

## Song of Solomon Chapter 2

Verses 1-7: Believers are beautiful, as clothed in the righteousness of Christ; and fragrant, as adorned with the graces of his Spirit. And they thrive under the refreshing beams of the Sun of righteousness. The lily is a very noble plant in the East; it grows to a considerable height, but has a weak stem. The church is weak in herself, yet is strong in Him that supports her. The wicked, the daughters of this world, who have no love to Christ, are as thorns. Worthless and useless, noxious and hurtful. Corruptions are thorns in the flesh. But the lily now among thorns, shall be transplanted into that paradise where there is no brier or thorn. The world is a barren tree to the soul; but Christ is a fruitful one. And when poor souls are parched with convictions of sin, with the terrors of the law, or the troubles of this world, weary and heavy laden, they may find rest in Christ. It is not enough to pass by this shadow, but we must sit down under it. Believers have tasted that the Lord Jesus is gracious. His fruits are all the precious privileges of the new covenant, purchased by his blood, and communicated by his Spirit. Promises are sweet to a believer, and precepts also. Pardons are sweet, and peace of conscience sweet. If our mouths are out of taste for the pleasures of sin, Divine consolations will be sweet to us. Christ brings the soul to seek and to find comforts through his ordinances, which are as a banqueting-house where his saints feast with him. The love of Christ, manifested by his death, and by his word, is the banner he displays, and believers resort to it. How much better is it with the soul when sick from love to Christ, than when overindulged with the love of this world? And though Christ seemed to have withdrawn, yet he was even then a very present help. All his saints are in his hand, which tenderly holds their aching heads. Finding Christ that's near to her, the soul is in great care that her communion with him is not interrupted. We easily grieve the Spirit by wrong tempers. Let those who have comfort, fear sinning it away.

### **Song of Solomon 2:1 "I [am] the rose of Sharon, [and] the lily of the valleys."**

Whether Christ, or the church, is here speaking, is not certain. Most of the Jewish writers, and some Christian interpreters, take them to be the words of the church, expressing the excellency of her grace, loveliness, and beauty, she had from Christ. And intimating also her being in the open fields, exposed to many dangers and enemies, and so needed his protection. No rose can be more beautiful in color, and delightful to the eye, than the church is in the eyes of Christ, as clothed with his righteousness, and adorned with the graces of his Spirit. Nor is any rose of a sweeter and fragrant smell than the persons of believers are to God and Christ, being considered in him. And even their graces, when in exercise, yea, their duties and services, when performed in faith. And, as the rose, they grow and thrive under the warming, comforting, and refreshing beams of the sun of righteousness, where they delight to be.

Jesus is the Rose of Sharon. He is also, the Lily of the valley. When we are in the valley, we can look at the Lily and realize there is a better tomorrow in Jesus. Many times, when we look at the beautiful rose or the lily, it does something in our hearts and quickens our spirit to the reality of God. God's creation reveals His beauty to the world.

### **Song of Solomon 2:2 "As the lily among thorns, so [is] my love among the daughters."**

These are manifestly the words of Christ concerning his church, whom he calls "my love" (see notes on SOS 1:9). And was his love still, though in such company, and in such an uncomfortable condition. In what sense she is comparable to a lily has been shown in (SOS 2:1). But here she is compared to one among "thorns": by which may be meant wicked men, comparable to thorns for their unfruitfulness and un-profitableness. For their being hurtful and pernicious to good men; and for their end, which is to be burned. Especially persecutors of religion, who are very distressing to the saints who dwell among them (see 2 Sam. 23:6).

There may be thorns of life surrounding us, but if we will keep our eye on the lily, we will have hope. God did not take the Christians out of the world. He saved them in the middle of the thorns. This is like the parable of the wheat and the tares that grow together until harvest. The tares are harvested and burned, and the wheat is taken to His barn (heaven).

**Song of Solomon 2:3 "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."**

As the apple tree, in a garden or orchard, excels and is preferable to the wild barren trees of a forest, especially it appears so when laden with choice fruit. So the church, who here returns the commendation to Christ, asserts, that he as much excels all the "sons", the creatures of God, angels or men. Angels, as the Targum, who, though sons of God by creation, Christ is the Son of God, in a higher sense. He is their Creator, and the object of their worship. They are confirmed by him in the estate they are, and are ministering spirits to him. And he is exalted above them in human nature. Men also, the greatest princes and monarchs of the earth, are sometimes compared to large and lofty trees. But Christ is higher than they, and is possessed of far greater power, riches, glory, and majesty. All the sons of Adam in general may be meant. Wicked men, who are like forest trees, wild, barren, and unfruitful. Yea, even good men, Christ has the pre-eminence of them, the sons of God by adopting grace. For he is so in such a sense they are not. He is their Creator, Lord, Head, Husband, and Savior, and they have all their fruit from him. And so ministers of the word have their gifts and grace from him, and therefore Christ excels all that come under this designation of sons.

"I sat down under his shadow with great delight": Under the shadow of the apple tree, to which Christ is compared. Whose person, blood, and righteousness, cast a shadow, which is a protecting one, from the heat of divine wrath, from the curses of a fiery law. And from the fiery darts of Satan, and from the fury of persecutors (Isa. 25:4). And is a cooling, comforting, and refreshing one, like the shadow of a great rock to a weary traveler (Isa. 32:2). And such is Christ; "they that dwell under his shadow shall revive and grow" (Hosea 14:7). "Sitting" here supposes it was her choice; that she preferred Christ to any other shadow, looking upon him to be a suitable one in her circumstances (SOS 1:6). It intimates that peace, quietness, satisfaction, and security, she enjoyed under him. It denotes her continuance, and desire of abiding there (Psalm 91:1). For the words may be rendered, "I desired, and I sat down". She desired to sit under the shade of this tree, and she did. She had what she wished for; and she sat "with great delight": having the presence of Christ, and fellowship with him in his word and ordinances.

"And his fruit was sweet to my taste": The fruit of the apple tree, to which the allusion is. By "his fruit" here are meant the blessings of grace, which are Christ's in a covenant way, that come through his sufferings and death, and are at his disposal. Such as peace, pardon, justification, and fresh discoveries and manifestations of his love, of which the apple is an emblem. And these are sweet, pleasant, and delightful, to those that have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

The apple tree has beautiful blooms and wonderful fruit when it matures. For it to be in the middle of trees of wood (worldliness), makes it even more desirable. Jesus is like no other who ever lived.

John 1:14-17 "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." "John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me." " And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." "For the law was given by Moses, [but] grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

The fruit He gave was grace and truth. All the prophets and judges were not to be compared with the very Son of God, who is the groom of all who will dare to believe.

**Song of Solomon 2:4 "He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me [was] love."**

Or "into" it. The "house of wine", as it is literally in the original. Either the "wine cellar", as some, where stores of it were kept. Or, the "place of fasting", as others. And, as we render it, a "banqueting house"; where it was distributed and drank. A banquet of wine being put for a feast, and here the nuptial feast. And may design the Gospel feast in the house of God, where there is plenty of the wine of Gospel truths, and provisions of rich food, with which believers are sweetly refreshed and delightfully entertained. To take his people by the hand, as it were, and introduce them into his house, so well furnished. And to a table so well spread. And so the church relates it as an instance of divine favor, and as a fresh token of Christ's love to her. The covenant of grace and the Scriptures of truth may be thought of as a banqueting house, well stored with blessings, and promises, and rich provisions. Which, to be led and let into, is a singular kindness.

"And his banner over me was love": Signifying, that she was brought into the banqueting house in a grand, stately, and majestic manner, with flying colors. The motto on which inscribed was "love". Christ's name, inscribed on his, was "love", his church's love. And by which his company was distinguished from all others, even by electing, redeeming, and calling love. It may signify the security and protection of the saints, while in the house of God. And enjoying communion with him, being under the banner of love, with which they are encompassed as a shield. And it may denote the very manifest and visible displays of it, which the church now experienced.

The "banqueting" house is a place to take those who are very dear to you. This is speaking of a place of abundance. This is a place where you will hunger and thirst no more. His protection over His bride is love.

Isaiah 11:10 " And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious."

John 15:10 "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."

**Song of Solomon 2:5 "Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I [am] sick of love."**

The church was now in a house of wine, where was plenty of it. Even of the love of Christ, compared to wine, and preferred unto it (SOS 1:2). The church though she had had large discoveries of it, desired more. And once that they have tasted of this love are eagerly desirous of it, and cannot be satisfied until they have their fill of it in heaven.

"Comfort me with apples": With exceeding great and precious promises; which, when fitly spoken and applied, are "like apples of gold in settings of silver" (Prov. 25:11). And are very comforting. Rather, with fresh and greater manifestations of his love still; for the apple is an emblem of love, as before observed; for one to send or throw an apple to another indicated love. The words, both in this and the former clause, are in the plural; and so may be an address to the other two divine Persons, along with Christ. To grant further manifestations of love unto her, giving the following reason for it.

"For I am sick of love": Not as loathing it, but as wanting, and eagerly desiring more of it. Being, as the Septuagint version is, "wounded" with it. Love's dart stuck in her, and she was inflamed therewith: and "languished". As the Vulgate Latin version is; with earnest desires after it; nor could she be easy without it, as is the case of lovers.

**Song of Solomon 2:6 "His left hand [is] under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me."**

The church, having desired to be stayed, supported, strengthened, and comforted, presently found her beloved with her, who with both hands sustained her. Which shows his tender love to her, care of her, and regard for her. And is expressive of the near and intimate communion she had with him. As the effect of union to him, often enjoyed in his house and ordinances. Likewise, of blessings of every kind she received from him. Temporal, mercies, or left hand blessings, which are necessary to support and carry through this wilderness.

"And his right hand doth embrace me": And spiritual, or right hand blessings, as justification, pardon, adoption, etc. Moreover, may denote the safety and security of the church, being encircled in the arms of her beloved, sustained by Christ's left hand, and embraced by his right hand. Out of whose hands none can pluck. We may render the verb either as indicative or imperative. The hand gently smooths with loving caresses. The historical sense is more in accordance with the context, as the next verse is an appeal to the attendant ladies. Behold my happiness, how my Beloved comforts me!

The left hand has to do with the world, or the earth. This is possibly saying He is lifting her head above the world. He lifts the church out of the world. The right side has to do with the Spirit. The love of Christ fills her with His Spirit. This is speaking of the Spirit of God covering the church.

Acts 2:17 "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:"

**Song of Solomon 2:7 "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."**

Of whom (see SOS 1:5). There is some difficulty in these words, whether they are spoken by the church, or by Christ. According to our version, they are the words of the church, and bids fair to be the sense; since they are spoken to the virgins, her companions, that waited on her. And the manner of speech is not by way of command, but of adjuration. Christ being the church's love; and the phrase, "till he please", best agrees with his sovereignty and authority. Who is at liberty to stay with, and remove from, his people at pleasure. And the context and scope of the place seem to confirm it. The church, enjoying communion with Christ, chooses not that he should be disturbed, and by any means be caused to depart from her.

"By the roes, and by the hinds of the field": Not that either Christ or his church swore by them; but the words may be descriptive of the persons addressed by the creatures, among whom they were feeding their flocks, or whom they delighted to hunt. And the charge is, that they would continue among them, and mind their business, and give no disturbance to Christ or the church.

"That ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please": Or, "till she please". If it is the charge of the church, it may lead to observe, that Christ is the object of the church's love. And that she is his resting place; that he may not be disturbed and raised up from it by an unfriendly behavior toward him, or by animosities among themselves. That saints should be very careful that they do not provoke Christ to depart from them. And that communion with him is entirely at his pleasure, when and how long it shall continue. It depends as much upon his sovereign will as the first acts of his grace towards them. But if this is the charge of Christ, not to disturb his church, then it may be observed, that the church is the object of Christ's love, and always continues so. That the church sleeps and takes her rest in Christ's arms. Which is not to be understood of a criminal drowsiness and sleep, but of comfortable repose and rest. Christ gives his beloved ones, in communion with himself; that he loves and delights in the company of his people, and would not have them disturbed in their fellowship with him. And though, while grace is in exercise, saints are desirous of enjoying Christ's presence always. Yet, when it is otherwise, they become indifferent to it, which provokes Christ to depart from them. And therefore it is said, "till she please". And as this charge is given to the "daughters of Jerusalem", young converts, or weak believers. It suggests, that they are apt to disturb both Christ and his church. To disturb Christ by their impatience and disobedience, like children; hence the church acts the part of a mother charging her children to be quiet, and not disturb her loving husband, while she enjoyed his company. And to disturb the church, through their weakness, not being able to bear the sublime doctrines of the Gospel, and through their ignorance of Gospel order.

The daughters of Jerusalem are the physical house of Israel. The one speaking in this, is the bride who is made up of the Christians. There is a time when Jesus will seek again, those of the physical house of Israel. Perhaps this is what is spoken of here.

Luke 23:28 "But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children."

Ephesians 5:32-33 "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."  
"Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife [see] that she reverence [her] husband."

Verses 2:8-13: The church pleases herself with thoughts of further communion with Christ. None besides can speak to the heart. She sees him come. This may be applied to the prospect the Old Testament saints had of Christ's coming in the flesh. He comes as pleased with his own undertaking. He comes speedily. Even when Christ seems to forsake, it is but for a moment; he will soon return with everlasting loving-kindness. The saints of old saw him, appearing through the sacrifices and ceremonial institutions. We see him through a glass darkly, as he manifests himself through the lattices. Christ invites the new convert to arise from sloth and despondency, and to leave sin and worldly vanities, for union and communion with him. The winter may mean years passed in ignorance and sin, unfruitful and miserable, or storms and tempests that accompanied his conviction of guilt and danger. Even the unripe fruits of holiness are pleasant unto Him whose grace has produced them. All these encouraging tokens and evidences of Divine favor, are motives to the soul to follow Christ more fully. Arise then, and come away from the world and the flesh, into fellowship with Christ. This blessed change is owing wholly to the approaches and influences of the Sun of righteousness.

**Song of Solomon 2:8 "The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills."**

So says the church, who well knew Christ her beloved's voice. Which is known by all believers in him, and is distinguished by them from the voice of others. By the majesty and authority of it; by the power and efficacy of it; by its directing them to himself, and by the pleasure it gives them. And she speaks of it as being very delightful to her. It being the voice of him whom she loved, and a voice of love, grace, and mercy, of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation.

"Behold, he cometh, leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills": This may be, understood, either of Christ's first coming in the flesh, much prophesied of, long expected, and was very welcome. This was attended with many difficulties, comparable to mountains and hills. That he the Son of God should become man. That he should obey, suffer, and die for men, fulfil the law, satisfy justice, atone for sin, and save from all enemies. But those which seemed insuperable were easily surmounted by Christ: Or of his spiritual coming. Sometimes he withdraws himself, and then returns again, and faith, spying him at a distance, rejoices at his nearer approach. For impediments in his way, occasioned by unbelief, carnality, being lukewarm, backslidings, and ingratitude of his people. Those are removed and got over by him,

nothing being able to separate from his love. And his coming, either way, is with all readiness, swiftness, speed, and haste.

At the voice of the King, even the dead will be quickened and rise from the grave. When He steps upon Mount of Olives, it cleaves in two. When He returns, the trumpet will blow in the sky. The trumpet is the same as His voice. All Christians are listening now for the voice of their beloved (Jesus Christ).

**Song of Solomon 2:9 "My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, showing himself through the lattice."**

In swiftness. He is coming to me with all speed, and will not tarry a moment beyond the proper season. The comparison of the beloved to a "roe" or "young hart" is symbolic of strength, masculinity and grace.

"Behold, he standeth behind our wall": Not the middle wall of the ceremonial law, behind which Christ under the Old Testament dispensation stood. But rather the wall of our hearts (Jer. 4:19). The hardness, infidelity, and carnal reasoning of it, which are so many walls of separation between Christ and his people. Behind which he stands, showing his resentment of those walls, in order to demolish them and get admittance. He is represented here, as nearer than when she first saw him, even at her very home.

"He looketh forth at the windows": This phrase, and that, through the lattice, intimate that the church does indeed see Christ. But as through a glass, darkly, as it is said even of gospel revelations (1 Cor. 13:12), which was much truer of legal administrations. And where Christ shows himself, in his glory and beauty, as kings and great personages look out at windows to show themselves to their people. Though Christ may also be said to look in at those windows, to observe the behavior of his people in his house and ordinances, with what attention, affection, faith, and reverence, they wait upon him in them.

This is coming nearer still. For, by the manner of the expression, it seems that he was within doors, since he is said, not to look through the windows, but to look "forth" at them, meaning the ordinances. Which are that to the church as windows to a house, the means of letting in light into the souls of men.

"Showing himself through the lattice": By which may be meant the same things, only a larger and clearer discovery of Christ in them, of which ordinances are the means. And yet, unless Christ shows himself through them, he cannot be seen in them. And a "behold" being prefixed to these gradual discoveries of himself, show them to be wonderful! A glance of him behind the wall is surprising; his looking in at the windows still more so; but his showing himself, in all his glories and excellences', through the lattice, is enough to throw into the greatest rapture. To fill with joy unspeakable and full of glory!

He is outside, and the bride must come out to Him. He is seeking fellowship with the believers. He will not force Himself into their lives. He shows Himself to them, but they must come out to Him.

**Song of Solomon 2:10 "My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away."**

Invited and called me outwardly by his word, and inwardly by his Spirit. Christ, the church's beloved, being so near her, she could distinctly hear and understand what he spoke, and relate the very words. Or, "he answered to me"; to a secret petition, put up to him for a fuller enjoyment of him. For there is mental as well as vocal prayer, which Christ, as God omniscient, knows full well, and gives answer to. Of this may be an answer to her petitions in (SOS 2:5); and as some in (SOS 2:6). However, Christ said something after related, that she well knew he spake, and not another, and to her in particular.

"Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away": The affectionate and endearing titles of "love" and "fair one", have been met with and explained (in SOS 1:5). And are repeated to show his ardent love to her, notwithstanding the frame she was in, which was very probably a slothful one, by the exhortations given. And to remove her discouragements, arising from her present state. And to prevail upon her to get up from her bed of carnal sloth and security, at least to shake off her indolence. And to quit her seat and company, and go along with him, or where he should direct, since it would be to her own advantage. For the words may be rendered, "rise up for thyself, and come away for thyself"; it will turn to thy account, and to do otherwise will be detrimental to thee.

This is speaking of the rapture of the church. His voice is what activates our spirit to rise and follow Him.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:" "Then we which are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Verses 11-13: Winter past, rains over, flowers appearing, and vines blooming use springtime as a picture of their robust, growing love for one another.

**Song of Solomon 2:11 "For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over [and] gone;"**

A season of the year which keeps people indoors, makes going abroad unsafe, unpleasant, and uncomfortable. Unfit for travelling, roads bad, rivers impassable, and journeying very difficult. But now this season being over, and the spring has come, the weather is fair, and everything is gay and pleasant, it is inviting to be abroad. Winter is by some writers used not for the season of the year, but for a storm or tempest. Thus, the winter and rain may be descriptive of the state and condition of Jews and Gentiles before the coming of Christ, and which then ceased. It having been a stormy dispensation with the one, and a time of darkness and ignorance with the other (Heb. 12:18).



Or rather it may in general represent the state of God's people both before and after conversion. Before conversion it is a time of darkness, coldness, barrenness, and unfruitfulness, and which are removed by the powerful and efficacious grace of Christ. And after conversion it is often a winter season with them, through the blustering winds of Satan's temptations. The storms of impending wrath for sin, as they imagine. And the nipping blasts of persecution, and sharp and severe afflictions they are at times exposed unto. Moreover, they are often in great darkness of soul, clouds inserted between Christ and them.

A great deal of coldness attends them. Their hearts are frozen up and hard, and no impression made on them by the preaching of the word, or by the providences of God. There is a coolness in their love to God and Christ, his people, ordinances, cause, and interest. Great barrenness and unfruitfulness in them, and they look like trees in winter, and with no appearance of fruit on them. Their hands are sealed up from working, and they become indolent and inactive. And by all these, fellowship with Christ is greatly interrupted. But, when the spring returns again, light breaks in upon them, and their hearts are melted with a sense of love. They become lively in their frames, and in the exercise of grace, and are fruitful in good works. And enjoy much calmness and serenity, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Sometimes they think the winter is not over when it is, and fear more storms are behind. Even of divine wrath and vengeance, though without reason. Since Christ has borne all wrath for them, and has satisfied law and justice, and has delivered them from wrath to come. And he that has done this says, "the winter is past"!

Between the time the Christians are carried away into heaven, and the return of Jesus with them to reign on the earth, the wrath of God falls. When Jesus comes back to the earth to reign, the entire earth will be like the garden of Eden. There will be no bad times, when Jesus is here caring for us. Sadness will be gone. Satan will be chained a thousand years.

**Song of Solomon 2:12 "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;"**

This and the following clauses are here shown as evidences of the spring time. Which in the mystical and principal sense seems to signify the day of grace. Or the glad tidings of salvation proposed to sinners in the time of the law, by types, and shadows, and promises. But much more clearly and fully in the gospel, and all the discoveries and communications of God's grace to mankind in holy ordinances. In the gifts, and graces, and comforts of the Holy Spirit, revealed unto and appearing in believers. As buds and blossoms do in the spring time.

"The time of the singing of birds": When birds sing most freely and sweetly, as they do in the spring. Or, as the ancient translator's render it, of cutting or cropping, not trees, which agrees not with that season, but the flowers, last mentioned, for nosegays, or other uses.

"The turtle": Which changes its place according to the season, as is observed (Jer. 8:7). And by all other writers, who affirm that it disappears in winter, and appears in the spring, as some other birds also do. But this seems particularly to be mentioned, because it not only gives notice of the spring, but also aptly represent the Spirit of God. Which even the Chaldee paraphrase understands by this turtle, which appeared in the shape of a dove. And which works a dove-like meekness, and chastity, and faithfulness in believers.

"In our land": In Immanuel's land, as Canaan is called (Isa. 8:8), in the church.

Notice, the flowers appear, as if they had been gone. This is a time of new beginnings with our King (Jesus Christ). This speaks of the earth as if it is a beautiful farmland. There will be perfect peace, because the King of peace will reign. This speaks of that 1000 year day (the sabbath of rest), that Jesus brings to all who believe.

**Song of Solomon 2:13 "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."**

Another sign of spring being come, or of its being pretty much advanced. Since Christ makes this a token of summer being at hand (Matt. 24:32).

“And the vines with the tender grape give a good smell”: And for the fruit of it, which is wholesome, pleasant, and delightful, as are the fruits of the Spirit, the fruits of grace and righteousness. And fruits meet for repentance, which ought to appear before a profession of religion is made.

Saints should bear fruit always, and ever continue to do so, even to old age. Nor do any ever become fruitful until their hearts have been pricked and cut by the word of God. And they never grow better, or are more fruitful, than when attended with afflictions and tribulations. When they first enter into the waters of affliction, like Peter, they sink, but, when more used to them, they lift up their heads above them, and bear up with great courage and resolution. By the "green figs" may be meant the beginnings of grace in the soul, some stirrings of affection to Christ, desires of knowledge of him. Panting and breathing after his ordinances, love to his people; all which appear soon, are very imperfect. And, like unripe figs, liable to be shaken off. And it is a miracle of grace that the first impressions of it are not destroyed by the force of corruption and temptation. And it may be observed, that grace in its first appearance, though but small, is not despised, but taken notice of by Christ. Yea, he makes use of it as exercised by young converts to stir up old professors, as here the church, to be more active and vigorous in it.

Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away; repeated from (SOS 2:10). Which shows sluggishness on the part of the church, that she needed one exhortation after another. And great love on the part of Christ, that notwithstanding this he persists in calling her; and even importunity in him, that he will have no denial: and it may be observed, that what is entertaining to most of the senses is mentioned to engage the church to arise and go along with her beloved. The flowery fields would be pleasing to her eye, the chirping birds to her ear, the sweet and ripening figs to her taste, and the refreshing odor of the vines to her smell.

The "fig tree" symbolizes the physical house of Israel. This then, is speaking of a new growth of physical Israel. Remember God had a remnant of the natural Israelite who came to Jesus. This is a renewing of them, as well as the followers of Jesus who are spiritual Israel. All who believe in Jesus, both Jew and Gentile, are included in this.

Verses 2:14-17: The church is Christ's dove; she returns to him, as her Noah. Christ is the Rock, in whom alone she can think herself safe. And find herself easy, as a dove in the hole of a rock, when struck at by the birds of prey. Christ calls her to come boldly to the throne of grace, having a great High Priest there, to tell what her request is. Speak freely, fear not a slight or a repulse. The voice of prayer is sweet and acceptable to God; those who are sanctified have the best comeliness. The first risings of sinful thoughts and desires, the beginnings of trifling pursuits which waste the time. Trifling visits, small departures from truth, whatever would admit some conformity to the world. All these, and many more, are little foxes which must be removed. This is a charge to believers to mortify their sinful appetites and passions, which are as little foxes. That destroy their graces and comforts, and crush good beginnings. Whatever we find a hindrance to us in that which is good, we must put away. He feedeth among the lilies. This shows Christ's gracious presence among believers. He is kind to all his people. It becomes them to believe this, when under desertion and absence, and so to ward off temptations. The shadows of the Jewish dispensation were dispelled by the dawning of the gospel day. And a day of comfort will come after a night of desertion. Come over the mountains of Bether, the mountains that divide, looking forward to that day of light and love. Christ will come over every separating mountain to take us home to himself.

**Song of Solomon 2:14 "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."**

The bridegroom is still addressing his beloved one, who has not yet come forth from the house in the rocks, though she has shown herself at the window. The language is highly poetical, and may be compared with similar words in Homer and Virgil. The Lord loveth the sight of his people. He delights in their songs and in their prayers. He is in the midst of their assemblies. Secret religion is not the highest religion. The highest emotions of the soul do not decrease in their power as they are expressed. They become more and more a ruling principle of life. There are many who need this encouragement to come forth out of secrecy, out of solitude, out of their own private home and individual thoughts. And realize the blessing of fellowship with the Lord and with his people.

We do know that the Lord hides us in the cleft of the rock. Of course, He is that Rock. He loves to hear our voices lifted in prayer, praise, and song to Him. We are a sweet sound in His ear. He loves to be with us, as we love to be with Him. There is sweet communion as with a bride and bridegroom.

**Song of Solomon 2:15 "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines [have] tender grapes."**

Of which there were great numbers in Judea (see Judges 15:4). These words are directed not to angels, nor to civil magistrates, but to ministers of the word. And therefore, calls upon her attendants and companions, to assist in taking and destroying those which were harmful to it. They seem to be the words of Christ since they not only show the care of his vines, the churches; but express power and authority over those they are spoken to. And perhaps they may be the words of them both jointly; since the church, with Christ, and under him, has a right to stir up her

officers to do their work, and fulfil their ministry, they have received of Christ for her service. The foxes are the false teachers, to whom the false prophets of old were compared (Ezek. 13:3). Foxes are crafty and subtle creatures, malignant and mischievous, hungry and voracious, full of deceit and dissimulation. Now ministers of the Gospel are ordered to take these, detect them, and refute their errors, and reprove them sharply for them. And, after proper steps are taken, to reject them, to cast them out of the vineyards, the churches, and keep them out.

"The little foxes": Heresies and heretics are to be nipped in the bud, before they increase to more ungodliness. Otherwise errors, which may seem small at first, soon grow larger and spread themselves, and become fatal to the churches.

"That spoil the vines": As foxes do, by gnawing the branches, biting the bark, making bare the roots, devouring the ripe grapes, and infecting all with their noxious teeth and vicious breath. So false teachers make divisions and schisms in churches; disturb their peace; unsettle some, and subvert others. And sap the foundation of religion, and corrupt the word of God.

"For our vines have tender grapes": Or "flowers" (See notes on SOS 2:13). The "vines" are the churches; the "tender grapes", or "flowers", young converts, which Christ has a particular regard unto (Isa. 40:11). And these, having but a small degree of knowledge, are more easily imposed upon and seduced by false teachers; and therefore, for their sakes, should be carefully watched, and vigorously opposed, since otherwise a promising vintage is in danger of being spoiled. Christ, in this address, intimates, that not only he and the church, but, he ministers also, had an interest in the vines and tender grapes, as they have (see SOS 8:11). And therefore, should be the more concerned for their welfare. Hence, he calls them "ours".

The "foxes" are speaking of the false teachers, demons, or subordinate devils. They are constantly attacking the "vines" (Christians). It is almost impossible to have new growth, because of the constant attack. This is a prayer for this attack to be taken away.

### **Song of Solomon 2:16 "My beloved [is] mine, and I [am] his: he feedeth among the lilies."**

These are the words of the bride, who having come to him upon his gracious invitation, now makes her boast of him. And of that intimate union and communion which was between them.

"He feedeth among the lilies": Either

- (1), He feeds his flock in sweet and lovely pastures, where there is not only herbage to feed them, but lilies to delight them. Or rather;
- (2), He feeds himself, i.e. he abideth and refreshes himself among his faithful people. Which are compared to lilies, above (verse 2:2; Hosea 14:5); as Christ also, is here (verse 2:1).

This is the bride speaking of the bridegroom (Jesus).

Hebrews 8:10 "For this [is] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:"

This is speaking of all Israel (both Jew and Gentile), who have accepted Jesus. This reminds me of the words of the song "In the Garden". It speaks of sweet fellowship with the Lord among the flowers. He walks and talks with His bride, as He walked with Adam and talked with Him in the garden of Eden. Fellowship is totally restored.

**Song of Solomon 2:17 "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."**

Until the morning of that blessed day of the general resurrection, when all the shadows, not only of ignorance, and sin, and calamity, but even of all ordinances, and outward administrations, shall cease.

"Turn, my beloved": Return to me. For although Christ had come to her, and she had gladly received him, yet he was gone again, as is here implied, and evidently appears from the following verse. Which sudden change is very agreeable to the state of God's people in this world. Where they are subject to frequent changes.

"And be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether": In swiftness; make haste to help me. The church desires Christ to be most ready to help her in all dangers. "Upon the mountains of Bether": A place in the land of promise, where it seems those creatures were in great abundance. If referring to his second coming, the spacious heavens may be meant, in which Christ will appear, and which now interpose and separate from his bodily presence. And therefore, the church importunately desires his coming with speed and swiftness, like a roe or a young hart, and be seen in them (see Rev. 22:10).

The day that breaks is that eternal day, where night never comes again. This is just another way of saying, come quickly Lord Jesus.

Romans 13:12 "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light."

2 Peter 1:19 "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:"

## **Song of Solomon Chapter 2 Questions**

1. Who is the Rose of Sharon?
2. Who is the Lily of the valley?

3. When we look at the beauty of nature, what does it do to us?
4. Where did the lily, in verse 2, grow?
5. What does that mean for us?
6. What happens to the tares in the parable?
7. What happens to the wheat?
8. What does "wood" symbolize?
9. What does the "banqueting house" show us?
10. His protection over His bride is \_\_\_\_\_.
11. What are the "flagons" of verse 5?
12. The left hand has to do with the \_\_\_\_\_.
13. Why is His left hand under the bride's head?
14. The right hand speaks of the \_\_\_\_\_.
15. This is a great mystery: but I speak of \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_.
16. What happens to the Mount of Olives, when Jesus steps on it as King?
17. In verse 9, where is the Lord?
18. What is verse 10 speaking of?
19. What happens on the earth, between the rapture of the church and Jesus' return as King?
20. Verse 12 speaks of the earth as if it were a beautiful \_\_\_\_\_.
21. The "fig tree" symbolizes \_\_\_\_\_.
22. Who is the Rock?
23. What does the Lord love for us to do, that is a sweet sound in His ear?
24. Who are the "foxes"?
25. Who are the "vines"?
26. What does verse 16 remind the author of?
27. What day is verse 17 speaking of?