



BIBLE STUDY SERIES

The Book Of
SONG OF SOLOMON

Modern Narrative Project

A Contemporary Rendering, Context,

Meaning & Commentary

Based on the King James Version

ROOT-TO-FRUIT

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SONG OF SOLOMON

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BIBLE:ESSENCE
Bible Study Project

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SONG OF SOLOMON

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This publication is intended for educational, devotional, and study purposes. Readers are encouraged to consult additional biblical translations and scholarly resources when conducting biblical research and study.

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DEDICATED TO GOD AND MY SON
... MY SON, MAY YOUR HEART FIND THE LORD

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

GEMMA, for opening the door so I could see.

PASTOR PHIL, for acknowledging and encouraging me to believe big and be fearless - giving clarity to the path I was seeing.

PREFACE

First, thanks for picking up this book. If there is anything good in these pages, give credit to God; anything weak or flawed, that’s on me. I wrote this out of gratitude—a small way to give back, hoping maybe it lights the path for someone else, just like Scripture has done for me:

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psalm 119:105).

My journey to faith wasn’t in a moment of crisis, in despair, or some dramatic story. No lightning bolts, no instant conversion. Honestly, it was more like water slowly carving its path over time.

Back at University, nearly 40 years ago, my friends were genuinely fired up about their faith and invited me along. They, and their invitation for me to believe there is a God, are the reason I got baptised. It wasn’t about church pressure; I just knew I wanted what they had, even if I didn’t truly understand what it was. But one thing was becoming clear to me: I was experiencing something I came to understand as the work of the Holy Spirit.

After University, the real world arrived. For years, my faith stayed quiet and private. I said the Lord’s Prayer every day. I tried to live with an open hand and hoped God had a plan for me, especially when life made no sense. I tried never to judge others too quickly, because I could never know the whole story or what was in another person's heart. God alone sees all things and judges perfectly.

Still, I rarely set foot in church. My life was busy, and I worked most Sundays. I also hardly knew anyone who talked about their faith openly.

I tried reading the Bible, but wrestling with the King James Version just felt impossible. When I was baptised, there wasn’t the choice of Bibles we have today. Sure, I believed there was something bright and life-giving in its words. I wasn't rejecting the King James Bible. I simply couldn't understand much of its language.

Then, a couple of years ago, everything shifted.

I lost my job in a way that wasn’t fair. My father passed away—not long after celebrating sixty years with my mother. My son was also close to a breakdown—he had been working too hard. Soon after that, I moved into my mother’s home so that I could care for her.

I believe Scripture calls us to care for our own (1 Timothy 5:8), and there are times when that responsibility has to come before my ability to attend church. Leaving my mother to attend church is not always safe, and that has made regular attendance difficult.

This has never been a rejection of the Church or of Christian fellowship. Quite the opposite. My heart is entirely with God, and I genuinely believe that caring for my mother is where God wants me to be. She is slowly losing her hearing and vision, with Alzheimer’s taking away more of who she is each day.

It is a hard season, and it continues to be. But I don't resent where I am. With all my heart, I believe this is where I am meant to be, and where I want to be.

The quick succession, timing and intensity of these events in my life began to feel like part of God’s plan for me.

It was then that I found solace in the Bible, just as life felt cracked wide open. And yet, in that brokenness, I noticed what I’d missed before—God actually draws close to people whose hearts are shattered (Psalm 34:18). When I ran out of my own strength, I learned how much I could lean on His:

“My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:9).

The Bible became more than something I was trying to understand. It became something I needed, even a passion. I honestly cannot imagine where I would be now without it.

Caring for my mother meant I couldn’t run from thing to thing anymore, and I like to be busy. It also meant that I didn’t have as much time or access to friends, especially as I now lived in a new area. Life slowed down, and income dropped to just enough to cover bare necessities.

But in that quiet, a new door opened.

I started volunteering as a driver—just helping elderly and vulnerable people who simply needed a lift—and, in many cases, a lift in more ways than one. I also started sharing my faith. It’s a small thing, but it felt right—my passengers lifted me as much as I lifted them, and I felt comfortable sharing my faith.

James reminds us that caring for those in need is an important expression of faith (James 1:27).

That volunteering drew me back to church, and—probably for the first time ever—I found myself having real conversations with God. Not just polite, thank-you prayers that I had always done, but honest ones where I was asking for help. I no longer felt guilty about asking God for help, as though doing so somehow meant I didn't trust the path God had given me.

I was forming a relationship with God.

And something shifted. I started to realise that God doesn't just help; He guides us, and I was beginning to learn to listen (Proverbs 3:5–6). I also started seeing the Bible not simply as a set of instructions, but as a guide for how to live.

I also began to see something about Christian fellowship that I hadn't really considered before.

Human beings naturally form communities. We make friends, find people we are comfortable with, and over time those friendships become established. There is nothing wrong with that. But Scripture calls us to something beyond simply gathering with the people we already know.

My own circumstances have sometimes left me on the edge of those established friendships. Even when I am able to attend church or volunteer, I often have responsibilities waiting for me at home. Sometimes I have to leave as soon as I can. At other times, I stay longer than I should because there is work that needs doing before I can return home.

I don't want that to be mistaken for being unfriendly or uninterested. Quite the opposite. I want fellowship. I want friendship. I want to feel that I belong.

This experience has taught me to be cautious about judging what I see in another person. I may see someone who does not stay, does not talk much, or seems distant, but I cannot know the circumstances behind what I see. God sees the whole story; I see only a small part of it.

That does not mean we should never exercise discernment. There are times when we need to recognise what is right and wrong, protect ourselves or others, and act when something is clearly harmful. But I believe we should be very slow to turn an observation into an assumption, an assumption into a judgement, and a judgement into exclusion. This has become clearer, while studying the Bible.

There may be someone standing on the edge of a church who desperately wants to belong. There may be someone carrying a burden that nobody else knows about. There may be someone searching for God who is quietly watching how Christians treat one another.

And that matters.

There are already enough barriers between people and God without Christians unintentionally creating more.

Jesus gives us a powerful picture of this in the parable of the lost sheep. The shepherd has ninety-nine sheep, but when one goes astray, he goes looking for it. The ninety-nine are not unimportant. But neither is the one.

That image has stayed with me.

If someone is struggling to understand Scripture, perhaps we should not simply assume that they will eventually find their way. If someone is standing on the edge of a Christian community, perhaps we should not simply accept that they are outside it. If someone appears distant, perhaps we should remember that we do not know their whole story.

Sometimes all that is needed is for someone to notice them, make room for them, and make sure they are not quietly left on the outside.

I don't say any of this as a criticism of the Church, and I certainly don't claim to have all the answers. I say it because Scripture has made me increasingly aware that following Christ changes not only our relationship with God, but also the way we see and treat other people.

Perhaps that is one of the things God has been teaching me through this season:

I cannot know another person's whole story, but I can choose not to become another barrier in their way.

So, I decided to really read the Bible, cover to cover.

My memory has always been atrocious, so I started typing out every verse, hoping the hands-on effort would help me absorb the words more effectively. Next to each King James verse, I wrote out what I thought it meant in plain English and started researching to gain more clarity.

Partly, I did it because I'd missed years of church teaching, and because I had put down the Bible in the past because of the frustration of not understanding more clearly the words that I read. But mostly, I did it for my son—he's autistic, he's exhausted, and as his father, I wanted to understand Scripture well enough to explain it to him. So, I decided to tackle my frustration with the Bible head-on.

Breaking it down for him became my main reason for all this—a way to do what Deuteronomy 6:6–7 calls us to:

“And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children...”

After I finished the first chunk, I showed it to my pastor because I wanted to be sure I hadn't missed the mark. He encouraged me greatly and told me to keep going.

So, I did.

Book by book, it grew, and I kept one thing front and centre:

“Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it” (Habakkuk 2:2).

“Let me be clear about what this is, and what it's not.”

This is not a rewrite of the Bible, or any sort of replacement for it. Scripture is the foundation:

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16).

I haven't altered the Scripture itself. Every King James verse is there in full, so you can clearly see what is Scripture and what is my attempt to explain it. What I have written alongside it is simply plain-English meaning and explanation—for people who are new to the Bible, even the young, to help them move towards understanding what is being said.

“Call it a companion, not a substitute. I call it Bible:Essence Project as it is simply that, the essence of the Bible.”

That line matters to me. I’ve tried to make the language simpler, not shrink the meaning. Where a verse is difficult to put into plain English, or where faithful Christians have understood it in more than one way, I try to say so rather than pretend there is only one possible interpretation.

This isn’t a new idea. In Nehemiah 8:8, the Levites read God's law and then explained it so everyone could understand. When Philip came across the Ethiopian man in Acts 8, that man admitted he couldn't understand Scripture without help. And Paul wrote to the Corinthian church:

“Unless you speak words that are easy to understand, how will anyone know what you’re saying?” (1 Corinthians 14:9).

Helping people understand Scripture has always been part of the life of God's people. I'm simply trying, in a very small way, to do the same.

There are many Bible studies and guides written by people who have a passion for God and a desire to share what they have learned. I make no claim to be different in that respect. I am simply another person who has found something in Scripture that I want others to have the opportunity to discover.

I didn’t write this as a scholar, and I don’t expect you to read it as though you’re taking a course. I’m simply an ordinary person whose faith deepened later in life, who still gets stuck on difficult passages, and who wanted to find a way into Scripture—for myself, for my son, and perhaps for you too.

Perhaps coming to a deeper understanding later in life has given me a perspective that can help someone else who is only just beginning that journey.

I’m not claiming to have all the answers, and I certainly don’t want you to take my explanations as a substitute for Scripture. Please check what I’ve written against the Scripture alongside it, and where something is difficult or open to more than one interpretation, I will try to say so.

My hope is not that you take my word for anything, but that my efforts might help you engage with God's Word for yourself.

If you already know the Bible well, I hope you'll forgive the simplicity of some of the explanations. They aren't written because I think Scripture is simple, but because I remember what it felt like when it wasn't.

And if you find that I've misunderstood something, I hope you'll test my words against Scripture, as I have tried to do myself.

I’m not looking for money or recognition. Most of these last few years, I’ve been caring for my mother and using whatever spare time I could find to chip away at this project. In a strange way, the two have gone hand in hand.

My prayer is that these efforts, offered to God, will do the quiet work in your heart that His Word began in mine.

I’m trusting, as Isaiah says, that God's word never returns empty—it always does what He intends (Isaiah 55:11).

Honestly, my hope is simple:

“That these pages help you move from feeling stuck with the text to beginning to understand it—and that, somewhere along that journey, you encounter God, as I did.

I hope you come to feel the love of the Bible as I do, and feel blessed by the wisdom of God’s Word as it shines through its pages.

I am continually in awe of the Bible. Although it was written more than 2,000 years ago, the wisdom it contains is just as relevant today as it has ever been—and, perhaps more than ever, that wisdom is needed now in our world.”

And if that happens for even one person, then all the time and effort that went into these pages will have been worth it.

Don’t worry if you struggle like me to remember Bible verses. Be assured that as you read, the verses will enter your heart, soul — and even your bones!

May God bless you, and may His Word do in your heart what it has done in mine. **Amen.**

Methodology Declaration:

The research for this Bible Study was conducted using a variety of sources, including Bible study plans available through YouVersion, other Bible study books, websites, and AI tools.

AI was used as a research and reference tool, rather than as a means of generating the Bible Study itself. Where AI was used, I used a platform that allowed me to submit the same prompts to multiple AI models and compare their responses. I then analysed and cross-referenced the information provided, with the aim of identifying inaccuracies, inconsistencies, or potential AI “hallucinations.”

The research from these various sources, including the AI-assisted research, helped me to develop my understanding of the subjects discussed and influenced some of my thinking. However, the content and wording presented in this Bible Study were written by me, based on my own understanding, analysis, and interpretation of the research.

If you’ve enjoyed what this Bible study has revealed to you, why not visit my website, where you’ll find many more resources that reveal the wonder and awe of the Bible? www.root-to-fruit.faith

Book Summary: Song of Solomon

The Song of Solomon, often called the Song of Songs, is a unique collection of lyrical poems found in the Hebrew Bible. It beautifully portrays the passionate and intimate love between a young woman and her beloved. Through a series of dialogues, dreams, and descriptions, the book celebrates the profound beauty, desire, and delight found in romantic affection and the sacred bond of marriage. While often interpreted literally as a love story between King Solomon and a Shulamite woman, it has also been understood allegorically to represent God's love for Israel or Christ's love for the Church, emphasising devotion, longing, and mutual admiration within a loving relationship.

CHAPTER 1

Chapter Summary: Song of Solomon 1

The young woman speaks of her deep affection for her beloved. Having worked hard outdoors under the hot sun tending vineyards, she feels self-conscious about her sunburnt skin, but her beloved reassures her that she is the fairest among women. They exchange sweet words of praise for one another.

1:1 *(KJV)* The song of songs, which is Solomon’s.
(B:E Project) This is the finest of all songs — Solomon's own Song of Songs, the best of the best.

Context: This is the book's title line, naming Solomon as its author or dedicatee and marking it out, in the Hebrew idiom of doubling a word for 'the very best of', as the greatest of his many songs.

Meaning: The 'song of songs' is a Hebrew way of saying 'the best song ever written' — the same construction as 'holy of holies' or 'king of kings'. Before a single line of the poem begins, the title tells you what kind of book this is: not a rulebook, not a list of laws, but a love poem the Bible itself rates as its finest piece of lyric writing. That's worth pausing on, because it means the Bible, right at its core, treats romantic love and physical desire between two people as something worth celebrating in its most beautiful language — not as a distraction from spiritual life, but as part of what makes life good.

Lesson: I gave you bodies, senses, and the capacity to delight in another person — and I called it good, not something to be ashamed of or managed at arm's length. Let this book loosen any idea you've picked up that love needs to be quiet, clinical, or apologised for. Celebrate what is genuinely good in your life with the same energy this poem does.

See Also: Genesis 2:23-25 — the first man's joy at finding his match, and the pair 'naked and not ashamed', is the same unembarrassed appreciation of love and body that this whole book expands into poetry.

1:2 *(KJV)* Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine.
(B:E Project) Kiss me again and again — your love means more to me than the finest wine.

Context: The woman opens the poem speaking about her lover, then turns to address him directly, longing for his kisses and telling him his love outclasses even good wine.

Meaning: She isn't being shy about what she wants. In a book that opens the whole Bible's love poetry, the very first thing the woman says is a direct, physical desire for her partner's affection — and she measures it against one of the best things she knows, good wine, and says his love wins. This sets the tone for the rest of the book: desire

- between two committed people isn't treated as a problem to manage, it's treated as one of the best things in life.
- Lesson:** Wanting to be close to someone you love is not something to hide or feel guilty about — I made you for connection, not for holding people at a careful distance. Speak your affection honestly, the way she does here, rather than burying it under politeness.
- See Also:** Proverbs 5:19 — a husband told to 'be thou ravished always with her love' shows the same frank enjoyment of a spouse's affection running right through Scripture's wisdom writing.
- 1:3 *(KJV) Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.*
- (B:E Project)** The fragrance of your perfumed oils is wonderful — your very name is like perfume poured out. No wonder every young woman adores you.
- Context:** The woman continues praising her lover's appeal, comparing his reputation and presence to the pleasant, spreading scent of fine oil, and noting that other women are drawn to him too.
- Meaning:** In the ancient world, good perfumed oil was a luxury — something poured out that filled a whole room with its scent the moment the jar was opened. She's saying his very name has that effect: mention him, and something good fills the space. It's a lovely way to describe genuine charisma and character — the kind of person whose reputation precedes them because it's earned, not manufactured.
- Lesson:** Let your life carry a good 'scent' — the kind that draws people towards warmth and honesty rather than towards status or fear. What people remember about you should be the quality of how you loved and lived, long after you've left the room.
- See Also:** 2 Corinthians 2:14-15 — Paul's image of believers as 'a sweet savour' spreading a recognisable, pleasant influence wherever they go picks up this same fragrance imagery.
- 1:4 *(KJV) Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee.*
- (B:E Project)** Take me with you — let's run together! The king has brought me into his private rooms. We are thrilled and delighted in you; we treasure your love more than wine. It's no wonder the honest and good love you.
- Context:** The woman speaks eagerly to her lover, imagining being swept along with him, picturing an intimate welcome into his private chambers, and a supporting chorus of voices affirms how right it is that he is loved.
- Meaning:** She wants to be pursued and to pursue in return — 'draw me, we will run' is mutual, active desire, not passive waiting. The 'king' language is simply how this poem's characters are dressed in the imagery of royalty, the highest compliment the culture

- had, to say this love is precious and dignified, not tawdry. The line 'the upright love thee' is a nice touch — genuine goodness and being genuinely loved aren't presented as opposites here.
- Lesson:** Don't be afraid to chase what's good and be chased in return — mutual, eager desire between two people who belong to each other is not a compromise of integrity, it can be the very expression of it. I want you to know that wanting someone, and being wanted, can be wholly good.
- See Also:** Song of Solomon 8:6-7 — later the book explicitly names love as strong 'as death' and unquenchable, the same intensity glimpsed here in her eagerness to run after him.
- 1:5 *(KJV) I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.*
- (B:E Project)** I am dark-skinned, yet beautiful, daughters of Jerusalem — dark like the tents of Kedar, yet lovely like Solomon's fine curtains.
- Context:** The woman turns to address a group of onlookers, 'the daughters of Jerusalem' (a recurring chorus of young women), owning her sun-darkened skin and insisting it doesn't diminish her beauty.
- Meaning:** She anticipates being judged for her tanned skin — outdoor field work marked you as lower-class in that society — and refuses to accept that verdict. 'Black, but comely' isn't apologising; it's correcting the assumption before anyone can voice it, and doing it with real self-possession, comparing herself to beautiful, richly-woven tent fabric rather than shrinking away.
- Lesson:** Don't let anyone else's narrow idea of what's presentable talk you out of your own worth. I see people the way this young woman sees herself here — clear-eyed about how she looks, and completely unwilling to let that be turned into shame. Refuse a verdict on your body or your worth that was never fair to begin with.
- See Also:** 1 Samuel 16:7 — 'man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart' voices the same refusal to let surface judgements be the final word.
- 1:6 *(KJV) Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me: my mother's children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept.*
- (B:E Project)** Don't stare at me because I'm dark — it's the sun that's tanned me. My brothers were angry with me and made me look after the vineyards, so I couldn't take care of my own.
- Context:** The woman explains why she is sun-darkened: her brothers put her to work guarding the family's vineyards, leaving her no time to tend to her own appearance or, likely, her own life and interests.

Meaning: There's real feeling under this — resentment at being pushed into hard outdoor labour by her own family and left with no space for herself, symbolised by 'mine own vineyard have I not kept'. Many readers hear a double meaning: her literal skin, but also her own person and time, neglected because others made demands on her. It's a rare, honest glimpse of family pressure and self-neglect inside an otherwise joyful love poem.

Lesson: It's alright to notice when other people's demands have left you no room to tend your own life, your own growth, your own heart. I don't want you carrying resentment in silence — name what's been asked of you, and start reclaiming space to look after yourself too.

See Also: Luke 10:38-42 — Martha, pulled into serving everyone else while Mary chooses to attend to what matters, echoes this same tension between others' demands and tending one's own life.

1:7 *(KJV) Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?*
(B:E Project) Tell me, you whom I love with my whole being — where do you graze your flock, where do you rest them at midday? Why should I have to wander veiled among your friends' flocks looking for you?

Context: The woman speaks directly to her lover, asking where to find him during the working day so she doesn't have to search awkwardly among other shepherds' flocks to locate him.

Meaning: This is a simple, practical longing dressed in the pastoral imagery the couple share (he is pictured, at points, as a shepherd). She doesn't want to have to hunt for him, mistaken for someone loitering near strangers — she wants direct access to him, openly, without ambiguity. It's the ordinary ache of wanting to know exactly where the person you love is, and not to be kept guessing.

Lesson: Clear communication is an act of love. If you care about someone, tell them plainly where they stand with you and where you'll be — don't make the people who love you guess or wander in search of you. I value directness over games.

See Also: John 10:14 — 'I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine', the same shepherd imagery used for a relationship of mutual, direct knowing.

1:8 *(KJV) If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents.*
(B:E Project) If you don't know, loveliest of women, just follow the tracks left by the flock, and graze your young goats near the shepherds' tents.

Context: The man answers her question with warm teasing rather than a direct address — telling her, in effect, to follow the obvious signs and she'll find him near the other shepherds.

Meaning: He calls her 'fairest among women' — an outright, generous compliment — while giving her a light, almost playful answer: just follow the tracks. There's ease and humour between them here, not just intensity; healthy love includes banter and reassurance, not only high passion.

Lesson: Real intimacy has room for lightness, not only intensity — a bit of playful teasing, freely given, is part of how trust grows between two people. Don't feel every moment of love has to be solemn to be genuine.

See Also: Proverbs 17:22 — 'a merry heart doeth good like a medicine' commends exactly this kind of light-hearted warmth within a good relationship.

1:9 *(KJV) I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots.*
(B:E Project) My love, I compare you to a mare among Pharaoh's chariot horses — striking and unforgettable.

Context: The man praises the woman's beauty using a startling ancient compliment: comparing her to a magnificent, single, ornamented mare standing out among a king's chariot horses.

Meaning: This lands oddly to modern ears, but Egyptian chariot horses were male, so a lone mare among them would turn every head and cause a stir — it's a compliment about how she captivates attention the instant she enters a room, not a comment on appearance alone. Ancient love poetry reached for the most striking, valuable image its culture had (royal horses were prized and expensive) to say: you are unmistakable, you stand out completely.

Lesson: Tell the people you love, plainly and specifically, what makes them unforgettable to you. Compliments land best when they're particular, not generic — notice what actually makes someone remarkable, and say it.

See Also: Proverbs 31:29-30 — 'many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all' is the same instinct to single someone out as uniquely outstanding.

1:10 *(KJV) Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold.*
(B:E Project) Your face is lovely between the jewellery framing it, your neck graceful with strings of gold.

Context: The man continues admiring the woman's appearance, picturing her adorned with jewellery that highlights, rather than replaces, her natural beauty.

Meaning: He's noticing her, dressed and adorned, the way you'd notice someone who has made an effort for you and whom you delight simply to look at. It's the plain pleasure of finding your partner beautiful and saying so, without any need to justify it.

Lesson: Let yourself openly admire and appreciate the person you love — their effort, their presence, the way they choose to show up for you. Withholding admiration you actually feel starves a relationship; say it out loud.

See Also: 1 Peter 3:3-4 — while cautioning against relying only on outward adorning, it assumes such adorning is real and simply asks that inner character matter too, not that beauty be denied.

1:11 (KJV) *We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver.*

(B:E Project) We will make you ornaments of gold, studded with silver.

Context: A supporting voice — likely friends or the chorus of young women — offers to craft the woman fine jewellery, joining in the celebration of her beauty and this courtship.

Meaning: It's a small but telling detail: this couple's love isn't happening in isolation. A community around them wants to contribute to their joy, offering gifts and blessing the relationship rather than standing apart from it. Healthy love tends to draw others into celebrating it, not to cut people off.

Lesson: Let the people who care about you take part in your joy — a wedding, a relationship, a milestone. Community that wants to add something good to your happiness, rather than compete with it or gatekeep it, is worth treasuring.

See Also: John 2:1-10 — Jesus attending and providing for a wedding at Cana shows the same instinct: gladly adding to the joy of people in love, rather than standing apart from it.

1:12 (KJV) While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.

(B:E Project) While the king reclines at his table, the fragrance of my perfume fills the air.

Context: The woman describes a scene of closeness — likely a shared meal or banqueting setting — where her own perfume becomes part of the intimate atmosphere between them.

Meaning: This is a small, sensory detail of shared presence: two people close enough that her fragrance is part of what he experiences of her at the table. It's an image of intimacy built from ordinary shared moments — a meal, a scent, a nearness — not grand gestures.

Lesson: Intimacy is often made of small, ordinary shared moments rather than dramatic ones. Notice and treasure the quiet closeness of simply being near someone you love — a meal together, a familiar presence — it matters as much as the big occasions.

See Also: Ruth 3:7 — the quiet, careful closeness of an evening meal setting the stage for Ruth and Boaz's own courtship carries a similar domestic tenderness.

1:13 *(KJV)* A bundle of myrrh is my well-beloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.

(B:E Project) My love is like a small pouch of myrrh resting all night between my breasts.

Context: The woman describes her lover with an intimate image: a sachet of fragrant myrrh worn close to the body through the night, symbolising how constantly present and cherished he is to her.

Meaning: Small bags of myrrh were worn against the skin as perfume that lasted through the night. She's saying he is that close and that constant to her — always near, always pleasant to be near. It is openly physical and openly affectionate, and the Bible records it without flinching, as a normal, good part of married or committed love.

Lesson: Don't be embarrassed by how much you delight in physical closeness with someone you're genuinely committed to — I made bodies and affection as part of a good life together, not a shameful add-on to it. Let yourself enjoy what is good within the relationship you've built.

See Also: Proverbs 5:18-19 — 'let her breasts satisfy thee at all times... and be thou ravished always with her love' is the same frank, approving delight in physical closeness within marriage.

1:14 (KJV) *My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of Engedi.*

(B:E Project) My love is to me like a cluster of sweet-smelling henna blossoms in the vineyards of Engedi.

Context: The woman continues her string of images for her lover, comparing him to fragrant flowering shrubs found in a lush, famously fertile oasis.

Meaning: Engedi was a real, well-known oasis by the Dead Sea — a green, thriving pocket of life in an otherwise harsh landscape. Comparing him to its flowers says: you are the unexpected richness and life in my world, the good thing that flourishes where you'd least expect it.

Lesson: Recognise and name the person who brings unexpected richness into your life — the one who feels like an oasis. Gratitude expressed specifically, rather than kept vague, is part of what keeps love alive.

See Also: Psalm 1:3 — the image of a tree 'planted by the rivers of water' flourishing against the odds shares this same oasis-like picture of thriving, unexpected life.

1:15 (KJV) Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes.

(B:E Project) You are beautiful, my love — so beautiful! Your eyes are like doves.

Context: The man speaks tenderly to the woman, repeating his admiration of her beauty and singling out her eyes, comparing them to doves for their gentle, striking quality.

Meaning: The doubling — 'thou art fair... thou art fair' — is emphasis, the way you might say something twice because once doesn't feel like enough. Doves were associated with

gentleness and purity in this culture, so praising her 'doves' eyes' is praising a softness and sincerity he sees looking back at him, not just physical shape.

Lesson: Say the good thing about someone twice if once doesn't feel like enough — sincerity doesn't need to be rationed or held back for fear of seeming excessive. Let your genuine admiration for someone show plainly.

See Also: Song of Solomon 4:1 — the man repeats this exact compliment about her dove-like eyes later, showing how these two return to and reaffirm what they treasure in each other.

1:16 *(KJV) Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed is green.*
(B:E Project) You are handsome, my love, and so pleasant! Our bed is like a bed of fresh grass.

Context: The woman answers his compliment with one of her own, delighting in him in return and picturing their shared intimacy set outdoors, amid fresh greenery.

Meaning: She mirrors his words back, praise for praise — this is a genuine back-and-forth, not one person adoring a passive partner. The 'green' bed suggests an outdoor, natural setting, tying their intimacy to the freshness and vitality of nature itself, unspoiled and unhurried.

Lesson: Love that lasts tends to be mutual — praise returned, delight answered with delight, not one person doing all the giving. Notice whether affection flows both ways in your relationships, and be as generous in returning it as in receiving it.

See Also: Genesis 2:23 — Adam's joyful recognition of Eve, 'bone of my bone', is the first instance of this same mutual delight between two people made for each other.

1:17 *(KJV) The beams of our house are cedar, and our rafters of fir.*
(B:E Project) The beams of our house are cedar, and its rafters are of fir.

Context: The woman (or possibly both voices together) pictures their shared dwelling built from fine, fragrant timber, extending the outdoor, natural imagery of their intimacy into a home of their own.

Meaning: Cedar and fir were prized, fragrant, expensive woods — used, notably, in Solomon's Temple. Picturing their 'house' this way (whether a literal home or, more likely, the natural bower of trees around them) says their love has substance and worth, not something flimsy or temporary, but built of good material meant to last.

Lesson: Build your relationships with quality and permanence in mind, not just fleeting excitement — invest in what will last and bear weight, the way solid timber does. What you build a life on matters as much as how it feels in the moment.

See Also: Matthew 7:24-25 — the wise man who builds his house on rock so it stands firm makes the same point about building a life, or a love, on something solid enough to endure

CHAPTER 2

Chapter Summary: Song of Solomon 2

The couple share poetic descriptions of each other—calling one another a lily among thorns and an apple tree in the woods. The beloved arrives quickly over the hills like a swift young deer to announce that winter has ended and springtime has arrived. They remind each other to catch "the little foxes that spoil the vines" before small disagreements harm their growing bond.

2:1 *(KJV) I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.*
(B:E Project) I am a wildflower of Sharon's plain, a lily growing in the valleys.

Context: The woman describes herself with simple, common wildflower imagery — not a rare, exotic bloom, but a lovely flower found growing naturally and abundantly.

Meaning: She's not claiming to be a rare hothouse flower reserved for royalty; the rose of Sharon and valley lily were common, wild blooms. There's a quiet humility here — she sees her own beauty as natural and unforced rather than exclusive or manufactured, and that self-image is about to be answered generously by her lover in the next verse.

Lesson: You don't need to be rare or exclusive to be genuinely beautiful and worth loving — ordinary, natural, unforced goodness is enough. Don't wait to feel exceptional before you believe you're worth cherishing.

See Also: Matthew 6:28-29 — Jesus pointing to the wildflowers, 'even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these', praises exactly this kind of unforced, natural beauty.

2:2 *(KJV) As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.*
(B:E Project) Like a lily growing among thorns, that's how my love stands out among other women.

Context: The man answers her self-description by elevating it — where she called herself a common flower, he insists she outshines everyone around her, like a lily surrounded by thorns.

Meaning: He takes her modest self-image and answers it with a comparison that makes her the clear standout — a soft, lovely bloom set against harsh thorns. It's a lovely pattern of a relationship: one partner's humility met by the other's generous, specific praise, rather than either being left to sit unanswered.

Lesson: When someone you love undersells themselves, answer it — don't let their humility go unmet. I want you to be the kind of person who notices what's genuinely remarkable in others and says so, especially when they can't see it in themselves yet.

See Also: Proverbs 31:10 — 'who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies' is the same instinct of setting someone apart as uniquely valuable.

2:3 *(KJV) As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.*
(B:E Project) Like an apple tree standing out among the ordinary trees of the forest, so is my love among other men. I love sitting in his shade, and his fruit tastes sweet to me.

Context: The woman answers in kind, comparing her lover to a fruit tree that stands out among unremarkable forest trees, and describing the pleasure and satisfaction of being close to him.

Meaning: An apple tree amid wild forest trees offers something the others don't: shade to rest in and fruit to enjoy — practical, tangible goodness, not just decorative beauty. She's saying he actually provides comfort and delight in her life, not merely that he looks impressive. The 'sweet to my taste' line is a frank, sensory description of enjoying physical closeness with him, stated plainly and without embarrassment.

Lesson: Look for what someone actually gives you — shelter, comfort, real delight — not just how they present. And when you find that kind of person, let yourself openly enjoy the good things they bring into your life, whether that's rest, comfort, or physical closeness within a committed love.

See Also: Psalm 34:8 — 'O taste and see that the LORD is good' uses this exact same sensory language of tasting to describe experiencing something genuinely good.

2:4 *(KJV) He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.*
(B:E Project) He brought me to the banqueting hall, and everyone could see: his banner over me was love.

Context: The woman describes being led by her lover into a place of celebration and feasting, publicly and unmistakably claimed by his love.

Meaning: A banner in ancient warfare marked whose side you fought under — visible, unmistakable, a public identity. Saying his 'banner over me was love' means his devotion to her isn't private or hidden; it's declared openly, for anyone to see. There's real security in that kind of public, unambiguous commitment.

Lesson: Commitment that hides in the shadows isn't much comfort to the person on the receiving end. If you love someone, let it be visible — don't make them guess at your loyalty or wonder where they stand with you in front of others.

See Also: Ephesians 5:25 — 'husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church' calls for exactly this kind of open, unmistakable devotion.

2:5 *(KJV) Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love.*
(B:E Project) Refresh me with raisin cakes, revive me with apples — I am faint with love.

Context: The woman, overwhelmed with longing for her lover, asks to be sustained and comforted, describing herself as almost weak or faint from the intensity of her desire.

Meaning: 'Sick of love' here doesn't mean love has made her ill in a bad sense — it means her longing is so strong it's physically overwhelming, like being lovesick or love-struck to the point of needing comfort food and rest. The Bible doesn't shy from describing desire as something that can genuinely overpower a person, and treats that intensity as worth taking seriously rather than mocking.

Lesson: It's alright to admit when longing or love feels overwhelming — you don't have to perform composure. I don't ask you to minimise how deeply you feel things; bring the full weight of your longing honestly, whether to the person you love or in prayer.

See Also: Psalm 42:1-2 — 'as the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God' voices this same physically-felt intensity of longing.

2:6 *(KJV) His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.*
(B:E Project) His left arm is under my head, his right arm holds me close.

Context: The woman describes a tender, physically close embrace with her lover — being held securely and gently in his arms.

Meaning: This is a simple, warm picture of physical safety and closeness — being held, supported, embraced. There's nothing complicated about it; it's just the quiet comfort of resting in the arms of someone who loves you, described honestly because it's genuinely good.

Lesson: Let yourself receive comfort and closeness from people who love you — you don't have to hold yourself rigid and self-sufficient all the time. Being held, physically or otherwise, by someone trustworthy is a real and legitimate source of peace.

See Also: Deuteronomy 33:27 — 'underneath are the everlasting arms' uses this same embrace imagery for the security of being held and supported.

2:7 *(KJV) I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please.*
(B:E Project) I charge you, daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles and wild deer of the field: do not stir up or awaken love before it is ready.

Context: The woman turns to address the chorus of young women with a solemn charge — a refrain that recurs through the book — urging patience and warning against rushing or forcing love before its proper time.

Meaning: This is one of the book's most important recurring lines. In the middle of all this passion, the poem pauses to insist on timing and restraint: don't force or rush love, don't wake desire prematurely, let it develop naturally and at the right moment. It's a striking balance — full-blooded passion held together with real discipline and respect for right timing, rather than either extreme alone.

Lesson: Passion and patience aren't opposites — the wisest love holds both together. I want you to feel the full force of desire and affection, but never let urgency talk you into

rushing something, or someone, before its time. Real love can wait for the right moment.

See Also: 1 Corinthians 13:4 — 'charity suffereth long... is not easily provoked' names this same patience as a core feature of genuine love, not a limitation on it.

2:8 *(KJV) The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills.*

(B:E Project) Listen! That's my love's voice — look, he comes leaping over the mountains, bounding over the hills!

Context: The woman hears her lover approaching from a distance and describes his eager, energetic arrival, coming quickly and joyfully across the landscape towards her.

Meaning: This captures the pure excitement of someone you love hurrying to reach you — not a leisurely stroll but leaping, bounding, unable to wait. The energy in the verse mirrors the energy of genuine eagerness between two people who can't wait to be together.

Lesson: Let the people you love see your eagerness to reach them — don't play it cool if what you actually feel is joy at seeing them again. Enthusiasm honestly shown is a gift, not a weakness.

See Also: Luke 15:20 — the father who 'ran' to meet his returning son shows this same unrestrained eagerness and joy at being reunited with someone he loves.

2:9 *(KJV) My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattice.*

(B:E Project) My love is like a gazelle or a young stag. Look, there he stands behind our wall, gazing in at the windows, peering through the lattice.

Context: The woman continues picturing her lover's swift, graceful approach, now imagining him just outside, eagerly looking in through the windows to catch sight of her.

Meaning: There's a playful, almost breathless quality here — he's so eager he's peeking through the lattice rather than waiting patiently at the door. It captures that particular, slightly comic urgency of wanting to see someone right now, unable to hold back even for a moment longer.

Lesson: There's nothing undignified about being visibly eager for someone you love — that eagerness, even a little clumsy or comic, is part of what makes love feel alive. Don't be so composed that you lose the joy of simply wanting to see someone.

See Also: Song of Solomon 5:2 — 'I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh' pictures this same eager arrival and longing to be let in.

2:10 *(KJV) My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.*

(B:E Project) My love spoke and said to me: 'Rise up, my love, my beautiful one, and come away with me.'

Context: The woman recounts her lover's own words, inviting her to get up and come away with him — the start of an extended invitation that continues through the following verses.

Meaning: This begins one of the most beloved passages in the whole book — a direct, tender invitation. He doesn't demand or assume; he invites, using her own name for endearment twice over ('my love, my fair one'). It's an image of love that calls rather than commands.

Lesson: Invite the people you love into good things rather than demanding their compliance. I call people towards life and joy, I don't drag them — love that respects someone's freedom to say yes is worth more than love that simply expects it.

See Also: Revelation 22:17 — 'the Spirit and the bride say, Come... let him that is athirst come' uses this same gentle language of invitation rather than command.

2:11 (KJV) *For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone;*

(B:E Project) Look — winter is over, the rains have stopped and gone.

Context: Continuing to quote her lover's invitation, the woman recounts him describing the changing season: the cold, wet winter has ended.

Meaning: He's using the turn of the seasons as the reason to come out and be together — a literal springtime, but also clearly standing for a season of renewal in their relationship, an end to some period of waiting or separation, and the start of something fresh.

Lesson: Notice the seasons in your own life — the times of waiting, hardship, or distance eventually give way to renewal, if you let them. Don't assume winter is permanent; be ready to step out and receive the new season when it comes.

See Also: Ecclesiastes 3:1 — 'to every thing there is a season' names this same rhythm of change that the man is describing here in nature.

2:12 (KJV) *The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;*

(B:E Project) The flowers are blooming across the land; the season of singing has come, and the sound of the turtledove is heard in our countryside.

Context: The invitation continues: her lover describes the full arrival of spring — flowers, birdsong, the turtledove's call — as the setting calling them outdoors together.

Meaning: This is a vivid, sensory picture of a world coming alive — colour, sound, warmth returning after a bare season. It mirrors what's happening between the couple: a relationship stepping out of anything guarded or dormant into open, thriving expression.

Lesson: When life opens up into a season of goodness, let yourself notice it fully — the sounds, the colours, the small evidences that things are turning good. Gratitude means paying attention to a good season while you're actually in it.

See Also: Psalm 65:11-13 — the fields 'clothed with flocks' and valleys that 'shout for joy, they also sing' describe this same abundant, singing world coming to life.

2:13 *(KJV) The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.*
(B:E Project) The fig tree is putting out its first green figs, and the blossoming vines smell sweet. Rise up, my love, my beautiful one, and come away with me.

Context: The man's invitation reaches its climax, repeating his opening call — rise up and come away — now backed by every sign of spring's abundance around them.

Meaning: The repetition of 'arise, my love, my fair one, come away' bookends this whole invitation, and it lands with more weight the second time, now that the full picture of spring surrounds it. The whole natural world has been described as ready — now it's simply an invitation for her to step into it with him.

Lesson: When I invite you into something good, I don't ask once and drop it — I keep calling, patiently, because I want you to actually come, not just hear the offer. Don't be afraid to repeat an honest, loving invitation to someone even if the first ask hasn't landed yet.

See Also: Matthew 11:28 — 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest' is this same warm, repeated invitation extended in a different key.

2:14 *(KJV) O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.*
(B:E Project) My dove, hidden in the crevices of the rock, in the secret places on the cliff — let me see your face, let me hear your voice; your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.

Context: The man speaks tenderly to the woman, picturing her as a dove tucked away out of sight, and asks — gently, not demanding — to see her and hear her.

Meaning: He wants access to her, but the request is soft and respectful: 'let me see', 'let me hear', not 'show me' as a command. There's something lovely about a request rather than a demand for someone's presence and voice — it treats her as someone whose face and voice are gifts to be asked for, not owed.

Lesson: Ask, don't demand, for someone's presence and attention, even when you love them deeply and want them close. Respecting someone's freedom to give themselves to you, rather than assuming you're entitled to it, is what keeps desire from curdling into control.

See Also: Revelation 3:20 — 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock' pictures this same patient, respectful asking rather than forcing entry.

2:15 *(KJV) Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.*
(B:E Project) Catch the foxes for us — the little foxes that ruin the vineyards, now while our vines are still tender and blossoming.

Context: A voice (likely the man, possibly both together) calls for dealing with small foxes that threaten the young vines — a playful but pointed image about protecting something valuable while it's still fragile.

Meaning: This sudden, slightly odd little verse is usually read as a warning about small problems — little grievances, jealousies, distractions — that can quietly ruin a young, still-developing relationship if left unaddressed. It's not the passionate declarations that wreck love most often; it's the small, unattended things nibbling away at the roots.

Lesson: Deal with the small foxes in your relationships early — the little resentments, unspoken irritations, small dishonesties — before they've had time to damage something still growing. I'd rather you have an honest, slightly awkward conversation now than let a small thing quietly spoil something good.

See Also: Ephesians 4:26-27 — 'let not the sun go down upon your wrath... neither give place to the devil' gives the same counsel: deal with small grievances promptly, before they take root.

2:16 *(KJV) My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies.*
(B:E Project) My love is mine, and I am his; he grazes among the lilies.

Context: The woman states, simply and confidently, the mutual belonging between her and her lover, picturing him at ease and at home among beautiful surroundings — with her.

Meaning: This short line is one of the book's clearest statements of committed, mutual belonging — not one person possessing the other, but both possessing each other equally, freely given. 'He feedeth among the lilies' pictures him content and at rest in her presence, exactly where he wants to be.

Lesson: Real love is mutual ownership freely given, not one-sided control — 'mine and I am his' only works both ways. Look for, and offer, that kind of equal, freely-chosen belonging, not a relationship where only one person is doing the giving.

See Also: Song of Solomon 6:3 — she repeats this same declaration of mutual belonging almost word for word, showing how central it is to how she understands their love.

2:17 *(KJV) Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether.*

(B:E Project) Until the day breaks and the shadows fade, turn to me, my love — be like a gazelle or a young stag on the rugged hills.

Context: The woman closes the chapter by inviting her lover to come to her swiftly, again using the image of a graceful, swift young deer, as the night gives way to day.

Meaning: This closes the chapter on an open, longing note rather than a tidy resolution — she's inviting him still, wanting him to come to her with the same swiftness and grace pictured earlier. It leaves the reader with anticipation rather than closure, which fits a book that treats desire as an ongoing, living thing rather than something fully settled once and for all.

Lesson: Healthy longing for someone you love doesn't have to end in immediate resolution to be good — sometimes wanting, itself, held honestly, is part of a real relationship's rhythm. Don't rush every desire to a tidy conclusion; some longing is meant to be lived in, not just solved.

See Also: Song of Solomon 8:14 — the whole book's final verse repeats this exact same longing image, showing that open desire, not neat resolution, is how this love story is meant to end.

CHAPTER 3

Chapter Summary: Song of Solomon 3

The young woman has a vivid dream where she searches through the city streets at night until she finds the one she loves. The second half of the chapter describes a grand royal wedding procession, featuring a magnificent carriage made of cedar and gold, escorted by brave guards.

3:1 **(KJV)** *By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.*

(B:E Project) Night after night on my bed I searched for the one I love with my whole being — I searched, but I could not find him.

Context: The woman describes a dream or restless night in which she longs for her absent lover and searches for him without success.

Meaning: This opens a vivid dream-sequence of anxious searching — the ache of wanting someone near and finding them absent, even in your own bed at night. It's an honest picture of how love includes longing and even anxiety about separation, not only contented togetherness.

Lesson: It's normal for love to include seasons of searching and even anxious longing, not just settled contentment. Don't mistake a restless, searching season for a sign something's wrong — sometimes it's simply what deep love feels like when the person you love isn't within reach.

See Also: Psalm 63:1 — 'my soul thirsteth for thee... in a dry and thirsty land' voices this same restless, searching longing, directed toward God rather than a human lover.

3:2 **(KJV)** *I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not.*

(B:E Project) I will get up now and go through the city, through the streets and squares, searching for the one I love with my whole being. I searched, but I could not find him.

Context: The woman decides to actively seek her lover through the city at night rather than remain passively waiting, continuing the dream's search.

Meaning: She doesn't just wait and hope — she gets up and goes looking, moving through a city at night, which for a woman in this culture would have been unusual and even risky. This is active, determined pursuit, not passive longing; love here takes real initiative.

Lesson: When something truly matters to you, get up and go after it — don't just wait for it to arrive. I honour persistence born of love, the willingness to leave your comfort and actively seek what, or who, you deeply care about.

See Also: Luke 15:8-9 — the woman who lights a lamp and 'sweep[s] the house, and seek[s] diligently till she find' the lost coin shows this same determined, active searching.

3:3 **(KJV)** *The watchmen that go about the city found me: to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?*

(B:E Project) The watchmen making their rounds of the city found me. I asked them, 'Have you seen the one I love?'

Context: During her search, the woman encounters the city's night watchmen and asks them directly whether they've seen her lover — a small, telling detail of how far she's willing to go.

Meaning: She's willing to stop strangers, even authority figures out at night, and ask directly for help finding him. There's no pride here getting in the way of the search — just plain, honest need, voiced without embarrassment.

Lesson: Don't let pride stop you asking for help when you're searching for something, or someone, that matters. Being willing to say plainly what you're looking for, even to strangers, is often what gets you closer to finding it.

See Also: Matthew 7:7 — 'ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find' commends this exact posture of direct, unembarrassed asking and seeking.

3:4 **(KJV)** *It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.*

(B:E Project) Barely had I passed them when I found the one I love with my whole being. I held onto him and would not let him go until I had brought him to my mother's house, into the room where she conceived me.

Context: The woman's dream-search ends in success — she finds her lover, holds on tightly, and brings him into the deep intimacy and family belonging represented by her mother's own household.

Meaning: The search that felt endless resolves quickly once it turns the right corner — 'it was but a little' — and her response is to hold on and not let go. Bringing him to her mother's chamber signals total, committed intimacy and belonging, tying their love to family and permanence rather than a fleeting encounter.

Lesson: When you find what you've genuinely been searching for, hold on to it — don't let go out of fear of seeming too attached. Real commitment sometimes looks exactly like refusing to release someone once you've found them, and building that bond into something lasting.

See Also: Genesis 2:24 — 'therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife' names this same movement toward a new, permanent, committed household.

3:5 **(KJV)** *I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please.*
(B:E Project) I charge you, daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles and wild deer of the field: do not stir up or awaken love before it is ready.

Context: The woman repeats the same solemn charge from 2:7, again urging the chorus of young women not to force or rush love before its proper time — marking the close of this section.

Meaning: The refrain returns exactly as before, functioning almost like a chorus in a song, marking the end of this episode. Its repetition reinforces how central this idea is to the whole book: passionate love is real and good, but it should never be forced or hurried before its time.

Lesson: Some truths are worth repeating until they sink in — I say things more than once because you need to actually live them, not just hear them once. Let this be one you return to: don't rush love, yours or anyone else's, ahead of its proper season.

See Also: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 — love's patience, named repeatedly as central to what love actually is, matches this refrain's insistence on not forcing love's timing.

3:6 **(KJV)** *Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?*
(B:E Project) Who is this coming up from the wilderness like columns of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense and every fragrant powder a merchant sells?

Context: The voice shifts to the chorus, describing an approaching procession from a distance — likely the arrival of a grand wedding party, wrapped in clouds of incense and perfume.

Meaning: The scene shifts from the woman's private dream to a public, magnificent spectacle — a procession rich with expensive spices, visible from far off like rising smoke. It signals something ceremonial and important is arriving, almost certainly the approach of a royal wedding procession, dressed in the finest luxury the culture could offer.

Lesson: Some occasions deserve to be marked with real ceremony and beauty — don't be embarrassed to celebrate a genuinely important commitment with visible joy and even extravagance. Marking love publicly, richly, and without restraint has its place.

See Also: Revelation 19:7-8 — 'the marriage of the Lamb is come... arrayed in fine linen, clean and white' pictures this same lavish, public celebration of a wedding, on a cosmic scale.

3:7 **(KJV)** *Behold his bed, which is Solomon's; threescore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel.*
(B:E Project) Look — it is Solomon's own carriage, with sixty of Israel's finest soldiers surrounding it.

Context: The chorus identifies the approaching procession as Solomon's own royal litter or carriage, guarded by a substantial escort of elite soldiers.

Meaning: This describes serious, visible protection — sixty trained men guarding this procession, a mark of how valuable and important its occupant is considered. It's a picture of a bride being brought to her wedding with real honour and real security, nothing left to chance.

Lesson: The people and commitments you value most deserve real protection and care, not casual treatment. If something — or someone — genuinely matters to you, be willing to guard it seriously, not just hope things work out.

See Also: Psalm 127:1 — 'except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain' reflects on this same theme of guarding what matters, and where true security ultimately comes from.

3:8 **(KJV)** *They all hold swords, being expert in war: every man hath his sword upon his thigh because of fear in the night.*
(B:E Project) They are all skilled swordsmen, trained for battle, each with his sword at his side, ready for danger in the night.

Context: The chorus continues describing the armed escort surrounding the royal procession, emphasising their readiness and vigilance, especially given the vulnerability of travelling at night.

Meaning: This detail underscores just how much care has gone into making this procession safe — trained, armed men, alert specifically to night-time danger. It reinforces the sense that this wedding, and the bride at its centre, is being treated as something precious enough to actively defend.

Lesson: Vigilance and readiness aren't the opposite of love — sometimes protecting something precious means being genuinely prepared, not just hopeful. Take real, practical care of the relationships and commitments that matter most to you.

See Also: Nehemiah 4:17-18 — the builders who worked 'with one of their hands... and with the other hand held a weapon' show this same combination of building something good while staying alert to real threats.

3:9 *(KJV)* King Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon.
(B:E Project) King Solomon made himself a carriage from the wood of Lebanon.

Context: The chorus describes the origin of the king's magnificent wedding carriage, built from the prized, fragrant cedar of Lebanon.

Meaning: Lebanon's cedar was famous throughout the ancient world for its quality, scent, and cost — the same wood used to build the Jerusalem Temple. Using it for a wedding carriage signals that this occasion has been given the very best materials available, nothing second-rate.

Lesson: Give the best of what you have to the commitments and celebrations that matter most — don't settle for the cheapest or the least effort on the things you claim to value. What you're willing to invest says something true about what you actually treasure.

See Also: Malachi 1:8 — the rebuke against offering blemished, cheap sacrifices instead of the best makes the same point from the opposite direction: give your best to what matters.

3:10 *(KJV)* He made the pillars thereof of silver, the bottom thereof of gold, the covering of it of purple, the midst thereof being paved with love, for the daughters of Jerusalem.
(B:E Project) He made its posts of silver, its base of gold, its seat covered in purple, its interior inlaid with love, a gift from the daughters of Jerusalem.

Context: The chorus finishes describing the lavish carriage — silver, gold, royal purple — noting its interior was crafted or decorated 'with love' by the young women of Jerusalem.

Meaning: Every material named here — silver, gold, purple dye — was among the most expensive available in the ancient world, purple especially, since it required enormous quantities of rare shellfish to produce. But the detail that the middle was 'paved with love' is the real point: for all the costly materials, what actually fills and finishes this whole magnificent structure is love itself, freely given by a community who wanted to be part of it.

Lesson: No amount of costly material substitutes for love actually being present at the centre of something. However much you're able to spend on a celebration or a gift, make sure what genuinely fills it is real affection and care, not just expense for its own sake.

See Also: 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 — 'though I... have not charity, I am nothing' makes the identical point: without love at the centre, even the most impressive outward display amounts to nothing.

3:11 *(KJV)* Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.
(B:E Project) Come out, daughters of Zion, and look at King Solomon wearing the crown his mother placed on him on his wedding day — the day his heart was full of gladness.

Context: The chorus calls the young women of Jerusalem out to witness Solomon at the height of celebration, crowned by his own mother on his wedding day, marking the emotional high point of the chapter.

Meaning: The chapter closes on pure, unrestrained gladness — a wedding day, a crown placed by a mother's own hands, a heart described plainly as glad. There's no hesitation or qualification here about whether this joy is appropriate; the text simply presents a wedding day as one of life's genuinely great, joyful occasions, worth calling everyone out to see.

Lesson: When real joy arrives — a wedding, a long-awaited commitment fulfilled — let it be full and unguarded, and let others come and witness it with you. I don't want you to downplay your happiest days for fear of seeming too much; gladness like this deserves an audience, not a shrug.

See Also: Psalm 45:8, 15 — a royal wedding psalm describing the king brought in 'with gladness and rejoicing' mirrors this exact same joyful, public wedding-day celebration.

CHAPTER 4

Chapter Summary: Song of Solomon 4

The groom praises the bride's inner and outer beauty using ancient nature metaphors—comparing her gentle eyes to doves and her peaceful nature to a beautiful garden filled with sweet spices, pomegranate trees, and fresh mountain springs. He calls her completely flawless and pure.

4:1 *(KJV)* Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks: thy hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gilead.

- (B:E Project)** Look at you — you are beautiful, truly beautiful, my love. Your eyes are as gentle and soft as doves peeking through your hair, and your dark hair flows and ripples down like a flock of goats streaming down the slopes of Mount Gilead.

Context: The bridegroom is speaking, opening an extended, admiring description of his bride from head to foot — a traditional poetic form used across the ancient Near East to praise a loved one's beauty.

Meaning: This is a man delighting, openly and without embarrassment, in the woman he loves — not analysing her clinically but drinking her in with wonder. The images (doves, a flock of goats moving down a hillside) sound odd to modern ears, but they were the ancient equivalent of vivid, sensory compliments: gentleness in her gaze, life and movement in her hair. The verse matters because it shows the Bible treating admiration of a partner's body and presence as good, natural and worth saying out loud.

Lesson: I love it when you delight in someone and actually tell them so. Don't let affection go unspoken — say what you see and love in the person beside you, plainly and often. Real love isn't shy about admiration; it notices and it speaks.

See Also: Genesis 2:23 - Adam's own unguarded delight ('bone of my bones') at first seeing his wife, the same instinct of joyful admiration.
- 4:2** **(KJV)** *Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came up from the washing; whereof every one bear twins, and none is barren among them.*
(B:E Project) Your teeth are white and even, like a flock of freshly washed, freshly shorn sheep coming up from the water — a matched, complete set, with nothing missing or crooked.

Context: The bridegroom continues praising the bride's features, moving from her hair to her smile.

Meaning: This is a compliment about wholeness and health — even, white teeth were rare and prized in the ancient world, a sign of youth and vitality. The comparison to clean, matching sheep is about symmetry and completeness, not literal resemblance. It's a reminder that praising ordinary physical details of someone you love, with warmth rather than obsession, is a normal and healthy part of romantic attraction.

Lesson: Notice the small, ordinary things about someone you love — not just the obvious highlights. Genuine affection pays attention to detail because it delights in the whole person, not a highlight reel.

See Also: Proverbs 5:19 - a wife described as a loving deer and pleasant roe, the same tender, appreciative attention to a partner.
- 4:3** **(KJV)** *Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely: thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.*
(B:E Project) Your lips are like a scarlet ribbon, and your voice is lovely to hear. Beneath your hair, your cheeks glow like the inside of a split-open pomegranate.

- Context:** The bridegroom keeps moving down the bride's face, now admiring her lips, her way of speaking, and her cheeks.

Meaning: Here the praise widens beyond looks to include how she speaks — her words themselves are called lovely. This is a reminder that real attraction isn't only about appearance; personality, voice, and the way someone communicates are just as much a part of what makes them captivating.

Lesson: When you love someone, love the whole of them — their words as much as their face. Tell people that how they speak, not just how they look, moves you; it means more than they might expect.

See Also: Proverbs 31:26 - a woman whose speech is wise and kind, praised for her words as much as her character.
- 4:4** **(KJV)** *Thy neck is like the tower of David builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.*
(B:E Project) Your neck is graceful and proud, like the tower of David, built strong and hung all around with a thousand shields — the weapons of mighty warriors.

Context: The bridegroom praises the bride's neck and bearing, comparing her poise and dignity to a famous fortified tower in Jerusalem.

Meaning: This image is about elegance combined with strength and dignity, not fragility. A tower hung with shields was a landmark of the city, admired and imposing; comparing her neck to it says her carriage is regal, confident, and commands respect. It's a picture of beauty that includes strength of character, not just delicacy.

Lesson: True attraction includes admiring someone's strength and dignity, not just softness. Love the whole person — their backbone as much as their gentleness.

See Also: Proverbs 31:25 - 'strength and honour are her clothing,' the same pairing of beauty with dignity and strength.
- 4:5** **(KJV)** *Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies.*
(B:E Project) Your breasts are like two young gazelles, twins, grazing peacefully among the lilies.

Context: The bridegroom's praise turns openly physical and intimate, admiring the bride's body with the same warmth as the rest of his description.

Meaning: The Bible here is frank and unembarrassed about physical desire between two people who belong to each other — this is neither crude nor apologetic, but tender, comparing her body to something gentle, graceful and alive. It's a striking corrective to any assumption that the Bible treats bodies or physical attraction as shameful; here it's celebrated as a beautiful part of committed love.

Lesson: Physical desire for the person you love and are committed to isn't something to hide or feel guilty about — it's part of what makes that love whole. I want you free from

shame about healthy desire within a loving, faithful relationship, not weighed down by it.
See Also: Genesis 2:24-25 - the man and woman were 'naked and not ashamed,' the same absence of shame around physical union.

4:6 *(KJV) Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense.*
(B:E Project) Until the day dawns and the night shadows disappear, I will go to the mountain of myrrh and the hill of frankincense.

Context: The bridegroom speaks, using 'mountain of myrrh' and 'hill of frankincense' as a poetic way of referring to closeness with the bride, echoing similar language in 2:17.
Meaning: This verse speaks of anticipated closeness, using fragrant, precious spices as a metaphor for the bride herself — something valuable and worth pursuing patiently through the night until morning. It reflects unhurried desire within committed love rather than instant gratification.
Lesson: Good things - real intimacy, real love - are worth the wait and worth travelling toward. Don't confuse patience with a lack of desire; the two can live together beautifully.
See Also: Song of Solomon 2:17 - the same 'until the day break' language of anticipated closeness.

4:7 *(KJV) Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.*
(B:E Project) You are altogether beautiful, my love; there is no flaw in you.
Context: The bridegroom closes his long description of the bride's beauty with a single, sweeping declaration of total admiration.
Meaning: After cataloguing individual features, he steps back and says simply: all of you, altogether, is beautiful — no imperfection. This isn't naive flattery; it's the natural conclusion of someone who has looked closely and lovingly at every detail and still finds nothing to complain about. It models a kind of seeing that focuses on what is good and lovely in a person rather than picking apart flaws.
Lesson: See the people you love the way I see you - looking for what's good and beautiful, not hunting for flaws. Choose to notice wholeness in someone rather than fixating on imperfections; it changes how they feel loved.
See Also: Ephesians 5:27 - the Church presented 'without spot or wrinkle,' the same language of being seen as wholly lovely by the one who loves you.

4:8 *(KJV) Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon: look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards.*

(B:E Project) Come with me from Lebanon, my bride, come with me from Lebanon. Come down from the peak of Amana, from the summits of Shenir and Hermon, away from the lions' dens and the mountains where leopards roam.

Context: The bridegroom invites the bride to leave a place of remoteness and danger — wild mountain peaks associated with predators — and come away with him into closeness.
Meaning: The mountains named here were real, wild, dangerous places on the edges of the land. The invitation is to come down from something high, remote and risky into safety and togetherness with him. It captures the pull of love to draw someone out of isolation, distance or self-protection and into connection.
Lesson: I'm always calling people down from the high, guarded, lonely places they've retreated to - come towards love instead of hiding from it. Real relationship asks you to leave isolation behind and be found.
See Also: Song of Solomon 2:10 - 'rise up, my love... and come away,' the same invitation to leave and come close.

4:9 *(KJV) Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.*
(B:E Project) You have captured my heart completely, my sister, my bride; you have captured my heart with just one glance of your eyes, with just one jewel of your necklace.

Context: The bridegroom expresses how overwhelmed he is by the bride, saying it takes only the smallest thing — a single glance, one piece of jewellery — to move him completely.
Meaning: Calling her 'sister' here is an ancient term of deep intimacy and equality between lovers, not a literal family claim. The real point is how little it takes to move someone deeply in love: one look, one small detail, is enough to overwhelm him. It's a picture of love that is fully given and easily stirred, not guarded or hard to reach.
Lesson: Let yourself be moved by the people you love. Don't armour your heart against being affected by someone's small gestures - the glance, the little things, are often exactly where real love is felt.
See Also: Proverbs 5:19 - 'be thou ravished always with her love,' the same word of being overwhelmed by a spouse's love.

4:10 *(KJV) How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices!*
(B:E Project) How beautiful is your love, my sister, my bride! Your love is better than wine, and the fragrance of your perfume is better than any spice.

- Context:** The bridegroom continues, comparing the bride's love to two of the most prized pleasures of the ancient world — wine and fine spices — and says she surpasses both.

Meaning: Wine and spices were luxuries associated with celebration and delight. Saying her love outdoes them both is saying that she, and what she offers him, is the best thing in his life - more satisfying than anything money could buy. It elevates romantic love as something genuinely valuable, not a lesser or secondary good.

Lesson: Let the person you love know they matter more to you than any comfort, luxury or achievement. Love spoken plainly like this builds security; don't assume they already know.

See Also: Song of Solomon 1:2 - 'thy love is better than wine,' the woman's own words echoed back to her here.
- 4:11

(KJV) *Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk are under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon.*

(B:E Project) Your lips drip sweetness like honey from the comb; honey and milk seem to be under your tongue. The scent of your clothes is like the scent of the cedar forests of Lebanon.

Context: The bridegroom continues admiring the bride, this time her kisses and words, and the fragrance that surrounds her.

Meaning: Honey and milk together evoke abundance and richness - a callback to the language used for the promised land itself ('flowing with milk and honey'). Applying that phrase to her kisses says she is, to him, a source of overflowing good things. It's a vivid, sensory way of saying that being close to her is deeply satisfying.

Lesson: Let the people you love be a source of genuine delight to you, and tell them so specifically. Vague compliments fade; specific, sensory ones stay with a person.

See Also: Exodus 3:8 - the promised land 'flowing with milk and honey,' the same picture of overflowing goodness applied here to a person rather than a place.
- 4:12

(KJV) *A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.*

(B:E Project) You are like a private garden, my sister, my bride - a spring that is kept covered, a fountain sealed off just for me.

Context: The bridegroom shifts to garden imagery, describing the bride's exclusivity and reserved intimacy — she belongs to him alone.

Meaning: An enclosed garden and a sealed fountain were valuable precisely because they were protected and private, not accessible to everyone. This is a picture of faithfulness and exclusivity in intimacy - something precious kept for one person within a committed relationship, rather than devalued by being shared widely. It frames sexual faithfulness not as restriction but as what makes intimacy specially valuable.

- Lesson:** What you save for one person, and keep just for them, becomes more precious, not less. Faithfulness isn't a cage - it's what makes love feel safe and specially chosen.

See Also: Proverbs 5:15-18 - 'drink waters out of thine own cistern... let thy fountain be blessed,' the same image of exclusive, faithful intimacy within marriage.
- 4:13

(KJV) *Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard,*

(B:E Project) You are like an orchard full of pomegranate trees and choice fruit, with henna and spikenard growing there too.

Context: The bridegroom continues the garden metaphor for the bride, now describing her as an orchard filled with the finest fruits and fragrant plants.

Meaning: This begins a long, luxurious list of the most valuable fragrant plants and spices known in the ancient world - grown far apart, hugely expensive, gathered here into one impossible garden. It's poetic exaggeration meant to say: everything good and rich and desirable exists in you, an expression of overflowing appreciation rather than a literal inventory.

Lesson: Don't be afraid of extravagant, generous praise for someone you love - true love isn't stingy with its words. Let your appreciation for someone be as rich as what you actually feel.

See Also: Song of Solomon 4:16 - the bride's answering invitation into this same garden.
- 4:14

(KJV) *Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices:*

(B:E Project) Spikenard and saffron, sweet cane and cinnamon, with every kind of frankincense tree, myrrh and aloes, and all the finest spices there are.

Context: The bridegroom's list of precious plants and spices continues, piling up nearly every luxury fragrance known in the ancient world to describe the bride.

Meaning: These spices came from distant lands - India, Arabia, East Africa - and were extraordinarily costly; some were used in temple worship itself. Naming them all together says that nothing valuable is missing from her; she holds the richness of the whole known world. It's love expressing itself through sheer abundance of praise rather than restraint.

Lesson: There's no limit on how much you're allowed to treasure someone. Let your love be generous and unguarded rather than measured out carefully for fear of saying too much.

See Also: Matthew 2:11 - gold, frankincense and myrrh given as gifts fit for a king, the same sense of rare, costly treasure.
- 4:15

(KJV) *A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.*

(B:E Project) You are a garden fountain, a well of fresh flowing water, streams flowing down from Lebanon.

Context: The bridegroom closes his description of the bride with an image of living, flowing water - something that refreshes and gives life.

Meaning: Still water goes stagnant; 'living water' means it flows and stays fresh - the highest praise for a water source in a dry land. Calling her this says she isn't just beautiful to look at but a genuine source of freshness and life to him. It rounds off the garden imagery: she actively nourishes and refreshes their relationship, not merely something admired from a distance.

Lesson: The best kind of love doesn't just look good - it actually nourishes you, day to day. Ask whether the people and relationships in your life leave you more alive, and pursue the ones that do.

See Also: John 4:14 - Jesus speaking of 'a well of water springing up' within a person, the same image of flowing, life-giving water.

4:16 ***(KJV)** Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.*
(B:E Project) Wake up, north wind, and come, south wind! Blow across my garden so its fragrance spreads. Let my beloved come into his garden and enjoy its choice fruits.

Context: The bride speaks now, inviting the winds to release her garden's fragrance, and openly inviting her beloved to enjoy intimacy with her - his to enjoy because she has given herself to him.

Meaning: This is the bride's own voice, answering all the praise the bridegroom has given her with an open, willing invitation. Note the shift: 'my garden' becomes 'his garden' within the same verse - she belongs to him and freely offers herself. This models mutual, willing desire: intimacy in the Bible's own poetry is not one-sided or coerced, but something both people actively want and invite.

Lesson: Real intimacy is a mutual gift, freely given and freely wanted by both people - never something taken or owed. When love is wanted equally by both sides, it's something to celebrate openly, not hide.

See Also: Genesis 2:24 - the two becoming 'one flesh,' the same idea of mutual, complete belonging within marriage.

CHAPTER 5

Chapter Summary: Song of Solomon 5

In another troubled dream, the young woman hesitates to open the door when her beloved knocks. By the time she reaches the latch, he has moved on. Distressed, she searches for him and

asks the young women of the city for help, spending the rest of the chapter describing his noble character, strength, and wonderful qualities.

5:1 ***(KJV)** I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.*
(B:E Project) I have come into my garden, my sister, my bride; I have gathered my myrrh and spice, eaten my honeycomb and honey, drunk my wine and milk. [To others:] Eat, friends, and drink - drink deeply, loved ones.

Context: The bridegroom responds to the bride's invitation from 4:16, describing the joy of their union; the final line seems to be a chorus or narrator blessing the couple's joy.

Meaning: This verse marks the consummation of the couple's love in the poem's own imagery - described with warmth and delight, never shame. The closing invitation to 'eat... drink abundantly' broadens out from the couple to a wider blessing, as if the whole community celebrates and affirms their joy, much like guests celebrating at a wedding.

Lesson: Celebrate your commitments openly - don't be ashamed of the good, faithful love you've built with someone. I rejoice with people who rejoice; healthy love between two people is something worth celebrating, not something to apologise for.

See Also: John 2:1-10 - Jesus's presence and blessing at a wedding feast, celebrating a couple's joy rather than treating it with suspicion.

5:2 ***(KJV)** I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.*
(B:E Project) I was asleep, but my heart stayed alert. I heard my beloved knocking, saying, 'Let me in, my sister, my love, my dove, my perfect one - my head is soaked with dew, my hair with the damp of the night.'

Context: The bride begins recounting a dream (continuing through the chapter) in which her beloved comes to her door at night, having travelled through the cold and wet to reach her.

Meaning: This opens a dream sequence about longing and near-miss - a common and honest experience in relationships, where love isn't always perfectly timed or easy. The beloved has clearly gone out of his way, travelling through the night, to come to her. Being 'asleep but heart awake' pictures a heart that stays tuned to someone even in rest, ready to respond to love.

Lesson: Stay alert to the people who love you, even when life makes you drowsy or distracted. Love that shows up at inconvenient times, travelling through difficulty to reach you, deserves to be noticed and answered.

See Also: Revelation 3:20 - 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock,' a strikingly similar image, later used of God's own patient, gentle pursuit of a person's heart.

5:3 *(KJV)* I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?
(B:E Project) I said, 'I've already taken off my clothes for the night - must I dress again? I've washed my feet - must I get them dirty again?'

Context: Still narrating her dream, the bride recalls her own hesitation - comfortable and settled for the night, she is slow to get up and answer the door.

Meaning: This is an honest, unflattering moment: she hesitates out of comfort and inconvenience, even though it's the person she loves at the door. It's a very human picture of how easy it is to let small comforts and laziness delay us from responding to someone we care about - with real consequences, as the next verses show.

Lesson: Don't let comfort or convenience be the reason you miss someone who's reaching out for you. I know it's easier to stay settled than to get up and answer love when it knocks - but hesitation has a cost, and the people who matter are worth the small effort of getting up.

See Also: Song of Solomon 5:6 - the consequence of this hesitation, where she opens the door too late.

5:4 *(KJV)* My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him.
(B:E Project) My beloved reached his hand through the opening in the door, and my heart stirred deeply for him.

Context: The bride continues her dream, describing the moment her beloved reaches through the door for her, which finally moves her to get up.

Meaning: Even through her hesitation, the closeness and effort of her beloved eventually stirs her heart - it's his continued nearness and initiative, not just her own decision, that finally moves her. This shows how love often has to persist gently even when met with delay, and how that persistence can be what finally wakes a slower heart.

Lesson: Keep reaching for the people you love, even when they're slow to respond - persistence born of love, not pressure, is often what finally reaches someone's heart.

See Also: Luke 15:20 - the father running to meet the returning son while he was still far off, the same patient reaching toward someone.

5:5 *(KJV)* I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock.
(B:E Project) I got up to open the door for my beloved, and my hands dripped with myrrh, my fingers with liquid myrrh, onto the handles of the lock.

Context: The bride finally rises to answer the door, and in doing so leaves fragrant myrrh on the door handles.

Meaning: By the time she moves, there is already evidence of him having been there and of her responding - but the timing has slipped. This detail of fragrance lingering on the lock captures how presence and desire can leave a real trace even in a moment that ultimately turns out to be too late.

Lesson: Even a late response to love still matters and still leaves something behind - don't let past delay convince you it's not worth answering now. It's never too late to reach toward someone, even if the ideal moment has already passed.

See Also: Song of Solomon 5:6 - the disappointment that follows despite her finally rising to answer.

5:6 *(KJV)* I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.
(B:E Project) I opened the door for my beloved, but he had already turned and gone. My heart sank when he left. I searched for him but couldn't find him; I called out but he didn't answer.

Context: The bride's dream reaches its painful turn: her hesitation cost her the moment, and now her beloved is gone, leaving her searching in vain.

Meaning: This is the emotional low point of the dream - a picture of missed connection and the ache of searching for someone who isn't there to answer. It echoes an earlier search sequence in the book (3:1-4), showing that longing, missed timing, and the fear of losing someone are honest parts of even a strong, loving relationship, not signs the love itself has failed.

Lesson: Don't be afraid of the ache of missing someone or the fear of losing them - it's part of loving someone deeply, and it doesn't mean the love is broken. Keep seeking, keep calling out; love worth having is worth the search.

See Also: Song of Solomon 3:1-2 - an earlier, similar night search for the beloved, showing this fear and searching is a recurring, honest part of the couple's story.

5:7 *(KJV)* The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me.
(B:E Project) The watchmen patrolling the city found me as I searched; they struck me and wounded me. The guards on the walls tore my veil away from me.

Context: Still in her dream, the bride describes being mistreated by the city's watchmen while out searching desperately for her beloved at night.

Meaning: This is a startling, dreamlike moment of vulnerability and even violence, reflecting how consuming and disorienting deep longing can feel - a dream distorting real anxiety about being exposed, unprotected, and misunderstood while searching for someone she loves. It doesn't need to be over-interpreted; it conveys how much this search costs her emotionally.

- Lesson:** Loving someone deeply can leave you feeling exposed and vulnerable to a world that doesn't understand what you're going through - I see that cost, and it's not something to be ashamed of. Vulnerability in pursuing real love is never wasted, even when it hurts.

See Also: Song of Solomon 3:3 - the watchmen appearing again in an earlier search scene, this time without harm, showing the same recurring image.
- 5:8** *(KJV) I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am sick of love.*
(B:E Project) I charge you, young women of Jerusalem - if you find my beloved, tell him I am faint with love for him.

Context: The bride turns to the chorus of young women and pleads with them to pass on a message to her beloved if they find him first.

Meaning: 'Sick of love' means overwhelmed and weakened by longing, not unwell - an ancient way of expressing how consuming her love and current heartache are. She isn't hiding this vulnerability; she's asking others to help carry the message. It shows that being open about the intensity of love, and asking for help when you're missing someone, is honest and healthy rather than embarrassing.

Lesson: You don't have to carry longing alone - it's alright to ask others to help you reach the person you love. Being open about how much someone means to you is a strength, not a weakness.

See Also: Song of Solomon 2:5 - 'for I am sick of love,' the same phrase used earlier in the book.
- 5:9** *(KJV) What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? what is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?*
(B:E Project) What makes your beloved better than any other, most beautiful of women? What makes him so special that you'd ask this of us?

Context: The chorus of young women responds to the bride's plea with a genuine question, prompting her to describe exactly what makes her beloved so remarkable.

Meaning: This question sets up the famous description that follows (verses 10-16). It's an invitation for the bride to put her love into words - which she does at length and with obvious delight. The question itself models genuine curiosity about why someone loves who they love, rather than dismissiveness.

Lesson: Ask people about who they love, and really listen to the answer - it's one of the most honouring questions you can ask someone. Being asked to describe what makes someone dear to you is an invitation, not an interrogation.

See Also: 1 Peter 3:15 - being ready to give an answer for the hope within you, when genuinely asked, applied here to love instead.

- 5:10** *(KJV) My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.*
(B:E Project) My beloved is radiant and glowing with health, outstanding among ten thousand others.

Context: The bride begins her detailed, admiring description of the bridegroom, answering the chorus's question about what makes him so special.

Meaning: 'White and ruddy' describes a fresh, healthy, vigorous complexion - the ancient equivalent of saying someone looks radiant and full of life. 'Chiefest among ten thousand' means that out of a huge crowd, he stands out above everyone else to her. This is mutual admiration in the poem: just as he praised her at length in chapter 4, she now praises him just as fully and openly.

Lesson: Love should go both ways - don't just receive admiration, give it back generously. The healthiest relationships are the ones where both people delight in each other equally, not where affection only flows one direction.

See Also: Song of Solomon 2:3 - the bride comparing her beloved favourably to all others, 'as the apple tree among the trees of the wood.'
- 5:11** *(KJV) His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy, and black as a raven.*
(B:E Project) His head is like the finest gold; his hair is thick and wavy, black as a raven.

Context: The bride continues describing her beloved's appearance, beginning at the top of his head, mirroring the structure of his earlier praise of her in chapter 4.

Meaning: Gold represents supreme value and worth; describing his head this way says he is, to her, priceless. The description that follows is deliberately structured like his praise of her - showing that this poem gives the woman just as full, sensory and appreciative a voice as the man, describing male beauty with the same openness usually reserved in ancient literature for women.

Lesson: Admiration and desire aren't one person's job in a relationship - both people get to look, delight, and speak up. I want love between people to be mutual and equally expressed, not lopsided.

See Also: Song of Solomon 4:1-15 - the bridegroom's earlier, matching description of the bride, showing the mutuality of admiration in the book.
- 5:12** *(KJV) His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set.*
(B:E Project) His eyes are like doves beside flowing streams, washed clean in milk, perfectly set.

Context: The bride continues describing her beloved's eyes, using the same gentle dove imagery he once used of hers in 4:1.

Meaning: By echoing his own words back to describe him, the bride shows how thoroughly they see each other in similar terms - a mirroring that reflects real intimacy

- and shared language between two people who know each other well. The picture is one of clarity, gentleness and calm in his gaze.
- Lesson:** Notice how the language of love you share with someone becomes its own private world, built over time - cherish and keep using it.
- See Also:** Song of Solomon 4:1 - 'thou hast doves' eyes,' the same image, now returned to describe him.
- 5:13** *(KJV) His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers: his lips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.*
(B:E Project) His cheeks are like a garden bed of spices, like sweet-scented flowers; his lips are like lilies, dripping with sweet myrrh.
- Context:** The bride continues her admiring description, moving to her beloved's face and the pleasure of being near and kissing him.
- Meaning:** As with his earlier praise of her lips (4:11), fragrance and sweetness stand in for the pleasure of closeness and kissing. The mirrored imagery across the book, used for both partners, suggests a relationship of true equals, each finding the other equally delightful.
- Lesson:** In love that's healthy, both people should feel equally treasured and equally free to say so. Don't let one partner do all the admiring while the other stays silent - speak up about what delights you in the person you love.
- See Also:** Song of Solomon 4:11 - the bridegroom's earlier praise of her lips 'dropping as the honeycomb,' now answered in kind.
- 5:14** *(KJV) His hands are as gold rings set with the beryl: his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires.*
(B:E Project) His hands are like rounded gold set with jewels; his body is like polished ivory inlaid with sapphires.
- Context:** The bride's description moves down to her beloved's hands and torso, continuing to use precious materials to convey his worth and appeal to her.
- Meaning:** Gold, jewels, ivory and sapphires were the most valuable materials available in the ancient world. Describing a person's body this way is poetic, not literal - it communicates that, to her, he is a treasure worth more than any material wealth. It's another clear example of the Bible speaking about physical attraction between spouses with total comfort and admiration.
- Lesson:** Let yourself value a person you love as more precious than any possession you could own. Genuine love treasures people, not things - and it's alright to say so plainly.
- See Also:** Proverbs 31:10 - an excellent spouse's worth being 'far above rubies,' the same use of precious materials to express a person's value.

- 5:15** *(KJV) His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.*
(B:E Project) His legs are like pillars of marble set on bases of pure gold; his whole presence is like Lebanon, majestic as its cedar trees.
- Context:** The bride finishes her physical description of her beloved, comparing his stature and bearing to grand architecture and towering trees.
- Meaning:** Marble pillars and cedar trees of Lebanon were both famous symbols of strength, stability and grandeur in the ancient world. This isn't just praising looks but describing someone dependable, strong and impressive in his overall presence - a whole-person admiration, not a narrow physical checklist.
- Lesson:** When you love someone, let your admiration take in their whole presence - the way they carry themselves, the stability they offer - not just isolated features. That kind of seeing is where lasting attraction lives.
- See Also:** Psalm 92:12 - the righteous flourishing 'like the cedar in Lebanon,' the same tree used as an image of strong, enduring growth.
- 5:16** *(KJV) His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.*
(B:E Project) His mouth is sweetness itself; everything about him is lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, young women of Jerusalem.
- Context:** The bride concludes her description of the bridegroom to the chorus of young women, summing up her admiration and calling him her friend as well as her lover.
- Meaning:** The closing phrase 'this is my friend' is significant - it shows that what she treasures about him isn't only physical attraction but genuine friendship and companionship. This rounds out a healthy picture of romantic love: passion held together with real friendship, part of what makes committed love last.
- Lesson:** The strongest relationships combine desire with real friendship - want the whole package, not just one or the other. I call the people I love my friends, and I want that for you too: love that likes the person, not just longs for them.
- See Also:** John 15:15 - 'I have called you friends,' the same combination of deep love expressed through the language of friendship.

CHAPTER 6

Chapter Summary: Song of Solomon 6

The couple find each other again in the quiet garden. The groom reassures her that his feelings have not changed at all, declaring that among all the queens and maidens in the land, she remains his single, chosen favourite—as bright and radiant as the morning sun.

6:1 *(KJV) Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? whither is thy beloved turned aside? that we may seek him with thee.*

(B:E Project) Where has your beloved gone, most beautiful of women? Which way did he turn? Let us help you look for him.

Context: The chorus of young women, having just heard the bride's glowing description of her beloved, now offers to help her search for him.

Meaning: Having been moved by her description of him, the young women offer real, practical help rather than just admiring words. It shows how genuinely and openly sharing your love for someone can draw others in to support you, rather than isolating you.

Lesson: When you speak honestly about who and what you love, don't be surprised when others want to help you find it or protect it. Community is built through this kind of honest sharing, not through keeping your heart to yourself.

See Also: Song of Solomon 3:1-4 - the earlier search for the beloved, now supported by others rather than pursued alone.

6:2 *(KJV) My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.*

(B:E Project) My beloved has gone down to his garden, to the beds of spices, to walk among the gardens and gather lilies.

Context: The bride answers the chorus's question - she already knows where he is: in 'his garden,' a return to the intimate garden imagery from chapters 4-5.

Meaning: The anxious 'searching' dream of chapter 5 gives way here to reassurance - she knows exactly where to find him, in the place of shared intimacy they both belong to. It signals that the dream sequence has passed, and the relationship is secure again. Fear of loss doesn't have the final word.

Lesson: Anxious seasons in love don't have to be permanent - security and closeness can return even after a period of doubt or distance. Trust that the connection you've built is more solid than a moment of fear makes it feel.

See Also: Song of Solomon 4:16 - the bride's earlier invitation into 'his garden,' now confirmed as the place he's actually gone.

6:3 *(KJV) I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies.*

(B:E Project) I belong to my beloved, and my beloved belongs to me; he grazes among the lilies.

Context: The bride declares her mutual, settled belonging to her beloved - a calm statement of committed love after the turmoil of the search in chapter 5.

Meaning: This is one of the clearest statements in the whole book of mutual, exclusive belonging - not one person owning the other, but both fully given to each other. It

reflects a healthy model of committed relationship: security built on mutual choice and mutual devotion, not possession or control.

Lesson: The best kind of love is mutual, not one-sided ownership - both people choosing each other, both people secure in being chosen. That mutual belonging is worth building your life around.

See Also: Song of Solomon 2:16 - 'My beloved is mine, and I am his,' the same declaration stated earlier, now repeated with even more settled confidence.

6:4 *(KJV) Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners.*

(B:E Project) You are beautiful, my love, like the city of Tirzah, lovely as Jerusalem, as awe-inspiring as an army marching with its banners raised.

Context: The bridegroom's voice returns, praising the bride again, comparing her to two great, admired cities and to the imposing sight of a marching army.

Meaning: Tirzah and Jerusalem were both celebrated, beautiful capital cities. Comparing her to an army with banners is not about violence but about being genuinely awe-inspiring and impossible to ignore - someone whose presence commands attention and even a little wonder. It shows that beauty, in this poem, includes a kind of overwhelming, commanding presence, not just softness.

Lesson: Some people you love aren't just pleasant to be near - they're genuinely striking, even a little overwhelming in the best way. Let yourself be honestly awed by someone rather than only comfortable around them.

See Also: Song of Solomon 4:4 - the earlier comparison to the tower of David, another image combining beauty with imposing strength.

6:5 *(KJV) Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me: thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead.*

(B:E Project) Turn your eyes away from me - they overwhelm me. Your hair flows like a flock of goats streaming down from Gilead.

Context: The bridegroom, continuing to praise the bride, admits that her direct gaze is almost too much for him to bear, before repeating earlier compliments about her hair.

Meaning: This is a striking admission of vulnerability - he is the one being overcome, not simply admiring from a position of control. It shows that real attraction and love make a person vulnerable to the one they love, not invincible. Genuine desire includes being moved, even undone, by someone else's presence.

Lesson: It's alright to admit when someone you love has power over your heart - that vulnerability isn't weakness, it's honesty. I don't want you pretending to be unaffected by the people you truly love.

- See Also:** Song of Solomon 4:9 - 'thou hast ravished my heart... with one of thine eyes,' the same vulnerability to her gaze.
- 6:6

(KJV) Thy teeth are as a flock of sheep which go up from the washing, whereof every one beareth twins, and there is not one barren among them.

(B:E Project) Your teeth are like a flock of sheep coming up from being washed, each one with a matching twin, not one of them missing.

Context: The bridegroom repeats, almost word for word, his earlier compliment about the bride's teeth from 4:2, as part of a second, shorter round of praise.

Meaning: This near-repetition of chapter 4's praise isn't laziness in the poem - it reflects how genuine love keeps circling back to say the same true things again, because they're still true and still worth saying. Love doesn't need new material every time; sometimes it's enough to say again what's already been lovingly said before.

Lesson: You don't need a new compliment every day - sometimes the most loving thing is simply to say again what's still true. Repetition, from the heart, isn't boring; it's reassuring.

See Also: Song of Solomon 4:2 - the original form of this same compliment.
- 6:7

(KJV) As a piece of a pomegranate are thy temples within thy locks.

(B:E Project) Beneath your hair, your cheeks glow like the inside of a pomegranate.

Context: The bridegroom continues repeating his earlier praise from 4:3 of the bride's cheeks, as part of this renewed declaration of love.

Meaning: As with the previous verse, this is a deliberate echo of chapter 4 - showing that his feelings for her have not faded or changed with time. This matters as reassurance after the anxious searching of chapter 5: the love that seemed at risk of being lost is shown to be exactly as strong and constant as it always was.

Lesson: Consistency is one of the deepest expressions of love - loving someone the same way today as you did before doubt or distance crept in is a powerful reassurance. I want my love for you to feel like solid ground, not a shifting one.

See Also: Song of Solomon 4:3 - the original compliment, now repeated to show his love hasn't wavered.
- 6:8

(KJV) There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number.

(B:E Project) There may be sixty queens, eighty royal companions, and countless young women without number.

Context: The bridegroom, using the figure of a king as a literary device, begins to contrast the bride against a huge, exaggerated crowd of other women, to make his next point about her uniqueness.

- Meaning:** This verse uses the extravagant image of a king's huge royal household purely as a setup for the next verse's point: however many other women there might be, she is still singled out as unique. It's a poetic device of scale, not a literal description of anyone's actual relationships or an endorsement of polygamy - the poem's own heart, as seen throughout, is fiercely for one exclusive, mutual love (see 6:3).

Lesson: However many other options or comparisons the world puts in front of you, real love isn't about counting alternatives - it's about the ache and the choosing of one particular person as irreplaceable.

See Also: Song of Solomon 6:3 - 'I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine,' the exclusive, mutual love that this contrast is building toward.
- 6:9

(KJV) My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.

(B:E Project) But my dove, my perfect one, is one of a kind - the only daughter her mother has, her mother's favourite. Other women see her and call her blessed; even queens and royal companions praise her.

Context: The bridegroom concludes the contrast begun in verse 8: out of all those other women, the bride stands utterly unique and is even admired by the very women being compared to her.

Meaning: This is the poem's clear statement that, whatever the size of the comparison, this love is singular and irreplaceable - she isn't merely one among many but genuinely one of a kind to him, and her worth is recognised even by others. It reinforces the book's consistent value: exclusive, devoted love between two people, celebrated rather than diluted by comparison.

Lesson: When you truly love someone, they become irreplaceable to you - not the best of many options, but singular, one of a kind. That's the kind of love worth building a life on, and it's the kind of love I have for each of you.

See Also: Ephesians 5:25-27 - Christ's singular, devoted love for the Church, described in strikingly similar bridegroom-and-bride language.
- 6:10

(KJV) Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?

(B:E Project) Who is this, appearing like the dawn, beautiful as the moon, radiant as the sun, as awe-inspiring as an army with banners?

Context: This verse is likely spoken by the chorus, or possibly the bridegroom himself, marvelling at the bride's appearance in wonder-filled, almost cosmic terms.

Meaning: The escalating comparisons - dawn, moon, sun - build to a peak of admiration, treating her beauty as something as reliable and awe-inspiring as the natural order of the sky itself. Repeating 'terrible as an army with banners' from verse 4 reinforces that

- her presence is genuinely stunning, not just pleasant. It's the poem's high point of wonder at her.
- Lesson:** Let yourself feel real wonder at someone you love, the way you'd feel looking at a sunrise - don't let familiarity dull your appreciation for the people closest to you.
- See Also:** Song of Solomon 6:4 - the same phrase 'terrible as an army with banners,' repeated here for emphasis.
- 6:11** *(KJV)* I went down into the garden of nuts to see the fruits of the valley, and to see whether the vine flourished, and the pomegranates budded.
- (B:E Project)** I went down to the orchard of nut trees, to see the new growth in the valley, to check whether the vines were budding and the pomegranates were in bloom.
- Context:** The speaker, likely the bride, describes going down to a garden to check on the new growth of spring - possibly continuing the garden imagery for their relationship.
- Meaning:** This verse can be read simply as an ordinary, peaceful moment - checking on a garden's new growth in spring - which fits naturally after the anxious searching of chapter 5 has resolved into calm. The renewal of the garden mirrors the renewal of confidence and closeness in the relationship itself; new growth outside reflects new flourishing within it.
- Lesson:** Pay attention to the small, ordinary signs of growth in your relationships and your life - checking on the little things, noticing what's budding, is part of tending anything worth having.
- See Also:** Song of Solomon 2:11-13 - an earlier passage celebrating the arrival of spring and new growth as a picture of renewed love.
- 6:12** *(KJV)* Or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib.
- (B:E Project)** Before I even realised it, my heart had swept me away, like being carried off in a noble's chariot.
- Context:** This is one of the most difficult verses in the whole book to translate; the speaker describes being suddenly, unexpectedly overwhelmed and carried away by strong emotion or desire.
- Meaning:** Even scholars are honestly unsure of the precise original meaning of this verse's wording, but the overall sense is clear: a sudden rush of feeling, almost involuntary, sweeping the speaker away with excitement before they even noticed it happening. It captures something true about love and longing - how it can catch a person off guard, moving faster than conscious decision.
- Lesson:** Don't be embarrassed when love catches you by surprise and sweeps you along faster than you expected. Some of the truest feelings arrive before you've had time to plan or guard yourself, and that's alright.

- See Also:** Song of Solomon 5:4 - an earlier moment of the heart being suddenly and deeply stirred, unbidden, by love.
- 6:13** *(KJV)* Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies.
- (B:E Project)** Come back, come back, young woman of Shulem, come back, come back, so we can look at you! Why do you want to look at the Shulamite - as if watching a dance between two lines of dancers?
- Context:** The chorus calls the bride (named here 'the Shulamite') to come back so they can admire her; a question-and-answer follows about why they're so eager to see her.
- Meaning:** This transitional verse closes chapter 6 by turning attention fully onto the bride as an object of communal admiration, setting up chapter 7's extended description of her in a dance. The comparison to 'two armies' (better understood as a formation dance between two lines of performers) points to a graceful, almost performance-like beauty in motion. It shows the whole community, not only the bridegroom, delights in celebrating her.
- Lesson:** Let the people around you celebrate someone you love too - joy in a person shared with others multiplies rather than diminishes it. Don't hoard admiration; let a wider circle share in delighting over the good things in your life.
- See Also:** Song of Solomon 7:1 - the description that immediately follows, picking up exactly where this admiring call leaves off.

CHAPTER 7

Chapter Summary: Song of Solomon 7

- The poem continues with expressions of joy and delight in each other's presence. The bride invites her beloved out into the quiet countryside and vineyards to enjoy the fresh fruit and blooming flowers together away from the busy city.*
- 7:1** *(KJV)* How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter! the joints of thy thighs are like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman.
- (B:E Project)** How graceful your feet look in their sandals, noble one! The curve of your hips is like a piece of fine jewellery, shaped by a master craftsman's hands.
- Context:** The bridegroom begins a loving, head-to-toe (here, foot-to-head) celebration of his bride's beauty, addressing her with the honouring title "prince's daughter" — a mark of dignity, not literal royalty.
- Meaning:** This is admiration, not objectification: within a committed relationship, he delights in her whole self, comparing her graceful form to the finest craftsmanship he

knows. The point isn't a checklist of features but awe — treating the person he loves as a marvel worth honouring, not something to feel embarrassed about.

Lesson: I want you to see the person you love the way this bridegroom sees her — as someone worth genuinely admiring for who they are, not measured against anyone else. Give real honour to the people you love; noticing and naming what makes them them is a gift, not flattery.

See Also: Genesis 2:23-25 — the first man delights in the first woman with no shame between them, the same unembarrassed wonder seen here. Proverbs 5:18-19 — a husband urged to rejoice in his wife's body and presence lifelong.

7:2 *(KJV) Thy navel is like a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor: thy belly is like an heap of wheat set about with lilies.*
(B:E Project) Your navel is like a perfectly rounded cup, never empty of wine; your waist is like a mound of golden wheat, bordered with lilies.

Context: The bridegroom continues his praise-poem, moving from her feet upward to her torso, using images of abundance and natural beauty.

Meaning: A goblet that's never empty means overflowing plenty; a heap of wheat evokes harvest, richness and life-giving nourishment; lilies add delicate elegance around it. Together the images say she is a source of abundance and delight — nothing lacking, nothing shameful, only richness worth celebrating.

Lesson: I don't want you to treat a body — yours or your partner's — as something to hide or apologise for. Within faithful, committed love, delight in one another is meant to be full and generous, like a table set with plenty, not a source of guilt.

See Also: Proverbs 5:19 — a wife's presence described as something to be satisfied and delighted in continually, the same generous tone as here.

7:3 *(KJV) Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins.*
(B:E Project) Your breasts are like a pair of twin young gazelles, graceful and perfectly matched.

Context: The bridegroom continues his physical praise, reusing a gentle animal image he had already used earlier in the poem (4:5) — young gazelles suggest softness, grace and lively beauty.

Meaning: Gazelles were the ancient world's picture of graceful, gentle vitality, so the comparison praises symmetry, softness and life. That this exact image reappears later in the poem shows continued, attentive delight rather than a single passing compliment.

Lesson: Love that lasts keeps noticing and keeps saying so. I'm not asking for grand gestures every day — just don't let appreciation for someone go unspoken because you said it once already. Genuine desire stays alive when it's voiced again and again.

See Also: Song of Solomon 4:5 — the identical image used earlier, showing his admiration is consistent, not a one-off.

7:4 *(KJV) Thy neck is as a tower of ivory; thine eyes like the fishpools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bathrabbim: thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus.*
(B:E Project) Your neck is elegant, like a tower carved from ivory; your eyes are deep and clear, like the pools at Heshbon near the city gate; your face has a fine, dignified profile, like the tower of Lebanon looking out toward Damascus.

Context: The bridegroom continues upward — neck, eyes, and the line of her face — reaching for the grandest landmarks he knows to describe her.

Meaning: Ivory towers, famous clear pools, and an imposing mountain watchtower were the marvels of that world. Using them says this isn't only physical prettiness — she carries a calm, regal presence, a bearing that commands genuine respect, not just attention.

Lesson: Love the whole person, not just the surface. When I look at someone, I look at their bearing, their dignity, the quiet strength in how they carry themselves — and that's worth noticing and naming in the people you love too, not only their appearance.

See Also: Proverbs 31:25 — a woman "clothed with strength and honour," the same praise of dignity alongside beauty.

7:5 *(KJV) Thine head upon thee is like Carmel, and the hair of thine head like purple; the king is held in the galleries.*
(B:E Project) Your head is held high, like Mount Carmel, and your hair is rich and dark, almost the deep colour of royal purple dye — even a king is held captive by you.

Context: The bridegroom (a king, traditionally identified with Solomon in this poem) compares her to a noble mountain and to the rarest, most expensive dye of the ancient world, then admits he himself is captivated by her.

Meaning: Purple dye came from crushed shellfish and cost a fortune — comparing her hair to it signals rare, exceptional value. That a powerful king openly calls himself "captured" is the striking part: genuine love makes even the powerful vulnerable, humble, and devoted rather than domineering.

Lesson: Real love isn't about who holds power over whom. I want you to see that being willing to be moved, undone, even "captured" by love for someone is a strength, not a weakness — status and control matter far less than honest devotion.

See Also: none directly parallel; the point stands on its own within the poem.

7:6 *(KJV) How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!*
(B:E Project) How beautiful you are, how delightful — my love, so full of pleasure!

Context: The bridegroom pauses his detailed description with a joyful outburst of pure delight, addressing her simply as "love."

Meaning: He openly names pleasure and delight as good things, without embarrassment. For a modern reader who assumes ancient religious texts are uniformly prudish, this is a striking, refreshing moment: shared delight between a committed couple is treated here as something wholesome to celebrate aloud, not hide.

Lesson: Don't let shame creep into joy that belongs to you. When love brings you genuine pleasure and delight within a faithful relationship, that's not something to apologise for — say it out loud, the way this poem does.

See Also: Proverbs 5:19 — urging a husband to "be thou ravished always with her love," the same unashamed embrace of delight.

7:7 *(KJV) This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes.*
(B:E Project) Your figure stands tall and graceful like a palm tree, and your breasts are like clusters of grapes.

Context: The bridegroom moves to a fresh image, comparing her whole form to a tall date-palm and her breasts to grape clusters, tying her back into the vineyard and orchard imagery running through the book.

Meaning: Palm trees were tall, elegant and prized for their fruit and shade; grape clusters evoke ripeness, sweetness and festivity. Together they picture her as a source of natural abundance and joy — something worth reaching for, not merely admired from a distance.

Lesson: Anticipation and longing for someone you love and are committed to is healthy, not something to feel guilty about. I'd rather you feel that desire honestly than pretend it isn't there.

See Also: Psalm 128:3 — a wife pictured as "a fruitful vine," a similar image of flourishing abundance within marriage.

7:8 *(KJV) I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples;*
(B:E Project) I said, I will climb the palm tree and take hold of its branches. Let your breasts be like clusters of grapes, and the scent of your breath like apples.

Context: The bridegroom voices his desire directly, continuing the palm and vine imagery into a picture of physical closeness, and noting the sweetness of her breath.

Meaning: This is a tender, direct expression of physical desire and the wish to be close to a beloved spouse. The Bible doesn't shy away here from naming that wanting closeness with the person you love is good, not something to be embarrassed about.

Lesson: Speak your desire honestly to the person you're committed to, rather than burying it out of awkwardness. Tenderness expressed plainly deepens intimacy far more than desire left unsaid.

See Also: Genesis 2:24 — husband and wife becoming "one flesh," the foundation this closeness is built on.

7:9 *(KJV) And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak.*
(B:E Project) And your kisses are like the finest wine to me, flowing smoothly, delighting even those half-asleep to speak with pleasure.

Context: The bridegroom closes his description with the sweetness of her kiss, likening it to the finest wine — the fitting climax of his praise before she takes over speaking.

Meaning: Wine represented the highest quality pleasure and celebration in that culture, so comparing her kiss to it says intimacy with her is the finest, most satisfying thing he knows — a joyful, sensory conclusion to his tribute to her.

Lesson: Don't rush past the small intimacies of love — a kiss, a shared word, a quiet moment. I want you to actually savour them; they're not lesser than the big romantic gestures, they're often where love is most real.

See Also: none directly parallel; this caps the bridegroom's speech within the poem itself.

7:10 *(KJV) I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me.*
(B:E Project) I belong to my beloved, and his desire is for me.

Context: The woman now speaks, echoing an earlier line (6:3) but with a telling shift — here she highlights that his desire is actively directed toward her, showing their longing is fully mutual.

Meaning: Earlier in the poem she said "my beloved is mine, and I am his" (2:16); here the emphasis moves to being desired. Mutual, reciprocated wanting — not one person merely possessing the other — is the picture of healthy love the poem builds toward.

Lesson: Feeling genuinely wanted by someone who loves you matters — it's not vanity to want that, it's part of what makes a relationship healthy. Look for love that goes both ways, and be the kind of person whose desire for another is just as evident as theirs for you.

See Also: Song of Solomon 2:16 and 6:3 — earlier versions of this refrain, showing the relationship's growing mutuality across the poem.

7:11 *(KJV) Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages.*
(B:E Project) Come, my beloved, let's go out into the countryside; let's spend the night among the villages.

Context: The woman now takes the initiative, inviting her beloved away on a romantic getaway into nature — she proposes the plan herself.

Meaning: She is the active initiator here, planning where they'll go together. For an ancient text, this is a notably equal picture of love: a confident woman inviting intimacy on her own terms rather than simply waiting to be pursued.

Lesson: Love isn't only something you receive — it's something both people actively build and pursue. Don't be afraid to be the one who makes the plan, makes the space, and reaches out first.

See Also: none directly parallel; this stands as the poem's own picture of mutual initiative.

7:12 *(KJV) Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.*
(B:E Project) Let's rise early and go to the vineyards; let's see if the vines are budding, if the young grapes are opening, if the pomegranates are in bloom — there I will give you my love.

Context: The woman continues planning their time away together in the vineyards, promising that amid nature's spring renewal she will give herself to him fully.

Meaning: Budding vines and blossoming pomegranates evoke new growth and fertility — an unhurried, natural setting for intimacy. She openly, willingly promises her love, again as an active partner rather than a passive one.

Lesson: Make space in ordinary life for real closeness — a quiet morning, a walk, unhurried time together — rather than always rushing. Intimacy tends to grow in the moments you actually make room for it.

See Also: none directly parallel; the vineyard imagery is native to this poem.

7:13 *(KJV) The mandrakes give a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved.*
(B:E Project) The mandrake plants are giving off their fragrance, and at our door is every kind of delicious fruit, both new and stored from before, which I have kept especially for you, my beloved.

Context: The woman closes the exchange, describing the fragrant, abundant setting she has prepared and declaring she has saved up delights — both fresh and long-treasured — specifically for him.

Meaning: Mandrakes were linked in the ancient world with fertility and love (see Genesis 30). "New and old" suggests she offers both spontaneous delight and long-kept devotion — she hasn't just fallen into this love, she has faithfully treasured it for him over time.

Lesson: Faithfulness isn't only about a single passionate moment — it's about what you keep and nurture for someone over time. Treasure both the new joys and the long-held devotion you have for the person you're committed to.

See Also: Genesis 30:14-16 — mandrakes used as a fertility and love token, the same association drawn on here. Proverbs 5:15-19 — faithful, exclusive love pictured as drinking only from "thine own cistern."

CHAPTER 8

Chapter Summary: Song of Solomon 8

The book concludes with a powerful description of true, godly love: it is as strong as death, burns like a blazing fire, and cannot be drowned by all the waters in the world. True love is priceless and cannot be bought with all the wealth in someone's house, ending with a mutual promise of lifelong devotion.

8:1 *(KJV) O that thou wert as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother! when I should find thee without, I would kiss thee; yea, I should not be despised.*
(B:E Project) I wish you were like a brother to me, one who had nursed at my mother's breast — then if I found you outside, I could kiss you openly, and no one would think less of me for it.

Context: The woman speaks, longing for the social freedom a sibling relationship would give her; in her culture, public affection between an unmarried, unrelated man and woman invited gossip, while embracing a family member did not.

Meaning: She isn't wishing for an actual sibling bond — she's longing for the freedom to show her love for him openly, anywhere, without fear of judgement, because that kind of unguarded public affection was reserved for family. It shows how much she wants their love visible, not hidden.

Lesson: I don't want you living in fear of what others will think of who you love, so long as that love is honest and faithful. Genuine, committed love shouldn't have to hide from the world out of shame.

See Also: none directly parallel; this reflects the poem's own social setting.

8:2 *(KJV) I would lead thee, and bring thee into my mother's house, who would instruct me: I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate.*
(B:E Project) I would lead you and bring you into my mother's house, where she taught me; I would give you spiced wine to drink, made from my own pomegranate juice.

Context: The woman continues imagining bringing him fully into her family home and offering him a carefully prepared, personal gift of spiced wine — an image of warm welcome and intimacy.

Meaning: The mother's house is linked elsewhere in the poem with learning about love (3:4); the pomegranate wine is something she has made herself, specifically for him. She's picturing welcoming him into her whole life and history, not just a passing moment.

Lesson: Real love wants to share someone's whole world — their family, their history, the things that shaped them — not just the exciting moments. Offer people you love access to your actual life, not just a curated version of it.

See Also: Song of Solomon 3:4 — the same image of the mother's house as a place of intimacy and instruction.

8:3 *(KJV)* His left hand should be under my head, and his right hand should embrace me.
(B:E Project) His left arm would be under my head, and his right arm would hold me close.

Context: The woman pictures the tender, secure embrace she longs for, repeating a refrain used earlier in the poem (2:6).

Meaning: This embrace image recurs twice in the book, which signals that what she treasures most isn't only passion but the simple security of being held — comfort and safety alongside desire.

Lesson: Don't underestimate the power of simply holding someone close. Passion matters, but so does the quiet safety of being physically comforted by someone you trust — both are part of real love.

See Also: Song of Solomon 2:6 — the identical line used earlier in the poem.

8:4 *(KJV)* I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, until he please.
(B:E Project) I urge you, women of Jerusalem — don't stir up or awaken love before its proper time.

Context: The woman addresses the "daughters of Jerusalem" (the chorus) with a refrain repeated through the book, warning against forcing or rushing love before it's ready.

Meaning: This recurring line is the book's core piece of wisdom about timing: genuine love and desire shouldn't be manufactured or rushed. It has its own proper pace, and pushing it prematurely causes real harm.

Lesson: Be patient with love — your own and other people's. Don't push someone into intimacy or a relationship before they're genuinely ready; respecting timing is a form of real care, not a lack of desire.

See Also: Song of Solomon 2:7 and 3:5 — the same refrain repeated three times across the book, underlining its importance.

8:5 *(KJV)* Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? I raised thee up under the apple tree: there thy mother brought thee forth: there she brought thee forth that bare thee.
(B:E Project) Who is this, coming up from the wilderness, leaning on her beloved's arm? — I woke you under the apple tree; there your mother went into labour with you, there she gave birth to you.

Context: The chorus asks in wonder who is approaching, picturing the couple walking together with the woman leaning on him (echoing 3:6); the man's voice then tenderly recalls the very place of her birth.

Meaning: The image of the couple leaning into one another pictures mutual support. Tying her identity back to her birthplace shows deep, total knowledge and acceptance of who she is from the very beginning of her life — not just admiration for the present moment.

Lesson: Love someone's whole story, not just the parts that are easy to admire right now. Real love takes in a person's whole history and origins, and accepts them fully because of it, not despite it.

See Also: Song of Solomon 3:6 — a similar "who is this coming up" question used earlier in the poem.

8:6 *(KJV)* Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.
(B:E Project) Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm — for love is as strong as death, and jealous devotion as unrelenting as the grave. Love burns like a blazing fire, a flame that nothing can put out.

Context: The woman speaks perhaps the most intense and famous lines in the whole book, asking to be permanently marked as belonging to him and declaring love's fierce, unstoppable power.

Meaning: A seal was a signet used to stamp ownership and authenticity onto something precious — she is asking to be that permanent, identifying mark on him, inseparable and always present. Calling love "strong as death" and jealousy "cruel as the grave" names its totalising force: once love truly takes hold, nothing reverses it, just as nothing escapes death and the grave. This is the emotional high point of the entire poem.

Lesson: This is exactly the kind of unbreakable, permanent devotion I want from those who love me, and it's the kind I offer in return — sealed, not casual, not conditional. Want to be that inseparably marked on someone's heart, and let that same fierce constancy shape how you love.

See Also: Ephesians 1:13 — being "sealed" as a mark of permanent belonging, the same image used of God's devotion. Romans 8:38-39 — nothing in all creation able to separate us from love, echoing love's unstoppable strength here.

8:7 *(KJV) Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.*
(B:E Project) Vast oceans cannot put love out, and floods cannot sweep it away. If a man offered all his wealth to buy love, it would be laughed at as worthless.

Context: The woman continues her declaration about love's power, insisting it survives overwhelming hardship and cannot be purchased with money.
Meaning: Both images are plain: real love survives even overwhelming difficulty (waters and floods), and real love has no price tag — trying to buy it with wealth isn't just difficult, it's genuinely absurd, because love that can be bought was never real love to begin with.
Lesson: You can't purchase your way into being loved — with money, status, or gifts — and you don't need to. Real love holds through hard times rather than being swept away by them; trust that kind of love, and offer it rather than trying to buy affection.
See Also: 1 Corinthians 13:7-8 — love described as bearing and enduring all things, never failing. 1 Peter 1:18-19 — what truly matters not being redeemable with silver or gold, the same point about love's value being beyond price.

8:8 *(KJV) We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for?*
(B:E Project) We have a young sister who isn't yet grown up. What will we do for her on the day someone asks to marry her?

Context: The chorus — likely the woman's brothers, recalling an earlier concern from 1:6 — speaks about a younger sister not yet of marrying age, wondering how to prepare and protect her for the future.
Meaning: This shifts to a family's protective concern for someone too young for romance yet. It reflects a caring, responsible attitude: wanting to prepare and guard her well rather than rush her into something she isn't ready for.
Lesson: Looking out for people younger or less ready than you is real love in action. Protect people from being rushed into intimacy or relationships before they're ready — out of care, never out of control.
See Also: Song of Solomon 1:6 — the brothers mentioned earlier in the poem, tying this family concern back to the start.

8:9 *(KJV) If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she be a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar.*
(B:E Project) If she stands firm like a wall, we will build a silver tower on her; but if she's easily opened like a door, we will secure her firmly with cedar boards.

Context: The brothers continue reasoning about how to respond depending on her character — firm and self-possessed (a "wall"), or more easily swayed (a "door").

Meaning: A wall stands firm and guards what's within; a door swings open easily. This pictures a family weighing whether she has the maturity to be trusted with more freedom, or needs more protection while she grows — responsible care matched to her actual readiness, not punishment.
Lesson: Care for people in a way that actually fits who they are, not a one-size-fits-all rule. Pay attention to a person's real maturity and needs before deciding how much freedom or protection genuinely serves them.
See Also: none directly parallel; the wall/door metaphor is native to this passage.

8:10 *(KJV) I am a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found favour.*
(B:E Project) I am a wall, and my breasts are like towers — so in his eyes, I was one who brought him peace and delight.

Context: The woman answers her brothers' earlier concern by declaring she was indeed a "wall" — strong, mature, self-possessed — and that this maturity is exactly what won her beloved's genuine favour.
Meaning: She affirms her own strength and dignity: she wasn't naive or easily swayed, and it was precisely this solid self-possession that made her beloved delight in her and find real peace with her, rather than mere infatuation.
Lesson: Self-respect and inner strength are genuinely attractive, not something to soften for someone else's comfort. A partner worth having values your maturity and sense of self — don't shrink yourself to be more easily managed.
See Also: Proverbs 31:25 — a woman "clothed with strength and honour," the same pairing of dignity and worth.

8:11 *(KJV) Solomon had a vineyard at Baalhamon; he let out the vineyard unto keepers; every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand pieces of silver.*
(B:E Project) Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon. He rented it out to caretakers, and each one was to pay a thousand pieces of silver for its fruit.

Context: The woman shifts to a final extended metaphor, describing King Solomon's commercially valuable vineyard, managed by hired keepers for a large price.
Meaning: This sets up the contrast that follows: a vast, valuable but essentially commercial arrangement — land, workers, profit — deliberately unlike what she says next about her own "vineyard," herself.
Lesson: Notice the difference between something valued for what it earns and someone valued and given freely for who they are. Keep that distinction clear in how you treat the people you love.
See Also: none directly parallel; this sets up the point made in the next verse.

8:12 *(KJV) My vineyard, which is mine, is before me: thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred.*

(B:E Project) But my own vineyard is mine to give — it's before me, mine to offer. You, Solomon, may keep your thousand pieces of silver, and let the caretakers keep their two hundred.

Context: The woman contrasts herself with Solomon's rented-out vineyard — unlike his commercial vineyard managed by hired keepers for profit, her own "vineyard" (herself, her love) belongs to her alone, freely hers to give.

Meaning: This is a striking assertion of personal autonomy: she is not a commodity to be bought or managed by anyone, not even a king as wealthy as Solomon. Her love is hers, and she chooses freely to give it to the one she loves rather than have it bought, traded, or assigned — remarkable for a text this old.

Lesson: Who you love, and how you give your love, is a free gift you choose to give — never something someone else can buy, assign, or take from you. Guard that freedom, and give your love where you actually choose to, not where you're pressured to.

See Also: 1 Corinthians 7:4 — mutual, freely given belonging between husband and wife, echoing the same dignity in this freely offered love.

8:13 *(KJV) Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear it.*

(B:E Project) You who live among the gardens — my companions are listening for your voice; let me hear it too.

Context: The bridegroom speaks, picturing her among the gardens (recalling the book's recurring garden imagery for her) and asking simply to hear her voice, with their companions listening in as well.

Meaning: Even near the poem's end, what he wants is simply to hear her speak — a reminder that love craves someone's voice and presence, not only physical closeness, and that their love is also something shared within a wider community, not entirely private.

Lesson: Don't let physical closeness replace real conversation. Keep wanting to hear the voice of the person you love — their thoughts, their words — long after the first excitement of a relationship has settled.

See Also: none directly parallel; this reflects the poem's recurring garden imagery for the beloved.

8:14 *(KJV) Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.*

(B:E Project) Hurry, my beloved — come to me swiftly, like a young gazelle or a stag bounding over the spice-covered mountains.

Context: The woman speaks the book's final words, calling him to come to her quickly, using the swift-gazelle image that has run through the whole poem.

Meaning: The book deliberately ends not with a tidy, resolved conclusion but with ongoing longing and invitation. Love here is portrayed as a continuing pursuit rather than a finished, box-ticked event — an open, joyfully unresolved final note.

Lesson: Love isn't a destination you arrive at once and then stop working towards — it's an ongoing pursuit, a continual calling-out and reaching for the person and the life you love. And for anyone who wants to read this as a picture of the soul's longing for God, it closes on exactly that same note: keep calling, keep longing, keep coming.

See Also: Song of Solomon 2:9,17 — the same gazelle and stag imagery used earlier, a running motif across the whole book. Revelation 22:17,20 — the Bible's own last chapter closing on an almost identical note of longing invitation, "Come."

