,
as if we were soldiers building a battlement of silver to protect a wall.
We will protect her virginity,
like we would protect a door from intruders by covering it with boards made of cedar wood.

The woman speaking

¹⁰Like a wall that allows no one to enter, I have remained a virgin and let no man come into me;
but now my breasts are large like towers.
So I am delightful to my beloved.

¹¹King Solomon had a vineyard at a place called Baal Hamon,
and he rented it to people for them to farm it.
He required each one to pay him one thousand pieces of silver each year for the grapes that they harvested.

¹²But my body is like my own vineyard, which is mine to give to the man whom I choose.
Solomon can keep the one thousand pieces of silver that he receives from renting his vineyard,
and the farmers who take care of it for him can keep the two hundred pieces of silver he pays them.

The man speaking to the woman he loves

¹³You, the woman I love, who are staying in the gardens,
my friends are eagerly listening so that they can hear you speak;
speak to me!

The young woman speaking to the man she loves

14You who I love, come to me quickly!

Run to me like a gazelle or a young male deer

runs across mountains where spices grow.

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