

Song of Songs notes

Attribution to Solomon

Plot: Two lovers, separated, longing for one another plus a chorus, the Daughters of Jerusalem

They can't find each other

The female, in particular, is troubled by her brothers locking her up and the watchmen as she roams the city looking for her lover

1:5- Black but beautiful, black AND beautiful, dark and lovely

agricultural imagery, sometimes kind of striking, although that may be cultural prejudice

2:1 I am a rose of Sharon, A lily of the valleys.

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

2:3 Like an apple tree among trees of the forest, So is my beloved among the youths. I delight to sit in his shade, And his fruit is sweet to my mouth.

2:4 He brought me to the banquet room And his banner of love was over me.

2:5 "Sustain me with raisin cakes, Refresh me with apples, For I am faint with love."

2:6 His left hand was under my head, His right arm embraced me.

2:7 I adjure you, O maidens of Jerusalem, By gazelles or by hinds of the field: Do not wake or rouse Love until it please!

2:8 Hark! My beloved! There he comes, Leaping over mountains, Bounding over hills.

2:9 My beloved is like a gazelle Or like a young stag. There he stands behind our wall, Gazing through the window, Peering through the lattice.

2:10 My beloved spoke thus to me, "Arise, my darling; My fair one, come away!"

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2:11 For now the winter is past, The rains are over and gone.

2:12 The blossoms have appeared in the land, The time of pruning has come; The song of the turtledove Is heard in our land.

2:13 The green figs form on the fig tree, The vines in blossom give off fragrance. Arise, my darling; My fair one, come away!

2:14 "O my dove, in the cranny of the rocks, Hidden by the cliff, Let me see your face, Let me hear your voice; For your voice is sweet And your face is comely."

2:15 Catch us the foxes, The little foxes That ruin the vineyards -- For our vineyard is in blossom.

2:16 My beloved is mine And I am his Who browses among the lilies.

2:17 When the day blows gently And the shadows flee, Set out, my beloved, Swift as a gazelle Or a young stag, For the hills of spices!

Man's praises are both agricultural but also architectural and martial

4:1 Ah, you are fair, my darling, Ah, you are fair. Your eyes are like doves Behind your veil. Your hair is like a flock of goats Streaming down Mount Gilead.

4:2 Your teeth are like a flock of ewes Climbing up from the washing pool; All of them bear twins, And not one loses her young.

4:3 Your lips are like a crimson thread, Your mouth is lovely. Your brow behind your veil [Gleams] like a pomegranate split open.

4:4 Your neck is like the Tower of David, Built to hold weapons, Hung with a thousand shields -- All the quivers of warriors.

4:5 Your breasts are like two fawns, Twins of a gazelle, Browsing among the lilies.

4:6 When the day blows gently And the shadows flee, I will betake me to the mount of myrrh, To the hill of frankincense.

4:7 Every part of you is fair, my darling, There is no blemish in you

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4:8 From Lebanon come with me; From Lebanon, my bride, with me! Trip down from Amana's peak, From the peak of Senir and Hermon, From the dens of lions, From the hills of leopards.

4:9 You have captured my heart, My own, my bride, You have captured my heart With one [glance] of your eyes, With one coil of your necklace.

4:10 How sweet is your love, My own, my bride! How much more delightful your love than wine, Your ointments more fragrant Than any spice!

4:11 Sweetness drops From your lips, O bride; Honey and milk Are under your tongue; And the scent of your robes Is like the scent of Lebanon.

Solomonic attribution, from Solomon's youth. Probably not.

What is this doing in the Bible, anyway?

History of Interpretation as a song between God (the man) and Israel (the woman)-
mystical interpretation (?)

Liturgical use- Passover.

How is it related to Passover? Examine Passover as read through this lens- the Exodus as arising from, essentially God's love for and longing for Israel, Israel as searching for God, through all kinds of obstacles.

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