

SONG OF SONGS 2:8-17

She tells of her encounter with her lover (2:8-14)

⁸Hark, my lover! See, he comes: leaping over the mountains, bounding over the hills.

⁹My lover is like a gazelle, like a young stag. See, here he is standing behind our wall, gazing in at the windows, peering through the lattice.

¹⁰My lover speaks and says to me: "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come!"

¹¹See, the winter is past, the rains are over and gone. ¹²The blossoms appear in the land; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtle-dove is heard in our land.

¹³The fig tree yields its figs; the vines, in bloom, give forth fragrance. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come!

¹⁴O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, 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."

She describes the approach of the man she loves, and recounts the dialogue that takes place between them. She opens by speaking of mountains, gazelle and stag (verses 8-9). She closes her reverie (verse 17) in the same way. The song hinges on verses 11 to 13 which speak of spring. She sings of the springtime of love.

She conveys his desire for her by his swift and graceful movements and the darting of his eyes as he goes from window to window hoping to catch sight of her. He pleads with her to come out and go off with him.

Winter in Palestine is the rainy season. It is gone, and spring, the season of renewal (the season of fruitful love) is bursting out. The sights and the fragrance of spring fill the senses with the delights of new love. With the coming of spring the migratory turtledoves have arrived. He invites his love to come with him on a new journey into love. His longing heightens the anticipation of union.

She recalls how endearingly he called her his 'dove'(repeated in 5:2, 6:9), suggesting tenderness. He yearns for the sweet cooing of her 'Yes'. He is impatient to see her lovely face.

She speaks to the chorus (2:15-16)

She addresses the chorus, her maiden companions, anyone who will listen. She doesn't want anything to interfere with the lovemaking that she anticipates.

They belong to each other. No one and nothing must come between them (compare 6:3; 7:11). Their lovemaking is described as his browsing among the lilies (verse 16). She knows that it is with her that the hunger of his longing is satisfied.

She speaks to him (2:17)

She tells him that she wants him to stay with her till the darkness is dispelled by the gentle morning breeze. She wants him to 'return' to the 'cleft mountains' of her breasts. She is inviting him to come to her again and again throughout the night (compare 8:14).

**¹⁵Catch us the foxes,
the little foxes, that
damage the vineyards,
when our vineyards
are in bloom."**

**¹⁶My lover is mine
and I am his who
browses among the
lilies.**

**¹⁷Until the day
breathes and the
shadows flee, return,
my lover; be like a ga-
zelle or a young stag
on the cleft moun-
tains.**

