EDIFIED EDITION

Song of Solomon

A modern rendering of the Holy Scriptures

8	117	Old	22
chapters	verses	Testament	book of 66

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Edified Edition (EDE): a modern rendering of the Holy Scriptures from the original Hebrew and Greek, in everyday British English. www.edifiededition.com

Numbered notes follow each chapter.

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Chapter 1

Song of Songs 1 opens with the woman's longing for her beloved's kisses, for his love is better than wine. She tells the daughters of Jerusalem that she is dark but lovely, sunburnt from tending her brothers' vineyards, and asks where her beloved pastures his flock. He answers that she is the most beautiful of women and compares her to a mare among Pharaoh's chariots. The two delight in each other: he praises her eyes as doves, she calls him handsome, and they describe their green couch and cedar-beamed house.

[1]The Song of Songs, Solomon's.[1]

[2]Oh, that he would kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! Your love is sweeter than wine.[2]

[3]Your oils have a pleasing fragrance; your name is perfume poured out. No wonder the young women love you.

[4]Draw me after you; let us run. The king has brought me into his chambers. We will rejoice and delight in you; we will praise your love more than wine. How right they are to love you!

[5]I am dark but lovely, daughters of Jerusalem, like the tents of Kedar, like the curtains of Solomon.

[6]Do not look down on me for being dark; the sun has burned me. My mother's sons were angry with me and set me to guard the vineyards; my own vineyard I have not guarded.

[7]Tell me, you whom my soul loves, where do you pasture your flock? Where do you rest it at noon? Why should I be like a veiled woman beside the flocks of your companions?

[8]If you do not know, most beautiful of women, follow the tracks of the flock and pasture your young goats beside the shepherds' tents.

[9]I compare you, my darling, to a mare among Pharaoh's chariots.

[10]Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments, your neck with strings of beads.

11 We will make you ornaments of gold, studded with silver.

12 While the king was at his table, my nard gave out its fragrance.

13 My beloved is a pouch of myrrh to me, resting all night between my breasts.

14 My beloved is a spray of henna flowers to me from the vineyards of En-gedi.

15 How beautiful you are, my darling! How beautiful you are! Your eyes are doves.

16 How handsome you are, my beloved, how delightful! Our couch is green and leafy.

17 Cedars are the beams of our house, and firs our rafters.

1 That is, the finest of songs. ‘Solomon’s’ may also mean ‘about Solomon’ or ‘for Solomon’.

2 The poem has three voices: the woman, the man, and the women of Jerusalem. Hebrew shows who is speaking by its grammar; the chapter summaries name the speakers.

Chapter 2

Song of Songs 2 continues the exchange of praise: she is a flower of the valleys, he is an apple tree among the trees of the forest, and she is faint with love. She charges the daughters of Jerusalem not to stir up love until it pleases. Then she hears her beloved coming, leaping over the hills like a gazelle, and he calls her to rise and come away, for winter is past and spring has come. She declares that her beloved belongs to her and she to him, and calls him to return like a gazelle until the day breathes.

1 I am a crocus of Sharon, a lily of the valleys.[1]

2 Like a lily among thorns is my darling among the young women.

3 Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest is my beloved among the young men. I delight to sit in his shade, and his fruit is sweet to my taste.

4 He has brought me to the house of wine, and his banner over me is love.

5 Sustain me with raisin cakes, refresh me with apples, for I am faint with love.

6 His left arm is beneath my head, and his right arm holds me close.

7 Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you by the gazelles and the does of the field: do not stir up or awaken love until it pleases.[2]

8 Listen! My beloved! Look, here he comes, leaping over the mountains, bounding over the hills.

9 My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Look, there he stands behind our wall, gazing through the windows, peering through the lattice.

10 My beloved spoke and said to me, “Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, and come away.

11 For look, winter is over; the rains have passed and gone.

12 Flowers appear in the land; the season of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.

13 The fig tree ripens its early figs, and the blossoming vines give out their fragrance. Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, and come away.

14 My dove in the crevices of the rock, hidden in the cliffside, let me see how you look and hear how you sound, for your voice is sweet and your form is lovely.”

15 Catch the foxes for us, the little foxes that ruin the vineyards, for our vineyards are in blossom.

16 My beloved belongs to me, and I to him; he feeds his flock among the lilies.

17 Until the day breathes and the shadows flee, turn, my beloved, and be like a gazelle or a young stag on the cleft mountains.

1 The exact flowers meant are uncertain; older versions have ‘rose of Sharon’.

2 This refrain returns at 3:5 and 8:4.

Chapter 3

Song of Songs 3 tells how the woman searched the city at night for the one her soul loves, asked the watchmen, and found him and would not let him go until she had brought him to her mother's house. She repeats her charge not to stir up love until it pleases. Then a royal procession comes up from the wilderness: Solomon's carriage, guarded by sixty warriors and made of Lebanon wood, silver, gold and purple. The daughters of Zion are called to see King Solomon wearing the crown his mother gave him on his wedding day.

1 On my bed night after night I sought the one my
soul loves; I sought him but did not find him.
2 I will rise now and go about the city, through the
streets and the squares; I will seek the one my
soul loves. I sought him but did not find him.
3 The watchmen making their rounds in the city
came upon me. "Have you seen him, the one my
soul loves?"
4 I had only just left them behind when I found
him, the one my soul loves. I held on to him and
would not release him until I had brought him to
my mother's house, to the room of the woman who
bore me.
5 Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you by the
gazelles and the does of the field: do not stir up or
awaken love until it pleases.
6 What is this rising from the wilderness like
pillars of smoke, fragrant with myrrh and
frankincense and every perfume a merchant sells?
7 Look, it is Solomon's carriage, with sixty warriors
around it, from the warriors of Israel,
8 all of them wearing swords, all trained in war,
each with his sword at his side against the terrors
of the night.
9 King Solomon made himself a sedan chair from
the wood of Lebanon.[1]
10 He made its posts of silver, its back of gold, its
seat of purple; its interior was lovingly inlaid by
the daughters of Jerusalem.
11 Come out, daughters of Zion, and look at King
Solomon wearing the crown with which his
mother crowned him on the day of his wedding,
the day of his heart's joy.

1 The Hebrew word occurs only here; it was probably a carried chair or canopied litter.

Chapter 4

Song of Songs 4 is the man's praise of his bride. He describes her eyes, hair, teeth, lips, cheeks, neck and breasts in pictures drawn from flocks, fruit and towers, and declares that she is altogether beautiful, without flaw. He calls her to come with him from the mountains of Lebanon. She has captured his heart; her love is better than wine. She is a garden locked, a sealed fountain, full of choice fruit and every spice. She answers by inviting the winds to blow on her garden and her beloved to come into it.

1 How beautiful you are, my darling! How beautiful
you are! Your eyes behind your veil are doves.
Your hair is like a flock of goats streaming down
from Mount Gilead.
2 Your teeth are like a flock of newly shorn ewes
coming up from the washing; each has its twin,
and not one of them is missing.
3 Your lips are like a scarlet thread, and your
mouth is lovely. Your cheeks behind your veil are
like halves of a pomegranate.
4 Your neck is like the tower of David, built in
courses, on which hang a thousand shields, all the
shields of warriors.
5 Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a
gazelle, that graze among the lilies.
6 Until the day breathes and the shadows flee, I
will make my way to the mountain of myrrh, to the
hill of frankincense.
7 You are altogether beautiful, my darling; there is
no flaw in you.
8 Come with me from Lebanon, my bride; come
with me from Lebanon. Gaze down from the
summit of Amana, from the heights of Senir and
Hermon, from the lions' dens and the leopards'
hills.
9 You have captured my heart, my sister, my bride;
you have captured my heart with one glance of
your eyes, with one jewel of your necklace.[1]
10 How beautiful is your love, my sister, my bride!
How much better your love than wine, and the

fragrance of your oils than any spice!

11 Your lips drip honey, my bride; honey and milk
are under your tongue, and the fragrance of your
garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon.

12 A garden locked is my sister, my bride, a spring
locked, a fountain sealed.

13 Your shoots are an orchard of pomegranates
with choice fruits, henna with nard,

14 nard and saffron, fragrant cane and cinnamon,
with all the trees of frankincense, myrrh and
aloes, and every choice spice.

15 You are a garden fountain, a well of living water,
streams flowing from Lebanon.

16 Awake, north wind, and come, south wind! Blow
on my garden, and let its spices flow. Let my
beloved come into his garden and eat its choice
fruits.

1 ‘Sister’ was a term of affection for a wife or beloved.

Chapter 5

Song of Songs 5 begins with the man in his garden, and a call to the friends to drink deeply of love. Then the woman tells how her beloved knocked at night, drenched with dew; she hesitated, and when she opened he was gone. Searching the city, she was beaten by the watchmen. She charges the daughters of Jerusalem to tell him she is faint with love. When they ask what makes him better than others, she describes him from head to foot: radiant, with hair black as a raven and arms of gold, altogether desirable, her beloved and her friend.

1 I have entered my garden, my sister, my bride; I
have picked my myrrh and my spice, eaten my
honeycomb and my honey, drunk my wine and my
milk. Eat, my friends, and drink; drink deep of
love![1]

2 I was asleep, but my heart was awake. Listen!
My beloved is knocking: “Open to me, my sister,
my darling, my dove, my perfect one, for my head
is drenched with dew, my hair with the drops of
the night.”

3 I have taken off my robe; how can I put it on
again? I have washed my feet; how can I soil
them?

4 My beloved put his hand through the opening,
and my heart was stirred for him.

5 I got up to open the door to my beloved; myrrh
dripped from my hands and liquid myrrh from my
fingers onto the handles of the bolt.

6 I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had
turned and gone. My soul failed me when he
spoke. I sought him but did not find him; I called
him but he did not answer.

7 The watchmen who go about the city found me;
they struck me and wounded me; the guards of
the walls took my cloak from me.

8 Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you: if you find
my beloved, tell him that I am faint with love.

9 How is your beloved better than others, most
beautiful of women? How is your beloved better
than others, that you charge us so?

10 My beloved is radiant and ruddy, outstanding
among ten thousand.

11 His head is the finest gold; his locks are wavy,
black as a raven.

12 His eyes are like doves beside streams of water,
bathed in milk, set like jewels.

13 His cheeks are like beds of spice, towers of
perfume; his lips are lilies dripping with liquid
myrrh.

14 His arms are rods of gold set with topaz; his
body is polished ivory covered with sapphires.

15 His legs are marble columns resting on bases of
pure gold. He looks like Lebanon, as choice as its
cedars.

16 His mouth is all sweetness, and everything
about him is desirable. Such is my beloved, such is
my friend, daughters of Jerusalem.

1 The last line may be spoken by the friends, or by the poet.

Chapter 6

Song of Songs 6 opens with the daughters of Jerusalem offering to help seek him, and the woman answers that her beloved has gone down to his garden: she is his and he is hers. The man again praises her beauty, awe-inspiring as an army with banners; among sixty queens and eighty concubines she is unique, and even the queens praise her. He went down to the nut grove to see the new growth. The friends call the Shulammite to come back so that they may gaze at her.

1 Where has your beloved gone, fairest of women?
Which way has your beloved turned, so that we
can search for him with you?

2 My beloved has gone down into his garden, to
the beds of spice, to feed his flock in the gardens
and gather lilies.

3 I belong to my beloved, and my beloved belongs
to me; he feeds his flock among the lilies.

4 You are beautiful, my darling, as Tirzah, lovely as
Jerusalem, awe-inspiring as an army with
banners.[1]

5 Turn your eyes away from me, for they
overwhelm me. Your hair is like a flock of goats
streaming down from Gilead.

6 Your teeth are like a flock of ewes coming up
from the washing; each has its twin, and not one
of them is missing.

7 Your cheeks behind your veil are like halves of a
pomegranate.

8 There are sixty queens and eighty concubines,
and young women without number,

9 but my dove, my perfect one, is unique, the only
one of her mother, the favourite of the one who
bore her. The young women saw her and called
her blessed; the queens and concubines praised
her.

10 Who is this who looks down like the dawn,
beautiful as the moon, bright as the sun, awe-
inspiring as an army with banners?

11 I went down to the grove of nut trees to look at
the new growth in the valley, to see whether the
vine had budded or the pomegranates were in
bloom.

12 Before I knew it, my longing had placed me
among the chariots of my princely people.[2]

13 Come back, come back, O Shulammite; come
back, come back, that we may gaze at you. Why
would you gaze at the Shulammite, as at the
dance of the two camps?[3]

1 Tirzah was an early capital of the northern kingdom (1 Kings 16:23); its name means ‘pleasing’.

2 The meaning of the Hebrew of this verse is uncertain.

3 In Hebrew this verse is 7:1, and 7:1–13 are 7:2–14. ‘Shulammite’ may mean ‘woman of Shunem’ or ‘Solomon’s woman’.

Chapter 7

Song of Songs 7 is the man’s second song of praise, from her feet to her head: her thighs are like jewels, her neck a tower of ivory, her eyes pools of Heshbon, and her hair holds a king captive. She is like a palm tree, and he longs to climb it and take hold of its fruit. She answers that she is her beloved’s and his desire is for her, and invites him out to the fields and vineyards at dawn, where she will give him her love.

1 How beautiful are your feet in sandals, O noble
daughter! The curves of your thighs are like
jewels, the work of a craftsman’s hands.

2 Your navel is a rounded bowl that never lacks
mixed wine. Your waist is a heap of wheat
encircled by lilies.

3 Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a
gazelle.

4 Your neck is like a tower of ivory, your eyes like
the pools of Heshbon by the gate of Bath-rabbim.
Your nose is like the tower of Lebanon that looks
towards Damascus.

5 Your head crowns you like Carmel, and the hair
of your head is like purple; a king is held captive
in its tresses.

6 How beautiful and how pleasant you are, my
love, with all your delights!

7 Your stature is like a palm tree, and your breasts
are like its clusters.

8 I said, “I will climb the palm and grasp its
branches of fruit.” Let your breasts be like grape
clusters on the vine, and your breath as fragrant
as apples,

9 and your mouth like the best wine, going down
smoothly for my beloved, gliding over the lips of
sleepers.[1]

10 I am my beloved's, and his desire is for me.[2]

11 Come, my beloved, let us go out into the fields
and spend the night in the villages.

12 Let us go early to the vineyards and see whether
the vine has budded, whether its blossoms have
opened and the pomegranates are in bloom. There
I will give you my love.

13 The mandrakes give out their fragrance, and at
our doors are all kinds of choice fruits, new as
well as old, which I have stored up for you, my
beloved.

1 The meaning of the last line is uncertain; the Greek and Syriac have 'over lips and teeth'.
2 The word for 'desire' is used elsewhere only in Genesis 3:16 and 4:7.

Chapter 8

Song of Songs 8 brings the poem to its close. The woman wishes she could show her love openly and bring her beloved to her mother's house, and for the third time charges the daughters of Jerusalem not to stir up love until it pleases. She asks him to set her as a seal on his heart, for love is as strong as death and its flame cannot be quenched by many waters or bought with all a man's wealth. Her brothers speak of protecting their little sister, and she answers that she has found peace. Her vineyard is her own to give. The poem ends with her calling her beloved to come like a gazelle.

1 Oh, that you were like a brother to me, who
nursed at my mother's breasts! If I found you
outside, I would kiss you, and no one would
despise me.

2 I would lead you and bring you into my mother's
house, she who taught me. I would give you spiced
wine to drink, the juice of my pomegranates.

3 His left arm is beneath my head, and his right
arm holds me close.

4 Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you: do not stir
up or awaken love until it pleases.

5 Who is this coming up from the wilderness,
leaning on her beloved? Under the apple tree I
awakened you; there your mother conceived you,
there she who bore you was in labour.

6 Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal
upon your arm, for love is as strong as death, and
its ardour as relentless as Sheol. Its flashes are
flashes of fire, a blaze of the LORD.[1]

7 Many waters cannot quench love, nor can rivers
sweep it away. If a man offered all the wealth of
his house for love, he would be utterly scorned.

8 We have a young sister whose breasts have not
yet grown. What shall we do for her when the day
comes that she is asked for in marriage?

9 If she is a wall, we will build silver battlements
on her; if she is a door, we will panel her with
cedar boards.

10 I am a wall, and my breasts are like towers; so I
became in his eyes like one who finds peace.

11 Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon; he let
out the vineyard to keepers; each was to bring for
its fruit a thousand pieces of silver.

12 My own vineyard is mine to give; the thousand
are yours, Solomon, and two hundred for those
who keep its fruit.

13 You who dwell in the gardens, with companions
listening, let me hear your voice.

14 Come quickly, my beloved; be like a gazelle or a
young stag upon the spice-covered mountains.

1 Or 'a mighty flame'. The Hebrew ends with a short form of the LORD's name, the only time it appears in this book.