

Song of Songs

The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's. Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! For your love is better than wine, your anointing oils are fragrant, your name is perfume poured out; therefore the maidens love you. Draw me after you, let us make haste. The king has brought me into his chambers. We will exult and rejoice in you; we will extol your love more than wine; rightly do they love you. I am black and beautiful, O daughters of Jerusalem, like the tents of Kedar, like the curtains of Solomon. Do not gaze at me because I am dark, because the sun has gazed on me. My mother's sons were angry with me; they made me keeper of the vineyards, but my own vineyard I have not kept! Tell me, you whom my soul loves, where you pasture your flock, where you make it lie down at noon; for why should I be like one who is veiled beside the flocks of your companions? If you do not know, O fairest among women, follow the tracks of the flock, and pasture your kids beside the shepherds' tents. I compare you, my love, to a mare among Pharaoh's chariots. Your cheeks are comely with ornaments, your neck with strings of jewels. We will make you ornaments of gold, studded with silver. While the king was on his couch, my nard gave forth its fragrance. My beloved is to me a bag of myrrh that lies between my breasts. My beloved is to me a cluster of henna blossoms in the vineyards of Engedi. Ah, you are beautiful, my love; ah, you are beautiful; your eyes are

doves. Ah, you are beautiful, my beloved, truly lovely. Our couch is green;
the beams of our house are cedar, our rafters are pine. I am a rose of
Sharon, a lily of the valleys. As a lily among brambles, so is my love
among maidens. As an apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my
5 beloved among young men. With great delight I sat in his shadow, and his
fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and his
intention toward me was love. Sustain me with raisins, refresh me with
apples; for I am faint with love. O that his left hand were under my head,
and that his right hand embraced me! I adjure you, O daughters of
10 Jerusalem, by the gazelles or the wild does: do not stir up or awaken love
until it is ready! The voice of my beloved! Look, he comes, leaping upon
the mountains, bounding over the hills. My beloved is like a gazelle or a
young stag. Look, there he stands behind our wall, gazing in at the windows,
looking through the lattice. My beloved speaks and says to me: "Arise, my
15 love, my fair one, and come away; for now the winter is past, the rain is
over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has
come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. The fig tree puts
forth its figs, and the vines are in blossom; they give forth fragrance. Arise,
my love, my fair one, and come away. O my dove, in the clefts of the rock,
20 in the covert of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for

your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely. Catch us the foxes, the little
foxes, that ruin the vineyards-- for our vineyards are in blossom." My
beloved is mine and I am his; he pastures his flock among the lilies. Until
the day breathes and the shadows flee, turn, my beloved, be like a gazelle or
5 a young stag on the cleft mountains. Upon my bed at night I sought him
whom my soul loves; I sought him, but found him not; I called him, but he
gave no answer. "I will rise now and go about the city, in the streets and in
the squares; I will seek him whom my soul loves." I sought him, but found
him not. The sentinels found me, as they went about in the city. "Have you
10 seen him whom my soul loves?" Scarcely had I passed them, when I found
him whom my soul loves. I held him, and would not let him go until I
brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that
conceived me. I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles or the
wild does: do not stir up or awaken love until it is ready! What is that
15 coming up from the wilderness, like a column of smoke, perfumed with
myrrh and frankincense, with all the fragrant powders of the merchant? Look,
it is the litter of Solomon! Around it are sixty mighty men of the mighty
men of Israel, all equipped with swords and expert in war, each with his
sword at his thigh because of alarms by night. King Solomon made himself
20 a palanquin from the wood of Lebanon. He made its posts of silver, its back

of gold, its seat of purple; its interior was inlaid with love. Daughters of
Jerusalem, come out. Look, O daughters of Zion, at King Solomon, at the
crown with which his mother crowned him on the day of his wedding, on
the day of the gladness of his heart. How beautiful you are, my love, how
5 very beautiful! Your eyes are doves behind your veil. Your hair is like a
flock of goats, moving down the slopes of Gilead. Your teeth are like a
flock of shorn ewes that have come up from the washing, all of which bear
twins, and not one among them is bereaved. Your lips are like a crimson
thread, and your mouth is lovely. Your cheeks are like halves of a
10 pomegranate behind your veil. Your neck is like the tower of David, built in
courses; on it hang a thousand bucklers, all of them shields of warriors.
Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle, that feed among the
lilies. Until the day breathes and the shadows flee, I will hasten to the
mountain of myrrh and the hill of frankincense. You are altogether beautiful,
15 my love; there is no flaw in you. Come with me from Lebanon, my bride;
come with me from Lebanon. Depart from the peak of Amana, from the
peak of Senir and Hermon, from the dens of lions, from the mountains of
leopards. You have ravished my heart, my sister, my bride, you have
ravished my heart with a glance of your eyes, with one jewel of your
20 necklace. How sweet is your love, my sister, my bride! how much better is

your love than wine, and the fragrance of your oils than any spice! Your
lips distill nectar, my bride; honey and milk are under your tongue; the scent
of your garments is like the scent of Lebanon. A garden locked is my sister,
my bride, a garden locked, a fountain sealed. Your channel is an orchard of
5 pomegranates with all choicest fruits, henna with nard, nard and saffron,
calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense, myrrh and aloes, with
all chief spices-- a garden fountain, a well of living water, and flowing
streams from Lebanon. Awake, O north wind, and come, O south wind!
Blow upon my garden that its fragrance may be wafted abroad. Let my
10 beloved come to his garden, and eat its choicest fruits. I come to my garden,
my sister, my bride; I gather my myrrh with my spice, I eat my honeycomb
with my honey, I drink my wine with my milk. Eat, friends, drink, and be
drunk with love. I slept, but my heart was awake. Listen! my beloved is
knocking. "Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my perfect one; for
15 my head is wet with dew, my locks with the drops of the night." I had put
off my garment; how could I put it on again? I had bathed my feet; how
could I soil them? My beloved thrust his hand into the opening, and my
inmost being yearned for him. I arose to open to my beloved, and my hands
dripped with myrrh, my fingers with liquid myrrh, upon the handles of the
20 bolt. I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had turned and was gone. My

soul failed me when he spoke. I sought him, but did not find him; I called
him, but he gave no answer. Making their rounds in the city the sentinels
found me; they beat me, they wounded me, they took away my mantle, those
sentinels of the walls. I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find
5 my beloved, tell him this: I am faint with love. What is your beloved more
than another beloved, O fairest among women? What is your beloved more
than another beloved, that you thus adjure us? My beloved is all radiant and
ruddy, distinguished among ten thousand. His head is the finest gold; his
locks are wavy, black as a raven. His eyes are like doves beside springs of
10 water, bathed in milk, fitly set. His cheeks are like beds of spices, yielding
fragrance. His lips are lilies, distilling liquid myrrh. His arms are rounded
gold, set with jewels. His body is ivory work, encrusted with sapphires. His
legs are alabaster columns, set upon bases of gold. His appearance is like
Lebanon, choice as the cedars. His speech is most sweet, and he is altogether
15 desirable. This is my beloved and this is my friend, O daughters of
Jerusalem. Where has your beloved gone, O fairest among women? Which
way has your beloved turned, that we may seek him with you? My beloved
has gone down to his garden, to the beds of spices, to pasture his flock in
the gardens, and to gather lilies. I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine;
20 he pastures his flock among the lilies. You are beautiful as Tirzah, my love,

comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners. Turn away your eyes
from me, for they overwhelm me! Your hair is like a flock of goats, moving
down the slopes of Gilead. Your teeth are like a flock of ewes, that have
come up from the washing; all of them bear twins, and not one among them
5 is bereaved. Your cheeks are like halves of a pomegranate behind your veil.
There are sixty queens and eighty concubines, and maidens without number.
My dove, my perfect one, is the only one, the darling of her mother,
flawless to her that bore her. The maidens saw her and called her happy; the
queens and concubines also, and they praised her. "Who is this that looks
10 forth like the dawn, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army
with banners?" I went down to the nut orchard, to look at the blossoms of
the valley, to see whether the vines had budded, whether the pomegranates
were in bloom. Before I was aware, my fancy set me in a chariot beside my
prince. Return, return, O Shulammite! Return, return, that we may look upon
15 you. Why should you look upon the Shulammite, as upon a dance before
two armies? How graceful are your feet in sandals, O queenly maiden! Your
rounded thighs are like jewels, the work of a master hand. Your navel is a
rounded bowl that never lacks mixed wine. Your belly is a heap of wheat,
encircled with lilies. Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle.
20 Your neck is like an ivory tower. Your eyes are pools in Heshbon, by the

gate of Bath-rabbim. Your nose is like a tower of Lebanon, overlooking
Damascus. Your head crowns you like Carmel, and your flowing locks are
like purple; a king is held captive in the tresses. How fair and pleasant you
are, O loved one, delectable maiden! You are stately as a palm tree, and
5 your breasts are like its clusters. I say I will climb the palm tree and lay
hold of its branches. Oh, may your breasts be like clusters of the vine, and
the scent of your breath like apples, and your kisses like the best wine that
goes down smoothly, gliding over lips and teeth. I am my beloved's, and his
desire is for me. Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the fields, and
10 lodge in the villages; let us go out early to the vineyards, and see whether
the vines have budded, whether the grape blossoms have opened and the
pomegranates are in bloom. There I will give you my love. The mandrakes
give forth fragrance, and over our doors are all choice fruits, new as well as
old, which I have laid up for you, O my beloved. O that you were like a
15 brother to me, who nursed at my mother's breast! If I met you outside, I
would kiss you, and no one would despise me. I would lead you and bring
you into the house of my mother, and into the chamber of the one who bore
me. I would give you spiced wine to drink, the juice of my pomegranates. O
that his left hand were under my head, and that his right hand embraced me!
20 I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, do not stir up or awaken love until

it is ready! Who is that coming up from the wilderness, leaning upon her
beloved? Under the apple tree I awakened you. There your mother was in
labor with you; there she who bore you was in labor. Set me as a seal upon
your heart, as a seal upon your arm; for love is strong as death, passion
5 fierce as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, a raging flame. Many
waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. If one offered for
love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly scorned. We have a
little sister, and she has no breasts. What shall we do for our sister, on the
day when she is spoken for? If she is a wall, we will build upon her a
10 battlement of silver; but if she is a door, we will enclose her with boards of
cedar. I was a wall, and my breasts were like towers; then I was in his eyes
as one who brings peace. Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon; he
entrusted the vineyard to keepers; each one was to bring for its fruit a
thousand pieces of silver. My vineyard, my very own, is for myself; you, O
15 Solomon, may have the thousand, and the keepers of the fruit two hundred!
O you who dwell in the gardens, my companions are listening for your
voice; let me hear it. Make haste, my beloved, and be like a gazelle or a
young stag upon the mountains of spices! *

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