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**Song of Solomon**

From Commentary on the Old Testament

C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch

adapted for Grace Notes training by Warren Doud
Song of Solomon - Keil and Delitzsch

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Song of Solomon

The Translator’s Preface

The volume now offered to students of the Bible completes the Keil and Delitzsch series of Commentaries on the Old Testament. Like those which have preceded, it is intended exclusively for theological students and scholars, with whom it cannot but gain a welcome reception, as a most important contribution to the right interpretation of those difficult portions of the sacred canon, whether the reader may agree with the conclusions of the learned author or not.

At the end of the original volume there are added three dissertations by Wetzstein. But as the commentary is in itself complete without those, they have been omitted with Dr. Delitzsch’s concurrence. I content myself by merely indicating here their import. In the first of them, Wetzstein aims at showing that the words פֶּלַח הָרִמֹּון, Song 4:3; 6:7, signify the slice (Spalt, Ritz) of a pomegranate = the inner surface of a sliced pomegranate. In the second, he argues that the Dudaim plant, Song 7:13, is not the mandragora vernalis of botanists, but the mandr. autumnalis, which begins to bud and blossom, as is the case with most of the Palestinian flora, about the time of the first winter rains in the month of November. The passage, הד׳ … ריח, he accordingly translates: “Already the mandragora apples give forth their fragrance,” i.e., are already ripe; because it is only the ripe apples that are fragrant. In the third dissertation, on Eccles. 12:5, he seeks to establish the translation of ויסתבל by יתבשל ... ההוב ...ジェヴラ by “And the almond tree flourisheth, and the locusts creep forth, and the wretched life is brought to dissolution.” The first two of these clauses, he holds, denote the season of the year [the beginning of the meteorological spring. The seven days from 25th February to 3rd March are called the ejam el-’agaiz, i.e., the (seven death-) days for old people], in which that which is said in the third (the death of the old man) takes place.

I cannot send forth this volume without expressing the deep obligation I am under to Dr. Delitzsch for his kindness in forwarding to me various important corrections and additions which I have incorporated in the translation, and for valuable suggestions with reference to it. This English edition may, from these circumstances, be almost regarded as a second edition of the original. I have done my best to verify the references, and to present a faithful rendering of the original, and in such a form as to allow the author to express himself in his own way, without violating the idiomatic structure of the language.

Abbreviations

The abbreviations and technical forms common to such critical works as this have been retained. These require no explanation. The colon (:) has been used, as in the original, to introduce a translation or a quotation. In the text criticisms, the following abbreviations have been used:—

F. = Cod. Francofurtensis of 1294, described by Delitzsch in his Preface to Baer’s edition of the Psalter of 1861 and 1874.

H. = Cod. Heidenheimii, a MS.

J. = Cod. Jamanensis, which was brought from South Arabia by Jacob Sappir, and passed into Baer’s possession. Vide, Delitzsch’s Preface to Baer’s edition of Isaiah, 1872.


D. = A parchment MS of the Song placed at Delitzsch’s disposal by Baer.

E, E, E, E = The four Erfurt Manuscripts.

Introduction to the Song of Solomon

The Song is the most obscure book of the Old Testament. Whatever principle of interpretation one may adopt, there always remains a number of inexplicable passages, and just such as, if we understood them, would help to solve the mystery. And yet the interpretation of a book presupposes from the beginning that
the interpreter has mastered the idea of the whole. It has thus become an ungrateful task; for however successful the interpreter may be in the separate parts, yet he will be thanked for his work only when the conception as a whole which he has decided upon is approved of. It is a love-poem. But why such a minne-song in the canon? This question gave rise in the first century, in the Jewish schools, to doubts as to the canonicity of the book. Yet they firmly maintained it; for they presupposed that it was a spiritual and not a secular love-poem. They interpreted it allegorically. The Targum paraphrases it as a picture of the history of Israel from the Exodus to the coming of the Messiah. The bride is the congregation of Israel; and her breasts, to quote one example, are interpreted of the Messiah in His lowliness and the Messiah in His glory. But "Solomon" is an anthropomorphic representation of Jahve Himself. And all the instances of the occurrence of the name, with one exception, are regarded as an indirect allegorical designation of the God of peace (vid., Norzi under 1:1). And because of its apparently erotic, but in truth mysterious contents, it was a Jewish saying, as Origen and Jerome mention, that the Song should not be studied by any one till he was thirty years of age (nisi quis aetatem sacerdotalis ministerii, id est, tricesimum annum impleverit). Because, according to the traditional Targ. interpretation, it begins with the departure out of Egypt, it forms a part of the liturgy for the eighth day of the Passover. The five Megilloths are arranged in the calendar according to their liturgical use.

In the church this synagogal allegorizing received a new turn. They saw represented in the Song the mutual love of Christ and His church, and it thus became a mine of sacred mysticism in which men have dug to the present day. Thus Origen explains it in twelve volumes. Bernhard of Clairvaux died (1153) after he had delivered eighty-six sermons on it, and had only reached the end of the second chapter; and his disciple Gilbert Porretanus carried forward the interpretation in forty-eight sermons only to 5:10, when he died.

Perluigi de Palestrina gained by his twenty-nine motettos on the Song (1584) the honoured name of Principe della Musica. In modern times this allegorico-mystical interpretation is represented in the department of exegesis (Hengst.), sermon (F. W. Krummacher), and poetry (Gustav Jahn), as well as of music (Neukomm's duet: Er und sie), and even of painting (Ludw. von Maydell).

If the Song is to be understood allegorically, then Shulamith is the personification of the congregation of Israel, and meditately of the church. All other interpretations fall below this. Hug (1813) understands by the "beloved" the kingdom of the ten tribes longing after a reunion with the house of David; and Heinr. Aug. Hahn (1852), the Japhetic heathendom. Ludw. Noack (1869) has even changed and modified the readings of the Heb. text, that he might find therein the ballads of a Tirhâka romance, i.e., a series of pictures of the events occurring between Samaria and her Aethiopian lover Tirhâka, of the years (B.C.) 702, 691, and 690. These are the aberrations of individuals. Only one other interpretation recommends itself. Solomon's chairisma and aim was the Chokma. The Peshito places over the Song the superscription חכמת דחכמתא. Is Shulamith, then, the personification of wisdom, like Dante’s Beatrice? Rosenmüller (1830) is the most recent representative of this view; we ought then to have in Dante’s Convito the key to the allegorical interpretation. He there sings sweet songs of love of his mistress Philosophy. But there is nothing in the description here to show that Shulamith is Wisdom. The one expression, "Thou shalt teach me" (Song 8:2), warns us against attempting to put Wisdom in the place of the church, as a reversal of the facts of the case.

But if one understands the church to be meant, there yet remains much that is inexplicable. Who are the sixty queens and the eighty concubines (Song 6:8)? And why are the heroes just sixty (Song 3:7)? The synagogal and church interpretation, in spite of two thousand years’ labour, has yet brought to light no sure results,
but only numberless absurdities, especially where the Song describes the lovers according to their members from head to foot and from foot to head. But notwithstanding all this, it is certain that the “great mystery” (Eph. 5:32) mirrors itself in the Song. In this respect it resembles the love of Joseph and Zuleikha, often sung by the Arabian poets, which is regarded by the mystics as a figure of the love of God towards the soul longing for union with Him. Shulamith is a historic personage; not the daughter of Pharaoh, as has been often maintained since the days of Theodore of Mopsuestia (died 429) and Abulfaraj (died 1286), but a country maiden of humble rank, who, by her beauty and by the purity of her soul, filled Solomon with a love for her which drew him away from the wantonness of polygamy, and made for him the primitive idea of marriage, as it is described in Gen. 3:23ff., a self-experienced reality. This experience he here sings, idealizing it after the manner of a poet; i.e., removing the husk of that which is accidental, he goes back to its kernel and its essential nature. We have before us six dramatic figures, each in two divisions, which represent from within the growth of this delightful relation to its conclusion. This sunny glimpse of paradisaical love which Solomon experienced, again became darkened by the insatiableness of passion; but the Song of Songs has perpetuated it, and whilst all other songs of Solomon have disappeared, the providence of God has preserved this one, the crown of them all. It is a protest against polygamy, although only in the measure one might expect from the Mosaic standpoint. For the Tôra recognises, indeed, in its primitive history monogamy as the original form (Matt. 19:4–6); but in its legislation, giving up the attempt to abolish polygamy, it is satisfied with its limitation (Deut. 17:17).

The Song celebrates paradisaical, but yet only natural love (minne). It stands, however, in the canon of the church, because Solomon is a type of Him of whom it can be said, “a greater than Solomon is here” (Matt. 12:12). Referred to Him the antitype, the earthly contents receive a heavenly import and glorification. We see therein the mystery of the love of Christ and His church shadowed forth, not, however, allegorically, but typically. The allegory has to coincide throughout with that which is represented; but the type is always only a type subtractis subtrahendis, and is exceedingly surpassed by the antitype. In this sense Jul. Sturm (1854) has paraphrased the Song under the title of “Zwei Rosen” (two roses) (the typical and the antitypical). When my monograph on the Song appeared (1851), a notice of it in Colani’s Revue de Theologie (1852) began with the frivolous remark: “Ce n’est pas la première rêverie de ce genre sur le livre en question; plût à Dieu que ce fût la dernières”; and Hitzig (1855) judged that “such a work might properly have remained unprinted; it represents nothing but a perverse inconsiderate literature which has no conception of scientific judgment and industry.” But this work (long since out of print and now rare) was the fruit of many years of study. The commentary here given is based on it, but does not put it out of date. It broke with the allegorizing interpretation, the untenableness of which appears against his will in Hengstenberg’s commentary (1853); it broke also with the theory which regards the poem as a history of Solomon’s unsuccessful seductive efforts to gain the Shulamite’s affections, a theory which Hitzig (1855) tries to exempt from the necessity of doing violence to the text by arbitrarily increasing the number of speakers and actors in the plot. I certainly succeeded in finding the right key to the interpretation of this work. Zöckler has recognised my book as presenting “the only correct interpretation of its design and contents.” Kingsbury, author of the notes on the Son in The Speaker’s Commentary, has expressed the same judgment. Poets such as Stadelmann (Das Hohelied, ein dramatisches Gedicht = The Song of Songs: a dramatic poem, 1870) and J. Koch, late pastor of St. Mary’s in Parchim (died 1873), have recognised in their beautiful German paraphrases my interpretation as natural and in conformity with the text; and for twenty years I have
constantly more and more seen that the solution suggested by me is the right and only satisfactory one.

Shulamith is not Pharaoh’s daughter. The range of her thoughts is not that of a king’s daughter, but of a rustic maiden; she is a stranger among the daughters of Jerusalem, not because she comes from a foreign land, but because she is from the country; she is dark-complexioned, not from the sun of her more southern home, but from the open sunshine to which she has been exposed as the keeper of a vineyard; in body and soul she is born to be a princess, but in reality she is but the daughter of a humble family in a remote part of Galilee; hence the child-like simplicity and the rural character of her thoughts, her joy in the open fields, and her longing after the quiet life of her village home. Solomon appears here in loving fellowship with a woman such as he had not found among a thousand (Eccles. 7:28); and although in social rank far beneath him, he raises her to an equality with himself. That which attached her to him is not her personal beauty alone, but her beauty animated and heightened by nobility of soul. She is a pattern of simple devotedness, naive simplicity, unaffected modesty, moral purity, and frank prudence,—a lily of the field, more beautifully adorned than he could claim to be in all his glory. We cannot understand the Song of Songs unless we perceive that it presents before us not only Shulamith’s external attractions, but also all the virtues which make her the idea of all that is gentlest and noblest in woman. Her words and her silence, her doing and suffering, her enjoyment and self-denial, her conduct as betrothed, as a bride, and as a wife, her behaviour towards her mother, her younger sister, and her brothers,—all this gives the impression of a beautiful soul in a body formed as it were from the dust of flowers. Solomon raises this child to the rank of queen, and becomes beside this queen as a child. The simple one teaches the wise man simplicity; the humble draws the king down to her level; the pure accustoms the impetuous to self-restraint. Following her, he willingly exchanges the bustle and the outward splendour of court life for rural simplicity, wanders gladly over mountain and meadow if he has only her; with her he is content to live in a lowly cottage. The erotic external side of the poem has thus an ethical background. We have here no “song of loves” (Ezek. 33:32) having reference to sensual gratification. The rabbinical proverb is right when it utters its threat against him who would treat this Song, or even a single verse of it, as a piece of secular literature. The Song transfigures natural but holy love. Whatever in the sphere of the divinely-ordered marriage relation makes love the happiest, firmest bond uniting two souls together, is presented to us here in living pictures. “The Song,” says Herder, “is written as if in Paradise. Adam’s song: Thou art my second self! Thou art mine own! echoes in it in speech and interchanging song from end to end.” The place of the book in the canon does not need any further justification; that its reception was favoured also by the supposition that it represented the intercourse between Jahve and the congregation of Israel, may be conjectured indeed, but is not established. The supposition, however, would have been false; for the book is not an allegory, and Solomon is by no means an Allegorumon of God. But the congregation is truly a bride (Jer. 2:2; Isa. 62:5), and Solomon a type of the Prince of peace ( Isa. 9:5; Luke 11:31), and marriage a mystery, viz., as a pattern of the loving relation of God and His Christ to the church ( Eph. 5:32). The Song has consequently not only a historico-ethical, but also a typico-mystical meaning. But one must be on his guard against introducing again the allegorical interpretation as Soltz (1850) has done, under the misleading title of the typical interpretation. The typical interpretation proceeds on the idea that the type and the antitype do not exactly coincide; the mystical, that the heavenly stamps itself in the earthly, but is yet at the same time immeasurably different from it. Besides, the historico-ethical interpretation is to be regarded as the proper business of the interpreter. But because Solomon is a type (vaticinium reale) of the spiritual David in his glory, and earthly love a
shadow of the heavenly, and the Song a part of 
sacred history and of canonical Scripture, we
will not omit here and there to indicate that the
love subsisting between Christ and His church
shadows itself forth in it.

But the prevailing view which Jacob (1771)
established, and which has predominated since
Umbreit (1820) and Ewald (1826), is different
from ours. According to them, the Song
celebrates the victory of the chaste passion
of conjugal love. The beloved of Shulamith is a
shepherd, and Solomon acts toward her a part
like that of Don Juan with Anna, or of Faust with
Gretchen. Therefore, of course, his authorship is
excluded, although Anton (1773), the second
oldest representative of this so-called shepherd
hypothesis, supposes that Solomon at a later
period of his life recognised his folly, and now
here magnanimously praises the fidelity of
Shulamith, who had spurned his enticements
away from her; and a Jewish interpreter, B.
Holländer (1871), following Hezel (1780),
supposes that Solomon represents himself as
an enticer, only to exhibit the idea of female
virtue as triumphing over the greatest
seduction. Similarly also Godet (1867), who,
resting on Ewald, sees here a very complicated
mystery presented by Solomon himself, and
pointing far beyond him: Solomon, the earthly
Messiah; Shulamith, the true Israel; the
shepherd, Jahve, and as Jahve who is about to
come, the heavenly Solomon; the little sisters,
heathenism—it is the old allegory, able for
everything, only with changed names and a
different division of the parts which here comes
in again by the back-door of the seduction-
history.

Thus this seduction-history has not put an end
to the over-ingenious allegorizing. In one point,
however, at least, it has aided in the
understanding of the Song. Herder saw in the
Song a collection of Solomonic songs of love,
which he translated (1778), as the oldest and
the most beautiful, from the Orient. But Goethe,
who in the Westöst. Divan (1819) praises the
Song as the most divine of all love-songs,
recognised, after the appearance of Umbreit’s
Comm., the unity also of the “inexplicably
mysterious.”

We are not conscious of any prejudice which
makes it impossible for us to do justice to the
interpretation to which Umbreit and Ewald
gave currency. It abundantly accounts for the
reception of the book into the canon, for so
interpreted it has a moral motive and aim. And
the personality of Solomon has certainly not
merely a bright side, which is typical, but also a
dark side, which is pregnant with dark issues
for his kingdom; it may perhaps be possible
that in the Song the latter, and not the former, is
brought to view. Then, indeed, the inscription
would rest on an error; for that in this case also
the Solomonic authorship could be maintained,
is an idea which, in the traditional-apologetical
interest, mounts up to a faith in the impossible.
But the truth goes beyond the tradition; the
inscription would then indicate a traditional
interpretation which, as is evident from the
book itself, does not correspond with its
original meaning and aim. “It is clear to every
unprejudiced mind,” says Gustav Baur, “that in
2:10–15; 4:8–15, a different person speaks
from the royal wooer; for (1) Solomon only
says, ’my friend’ [1:15, etc.]; while, on the other
hand, the shepherd heaps up flattering words of
warmest love; (2) Solomon praises only the
personal beauty of the woman; the shepherd,
the sweet voice, the enchanting look, the warm
love, the incorruptible chastity of his
beloved;—in short, the former reveals the eye
and the sensuousness of the king; the latter, the
heart of a man who is animated by the divine
flame of true love.” We only ask, meanwhile,
whether words such as 4:13 are less sensuous
than 4:5, and
whether the image of the twin
gazelles is not more suitable in the mouth of the
shepherd than the comparison of the
attractions of Shulamith with the exotic plants
of Solomon’s garden? “In three passages,” says
Godet, “lies open the slender thread which
Ewald’s penetrating eye discovered under the
flowers and leaves which adorn the poem: ‘The
kings has brought me into his palace’ (Song
1:4); ‘I knew not how my heart has brought me
to the chariots of a princely people’ (Song 6:12);
'I was a wall, and have found peace before his eyes' (Song 8:10). The same critic also finds in several passages an apparent contrariety between Solomon and the shepherd. "Observe," says he, "e.g., 1:12, 13, where the shepherd—who Shulamith calls her spikenard, and compares to a bunch of flowers on her breast—is placed over against the king, who sits on his divan; or 7:9f. where, suddenly interrupting the king, she diverts the words which he speaks concerning herself to her beloved; or 8:7, where, leaning on the arm of her beloved, she expresses her disregard for riches, with which Solomon had sought to purchase her love." But spikenard is not the figure of the shepherd, not at all the figure of a man; and she who is praised as a "prince’s daughter" (Song 7:2) cannot say (Song 6:12) that, enticed by curiosity to see the royal train, she was taken prisoner, and now finds herself, against her will, among the daughters of Jerusalem; and he whom she addresses (Song 8:12) can be no other than he with whom she now finds herself in her parents’ home. The course of the exposition will show that the shepherd who is distinguished from Solomon is nothing else than a shadow cast by the person of Solomon. The Song is a dramatic pastoral. The ancients saw in it a *carmen bucolicum mimicum*. Laurentius Pteræus, in his Heb.-Danish Paraphrase (1640), calls it *carmen bucolicum, ὄμοσβαίον δραματικόν*; George Wachter (1722), an "opera divided into scenic parts." It acquires the character of a pastoral poem from this, that Shulamith is a shepherdess, that she thinks of Solomon as a shepherd, and that Solomon condescends to occupy the sphere of life and of thought of the shepherdess. It is not properly an idyll, nor yet properly a drama. Not an idyll, because the life-image which such a miniature drawn from life—such, e.g., as the Adon. of Theocritus presents to us—unfolds itself within a brief time without interruption; in the Song, on the other hand, not merely are the places and persons interchanged, but also the times. The whole, however, does not fall into little detached pictures; but there runs through this wreath of figures a love-relation, which embodies itself externally and internally before our eyes, and attains the end of its desire, and shows itself on the summit of this end as one that is not merely sensuous, but moral. The Song is certainly not a theatrical piece: the separate pieces would necessarily have been longer if the poet had had in view the changes of theatrical scenery. But at all events the theatre is not a Semitic institution, but is of Indo-Persian Greek origin. Jewish poetry attempted the drama only after it began in Alexandrinism to emulate Greece. Grätz’ (1871) polemic against the dramatists is so far justified. But yet we see, as in the Book of Job, so in the Song, the drama in process of formation from the lyric and narrative form of poetry, as it has developed among the Greeks from the lyric, and among the Indians from the epic. In the Book of Job the colloquies are all narrative. In the Song this is never the case; for the one expression, “answered my beloved, and said to me” (Song 2:10), is not to be compared with, “and Job answered and said:” the former expression indicates a monologue. And in the “Daughters of Jerusalem” (Song 1:5, etc.) we have already something like the chorus of the Greek drama. The ancient Greek MSS bear involuntary testimony to this dramatic character of the Song. There are several of them which prefix to the separate addresses the names of the persons speaking, as ἡ γυνὴ ὁ ἄρης. And the Aethiopic translation makes five separate pieces, probably, as the Cod. Sinait. shows, after the example of the LXX, which appear as divisions into Acts. The whole falls into the following six Acts:—

1. The mutual affection of the lovers, 1:2–2:7, with the conclusion, “I adjure you, ye daughters of Jerusalem.”

2. The mutual seeking and finding of the lovers, 2:8–3:5, with the conclusion, “I adjure you, ye daughters of Jerusalem.”

3. The fetching of the bride, and the marriage, 3:6–5:1, beginning with, “Who is this …?” and ending with, “Drink and be drunken, beloved.”

(5.) Shulamith the attractively fair but humble princess, 6:10–8:4, beginning with, “Who is this ... ?” and ending with, "I adjure you, ye daughters of Jerusalem."

(6.) The ratification of the covenant of love in Shulamith’s home, 8:5–14, beginning with, "Who is this ... ?"

Zöckler reckons only five acts, for he comprehends 5:2–8:4 in one; but he himself confesses its disproportionate length; and the reasons which determine him are invalid; for the analogy of the Book of Job, which, besides, including the prologue and the epilogue, falls into seven formal parts, can prove nothing and the question, "Who is this?" 6:10, which he interprets as a continuation of the encomium in 6:9, is rather to be regarded, like 3:8; 8:5, as a question with reference to her who is approaching, and as introducing a new act; for the supposition that 6:9 requires to be further explained by a statement of what was included in the “blessing” and the “praising” is unwarranted, since these are ideas requiring no supplement to explain them (Gen. 30:13; Ps. 41:3; 107:32), and the poet, if he had wished to explain the praise as to its contents, would have done this otherwise (cf. Prov. 31:28f.) than in a way so fitted to mislead. Rightly, Thrupp (1862) regards 6:10 as the chorus of the daughters of Jerusalem. He divides as follows: (1) The Anticipation, 1:2–2:7; (2) the Awaiting, 2:8–3:5; (3) the Espousal and its Results, 3:6–5:1; (4) the Absence, 5:2–8; (5) the Presence, 5:9–8:4; (6) Love’s Triumph, 8:5–12, with the Conclusion, 8:13, 14. But how can 5:9 begin a new formal part? It is certainly the reply to Shulamith’s adoration the daughters of Jerusalem. He divides as follows: (1) The Anticipation, 1:2–2:7; (2) the Awaiting, 2:8–3:5; (3) the Espousal and its Results, 3:6–5:1; (4) the Absence, 5:2–8; (5) the Presence, 5:9–8:4; (6) Love’s Triumph, 8:5–12, with the Conclusion, 8:13, 14. But how can 5:9 begin a new formal part? It is certainly the reply to Shulamith’s adoration the daughters of Jerusalem, and not at all the commencement of a new scene, much less of a new act.

The first scene of the first act I formerly (1851) extended to 1:17, but it reaches only to 1:8; for up to this point Solomon is absent, but with 1:9 he begins to converse with Shulamith, and the chorus is silent—the scene has thus changed. Kingsbury in his translation (1871) rightly places over 1:9 the superscription, “The Entrance of the King.”

The change of scenery is not regulated in accordance with stage decoration, for the Song is not a theatrical piece. The first act is played both in the dining-room and in the wine-room appertaining to the women of the royal palace. In the second act, Shulamith is again at home. In the third act, which represents the marriage, the bride makes her entrance into Jerusalem from the wilderness, and what we further then hear occurs during the marriage festival. The locality of the fourth act is Jerusalem, without being more particularly defined. That of the fifth act is the park of Etam, and then Solomon’s country house there. And in the sixth act we see the newly-married pair first in the way to Shulem, and then in Shulamith’s parental home. In the first half of the dramatic pictures, Shulamith rises to an equality with Solomon; in the second half, Solomon descends to an equality with Shulamith. At the close of the first, Shulamith is at home in the king’s palace; at the close of the second, Solomon is at home with her in her Galilean home.

In our monograph on the Song (1851), we believe we have proved that it distinctly bears evidences of its Solomonic origin. The familiarity with nature, the fulness and extent of its geographical and artistic references, the mention made of so many exotic plants and foreign things, particularly of such objects of luxury as the Egyptian horses, point to such an authorship; in common with Ps. 72, it has the multiplicity of images taken from plants; with the Book of Job, the dramatic form; with the Proverbs, manifold allusions to Genesis. If not the production of Solomon, it must at least have been written near his time, since the author of Prov. 1–9, the introduction to the older Book of Proverbs, for the origin of which there is no better defined period than that of Jehoshaphat (909–883 B.C.), and the author or authors of the supplement (Prov. 22:17–24:22), reveal an acquaintance with the Song. Ewald also, and Hitzig, although denying that Solomon is the author because it is directed against him, yet see in it a produce of the most flourishing state of the language and of the people; they ascribe it to a poet of the northern kingdom about 950.
B.C. Modern Jewish criticism surpasses, however, on the field of O.T. history, the anachronisms of the Tübingen school. As Zunz has recently (Deut. Morgenl. Zeitsch. xxvii.) sought to show that the Book of Leviticus was written about a thousand years after Moses, that there never was a prophet Ezekiel, that the dates of this book are fictitious, etc.; so Grätz attempts to prove that the Song in its Graecising language and Greek customs and symbols bears evidences of the Syro-Macedonian age; that the poet was acquainted with the idylls of Theocritus and the Greek erotic poets, and, so far as his Hellenistic standpoint admitted, imitates them; and that he placed an ideal picture of pure Jewish love over against the immorality of the Alexandrine court and its Hellenistic partisans, particularly of Joseph b. Tobia, the collector of taxes in the time of Ptolemy Euergetes (247–221 B.C.),—a picture in which “the Shepherd,” now grown into a fixed idea, renders welcome service, in contrast to Solomon, in whom the poet glances at the court of Alexandria. One is thus reminded of Kirschbaum (1833), who hears in Ezek. 33:5 an echo of Cicero’s dixi et salvavi animam, and in the Song 2:17, a reference to the Bethar of Barcochba. We do not deny the penetration which this chief of Jewish historians has expended on the establishment of his hypothesis; but the same penetration may prove that the Babylon-Assyr. “syllabaries” of the time of Asurbanipal (667–626) belong to the Greek era, because there occurs therein the word azamillav (knife), and this is the Greek σμήνα; or that the author of Prov. 1–9 alludes in 7:23 to Eros and his quivers, and in 9:1 betrays a knowledge of the seven artes liberales.

Parallels to the Song are found wherever sensuous love is sung, also in the Pastoralia of Longus, without the least dependence of one author upon another. And if such a relation is found between Theocritus and the Song, then it might rather be concluded that he became acquainted with it in Alexandria from Jewish literates, than that the author of the Song has imitated Greek models, as Immanuel Romi, the Arabians and Dante; besides, it is not at all the Song lying before us which Grätz expounds, but the Song modified by violent corrections of all kinds, and fitted to the supposed tendency. Thus he changes (Song 1:3) שְׁמָנֶּה (thine unguent) into בְּשָמִי, and שֶּמֶּן תּוּרַק (ointment poured forth) into שֶּם תַּמְרַק. Shulamith says this of her beautiful shepherd, and what follows (Song 1:4) the damsels say to him; he changes משכני into משכנו, הביאני into הביאנו, and then remarks: “Shulamith mentions it as to the praise of her beloved, that the damsels, attracted by his beauty, love him, and say to him, ‘Draw us, we will run after thee; though the king brought us into his changers, we would rejoice only with thee, and prefer thee to the king.’ ” His too confident conjectural criticism presents us with imaginary words, such as (Song 3:10) אֲהָבִים (ebony); with unfortunate specimens of style, such as (Song 6:10), “Thou hast made me weak, O daughter of Aminadab;” and with unheard-of renderings, such as (Song 8:5), “There where thy mother has wounded thee;” for he supposes that Shulamith is chastised by her mother because of her love. This Song is certainly not written by Solomon, nor yet does it date from the Syro-Macedonian time, but was invented in Breslau in the 19th century of our era!

Grätz (1871) has placed yet farther down than the Song the Book of Ecclesiastes, in which he has also found Graecisms; the tyrannical king therein censured is, as he maintains, Herod the Great, and the last three verses (Eccl. 12:12–14) are not so much the epilogue of the book as that of the Hagiographa which closes with it. Certainly, if this was first formed by the decision of the conference in Jerusalem about 65, and of the synod in Jabne about 90, and the reception of the Books of Ecclesiastes and the Song was carried not without controversy, then it lies near to regard these two books as the most recent, originating not long before. But the fact is this: We learn from Jud-aqim iii. 5, iv. 6, cf. Edujoth v. 3, that in the decade before the destruction of Jerusalem the saying was current among the disciples of Hillel and Shammai, that...
“all Holy Scriptures (Kethubîm) pollute the hands;” but that the question whether Ecclesiastes is included was answered in the negative by the school of Shamai, and in the affirmative by the school of Hillel—of the Song nothing is here said. But we learn further, that several decades later the Song also was comprehended in this controversy along with Ecclesiastes; and in an assembly of seventy-two doctors of the law in Jabne, that decree, “all Holy Scriptures (Kethubîm) pollute the hands,” was extended to Ecclesiastes and the Song. R. Akiba (or some one else) asserted, in opposition to those who doubted the canonicity of the Song, “No day in the whole history of the world is so much worth as that in which the Song of Songs was given; for all the Ketubîm are holy, but the Song of Songs is most holy.” From this Grätz draws the conclusion that the Hagiographa was received as canonical for the first time about 65, and that its canon was finally fixed so as to include Ecclesiastes and the Song, not till about 90; but this conclusion rests on the false supposition that “Holy Scriptures” (Kethubîm) is to be understood exclusive of the Hagiographa, which is just as erroneous as that Sephârim designates the prophets, with the exclusion of the Hagiographa. Holy Kethubîm is a general designation, without distinction, of all the canonical books, e.g., Bathra i. 6, and Sepharîm in like manner, with the exception only of the Tôra, Megilla i. 8, 333. 1, Shabbath 115b. And it rests on a misapprehension of the question discussed: the question was not whether Ecclesiastes and the Song should be admitted, but whether they had been justly admitted, and whether the same sacred character should be ascribed to them as to the other holy writings; for in Bathra 14b -15a (without a parallel in the Palest. Talmud) the enriching of the canon by the addition of the Books of Isaiah, Proverbs, the Song, and Ecclesiastes, is ascribed to the Hezekiah-Collegium (Prov. 21:5), and thus is dated back in the period before the rise of the great synagogue. That Philo does not cite the Song proves nothing; he cites none of the five Megilloth. But Josephus (C. Ap. 1, § 8; cf. Euseb. H. E. iii. 10), since he enumerates five books of the Mosaic law, thirteen books of prophetic history and prediction, and four books of a hymno-ethical character, certainly means by these four the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song, which in the Alexandrine canon stand thus connected. His work, Cont. Apion, was not indeed written till about 100 A.D.; but Josephus there speaks of a fact which had existed for centuries. The Song and Ecclesiastes formed part of the sacred books among the Hellenists as well as among the Palestinian Jews of the first Christian century; but, as those Talmud notices show, not without opposition. The Old Testament canon, as well as that of the New Testament, had then also its Antilegomena. These books were opposed not because of their late origin, but because their contents apparently militated against the truth of revelation and the spiritual nature of revealed religion. Similar doubts, though not so strong and lasting, were also uttered with reference to Proverbs, Esther, and Ezekiel.

The history of the exposition of this book is given in detail by Christian D. Ginsburg in The Song of Songs, London 1857; and by Zöckler in “The Song,” forming part of Lange’s Bibelwerk, 1868, and supplemented by an account of the English interpretations and translations in the Anglo-American translation of this work by Green. Zunz, in the preface to Rebenstein’s (Bernstein’s) Lied der Lieder, 1834, has given an historical account of the Jewish expositors. Steinschneider’s הימיכר (Heb. Bibliograph. 1869, p. 110ff.) presents a yet fuller account of the Jewish commentaries. The Münich royal library contains a considerable number of these,—e.g., by Moses b. Tibbon, Shemariah, Immanuel Romi, Moses Calais (who embraced Christianity). Our commentary presents various new contributions to the history of the interpretation of this book. No other book of Scripture has been so much abused, by an unscientific spiritualizing, and an over-scientific unspiritual treatment, as this has. Luther says, at the close of his exposition: Quosdi erro, veniam meretur primus labor, nam aliorum...
cogitationes longe plus absurditatis habent. To inventory the maculatur of these absurdities is a repulsive undertaking, and, in the main, a useless labour, from which we absolve ourselves.

Song of Solomon 1

Song 1:1. The title of the book at once denotes that it is a connected whole, and is the work of one author.—Ch. 1:1. The Song of Songs, composed by Solomon. The genitival connection, “Song of Songs,” cannot here signify the Song consisting of a number of songs, any more than calling the Bible “The Book of books” leads us to think of the 24 + 27 canonical books of which it consists. Nor can it mean “one of Solomon’s songs;” the title, as it here stands, would then be the paraphrase of שִיר שִירֵי שְׁ׳, chosen for the purpose of avoiding the redoubled genitives; but “one of the songs” must rather have been expressed by שִיר מִשִירֵי. It has already been rightly explained in the Midrash: “the most praiseworthy, most excellent, most highly-treasured among the songs.” The connection is superl. according to the sense (cf. ἡ ὡς Σόλωμος ὁ μεγάλος Σοφοκλος), and signifies that song which, as such, surpasses the songs one and all of them; as “servant of servants,” Gen. 9:25, denotes a servant who is such more than all servants together. The plur. of the second word is for this superl. sense indispensable (vid., Dietrich’s Abhandl. zur hebr. Gramm. p. 12), but the article is not necessary: it is regularly wanting where the complex idea takes the place of the predicate, Gen. 9:25, Ex. 29:37, or of the inner member of a genitival connection of words, Jer. 3:19; but it is also wanting in other places, as Ezek. 16:7 and Eccles. 1:2; 12:8, where the indeterminate plur. denotes not totality, but an unlimited number; here it was necessary, because a definite Song—that, namely, lying before us—must be designated as the paragon of songs. The relative clause, “asher lishlômē,” does not refer to the single word “Songs” (Gr. Venet. τῶν τούτων), as it would if the expression were שִיר אשֶר, but to the whole idea of “the Song of Songs.” A relative clause of similar formation and reference occurs at 1 Kings 4:2: “These are the princes, asher lo, which belonged to him (Solomon).” They who deny the Solomonic authorship usually explain: The Song of Songs which concerns or refers to Solomon, and point in favour of this interpretation to LXX B. ὁ ὡς Σολωμος, which, however, is only a latent genit., for which LXX A. τῷ Σολωμος. Lamed may indeed introduce the reference of a writing, as at Jer. 23:9; but if the writing is more closely designated as a “Song,” “Psalm,” and the like, then Lamed with the name of a person foll. is always the Lamed auctoris; in this case the idea of reference to, as e.g., at Isa. 1:1, cf. 1 Kings 5:13, is unequivocally expressed by ה. We shall find that the dramatized history which we have here, or as we might also say, the fable of the melodrama and its dress, altogether correspond with the traits of character, the favourite turns, the sphere of vision, and the otherwise well-known style of authorship peculiar to Solomon. We may even suppose that the superscription was written by the author, and thus by Solomon himself. For in the superscription of the Proverbs he is summed “son of David, king of Israel,” and similarly in Ecclesiastes. But he who entitles him merely “Solomon” is most probably himself. On the other hand, that the title is by the author himself, is not favoured by the fact that instead of the ה, everywhere else used in the book, the fuller form asher is employed. There is the same reason for this as for the fact that Jeremiah in his prophecies always uses asher, but in the Lamentations interchanges ה with asher. This original demonstrative ה is old-Canaanitish, as the Phoenician ה, arrested half-way toward the form asher, shows. In the Book of Kings it appears as a North Palest. provincialism, to the prose of the pre-exilian literature it is otherwise foreign; but the pre-exilian shir and kinah (cf. also Job 19:29) make use of it as an ornament. In the post-exilian literature it occurs in poetry (Ps. 122:3, etc.) and in prose (1 Chron. 5:20; 27:27); in Ecclesiastes it is already a component part of
the rabbinism in full growth. In a pre-exilian book-title ש in place of asher is thus not to be expected. On the other hand, in the Song itself it is no sign of a post-exilian composition, as Grätz supposes. The history of the language and literature refutes this.

**First Act**

**The Mutual Affection of the Lovers—Ch. 1:2–2:7**

The first act of the melodrama, which presents the loving relationship in the glow of the first love, now opens, 1:5, 6, are evidently the words of Shulamith. Here one person speaks of herself throughout in the singular. But in vv. 2–4 one and several together speak. Ewald also attributes vv. 2–4 to Shulamith, as words spoken by her concerning her shepherd and to him. She says, "Draw me after thee, so will we run," for she wishes to be brought by him out of Solomon's court. But how can the praise, "an ointment poured forth is thy name," —an expression which reminds us of what is said of Solomon, 1 Kings 5:11 [1 Kings 4:31], "and his fame was in all nations round about,"—be applicable to the shepherd? How could Shulamith say to the shepherd, "virgins love thee," and including herself with others, say to him also, "we will exult and rejoice in thee"? on which Ewald remarks: it is as if something kept her back from speaking of herself alone. How this contradicts the psychology of love aiming at marriage! This love is jealous, and does not draw in rivals by head and ears. No; in vv. 2–4 it is the daughters of Jerusalem, whom Shulamith addresses in v. 5, who speak. The one who is praised is Solomon. The ladies of the palace are at table (vid., under v. 12), and Solomon, after whom she who is placed amid this splendour which is strange to her asks longingly (v. 7), is not now present. The two pentastichal strophes, vv. 2–4, are a scholion, the table song of the ladies; the solo in both cases passes over into a chorus.

**Song 1:2.** From these words with which as a solo the first strophe begins:

Let him kiss me with kisses of his mouth, we at once perceive that she who here speaks is only one of many among whom Solomon's kisses are distributed; for min is partitive, as e.g., Ex. 16:27 (cf. Jer. 48:32 and Isa. 16:9), with the underlying phrase יַשְׁקֵנִי, ἱ σ ὶ ἐ ἔ ες, for יָשִׁיקַנְי is the parallel form of יָשִׁיק, and is found in prose as well as in poetry; it is here preferred for the sake of the rhythm. Böttcher prefers, with Hitzig, ἱ σ ὶ ἐ ἔ ες ("let him give me to drink"); but "to give to drink with kisses" is an expression unsupported. In line 2 the expression changes into an address:

For better is thy love than wine.

Instead of "thy love," the LXX render "thy breasts," for they had before them the word written defectively as in the traditional text, and read דְּדֵי. Even granting that the dual דְּדֵי or דְּדַיִם could be used in the sense of the Greek μαστοί (Rev. 1:13), of the breasts of a man (for which Isa. 32:12, Targ., furnishes no sufficient authority); yet in the mouth of a woman it were unseemly, and also is itself absurd as the language of praise. But, on the other hand, that דְּדַיִם is not the true reading ("for more lovely—thus he says to me—are," etc.), R. Ismael rightly says, in reply to R. Akiba, *Aboda zara* 29b, and refers to שְׁמַנְי following (v. 3), which requires the mas. for דְּדַיִם. Rightly the Gr. Venet. οἱ οἱ ἐστέρεσε, for דְּדַיִם is related to עָשָׁב, almost as ἐστέρεσε to αὐγά, *Minne* to Liebe. It is a plur. like יִבְיַיִם, which, although a *pluraletantum*, is yet connected with the plur. of the pred. The verbal stem דָּדָד is an abbreviated reduplicative stem (Ewald, § 118. 1); the root בר appears to signify "to move by thrusts or pushes" (vid., under Ps. 42:5); of a fluid, "to cause to boil up," to which the word דְּדָד, a kitchen-pot, is referred. It is the very same verbal stem from which דָּדָד (David),
the beloved, and the name of the foundress of Carthage, [דִידִון] Minna, is derived. The adj. tov appears here and at 3a twice in its nearest primary meaning, denoting that which is pleasant to the taste and (thus particularly in Arab.) to the smell.

Song 1:3. This comparison suaves prae vino, as well as that which in line 3 of the pentastich, v. 3,

To the smell thy ointments are sweet, shows that when this song is sung wine is presented and perfumes are sprinkled; but the love of the host is, for those who sing, more excellent than all. It is maintained that רֵיחַ signifies fragrance emitted, and not smell. Hence Hengst., Hahn, Hölem., and Zöckl explain: in odour thy ointments are sweet. Now the words can certainly, after Josh. 22:10, Job 32:4, 1 Kings 10:23, mean “sweet in (of) smell;” but in such cases the word with Lamed of reference naturally stands after that to which it gives the nearer reference, not as here before it. Therefore Hengst.: ad odorem unguentorem tuorum quod attinet bonus est, but such giving prominence to the subject and attraction (cf. 1 Sam. 2:4a; Job 15:20) exclude one another; the accentuation correctly places לְרֵיחַ out of the gen. connection. Certainly this word, like the Arab. ryḥ, elsewhere signifies odor, and the Hiph. לִרְיחַ (arah) odorari; but why should not לְרֵיחַ be also used in the sense of odoratus, since in the post-bibl. Heb. לְרֵיחַ means the sense of smell, and also in Germ. “riechen” means to emit fragrance as well as to perceive fragrance? We explain after Gen. 2:9, where Lamed introduces the sense of sight, as here the sense of smell. Zöckl. and others reply that in such a case the word would have been לְךַלְיִיחַ but the art. is wanting also at Gen. 2:9 (cf. 3:6), and was not necessary, especially in poetry, which has the same relation to the art. as to asher, which, wherever practicable, is omitted.

Thus in line 4:

An ointment poured forth is thy name.

By “thy ointments,” line 3, spices are meant, by which the palace was perfumed; but the fragrance of which, as line 4 says, is surpassed by the fragrance of his name. שֵם (name) and שֵּם (fragrance) form a paranomasia by which the comparison is brought nearer Eccles. 7:1. Both words are elsewhere mas.; but sooner than שֵם, so frequently and universally mas. (although its plur. is שֶׁם, but cf. אֱ ======= אֱ may be used as fem., although a parallel example is wanting (cf. dvāsh, mōr, nōphĕth, kēmah, and the like, which are constantly mas.). Ewald therefore translates שֵּם חַדִּיר as a proper name: “O sweet Salbenduft” [Fragrance of Ointment]; and Böttcher sees in turāk a subst. in the sense of “sprinkling” [Spreng-Oel ]; but a name like “Rosenoel” [oil of roses] would be more appropriately formed, and a subst. form is, in Heb. at least, unexampled (for neither מחר or שֶׁם, but nor שֶּם, in the name Tubal-Cain, is parallel).

Fürst imagines “a province in Palestine where excellent oil was got,” called Turak; “Turkish” Rosenöl recommends itself, on the contrary, by the fact of its actual existence. Certainly less is hazarded when we regard שֵּם, as here treated exceptionally, as fem.; thus, not: ut unguentum nomen tuum effunditur, which, besides, is unsuitable, since one does not empty out or pour out a name; but: unguentum quod effunditur (Hengst., Hahn, and others), an ointment which is taken out of its depository and is sprinkled far and wide, is thy name. The harsh expression שֵּם מוּרָק is intentionally avoided; the old Heb. language is not φ λ  έ  χ ς (fond of participles); and, besides, מַּרְק sounds badly withبارك, to rub off, to wash away. Perhaps, also, שֵּם יוּרַק is intentionally avoided, because of the collision of the weak sounds n and j. The name Shēm is derived from the verb shāmā, to be high, prominent, remarkable: whence also the name for the heavens (vid., under Ps. 8:2). That attractive charm (lines 2, 3), and this glory (line 4), make
him, the praised, an object of general love, line 5, v. 3b:

Therefore virgins love thee.

This “therefore” reminds us of Ps. 45. עֲלָמות (sing, Isa. 7:14), from עָלַם (Arab.), ghalima, pubescere, are maidens growing to maturity. The intrans. form אֲהֵב, with transitive signification, indicates a pathos. The perf. is not to be translated dilexerunt, but is to be judged of according to Gesen. § 126. 3: they have acquired love to thee (= love thee), as the ἠγάπησά σε of the Greek translators is to be understood. The singers themselves are the evidence of the existence of this love.

With these words the first pentastich of the table-song terminates. The mystical interpretation regards it as a song of praise and of loving affection which is sung to Christ the King, the fairest of the children of men, by the church which is His own. The Targum, in line first, thinks of the “mouth to mouth” [Num. 12:8] in the intercourse of Moses with God. Evidence of divine love is also elsewhere thought of as a kiss: the post-bibl. Heb. calls the gentlest death the death בֵּנְשִׁיק, i.e., by which God takes away the soul with a kiss.

**Song 1:4.** The second pentastich also begins with a solo:

4  **Draw me, so will we run after thee.**

All recent interpreters (except Böttcher) translate, like Luther, “Draw me after thee, so we run.” Thus also the Targ., but doubtfully: Trahe nos post te et curremus post viam bonitatis tuae. But the accentuation which gives Tiphcha to וִיתְפְחַת requires the punctuation to be that adopted by the Peshito and the Vulg., and according to which the passage is construed by the Greeks (except, perhaps, by the Quinta): Draw me, so will we, following thee, run (vid., Dachseit, Biblia Accentuata, p. 983 s.). In reality, this word needs no complement: of itself it already means, one drawing towards, or to himself; the corresponding (Arab.) masak signifies, prehendere prehensumque tenere; the root is מָשְׁךָ, palpare, contractare. It occurs also elsewhere, in a spiritual connection, as the expression of the gentle drawing of love towards itself (Hos. 11:4; Jer. 31:3; cf. ἐξομολογήσεσθαι, John 6:44; 12:32. If one connects “after thee” with “draw me,” then the expression seems to denote that a certain violence is needed to bring the one who is drawn from her place; but if it is connected with “we will run,” then it defines the desire to run expressed by the cohortative, more nearly than a willing obedience or following. The whole chorus, continuing the solo, confesses that there needs only an indication of his wish, a direction given, to make those who here speak eager followers of him whom they celebrate.

In what follows, this interchange of the solo and the unisono is repeated:

4b  **If the king has brought me into his chambers,**

    So will we exult and rejoice in thee.

    We will praise thy love more than wine!

    Uprightly have they loved thee.

The cohortative וְרָצָה (we will run) was the *apodosis imperativi*; the cohortatives here are the *apodosis perfecti hypothetici*. “Suppose that this has happened,” is oftener expressed by the perf. (Ps. 57:7; Prov. 22:29; 25:16); “suppose that this happens,” by the fut. (Job 20:24; Ewald, § 357b). חֲדָרִים are the *interiora domus*; the root word ḥādër, as the Arab. khadar shows, signifies to draw oneself back, to hide; the ḥhĕdĕr of the tent is the back part, shut off by a curtain from the front space. Those who are singing are not at present in this innermost chamber. But if the king brings one of them in (כָּבָר, from כָּבֵר, introire, with acc. loci), then—they all say—we will rejoice and be glad in thee.

The cohortatives are better translated by the fut. than by the conjunctive (exultemus); they express as frequently not what they then desire to do, but what they then are about to do, from inward impulse, with heart delight. The sequence of ideas, “exult” and “rejoice,” is not a *climax descendens*, but, as Ps. 118:24, etc., an advance from the external to the internal,—from jubilation which can be feigned, to joy of
heart which gives it truth; for שָמַח—according to its root signification: to be smoothed, unwrinkled, to be glad—means to be of a joyful, bright, complaisant disposition; and גִיל, cogn. גִיל, to turn (wind) oneself, to revolve, means conduct betokening delight. The prep. ב in verbs of rejoicing, denotes the object on account of which, and in which, one has joy. Then, if admitted into the closest neighbourhood of the king, they will praise his love more than wine. זָכַר denotes to fix, viz., in the memory; Hiph.: to bring to remembrance, frequently in the way of praise, and thus directly equivalent to celebrare, e.g., Ps. 45:18. The wine represents the gifts of the king, in contradistinction to his person. That in inward love he gives himself to them, excels in their esteem all else he gives. For, as the closing line expresses, “uprightly they love thee,”—viz. they love thee, i.e., from a right heart, which seeks nothing besides, and nothing with thee; and a right mind, which is pleased with thee, and with nothing but thee. Heiligstedt, Zöckler, and others translate: with right they love thee. But the plurality, מֵישָרִים (from מֵישָר, for which the sing. מִישור occurs) is an ethical conception (Prov. 1:3), and signifies, not: the right of the motive, but: the rightness of the word, thought, and act (Prov. 23:16; Ps. 17:2; 58:2); thus, not: jure; but: recte, sincere, candide. Hengst., Thrupp, and others, falsely render this word like the LXX, Aquil., Symm., Theod., Targ., Jerome, Venet., and Luther, as subject: rectitudes [abstr. for concr.] = those who have rectitude, the upright. Hengstenberg's assertion, that the word never occurs as in adv., is set aside by a glance at Ps. 58:2; 75:3; and, on the other hand, there is no passage in which it is sued as abstr. pro concr. It is here, as elsewhere, an adv. acc. for which the word בְּמישרים might also be used.

The second pentastich closes similarly with the first, which ended with “love thee.” What is there said of this king, that the virgins love him, is here more generalized; for diligunt te is equivalent to diligeris (cf. 8:1, 7). With these words the table-song ends. It is erotic, and yet so chaste and delicate,—it is sensuous, and yet so ethical, that here, on the threshold, we are at once surrounded as by a mystical cloudy brightness. But how is it to be explained that Solomon, who says (Prov. 27:2), “Let another praise thee, and not thine own mouth,” begins this his Song of Songs with a song in praise of himself? It is explained from this, that here he celebrates an incident belonging to the happy beginning of his reign; and for him so far fallen into the past, although not to be forgotten, that what he was and what he now is are almost as two separate persons.

Song 1:5. After this choral song, Shulamith, who has listened to the singers not without being examined by their inquisitive glances as a strange guest not of equal rank with them, now speaks:

5 Black am I, yet comely, ye daughters of Jerusalem,

As the tents of Kedar, as the hangings of Solomon.

From this, that she addresses the ladies of the palace as “daughters of Jerusalem” (Keri יָוֵרָשֵׁים, a du. fractus; like עֶפְרַיִן for עֶפְרִון, 2 Chron. 13:19), it is to be concluded that she, although now in Jerusalem, came from a different place. She is, as will afterwards appear, from Lower Galilee;—and it may be remarked, in the interest of the mystical interpretation, that the church, and particularly her first congregations, according to the prophecy (Isa. 8:23), was also Galilean, for Nazareth and Capernaum are their original seats;—and if Shulamith is a poetico-mystical Mashal or emblem, then she represents the synagogue one day to enter into the fellowship of Solomon,—i.e., of the son of David, and the daughters of Jerusalem, i.e., the congregation already believing on the Messiah. Yet we confine ourselves to the nearest sense, in which Solomon relates a self-experience. Shulamith, the lightly esteemed, cannot boast that she is so ruddy and fair of countenance as they who have just sung how pleasant it is to be beloved by this king; but yet she is not so
devour of beauty as not to venture to love and hope to be loved: "Black am I, yet comely." These words express humility without abjectness. She calls herself "black," although she is not so dark and unchangeably black as an "Ethiopian" (Jer. 13:23). The verb מָאָה מָa

of the adj. אַל־נָאָה אַל־נָאָה אַל־נָאָה אַל־נָאָה אַל־נָa

Song 1:6. Shulamith now explains, to those who were looking upon her with inquisitive wonder, how it is that she is swarthy: 6a Look not on me because I am black,

Because the sun has scorched me.

If the words were אַל־נָאָה אַל־נָa then the meaning would be: look not at me, stare not at me. But אַל־נָאָה אַל־נָa, with ש (elsewhere אַl־nָאָה) following, means: Regard me not that I am blackish (subnigra); the second ש is to be interpreted as co-ordin with the first (that ... that), or assigning a reason, and that objectively...
(for). We prefer, with Böttch., the former, because in the latter case we would have had שֶׁשׁומש instead of שֶׁשׁומש. The quinquiliterum signifies, in contradistinction to שֶׁשׁומש, that which is black here and there, and thus not altogether black. This form, as descriptive of colour, is diminutive; but since it also means id quod passim est, if the accent lies on passim, as distinguished from raro, it can be also taken as increasing instead of diminishing, as in יָסָר, יָסָר. The LXX trans. παραθαλάσσει (Symm. παρανεκλησε) μεο ἄνιον: the sun has looked askance on me. But why only askance? The Venet. better: κατεδείκνυ ο, but that is too little. The look is thought of as scorching; wherefore Aquila: συνέκασσε με, it has burnt me; and Theodotion: περιεφύσε με, it has scorched me over and over. פָּסָר signifies here not adspicere (Job 3:9; 41:10) so much as adurere. In this word itself (cogn. םָסָר, Arab. sadaf, whence aduraf, black; cf. 패, 패, Job 17:1), the looking is thought of as a scorcing; for the rays of the eye, when they fix upon anything, gather themselves, as it were, into a focus. Besides, as the Scriptures ascribe twinkling to the morning dawn, so it ascribes eyes to the sun (2 Sam. 12:11), which is itself as the eye of the heavens. The poet delicately represents Shulamith as regarding the sun as fem. Its name in Arab. and old Germ. is fem., in Heb. and Aram. for the most part mas. My lady the sun, she, as it were, says, has produced on her this swarthiness. She now says how it has happened that she is thus sunburnt:

6b My mother’s sons were angry with me,

Appointed me as keeper of the vineyards—

Mine own vineyard have I not kept.

If “mother’s sons” is the parallel for “brothers” (אִנְיָה), then the expressions are of the same import, e.g., Gen. 27:29; but if the two expressions stand in apposition, as Deut. 13:7 [6], then the idea of the natural brother is sharpened; but when “mother’s sons” stands thus by itself alone, then, after Lev. 18:9, it means the relationship by one of the parents alone, as “father’s wife” in the language of the O.T. and also 1 Cor. 5:5 is the designation of a step-mother. Nowhere is mention made of Shulamith’s father, but always, as here, only of her mother, 3:4; 8:2; 6:9; and she is only named without being introduced as speaking. One is led to suppose that Shulamith’s own father was dead, and that her mother had been married again; the sons by the second marriage were they who ruled in the house of their mother. These brothers of Shulamith appear towards the end of the melodrama as rigorous guardians of their youthful sister; one will thus have to suppose that their zeal for the spotless honour of their sister and the family proceeded from an endeavour to accustom the fickle or dreaming child to useful activity, but not without step-brotherly harshness. The form נַחֲרָת, Ewald, § 193c, and Olsh. p. 593, derive from נַחֲרָת, the Niph. of which is either נַחֲרָת (נַחֲרָת, = נַחֲרָת 30 נַחֲרָת), Gesen. § 68, An. 5; but the plur. of this נַחֲרָת should, according to rule, have been נַחֲרָת (cf. however, נַחֲרָת, profanantur, Ezek. 7:24); and what is more decisive, this נַחֲרָת everywhere else expresses a different passion from that of anger; Böttch. § 1060 (2, 379). נָחֲרָת is used of the burning of anger; and that נָחֲרָת (nacharrath) can be another form for נָחֲרָת, is shown, e.g., by the interchange of .. נָחֲרָת and נָחֲרָת, the form like נָחֲרָת, נָחֲרָת. Amos 6:6, resisted the bringing together of the נ and the half guttural נ. נֶּחֱרָת (here as Isa. 41:11; 45:24) means, according to the original, mid. signif. of the Niph., to burn inwardly, ἀνάβληται = ὀργίζοντα. Shulamith’s address consists intentionally of clauses with perfects placed together: she speaks with childlike artlessness, and not “like a book;” in the language of a book, should have been used instead of שֶׁשׁומש. But that she uses נַחֲרָת (from נַחֲרָת, R. רָה = נַחֲרָת; cf. Targ. Gen. 37:11 with Luke 2:51), and not
as they were wont to say in Judea, after Prov. 27:18, and after the designation of the tower for the protection of the flocks by the name of “the tower of the nōtsrīm” [the watchmen], 2 Kings 17:9, shows that the maid is a Galilean, whose manner of speech is Aramaizing, and if we may so say, platt-Heb. (= Low Heb.), like the Lower Saxon plattdeutsch. Of the three forms of the particip. נוֹטְׁרָה, נוֹטֵרָה, נוֹטֶּרֶּת we here read the middle one, used subst. (Ewald, § 188 b), but retaining the long ē (ground-form, nâṭir).

The plur. אֶת־הךְׁ׳ does not necessarily imply that she had several vineyards to keep, it is the categ. plur. with the art. designating the genus; custodiens vineas is a keeper of a vineyard. But what kind of vineyard, or better, vine-garden, is that which she calls כַּרְּמִי שֶּּלִי, i.e., meam ipsius vineam? The personal possession is doubly expressed; shĕlli is related to cārmī as a nearer defining apposition: my vineyard, that which belongs to me (vid., Fr. Philippi’s Status constr. pp. 112–116). Without doubt the figure refers to herself given in charge to be cared for by herself: vine-gardens she had kept, but her own vine-garden, i.e., her own person, she had not kept. Does she indicate thereby that, in connection with Solomon, she has lost herself, with all that she is and has? Thus in 1851 I thought; but she certainly seeks to explain why she is so sunburnt. She intends in this figurative way to say, that as the keeper of a vineyard she neither could keep nor sought to keep her own person. In this connection cārmī, which by no means = the colourless memet ipsam, is to be taken as the figure of the person in its external appearance, and that of its fresh-blooming attractive appearance which directly accords with כֶּרֶּם (Arab.), karuma, the idea of that which is noble and distinguished is connected with this designation of the planting of vines (for כֶּרֶּם, [Arab.] karm, cf. karmat, of a single vine-stock, denotes not so much the soil in which the vines are planted, as rather the vines themselves): her kērēm is her (Arab.) karamat, i.e., her stately attractive appearance. If we must interpret this mystically then, supposing that Shulamith is the congregation of Israel moved at some future time with love to Christ, then by the step-brothers we think of the teachers, who after the death of the fathers threw around the congregation the fetters of their human ordinances, and converted fidelity to the law into a system of hireling service, in which all its beauty disappeared. Among the allegorists, Hengstenberg here presents the extreme of an interpretation opposed to what is true and fine.

Song 1:7. These words (vv. 5–6) are addressed to the ladies of the palace, who look upon her with wonder. That which now follows is addressed to her beloved:

7 O tell me, thou whom my soul loveth: where feedest thou?
Where causest thou it (thy flock) to lie down at noon?

Among the flocks of thy companions!
The country damsels have no idea of the occupation of a king. Her simplicity goes not beyond the calling of a shepherd as of the fairest and the highest. She thinks of the shepherd of the people as the shepherd of sheep. Moreover, Scripture also describes governing as a tending of sheep; and the Messiah, of whom Solomon is a type, is specially represented as the future Good Shepherd. If now we had to conceive of Solomon as present from the beginning of the scene, then here in v. 7 would Shulamith say that she would gladly be alone with him, far away from so many who are looking on her with open eyes; and, indeed, in some country place where alone she feels at home. The entreaty “O tell me” appears certainly to require (cf. Gen. 37:19) the presence of one to whom she addresses herself. But, on the other hand, the entreaty only asks that he should let her know where he is; she longs to know where his occupation detains him, that she may go out and seek him. Her request is thus directed toward the absent one, as is proved by v. 8. The vocat., “O thou whom my soul loveth,” is connected with אַתָּה, which
lies hid in הַגִּידָה ("inform thou"). It is a circumlocution for "beloved" (cf. Neh. 13:26), or "the dearly beloved of my soul" (cf. Jer. 12:7).

The entreating request, *indica quaeso mihi ubi pascis*, reminds one of Gen. 37:16, where, however, *ubi* is expressed by אֵיפֹה, while here by אֵיכָה, which in this sense is *ut ne*. For *ubi* = אֵיכו, is otherwise denoted only by אֵיכָה, Kings 6:13, and usually אֵיכֵּה, North Palest., by Hosea אֵיכָה. This אֵיכָה elsewhere means *quomodo*, and is the key-word of the קינה, as אֵיךְ is of the Mashal (the satire); the Song uses for it, in common with the Book of Esther, אֲשֶׁר אֵיכָה. In themselves הַגִּידָה and אֵיכָה, which with אֵיך preceding, are stamped as interrog. in a sense analogous to hic, ecce, κείνος, and the like; the local, temporal, and polite sense rests only on a conventional usus *loq.*, Böttch. § 530. She wishes to know where he feeds, viz., his flock, where he causes it (viz., his flock) to lie down at mid-day. The verb רָבַץ (R. וּבֵ, with the root signific. of condensation) is the proper word for the lying down of a four-footed animal: *complicatis pedibus procumbere (cubare)*; Hiph. of the shepherd, who causes the flock to lie down; the Arab. rab’a is the name for the encampment of shepherds. The time for encamping is the mid-day, which as the time of the double-light, i.e., the most intense light in its ascending and descending, is called צָהֳרַיִם, פָּסִכָּה. אֵיכוֹכָה, occurring only here, signifies שֵׁלֵמִים, פָּסַכּא and more, because by such affected apparent modesty she wishes to make herself known as a Hierodoul or harlot. The former of these significations is not appropriate; for to appear as mourning does not offend the sense of honour in a virtuous maiden, but to create the appearance of an immodest woman is to her intolerable; and if she bears in herself the image of an only beloved, she shrinks in horror from such a base appearance, not only as a debasing of herself, but also as a desecration of this sanctuary in her heart.

Shulamith calls entreatingly upon him whom her soul loveth to tell her how she might be able directly to reach him, without feeling herself wounded in the consciousness of her maidenhood and of the exclusiveness of her love. It is thereby supposed that the companions of her only beloved among the shepherds might not treat that which to her is holy with a holy reserve,—a thought to which Hattendorff has given delicate expression in his exposition of the Song, 1867.

If Solomon were present, it would be difficult to think to which Hattendorff has given delicate expression in his exposition of the Song, 1867. If Solomon were present, it would be difficult to understand this entreating call. But he is not present, as is manifest from this, that she is not answered by him, but by the daughters of Jerusalem.

8 If thou knowest not, thou fairest of women,

Go after the footsteps of the flock,
And feed thy kids beside the shepherds’ tents.

Song 1:8. יְפָה, standing in the address or call, is in the voc.; the art. was indispensable, because “the beautiful one among women” = the one distinguished for beauty among them, and thus is, according to the meaning, superlative; cf. Judg. 6:15, Amos 2:16, with Judg. 5:24; Luke 1:28; Ewald, § 313 c. The verb יָפָה refers to the fundamental idea: integrum, completum esse, for beauty consists in well-proportioned fulness and harmony of the members. That the ladies of the court are excited to speak thus may arise from this, that one often judges altogether otherwise of a man, whom one has found not beautiful, as soon as he begins to speak, and his countenance becomes intellectually animated. And did not, in Shulamith’s countenance, the strange external swarthiness borrow a brightness from the inner light which irradiated her features, as she gave so deep and pure an expression to her longing? But the instruction which her childlike, almost childish, naïvete deserved, the daughters of Jerusalem do not feel disposed to give her. لأن ידיע signifies, often without the obj. supplied, non sapere, e.g., Ps. 82:5; Job 8:9. The דַּה subjoined guards against this inclusive sense, in which the phrase here would be offensive. This dat. ethicus (vid., 2:10, 11, 13, 17; 4:6; 8:14), used twice here in v. 8 and generally in the Song, reflects that which is said on the will of the subject, and thereby gives to it an agreeable cordial turn, here one bearing the colour of a gentle reproof: if thou knowest not to thee,—i.e., if thou, in thy simplicity and retirement, knowest it not, viz., that he whom thou thinkest thou must seek for at a distance is near to thee, and that Solomon has to tend not sheep but people,—now, then, so go forth, viz., from the royal city, and remain, although chosen to royal honours, as a shepherdess beside thine own sheep and kids. One misapprehends the answer if he supposes that they in reality point out the way to Shulamith by which she might reach her object; on the contrary, they answer her ironically, and, entering into her confusion of mind, tell her that if she cannot apprehend the position of Solomon, she may just remain what she is. עָקֵב (Arab. ’āqib), from עָקַב, to be convex, arched, is the heel; to go in the heels (the reading fluctuates between the form, with and without Dag. dirimens in ע) of one = to press hard after him, to follow him immediately. That they assign to her not goats or kids of goats, but kids, גְּרִיֹת, is an involuntary fine delicate thought with which the appearance of the elegant, beautiful shepherdess inspires them. But that they name kids, not sheep, may arise from this, that the kid is a near-lying erotic emblem; cf. Gen. 38:17, where it has been fittingly remarked that the young he-goat was the proper courtesan-offering in the worship of Aphrodite (Movers’ Phönizier, 1680). It is as if they said: If thou canst not distinguish between a king and shepherds, then indulge thy love-thoughts beside the shepherds’ tents,—remain a country maiden if thou understandest not how to value the fortune which has placed thee in Jerusalem in the royal palace.

Second Scene of the First Act, 1:9–2:7

Song 1:9–11. Solomon, while he was absent during the first scene, is now present. It is generally acknowledged that the words which follow were spoken by him:

9 To a horse in the chariot of Pharaoh
Do I compare thee, my love.

10 Beautiful are thy cheeks in the chains,
Thy neck in the necklaces.

11 Golden chains will we make for thee,
With points of silver.

Till now, Shulamith was alone with the ladies of the palace in the banqueting-chamber. Solomon now comes from the banquet-hall of the men (v. 12); and to 2:7, to which this scene extends, we have to think of the women of the palace as still present, although not hearing what Solomon says to Shulamith. He addresses her, “my love:” she is not yet his bride. רַעְׁיָה (female friend), from רָעַי (רָעָה), to guard, care for, tend,
ethically: to delight in something particularly, to take pleasure in intercourse with one, is formed in the same way as רְעָה (ra’j), abbreviated רֵעֶה, whence the fem. רֵעַ (ra’yāh); the mas. is רֵעֶה (ra’j), abbreviated רֵעַ, whence the fem. רֵעַ (ra’yāh), as well with reference to the ground-form. At once, in the first words used by Solomon, one recognises a Philip, i.e., a man fond of horses,—an important feature in the character of the sage (vid., Sur. 38 of the Koran),—and that, one fond of Egyptian horses: Solomon carried on an extensive importation of horses from Egypt and other countries (2 Chron. 9:28); he possessed 1400 war-chariots and 12,000 horsemen (1 Kings 10:26); the number of stalls of horses for his chariots was still greater (1 Kings 5:6) [4:26]. Horace (Ode iii. 11) compares a young sprightly maiden to a nimble and timid equa trima; Anacreon (60) addresses such an one: “thou Thracian filly;” and Theocritus says (Idyl xviii. 30, 31):

“As towers the cypress mid the garden’s bloom,
   As in the chariot proud Thessalian steed,
   Thus graceful rose-complexioned Helen moves.”

But how it could occur to the author of the Song to begin the praise of the beauty of a shepherdess by saying that she is like a horse in Pharaoh’s chariot, is explained only by the supposition that the poet is Solomon, who, as a keen hippologue, had an open eye for the beauty of the horse. Egyptian horses were then esteemed as afterwards the Arabian were. Moreover, the horse was not native to Egypt, but was probably first imported thither by the Hyksos: the Egyptian name of the horse, and particularly of the mare, ses-t, ses-mut, and of the chariot, markabuta, are Semitic. סוס is here not equitatus (Jerome), as Hengst. maintains: “Susah does not denote a horse, but is used collectively;” while he adds, “Shulamith is compared to the whole Egyptian cavalry, and is therefore an ideal person.” The former statement is untrue, and the latter is absurd. Sūs means equus, and susā may, indeed, collectively denote the stud (cf. Josh. 19:5 with 1 Chron. 4:31), but obviously it first denotes the equa. But is it to be rendered, with the LXX and the Venet., “to my horse”? Certainly not; for the chariots of Pharaoh are just the chariots of Egypt, not of the king of Israel. The Chirek in which this word terminates is the Ch. compag., which also frequently occurs where, as here and Gen. 49:11, the second member of the word-chain is furnished with a prep. (vid., under Ps. 113). This i is an old genitival ending, which, as such, has disappeared from the language; it is almost always accented as the suff. Thus also here, where the Metheg shows that the accent rests on the ult. The plur. רִכְׁבֵי, occurring only here, is the amplificative poetic, and denotes state equipage. דִמָֹּה is the trans. of דָמָה, which combines the meanings aequum and aequalem esse. Although not allegorizing, yet, that we may not overlook the judiciousness of the comparison, we must remark that Shulamith is certainly a “daughter of Israel;” a daughter of the people who increased in Egypt, and, set free from the bondage of Pharaoh, became the bride of Jahve, and were brought by the law as a covenant into a marriage relation to Him.

The transition to v. 10 is mediated by the effect of the comparison; for the head-frame of the horse’s bridle, and the poitral, were then certainly, must as now, adorned with silken tassels, fringes, and other ornaments of silver (vid., Lane’s Modern Egypt, I 149). Jerome, absurdly, after the LXX: pulchrae sunt genae tuae sicut turturis. The name of the turtle, תּוּר, redup. turtur, is a pure onomatopoeia, which has nothing to do with תור, whence רָדָר, to go round about, or to move in a circle; and turtle-dove’s cheeks—what absurdity! Birds have no cheeks; and on the sides of its neck the turtle-dove has black and white variegated feathers, which also furnishes no comparison for the colour of the cheeks. תורים are the round ornaments which hang down in front on both sides of the head-band, or are also inwoven in
the braids of hair in the forehead; הדר, circumire, signifies also to form a circle or a row; in Aram. it thus denotes, e.g., the hem of a garment and the border round the eye. In גלענ, אלפ is silent, as in ולענ, the Aleph is silent, as in לאמור, אוכל. In גלענ, סבב signifies also to form a circle or a row; in Aram. it thus denotes, e.g., the hem of a garment and the border round the eye. In גלענ, סבב, אינ is silent, as in לאמור, אוכל.

The verb חֲרוּזִים signifies, to bore through and to string together; e.g., in the Talm., fish which one strings on a rod or line, in order to bring them to the market. In Heb. and Aram. the secondary sense of stringing predominates, so that to string pearls is expressed by חָרַז, and to bore through pearls, by קָדָח; in Arab., the primary meaning of piercing through, e.g., michraz, a shoemaker’s awl.

After v. 11, one has to represent to himself Shulamith’s adorning as very simple and modest; for Solomon seeks to make her glad with the thought of a continued residence at the royal court by the promise of costly and elegant ornaments. Gold and silver were so closely connected in ancient modes of representation, that in the old Aegypt. silver was called nub het, or white gold. Gold derived its name of זָהָב from its splendour, after the witty Arab. word zabab, to go away, as an unstable possession; silver is called כָס, scindere, abscindere, a piece of metal as broken off from the mother-stone, like the Arab. dhukrat, as set free from the lump by means of the pickaxe (cf. at Ps. 19:11; 84:3). The name of silver has here, not without the influence of the rhythm (v. 8:9), the article designating the species; the Song frequently uses this, and is generally in using the art. not so sparing as poetry commonly is.

זָהָב makes prominent the points of silver as something particular, but not separate. In גלענ, מְׁסִב, Solomon includes himself among the other inhabitants, especially the women of the palace; for the plur. majest. in the words of God of Himself (frequently in the Koran), or persons of rank of themselves (general in the vulgar

Arab.), is unknown in the O.T. They would make for her golden globules or knobs with (i.e., provided with ...; cf. Ps. 89:14) points of silver sprinkled over them,—which was a powerful enticement for a plain country damsel.

**Song 1:12.** Now for the first time Shulamith addresses Solomon, who is before her. It might be expected that the first word will either express the joy that she now sees him face to face, or the longing which she had hitherto cherished to see him again. The verse following accords with this expectation:

12 While the king is at his table,

My nard has yielded its fragrance.

עַד ש or עַד אֲשֶּר, with fut. foll., usually means: usque eo, until this and that shall happen, 2:7; 17; with the perf. foll., until something happened, 3:4. The idea connected with “until” may, however, be so interpreted that there comes into view not the end of the period as such, but the whole length of the period. So here in the subst. clause following, which in itself is already an expression of continuance, donec = dum (erat); so also דע alone, without asher, with the part. foll. (Job 1:18), and the infin. (Judg. 3:26; Ex. 33:22; Jonah 4:2; cf. 2 Kings 9:22); seldom with the fin. foll., once with the perf. foll. (1 Sam. 14:19), once (for Job 8:21 is easily explained otherwise) with the fut. foll. (Ps. 141:10, according to which Gen. 49:10 also is explained by Baur and others, but without עד כי in this sense of limited duration: “so long as,” being anywhere proved). מְׁסִב, which, like the post-bibl. מְׁסֵב, signifies the circuit of the table; for מְׁסֵב signifies also, after 1 Sam. 16:11 (the LXX rightly, after the sense ὑν ὣ       λ θῶ ε ...), to seat themselves around the table, from which it is to be remarked that not till the Greek-Roman period was the Persian custom of reclining at table introduced, but in earlier times they sat (1 Sam. 20:5; 1 Kings 13:20; cf. Ps. 128:3).

Reclining and eating are to be viewed as separate from each other, Amos 6:4; אָכָל, “three and three they recline at table,” is in matter as
in language mishnic (Berachoth 42b; cf. Sanhedrin 2:4, of the king: if he reclines at table, the Tôra must be opposite him). Thus: While (usque eo, so long as), says Shulamith, the king was at his table, my nard gave forth its fragrance.

Nârdîn is an Indian word: naldâ, i.e., yielding fragrance, Pers. nard (nârd), Old Arab. nârdîn (nårdîn), is the aromatic oil of an Indian plant valeriana, called Nardostachys ‘Gatâmânsi (hair-tress nard). Interpreters are wont to represent Shulamith as having a stalk of nard in her hand. Hitzig thinks of the nard with which she who is speaking has besprinkled herself, and he can do this because he regards the speaker as one of the court ladies. But that Shulamith has besprinkled herself with nard, is as little to be thought of as that she has in her hand a sprig of nard (spica nardi), or, as the ancients said, an ear of nard; she comes from a region where no nard grows, and nard-oil is for a country maiden unattainable. Horace promises Virgil a cudas (= 9 gallons) of the best wine for a small onyx-box full of nard; and Judas estimated at 300 denarii (about £8, 10s.) the genuine nard (how frequently nard was adulterated we learn from Pliny) which Mary of Bethany poured from an alabaster box on the head of Jesus, so long as Solomon was absent, breathed itself out and, as it were, cast forth its fragrance (cf. 2:13; 7:14) in words of longing. She has longed for the king, and has sought to draw him towards her, as she gives him to understand. He is continually in her mind.

13 A bundle of myrrh is my beloved to me, Which lieth between by breasts.

14 A bunch of cypress-flowers is my beloved to me.

From the vine-gardens of Engedi.

Song 1:13, 14. Most interpreters, ignoring the lessons of botany, explain 13a of a little bunch of myrrh; but whence could Shulamith obtain this? Myrrh, מֹרַר, to move oneself in a horizontal direction hither and thither, or gradually to advance; of a fluid, to flow over the plain), belongs, like the frankincense, to the amyrds, which are also exotics in Palestine; and that which is aromatic in the Balsamodendron myrrha are the leaves and flowers, but the resin (Gummi myrrhae, or merely myrrha) cannot be tied in a bunch. Thus the myrrha here can be understood in no other way than as at 5:5; in general, מֹרַר, to move oneself, according to Hitzig’s correct remark, properly denotes not what one binds up together, but what one ties up—thus sacculus, a little bag. It is not supposed that she carried such a little bag with her (cf. Isa. 3:20), or a box of frankincense (Luth. musk-apple); but she compares her beloved to a myrrha-repository, which day and night departs not from her bosom, and penetrates her inwardly with its heart-strengthening aroma. So constantly does she think of him, and so delightful is it for her to dare to think of him as her beloved.

The 14th verse presents the same thought. כֹּפֶּר is the cypress-cluster or the cypress-flowers, κόρνος (according to Fürst, from מַרְפ, to be whitish, from the colour of the yellow-white flowers), which botanists call Lawsonia, and in the East Alhennâ; its leaves yield the orange colour with which the Moslem women stain their hands and feet. אֵשֶׁכֶל (from אַשְׁכֵל, to interweave) denotes that which is woven, tresses, or a cluster or garland of their flowers. Here also we have not to suppose that Shulamith carried a bunch of flowers; in her imagination she places herself in the vine-gardens which Solomon had planted on the hill-terraces of Engedi lying on the west of the Dead Sea (Eccles. 2:4), and chooses a cluster of flowers of the cypress growing in that tropical climate, and says that her beloved is to her internally what such a cluster of cypress-
flowers would be to her externally. To be able to call him her beloved is her ornament; and to think of him refreshes her like the most fragrant flowers.

**Song 1:15.** In this ardour of loving devotion, she must appear to the king so much the more beautiful.

15 Lo, thou art fair, my love.

Lo, thou art fair; thine eyes are doves.

This is a so-called *comparatio decurtata*, as we say: feet like the gazelle, i.e., to which the swiftness of the gazelle’s feet belongs (Hab. 3:19); but instead of “like doves,” for the comparison mounts up to equalization, the expression is directly, “doves.” If the pupil of the eye were compared with the feathers of the dove (Hitz.), or the sprightliness of the eye with the lively motion hither and thither of the dove (Heiligst.), then the eulogium would stand out of connection with what Shulamith has just said. But it stands in reference to it if her eyes are called doves; and so the likeness to doves’ eyes is attributed to them, because purity and gentleness, longing and simplicity, express themselves therein. The dove is, like the myrtle, rose, and apple, an attribute of the goddess of love, and a figure of that which is truly womanly; wherefore יְׁמִימוֹת (the Arab. name of a dove), Columbina, and the like names of women, columba and columbari, are words of fondness and caressing. Shulamith gives back to Solomon his eulogium, and rejoices in the prospect of spending her life in fellowship with him.

16 Behold, thou art comely, my beloved; yea charming:

Yea, our couch is luxuriously green.

17 The beams of our house are cedars,

Our wainscot of cypresses.

**Song 1:16, 17.** If v. 16 were not the echo of her heart to Solomon, but if she therewith meant some other one, then the poet should at least not have used כֶּנֶּשׁ, but כְּנֶשׁ. Hitzig remarks, that up to “my beloved” the words appear as those of mutual politeness—that therefore כְּנֶשׁ (charming) is added at once to distinguish her beloved from the king, who is to her insufferable. But if a man and a woman are together, and he says כֶּנֶּשׁ, and she says כְּנֶשׁ, that is as certainly an interchange of address as that one and one are two and not three. He praises her beauty; but in her eyes it is rather he who is beautiful, yea charming; she rejoices beforehand in that which is assigned to her. Where else would her conjugal happiness find its home but among her own rural scenes? The city with its noisy display does not please her; and she knows, indeed, that her beloved is a king, but she thinks of him as a shepherd. Therefore she praises the fresh green of their future homestead; cedar tops will form the roof of the house in which they dwell, and cypresses its wainscot. The bed, and particularly the bridal-bower (*D. M. Z. xxii. 153*),—but not merely the bed in which one sleeps, but also the cushion for rest, the divan (Amos 6:4),—has the name כָּנָפֶשׁ, from כָּנָף, to cover over; cf. the “network of goats’ hair” (1 Sam. 19:13) and the κονστιγναρε (Judith 10:21; 13:9), (whence our *kanapee* = canopy), a bed covered over for protection against the κονστιγμενος, the gnats. כָּנָף, whence here the fem. adj. accented on the ult., is not a word of colour, but signifies to be extensible, and to extend far and wide, as lentus in lenti salices; we have no word such as this which combines in itself the ideas of softness and juicy freshness, of bending and elasticity, of looseness, and thus of overhanging ramifications (as in the case of the weeping willow). The beams are called כַּרְחִיטֵנ, from כָּרְחִיט, to meet, to lay crosswise, to hold together (cf. *cingere* and *contignare*). כַּרְחִיט (after another reading, כַּרְחָד, from כַּרְחָד, with Kametz immutable, or a virtual *Dag.*) is North Palest. = כַּרְחָד (Kerf), for in place of כַּרְחִיטים, troughs (Ex. 2:16), the Samarit. has כַּרְחָדָם (cf. *sahar* and *sahhar, circumsire, zahar* and *zahhar*, whence the Syr. name of scarlet); here the word, if it is not defect. plur. (Heiligst.), is used as collect. sing. of the hollows or panels of a wainscoted ceiling, like φάντασμα, whence the LXX φανάρια
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(Symm. φαντάσεις), and like lacunae, whence lacunaria, for which Jerome has here laquearia, which equally denotes the wainscot ceiling. Abulwalîd glosses the word rightly by מָרָבִים, gutters (from רָהַט, to run); only this and oi σώματοι of the Gr. Venet. is not an architectural expression, like ῥαίτες, which is still found in the Talm. (vid., Buxtorf’s Lex.). To suppose a transposition from חֶרְיטנו, from חָרַט, to turn, to carve (Ew., Heiligst., Hitz.), is accordingly not necessary. As the ת in בְׁרותִים belongs to the North Palest. (Galilean) form of speech, so also ת for ה in this word: an exchange of the gutturals was characteristic of the Galilean idiom (vid., Talm. citations by Frankel, Einl. in d. jerus. Talm. 1870, 7b). Well knowing that a mere hut was not suitable for the king, Shulamith’s fancy converts one of the magnificent nature-temples of the North Palest. forest-solitudes into a house where, once together, they will live each for the other. Because it is a large house, although not large by art, she styles it by the poet. plur. bātattenu. The mystical interpretation here finds in Isa. 60:13 a favourable support.

Song of Solomon 2

Song 2:1. What Shulamith now further says confirms what had just been said. City and palace with their splendour please her not; forest and field she delights in; she is a tender flower that has grown up in the quietness of rural life.

1 I am a meadow-flower of Sharon,
   A lily of the valleys.

We do not render: “the wild-flower,” “the lily,” ... for she seeks to represent herself not as the one, but only as one of this class; the definiteness by means of the article sometimes belongs exclusively to the second number of the genit. word-chain. מָלָאך may equally (vid., at 1:11, Hitz. on Ps. 113:9, and my Comm. on Gen. 9:20) mean “an angel” or “the angel of Jahve;” and שָׁוָה “a virgin,” or “the virgin of Israel” (the personification of the people). For ḫāvatstsēlēth (perhaps from ḫivtsēl, a denom. quadril. from bētsēl, to form bulbs or bulbous knolls) the Syr. Pesh. (Isa. 35:1) uses chamsaljotho, the meadow-saffron, colchicum autumnale; it is the flesh-coloured flower with leafless stem, which, when the grass is mown, decks in thousands the fields of warmer regions. They call it filius ante patrem, because the blossoms appear before the leaves and the seed-capsules, which develope themselves at the close of winter under the ground. Shulamith compares herself to such a simple and common flower, and that to one in Sharon, i.e., in the region known by that name. Sharon is per aphaer. derived from שָׁרֹון. The most celebrated plain of this name is that situated on the Mediterranean coast between Joppa and Caesarea; but there is also a trans-Jordanic Sharon, 1 Chron. 5:16; and according to Eusebius and Jerome, there is also another district of this name between Tabor and the Lake of Tiberias, which is the one here intended, because Shulamith is a Galilean: she calls herself a flower from the neighbourhood of Nazareth. Aquila translates: “A rosebud of Sharon;” but שׁושָׁנָה (designedly here the fem. form of the name, which is also the name of a woman) does not mean the Rose which was brought at a later period from Armenia and Persia, as it appears, and cultivated in the East (India) and West (Palestine, Egypt, Europe). It is nowhere mentioned in the canonical Scriptures, but is first found in Sir. 24:14; 39:13; 50:8; Wisd. 2:8; and Esth. 1:6, LXX. Since all the rosaceae are five-leaved, and all the liliaceae are six-leaved, one might suppose, with Aben Ezra, that the name sosan (susan) is connected with the numeral שֵש, and points to the number of leaves, especially since one is wont to represent to himself the Eastern lilies as red. But they are not only red, or rather violet, but also white: the Moorish-Spanish azucena denotes the white lily. The root-word will thus, however, be the same as that of שֵש, byssus, and שַיִש, white marble. The comparison
reminds us of Hos. 14:6 [5], “I shall be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily.”

2 As a lily among thorns,
So is my love among the daughters.

Song 2:2. By סַחְוַּס הַחָוִסְי is not meant the thorns of the plant itself, for the lily has no thorns, and the thorns of the rose are, moreover, called קָוצִים; besides, בן (among) contradicts that idea, since the thorns are on the plant itself, and it is not among them—the סַחְוַּס are not the thorns of the flower-stem, but the thorn-plants that are around. סַחְוַּס designates the thorn-bush, e.g., in the allegorical answer of King Josiah to Amaziah, 2 Kings 14:9. Simplicity, innocence, gentleness, are the characteristics in which Shulamith surpasses all בָנות, i.e., all women (vid., 6:9), as the lily of the valley surpasses the thorn-bushes around it. “Although thorns surround her, yet can he see her; he sees her quiet life, he finds her beautiful.” But continuing this reciprocal rivalry in the praise of mutual love, she says:

3a As an apple-tree among the trees of the wood,
So is my beloved among the sons.

Song 2:3. The apple-tree, the name of which, תַּפוּחַ, is formed from נָפַח, and denominates it from its fragrant flower and fruit, is as the king among fruit trees, in Shulamith’s view. עֵר (from יָעַר, to be rough, rugged, uneven) is the wilderness and the forest, where are also found trees bearing fruit, which, however, is for the most part sour and unpalatable. But the apple-tree unites delicious fruit along with a grateful shade; and just such a noble tree is the object of her love.

3b Under his shadow it delighted me to sit down;
And his fruit is sweet to my taste.

In concupivi et consedi the principal verb completes itself by the co-ordinating of a verb instead of an adv. or inf. as Isa. 42:21; Esth. 8:7; Ewald, § 285. However, concupivi et consedi is yet more than concupivi considere, for thereby she not only says that she found delight in sitting down, but at the same time also in sitting down in the shadow of this tree. The פֵּלַח, occurring only here, expresses the intensity of the wish and longing. The shadow is a figure of protection afforded, and the fruit a figure of enjoyment obtained. The taste is denoted by דָּבָר, from דָּבָר, to chew, or also imbuere; and that which is sweet is called מָתַק, from the smacking connected with an agreeable relish. The usus loq. has neglected this image, true to nature, of physical circumstances in words, especially where, as here, they are transferred to the experience of the soul-life. The taste becomes then a figure of the soul’s power of perception (ἰσθημόν); a man’s fruit are his words and works, in which his inward nature expresses itself; and this fruit is sweet to those on whom that in which the peculiar nature of the man reveals itself makes a happy, pleasing impression. But not only does the person of the king afford to Shulamith so great delight, he entertains her also with what can and must give her enjoyment.

4 He has brought me into the wine-house,
And his banner over me is love.

Song 2:4. After we have seen the ladies of the palace at the feast, in which wine is presented, and after Solomon, till now absent, has entered the banqueting-chamber (Arab. המָלְס), by בית הַיָּין we are not to understand the vineyard, which would be called בֵּית הָהֲגִּפְדָּה or בֵּית הָאָנָב, as in Acts 1:12, Pesh. the Mount of Olives, בֵּית זָעֵית. He has introduced her to the place where he royally entertains his friends. Well knowing that she, the poor and sunburnt maiden, does not properly belong to
such a place, and would rather escape away
from it, he relieves her from her fear and
bashfulness, for he covers her with his fear-
inspiring, awful, and thus surely protecting,
banner; and this banner, which he waves over
her, and under which she is well concealed, is
“love.” דֶּגֶּל (from דָגַל, to cover) is the name of the
covering of the shaft or standard, i.e., pannus,
the piece of cloth fastened to a shaft. Like a
pennon, the love of the king hovers over her;
and so powerful, so surpassing, is the delight of
this love which pervades and transports her,
that she cries out:

5 Support me with grape-cakes,
Refresh me with apples:
For I am sick with love.

Song 2:5. She makes use of the intensive form
as one in a high degree in need of the
reanimating of her almost sinking life:ךְ סִמֵֹּ is
the intens. ofךְ סָמַ, to prop up, support, or, as
here, to under-prop, uphold; andרִפֵד, the
intens. ofרָפַד (R. רף, to raise up from beneath
vid., at Prov. 7:16), to furnish firm ground and
support. The apple is the Greek attribute of
Aphrodite, and is the symbol of love; but here it
is only a means of refreshing; and if thoughts of
love are connected with the apple-

(place); the pressed-out form. A cake is among the gifts (2
Sam. 6:19) which David distributed to the
people on the occasion of the bringing up of the
ark; date-cakes, e.g., at the monastery at Sinai,
are to the present day gifts for the refreshment
of travellers. If Shulamith’s cry was to be
understood literally, one might, with Noack,
doubt the correctness of the text; for “love-
sickness, even in the age of passion and
sentimentality, was not to be cured with roses
and apples.” But (1) sentimentality, i.e.,
susceptibility, does not belong merely to the
Romantic, but also to Antiquity, especially in
the Orient, as e.g., is shown by the symptoms of
sympathy with which the prophets were
affected when uttering their threatenings of
judgment; let one read such outbreaks of
sorrow as Isa. 21:3, which, if one is disposed to
scorn, may be derided as hysterical fits.
Moreover, the Indian, Persian, and Arabic erotic
(vid., e.g., the Romance Siret ’Antar) is as
sentimental as the German has at any time
been. (2) The subject of the passage here is not
the curing of love-sickness, but bodily
refreshment: the cry of Shulamith, that she may
be made capable of bearing the deep agitation
of her physical life, which is the consequence,
not of her love-sickness, but of her love-
happiness. (3) The cry is not addressed
(although this is grammatically possible, since
סַמְֹּכְׁנָה אֹתִי is, according to rule, = סַמֵֹּכִּי to the
daughters of Jerusalem, who would in that case
have been named, but to some other person;
and this points to its being taken not in a literal
sense. (4) It presupposes that one came to the
help of Shulamith, sick and reduced to
weakness, with grapes and apple-
scent to
revive her fainting spirit. The call of Shulamith
thus means: hasten to me with that which will
revive and refresh me, for I am sick with love.
This love-sickness has also been experienced in
the spiritual sphere. St. Ephrem was once so
overcome by such a joy that he cried out: “Lord,
draw back Thine hand a little, for my heart is too
weak to receive so great joy.” And J. R. Hedinger
(†1704) was on his deathbed overpowered
with such a stream of heavenly delight that he
cried: “Oh, how good is the Lord! Oh, how sweet
is Thy love, my Jesus! Oh, what a sweetness! I
am not worthy of it, my Lord! Let me alone; let
me alone!” As the spiritual joy of love, so may
also the spiritual longing of love consume the
body (cf. Job 19:27; Ps. 63:2; 84:3); there have
been men who have actually sunk under a
longing desire after the Lord and eternity. It is
the state of love-ecstasy in which Shulamith calls for refreshment, because she is afraid of sinking. The contrast between her, the poor and unworthy, and the king, who appears to her as an ideal of beauty and majesty, who raises her up to himself, was such as to threaten her life. Unlooked for, extraordinary fortune, has already killed many. Fear, producing lameness and even death, is a phenomenon common in the Orient. If Pharaoh’s daughter, if the Queen of Sheba, finds herself in the presence of Solomon, the feeling of social equality prevents all alarm. But Shulamith is dazzled by the splendour, and disconcerted; and it happens to her in type as it happened to the seer of Patmos, who, in presence of the ascended Lord, fell at His feet as one dead, Rev. 1:17. If beauty is combined with dignity, it has always, for gentle and not perverted natures, something that awakens veneration and tremor; but if the power of love be superadded, then it has, as a consequence, that combination of awe and inward delight, the psychological appearance of which Sappho, in the four strophes which begin with "Φ ί ε  ί      ῆ  ς ἴσ ς θε  σ   ἔ  ε `," has described in a manner so true to nature. We may thus, without carrying back modern sentimentality into antiquity, suppose that Shulamith sank down in a paroxysm caused by the rivalry between the words of love and of praise, and thus thanking him,—for Solomon supports and bears her up,—she exclaims:

6   His left hand is under my head,
   And his right hand doth embrace me.

Song 2:6. With his left hand he supports her head that had fallen backwards, and with his right he embraces her [herzet], as Luther rightly renders it (as he also renders the name Habakkuk by "der Herzer" = the embracer); for קֵבַס signifies properly to enfold, to embrace; but then generally, to embrace lovingly, to fondle, of that gentle stroking with the hand elsewhere denoted by חִלָה, mulcere. The situation here is like that at Gen. 29:13; 48:10; where, connected with the dat., it is meant of loving arms stretched out to embrace. If this sympathetic, gentle embracing exercises a soothing influence on her, overcome by the power of her emotions; so love mutually kindled now celebrates the first hour of delighted enjoyment, and the happy Shulamith calls to those who are witnesses of her joy:

7   I adjure you, ye daughters of Jerusalem,
   By the gazelles or the hinds of the field,
   That ye arouse not and disturb not love
   Till she pleases.

Song 2:7. It is permitted to the Israelites to swear, נִשְׁבַע, only by God (Gen. 21:23); but to adjure, הִשְׁבִיעַ, by that which is not God, is also admissible, although this example before us is perhaps the only direct one in Scripture. צְׁבִי = (צַבְׁי, dialect. צַבָּי, fem. צֵבִיה (Aram. צָבָי, Acts 9:36), plur. tsebaim or tsebajim, fem. tsabaōth (according with the pl. of צְבָא, softened from tsebaţōth, the name for the gazelle, from the elegance of its form and movements. אַיְלַיָה is the connecting form of אַיְ̀לות, whose consonantal Yod in the Assyrian and Syriac is softened to the diphthong ailuv, ailā; the gen. "of the field," as not distinguishing but describing, belongs to both of the animals, therefore also the first is without the article. אַיִל (after the etymon corresponding to the Lat. vel) proceeds, leaving out of view the repetition of this so-called Slumber-Song (Song 3:5; cf. 8:4, as also 2:9), from the endeavour to give to the adjuration the greatest impression; the expression is varied, for the representations flit from image to image, and the one, wherever possible, is surpassed by the other (vid., at Prov. 30:31). Under this verse Hengst. remarks: "The bride would not adjure by the hinds, much more would she adjure by the stage." He supposes that Solomon is here the speaker; but a more worthless proof for this could not be thought of. On the contrary, the adjuration by the gazelles, etc., shows that the speaker here is one whose home is the field and wood; thus also not the poet (Hitz.) nor the queen-mother (Böttch.), neither of whom is ever introduced as speaking.
The adjuration is that love should not be disturbed, and therefore it is by the animals that are most lovely and free, which roam through the fields. Zöckler, with whom in this one point Grätz agrees, finds here, after the example of Böttch. and Hitz., the earnest warning against wantonly exciting love in themselves (cf. Lat. *irritamenta veneris, irritata voluptas*) till God Himself awakens it, and heart finds itself in sympathy with heart. But the circumstances in which Shulamith is placed ill accord with such a general moralizing. The adjuration is repeated, 3:5; 8:4, and wherever Shulamith finds herself near her beloved, as she is here in his arms. What lies nearer, then, than that she should guard against a disturbance of this love-ecstasy, which is like a slumber penetrated by delightful dreams? Instead of אֶּתְׁכֶּם, תָּעִירוּ, and וּתְּ土耳ֲר, should be more exactly the words אֶּתְׁכֶּן, תָּעֵרְׁנה, and תְּ土耳ֵרְנה; but the gramm. distinction of the *genera* is in Heb. not perfectly developed. We meet also with the very same *synallage generis*, without this adjuration formula, at 5:8; 7:1; 4:2; 6:8, etc.; it is also elsewhere frequent; but in the Song it perhaps belongs to the foil of the vulgar given to the highly poet. Thus also in the vulgar Arab. the fem. forms *jaḳtulna, taḳtulna*, corresponding to תִּקְׁטֹלְׁנָה, are fallen out of use.

With העיר, *expergefacere*, there is connected the idea of an interruption of sleep; with *aruret*, *excitare*, the idea, which goes further, of arousing out of sleep, placing in the full activity of awakened life. The one adjuration is, that love should not be awakened out of its sweet dream; the other, that it should not be disturbed from its being absorbed in itself. The *Pasek* between תעירו and the word following has, as at Lev. 10:6, the design of keeping the two *Vavs* distinct, that in reading they might not run together; it is the *Pasek* which, as Ben Asher says, serves "to secure to a letter its independence against the similar one standing next it." אֶתְׁכֶּם אֶתְׁכֶּן is not abstr. *pro concreto*, but love itself in its giving and receiving. Thus closes the second scene of the first act:

Shulamith lies like one helpless in the arms of Solomon; but in him to expire is her life; to have lost herself in him, and in him to find herself again, is her happiness.

**The Mutual Seeking and Finding of the Lovers—Ch. 2:8–3:5**

**First Scene of the Second Act, 2:8–17**

With 2:8 the second act begins. The so-called slumber-song (Song 3:5) closes it, as it did the first act; and also the refrain-like summons to hasten to the mountains leaves no doubt regarding the close of the first scene. The locality is no longer the royal city. Shulamith, with her love-sickness, is once more at home in the house which she inhabits along with her own friends, of whom she has already (Song 1:6) named her brothers. This house stands alone among the rocks, and deep in the mountain range; around are the vineyards which the family have planted, and the hill-pastures on which they feed their flocks. She longingly looks out here for her distant lover.

8 Hark, my beloved! lo, there he comes! Springs over the mountains, Bounds over the hills.

9 My beloved is like a gazelle, Or a young one of the harts. Lo, there he stands behind our wall! He looks through the windows, Glances through the lattices.

**Song 2:8.** The word קול, in the expression קול דודִי, is to be understood of the call of the approaching lover (Böttch.), or only of the sound of his footsteps (Hitz.); it is an interjectional clause (sound of my beloved!), in which קול becomes an interjection almost the same as our "horch" ["hear!"]]. Vid., under Gen. 4:10. הוּא after הִנֵה sharpens it, as the demonstr. ce in *ecce = en ce*. הָאַהֲבָה is though of as partic., as is evident from the accenting of the fem. הָאַהֲבָה, e.g., Jer. 10:22. מִשָּׁלֵל is the usual word for springing; the parallel קָפַץ (קְפַץ), Aram. קָפַץ, קָפַז, signifies
properly contrahere (cogn. קְמֶץ, whence Kametz, the drawing together of the mouth, more accurately, of the muscles of the lips), particularly to draw the body together, to prepare it for a spring. In the same manner, at the present day, both in the city and in the Beduin Arab. kamaž, for which also famaz, is used of the springing of a gazelle, which consists in a tossing up of the legs stretched out perpendicularly. 'Antar says similarly, as Shulamith here of the swift-footed schêbûb (D. M. Zeitung, xxii. 362); wahu jegmis gamazât el-gazâl, it leaps away with the springing of a gazelle.

**Song 2:9.** The figure used in v. 8 is continued in v. 9. בָּשַׁל is the gazelle, which is thus designated after its Arab. name ghazał, which has reached us probably through the Moorish-Spanish gazela (distinct from “ghasele,” after the Pers. ghazal, love-poem). שָׁפַר is the young hart, like the Arab. ghufar (ghafar), the young chamois, probably from the covering of young hair; whence also the young lion may be called קְפִּיר.

Regarding the effect of its passing from one figure to another, vid., under 2:7a. The meaning would be plainer were v. 9a joined to v. 8, for the figures illustrate quick-footed speed (2 Sam. 2:18; 1 Chron. 12:8; cf. Ps. 18:34 with Hab. 3:19 and Isa. 35:6). In v. 9b he comes with the speed of the gazelle, and his eyes seek for the unforgotten one. הַחֲרַכִים (from עָכַר, compingere, condensare; whence, e.g., Arab. mukattal, pressed together, rounded, ramassé; vide), regarding R. תַּד at Ps. 87:6), Aram. מָצַל (Josh. 2:15; Targ. word for כֵּפֶר), is meant of the wall of the house itself, not of the wall surrounding it. Shulamith is within, in the house: her beloved, standing behind the wall, stands without, before the house (Tympe: ad latus aversum parietis, viz., out from it), and looks through the windows,—at one time through this one, at another through that one,—that he might see her and feast his eyes on her. We have here two verbs from the fulness of Heb. synon. for one idea of seeing. יָשָׁר, from רָשׁ, occurring only three times in the O.T., refers, in respect of the roots ישָׁר, יָשָׁר, to the idea of piercing or splitting (whence also ישָׁר, to be furious, properly pierced, percitum esse; cf. oestrus, sting of a gadfly = madness, Arab. transferred to hardiness = madness), and means fixing by reflexion and meditation; wherefore שָׁגַח in post-bibl. Heb. is the name for Divine Providence. בְּאָשׁ, elsewhere to twinkle and to bloom, appears only here in the sense of seeing, and that of the quick darting forward of the glance of the eye, as blick [glance] and blitz [lightning] (blick) are one word; “he saw,” says Goethe in Werther, “the glance of the powder” (Weigand). The plurs. fenestrae and transenamæ are to be understood also as synechdoche totius pro parte, which is the same as the plur. of categ.; but with equal correctness we conceive of him as changing his standing place. חֲלֹן is the window, as an opening in the wall, from חֲלָה, perforare. So we combine most certainly (vid., Prov. 12:27) with (Arab.) khark, fissura, so that the idea presents itself of the window broken through the wall, or as itself broken through; for the window in the country there consists for the most part of a pierced wooden frame of a transparent nature,—not (as one would erroneously conclude, from the most significant name of a window שָׁעֵב designate, now schubbâke, from שָׁבַךְ, to twist, to lattice, to close after the manner of our Venetian blinds) of rods or boards laid crosswise. שָׁבַךְ, Arab. transferred to the looking out through the pierced places of such a window, for the glances of his eye are like the penetrating rays of light.

**Song 2:10.** When now Shulamith continues:

> Arise, my love, my fair one, and go forth! the words show that this first scene is not immediately dramatic, but only mediately; for Shulamith speaks in monologue, though in a dramatic manner narrating an event which occurred between the commencement of their love-relation and her home-bringing. She does
not relate it as a dream, and thus it is not one. Solomon again once more passes, perhaps on a hunting expedition into the northern mountains after the winter with its rains, which made them inaccessible, is over; and after long waiting, Shulamith at length again sees him, and he invites her to enjoy with him the spring season. סָתַר signifies, like ἀπόκρισις, not always to answer to the words of another, but also to speak on the occasion of a person appearing before one; it is different from עָנָה, the same in sound, which signifies to sing, properly to sing through the nose, and has the root-meaning of replying (of the same root as עָנָן, with clouds, for in the East winter is the rainy season). סְׁתוּת also to speak on the occasion of a person who has passed by. עָבַר, with the nown-ending an, is the same as עָטֶס, and signifies the flower, as the latter the flower-month, floréal; in the use of the word, עָטֶס is related to עָנָה and נִצָן, probably as little flower is to flower. In הָצָהָם the idea of the song of birds (Arab. gharad) appears, and this is not to be given up. The LXX, Aquila, Symm., Targ., Jerome, and the Venet. translate tempus putationis: the time of the pruning of vines, which indeed corresponds to the usus loq. (cf. נְבַרָה, to prune the vine, and נִצָה, a pruning-knife), and to similar names, such as אָסִיף [ingathering of fruit], but supplies no reason for her being invited out into the open fields, and is on this account improbable, because the poet further on speaks for the first time of vines. נִצָן is an onomatopoeia, which for the most part denotes song and music; why should thus not be able to denote singing, like עָנָה,—but not, at least not in this passage, the singing of men (Hengst.), for they are not silent in winter; but the singing of birds, which is truly a sign of the spring, and as a characteristic feature, is added to this lovely picture of spring? Thus there is also suitably added the mention of the turtle-dove, which is a bird of passage (vid., Jer. 8:7), and therefore a messenger of spring. יֵשַׁע is 3rd pret.: it makes itself heard.

Song 2:11–13. The winter is called נִצָן, perhaps from a verb נִצָּה (of the same root as נִצָנָה, without any example, since הָגָה, Gen. 49:11, is certainly not derived from a verb חוּם), to conceal, to veil, as the time of being overcast with clouds, for in the East winter is the rainy season; (Arab.) shataaā is also used in the sense of rain itself (vid., D. M. Zeitsch. xx. 618); and in the present day in Jerusalem, in the language of the people, no other name is used for rain but шатааа (not metar). The word קֶרֶף, which the Kerî substitutes, only means that one must not read וְהָאָרֶץ, but וְהַמַּתָּה, with long _consts; in the same way humble, from מְדַבֶּר, to be bowed down, and a quail, from מְדַבֵּר, to be fat, are formed and written. Rain is here, however, especially mentioned: it is called gēshēm, from gāshām, to be thick, massy (cf. revivēm, of density). With מַזְּמֵר, to pass by, there is interchanged סָתָה, which, like (Arab.) khalāf, means properly to press on, and then generally to move to another place, and thus to remove from the place hitherto occupied. In יָשַׁע, with the dat. ethicus, which throws back the action on the subject, the winter rain is thought of as a person who has passed by. עָנָה, with the noun-ending an, is the same as עָטֶס, and signifies the flower, as the latter the flower-month, floréal; in the use of the word, עָטֶס is related to עָנָה and נִצָן, probably as little flower is to flower. In הָצָהָם the idea of the song of birds (Arab. gharad) appears, and this is not to be given up. The LXX, Aquila, Symm., Targ., Jerome, and the Venet. translate tempus putationis: the time of the pruning of vines, which indeed corresponds to the usus loq. (cf. נְבַרָה, to prune the vine, and נִצָה, a pruning-knife), and to similar names, such as אָסִיף [ingathering of fruit], but supplies no reason for her being invited out into the open fields, and is on this account improbable, because the poet further on speaks for the first time of vines. נִצָן is an onomatopoeia, which for the most part denotes song and music; why should thus not be able to denote singing, like עָנָה,—but not, at least not in this passage, the singing of men (Hengst.), for they are not silent in winter; but the singing of birds, which is truly a sign of the spring, and as a characteristic feature, is added to this lovely picture of spring? Thus there is also suitably added the mention of the turtle-dove, which is a bird of passage (vid., Jer. 8:7), and therefore a messenger of spring. יֵשַׁע is 3rd pret.: it makes itself heard.
The description of spring is finished by a reference to the fig-tree and the vine, the standing attributes of a prosperous and peaceful homestead, 1 Kings 5:5; 2 Kings 18:31. פַּג (from פֶּג, and thus named, not from their hardness, but their delicacy) are the little fruits of the fig-tree which now, when the harvest-rains are over, and the spring commences with the equinox of Nisan, already begin to assume a red colour; the verb פָּנַךְ does not mean “to grow into a bulb,” as Böttch. imagines; it has only the two meanings, condire (condiri, post-bibl. syn. of 곚�) and rubescere. From its colour, wheat has the name פָּנַך = פָּנַך, and here also the idea of colour has the preference, for becoming fragrant does not occur in spring,—in the history of the cursing of the fig-tree at the time of the Passover, Mark (Mark 11:13) says, “for the time of figs was not yet.” In fig-trees, by this time the green of the fruit-formation changes its colour, and the vines are חָנַט, blossom, i.e., are in a state of bloom (LXX κοινρίζομαι; cf. 7:13, κοινρίζω)—it is a clause such as Ex. 9:31, and to which “they diffuse fragrance” (v. 13) is parallel. This word is usually regarded as a compound word, consisting of טָר, scent, and זָרַד, brightness = blossom (vid., Gesen. Thes.); it is undeniable that there are such compound formations, e.g., הַשָּׁמִיק, הָשָּׁמִיק, and חַלָמִיש, חַלָמִיש, from (Arab.) हम, to be hard, and חל, to be dark-brown. But the traditional reading חָנַט (not חָנָד) is unfavourable to this view; the middle ה appears itself as an antep-tone vowel (Ewald, § 154a), and the stem-word appears as a quadril. which may be the expansion of חרד, to range, put in order in the sense of placing asunder, unfolding. Symm. renders the word by οἰκενοῦ, and the Talm. idiom shows that not only the green five-leaved blossoms of the vine were so named, but also the fruit-buds and the first shoots of the grapes. Here, as the words “they diffuse fragrance” (as at 7:14 of the mandrakes) show, the vine-blossom is meant which fills the vineyard with an incomparably delicate fragrance. At the close of the invitation to enjoy the spring, the call “Rise up,” etc., with which it began, is repeated. The Chethib יֵלֶל, if not an error in writing, justly set aside by the Keri, is to be read לְלֵך (cf. Syr. bechi, in thee, lvotechi, to thee, but with occult י)—a North Palestinism for יָלָל, like 2 Kings 4:2, where the Keri has substituted the usual form (vid., under Ps. 103 introd.) for this very dialectic form, which is there undoubtedly original.

**Song 2:14.** Solomon further relates how he drew her to himself out of her retirement:

My dove in the clefts of the rock,
In the hiding-place of the cliff;
Let me hear thy voice!
For thy voice is sweet and thy countenance comely.

“Dove” (for which Castellio, columbula, like vulticulum, voculam) is a name of endearment which Shulamith shares with the church of God, Ps. 74:19; cf. 56:1; Hos. 7:11. The wood-pigeon builds its nest in the clefts of the rocks and other steep rocky places, Jer. 48:28. That Shulamith is thus here named, shows that, far removed from intercourse with the world, her home was among the mountains. צָאוֹר, צָאוֹר, as a Himyar. lexicographer defines it, is a cleft into the mountains after the nature of a defile; with צָאוֹר, צָאוֹר, those of a secure hiding-place, and, indeed, a convenient, pleasant residence. פָּרָעָה, פָּרָעָה, is the stairs; here the rocky stairs, as the two chalk-cliffs on the Rügen, which sink perpendicularly to the sea, are called “Stubbenkammer,” a corruption of the Slavonic Stupnhkamen, i.e., the Stair-Rock. “Let me see,” said he, as he called upon her with enticing words, “thy countenance,” and adds this as a reason, “for thy countenance is lovely.” The
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a Grace Notes study

word מראיכ, thus pointed, is sing; the Jod Otiens is the third root letter of ראיכ, retained only for the sake of the eye. It is incorrect to conclude from ashrēch, in Eccles. 10:17, that the ech may be also the plur. suff., which it can as little be as ēhu in Prov. 29:18; in both cases the sing. ēshēr has substituted itself for ashrē. But, inversely, māraich cannot be sing.; for the sing. is simply marēch. Also mārāv, Job 41:1, is not sing: the sing. is marēhu, Job 4:16; Song 5:15. On the other hand, the determination of such forms as מראיכים, מראיכ, is difficult: these forms may be sing. as well as plur. In the passage before us, מראיכ is just such a non-numer. plur. as מרא. But while panim is an extensive plur., as Böttcher calls it: the countenance, in its extension and the totality of its parts.—marim, like marōth, vision, a stately term, Ex. 40:2 (vid., Deitrich's Abhand. p. 19), is an amplificative plur.: the countenance, on the side of its fulness of beauty and its overpowering impression.

Song 2:15, 16. There now follows a cantiuncula. Shulamith comes forward, and, singing, salutes her beloved. Their love shall celebrate a new spring. Thus she wishes everything removed, or rendered harmless, that would disturb the peace of this love:

15 Catch us the foxes, the little foxes,
The spoilers of the vineyards;
For our vineyards are in bloom!
16 My beloved is mine, and I am his;
Who feeds [his flock] among the lilies.

If the king is now, on this visit of the beloved, engaged in hunting, the call: “Catch us,” etc., if it is directed at all to any definite persons, is addressed to those who follow him. But this is a vine-dresser’s ditty, in accord with Shulamith’s experience as the keeper of a vineyard, which, in a figure, aims at her love-relations. The vineyards, beautiful with fragrant blossom, point to her covenant of love; and the foxes, the little foxes, which might destroy these united vineyards, point to all the great and little enemies and adverse circumstances which threaten to gnaw and destroy love in the blossom, ere it has reached the ripeness of full enjoyment. ארך comprehends both foxes and jackals, which “destroy or injure the vineyards; because, by their holes and passages which they form in the ground, loosening the soil, so that the growth and prosperity of the vine suffers injury” (Hitzig). This word is from שֵׁעַל (ר. של), to go down, or into the depth. The little foxes are perhaps the jackals, which are called tānnim, from their extended form, and in height are seldom more than fifteen inches. The word “jackal” has nothing to do with Sanscr. āraeh, the bowler (R. krāg, like kap-dāla, the skull; R. kap, to be arched). Moreover, the mention of the foxes naturally follows 14a, for they are at home among rocky ravines. Hitzig supposes Shulamith to address the foxes: hold for us = wait, ye rascals! But שעלא, Aram. סעלא, does not signify to wait, but to seize or lay hold of (synon. בבר, Judg. 15:4), as the lion its prey, Isa. 5:29. And the plur. of address is explained from its being made to the king’s retinue, or to all who could and would give help. Fox-hunting is still, and has been from old times, a sport of rich landowners; and that the smaller landowners also sought to free themselves from them by means of snares or otherwise, is a matter of course,—they are proverbially as destroyers, Neh. 3:35 [4:3], and therefore a figure of the false prophets, Ezek. 13:4. שער is here instead of שער יבשה. The articles are generally omitted, because poetry is not fond of the article, where, as here (cf. on the other hand, 1:6), the thoughts and language permit it; and the fivefold im is an intentional mere verborum sonus. The clause is זכר סופר, an explanatory one, as appears from the Vav and the subj. preceding, as well as from the want of a finitum. כפור maintains here also, in pausa, the sharpening of the final syllable, as זכר, Deut. 28:42.

The 16th verse is connected with the 15th. Shulamith, in the pentast. song, celebrates her
love-relation; for the praise of it extends into v. 15, is continued in v. 16, and not till v. 17 does she address her beloved. Luther translates:

My beloved is mine, and I am his;
He feeds [his flock] among the roses.

He has here also changed the "lilies" of the Vulgate into "roses;" for of the two queens among the flowers, he gave the preference to the popular and common rose; besides, he rightly does not translate הָרֹעֶּה, in the mid. after the pascitur inter lilia of the Vulgate: who feeds himself, i.e., pleases himself; for רעה has this meaning only when the object expressly follows, and it is evident that בַּשוֹם cannot possibly be this object, after Gen. 37:2, —the object is thus to be supplied. And which? Without doubt, gregem; and if Heiligst., with the advocates of the shepherd-hypothesis, understands this feeding (of the flock) among the lilies, of feeding on a flowery meadow, nothing can be said against it. But at 6:2f., where this saying of Shulamith is repeated, she says that her beloved feeds and gathers lilies. On this the literal interpretation of the qui pascit (gregem) inter lilia is wrecked; for a shepherd, such as the shepherd-hypothesis supposes, were he to feed his flock in a garden, would be nothing better than a thief; such shepherds, also, do not concern themselves with the plucking of flowers, but spend their time in knitting stockings. It is Solomon, the king, of whom Shulamith speaks. She represents him to herself as a shepherd; but in such a manner that, at the same time, she describes his actions in language which rises above ordinary shepherd-life, and, so to speak, idealizes. She, who was herself a shepherdess, knows from her own circle of thought nothing more lovely or more honourable to conceive and to say of him, than that he is a shepherd who feeds among lilies. The locality and the surroundings of his daily work correspond to his nature, which is altogether beauty and love. Lilies, the emblem of unapproachable highness, awe-inspiring purity, lofty elevation above what is common, bloom where the lily-like (king) wanders, whom the Lily names her own. The mystic interpretation and mode of speaking takes "lilies" as the figurative name of holy souls, and a lily-stalk as the symbol of the life of regeneration. Mary, who is celebrated in song as the rosa mystica, is rightly represented in ancient pictures with a lily in her hand on the occasion of the Annunciation; for if the people of God are called by Jewish poets "a people of lilies," she is, within this lily-community, this communio sanctorum, the lily without a parallel.

Song 2:17. Shulamith now further relates, in a dramatic, lively manner, what she said to her beloved after she had saluted him in a song:

17 Till the day cools and the shadows flee away,

Tum; make haste, my beloved,
Like a gazelle or a young one of the hinds
On the craggy mountains.

With the perf.,/= (cf. cf. זה אס, Gen. 24:33) signifies, till something is done; with the fut., till something will be done. Thus: till the evening comes—and, therefore, before it comes—may he do what she requires of him. Most interpreters explain סב, verte te, with the supplement ad me; according to which Jerome, Castell., and others translate by revertere. But Ps. 71:21 does not warrant this rendering; and if Shulamith has her beloved before her, then by סב she can only point him away from herself; the parall. 8:14 has instead of סב, which consequently means, "turn thyself from here away." Rather we may suppose, as I explained in 1851, that she holds him in her embrace, as she says, and inseparable from him, will wander with him upon the mountains. But neither that ad me nor this mecum should have been here (cf. on the contrary 8:14) unexpressed. We hold by what is written. Solomon surprises Shulamith, and invites her to enjoy with him the spring-time; not alone, because he is on a hunting expedition, and—as denoted by "catch us" (v. 15)—with a retinue of followers. She knows that the king has not now time to wander at leisure with her; and therefore she asks him to set forward his work
for the day, and to make haste on the mountains till "the day cools and the shadows flee." Then she will expect him back; then in the evening she will spend the time with him as he promised her. The verb קָוֵח, with the guttural letter ה, and the labial פ, signifies spirare, here of being able to be breathed, i.e., cool, like the expression רוח ה׳, Gen. 3:8 (where the guttural ה is connected with ר). The shadows flee away, when they become longer and longer, as if on a flight, when they stretch out (Ps. 109:23; 102:12) and gradually disappear. Till that takes place—or, as we say, will be done—he shall hasten with the swiftness of a gazelle on the mountains, and that on the mountains of separation, i.e., the riven mountains, which thus present hindrances, but which he, the "swift as the gazelle" (vid., 2:9), easily overcomes. Rightly, Bochart: montes scissionis, ita dicti propter, ῥογμος et χασμα. Also, Luther's "Scheideberge" are "mountains with peaks, from one of which to the other one must spring." We must not here think of Bithron (2 Sam. 2:29), for that is a mountain ravine on the east of Jordan; nor of Bar-Cochba’s בֶיתר (Kirschbau, Landau), because this mountain (whether it be sought for to the south of Jerusalem or to be north of Antipatris) ought properly to be named בֶיתר (vid., Aruch). It is worthy of observation, that in an Assyrian list of the names of animals, along with ṣbi (gazelle) and apparu (the young of the gazelle or of the hind), the name bitru occurs, perhaps the name of the rupicapra. At the close of the song, the expression “mountain of spices” occurs instead of “mountain of separation,” as here. There no more hindrances to be overcome lie in view, the rock-cliffs have become fragrant flowers. The request here made by Shulamith breathes self-denying humility, patient modesty, inward joy in the joy of her beloved. She will not claim him for herself till he has accomplished his work. But when he associates with her in the evening, as with the Emmaus disciples, she will rejoice if he becomes her guide through the new-born world of spring. The whole scene permits, yea, moves us to think of this, that the Lord already even now visits the church which loves Him, and reveals Himself to her; but that not till the evening of the world is His parousia to be expected.

**Song of Solomon 3**

**Second Scene of the Second Act, 3:1–5**

In the first scene, Shulamith relates what externally happened to her one day when the evening approached. In this second scene, she now relates what she inwardly experienced when the night came. She does not indeed say that she dreamed it; but that it is a dream is seen from this, that that which is related cannot be represented as an external reality. But it at once appears as an occurrence that took place during sleep.

1. **On my bed in the nights**
   I sought him whom my soul loveth:
   I sought him, and found him not.

**Song 3:1.** She does not mean to say that she sought him beside herself on her couch; for how could that be of the modest one, whose home-bringing is first described in the next act—she could and might miss him there neither waking nor sleeping. The commencement is like Job 33:15. She was at night on her couch, when a painful longing seized her: the beloved of her soul appeared to have forsaken her, to have withdrawn from her; she had lost the feeling of his nearness, and was not able to recover it. לֵילות is neither here nor at 3:8 necessarily the categ. plur. The meaning may also be, that this pain, arising from a sense of being forgotten, always returned upon her for several nights through: she became distrustful of his fidelity; but the more she apprehended that she was no longer loved, the more ardent became her longing, and she arose to seek for him who had disappeared.

2. **So I will arise, then, and go about the city,**
   The markets, and the streets;
   I will seek him whom my soul loveth!—
   I sought him, and found him not.
Song 3:2. How could this night-search, with all the strength of love, be consistent with the modesty of a maiden? It is thus a dream which she relates. And if the beloved of her soul were a shepherd, would she seek him in the city, and not rather without, in the field or in some village? No; the beloved of her soul is Solomon; and in the dream, Jerusalem, his city is transported close to the mountains of her native home. The resolution expressed by “I will arise, then,” is not introduced by “then I said,” or any similar phrase: the scene consists of a monologue which dramatically represents that which is experienced. Regarding the second Chatef-Pathach of ואֲס׳, vid., Baer’s Genesis, p. 7. שְׁוָקִים is the plur of-showq = (shavq); the root-word אָבַקְשָה is without the Daghesh, as are all the forms of this verb except the imper.; the semi-guttural nature of the Koph has something opposing the simple Sheva.

Song 3:3. Shulamith now relates what she further experienced when, impelled by love-sorrow, she wandered through the city:

3 The watchmen who go about in the city found me:

“Have ye seen him whom my soul loveth?” Here also (as in v. 2) there is wanting before the question such a phrase as, “and I asked them, saying:” the monologue relates dramatically. If she described an outward experience, then the question would be a foolish one; for how could she suppose that the watchmen, who make their rounds in the city (Epstein, against Grätz, points for the antiquity to Ps. 127:1; Isa. 62:6; cf. 21:11), could have any knowledge of her beloved! But if she relates a dream, it is to be remembered that feeling and imagination rise higher than reflection. It is in the very nature of a dream, also, that things thus quickly follow one another without fixed lineaments. This also, that having gone out by night, she found in the streets him whom she sought, is a happy combination of circumstances formed in the dreaming soul; an occurrence without probable external reality, although not without deep inner truth:

4 Scarcely had I passed from them,

When I found him whom my soul loveth.

I seized him, and did not let him go

Until I brought him into the house of my mother,

And into the chamber of her that gave me birth.

Song 3:4. כִמְׁעַט = paululum, here standing for a sentence: it was as a little that I passed, etc. Without ש, it would be paululum transii; with it, paululum fuit quod transii, without any other distinction than that in the latter case the paululum is more emphatic. Since Shulamith relates something experienced earlier, אָחַזְׁתִי is not fitly rendered by teneo, but by tenui; and ולא אַרְׁפֶּנו, not by et non dimittam eum, but, as the neg. of וָארפנו, et dimisi eum,—not merely et non dimittebam eum, but et non dimisi eum. In Gen. 32:27 [26], we read the cogn. שַלֵחַ, which signifies, to let go (“let me go”), as הִרְׁפָה, to let loose, to let free. It is all the same whether we translate, with the subjective colouring, donec introduxerim, or, with the objective, donec introduxi; in either case the meaning is that she held him fast till she brought him, by gentle violence, into her mother’s house. With בית there is the more definite parallel חֶּדֶּר, which properly signifies (vid., under 1:4), recessus, penetrale; with אִמִֹּי, the seldom occurring (only, besides, at Hos. 2:7) part.f. Kal of הרָה, to conceive, be pregnant, which poetically, with the accus., may mean parturire or parere. In Jacob’s blessing, Gen. 49:26, as the text lies before us, his parents are called הָרָהוּ, his “two mothers,” just as in Arab. ummâni, properly “my two mothers,” may be used for “my parents,” in the Lat. also,
parentes means father and mother zeugmatically taken together.

**Song 3:5.** The closing words of the monologue are addressed to the daughters of Jerusalem.

5 I adjure you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem,
   By the gazelles or the hinds of the field,
   That ye awake not and disturb not love
   Till she pleases.

We are thus obliged apparently to think of the daughters of Jerusalem as being present during the relation of the dream. But since Shulamith in the following Act is for the first time represented as brought from her home to Jerusalem, it is more probable that she represented her experience to herself in secret, without any auditors, and feasting on the visions of the dream, which brought her beloved so near, that she had him by herself alone and exclusively, that she fell into such a love-ecstasy as 2:7; and pointing to the distant Jerusalem, deprecates all disturbance of this ecstasy, which in itself is like a slumber pervaded by pleasant dreams. In two monologues dramatically constructed, the poet has presented to us a view of the thoughts and feelings by which the inner life of the maiden was moved in the near prospect of becoming a bride and being married. Whoever reads the Song in the sense in which it is incorporated with the canon, and that, too, in the historical sense fulfilled in the N.T., will not be able to read the two scenes from Shulamith’s experience without finding therein a mirror of the intercourse of the soul with God in Christ, and cherishing thoughts such, e.g., as are expressed in the ancient hymn: *Quando tandem venies, meus amor? Procura de Libano, dulcis amor! Clamat, amat sponsula: Veni, Jesu, Dulcis veni Jesu!*

### The Bringing of the Bride and the Marriage—Ch. 3:6–5:1

#### First Scene of the Third Act, 3:6–11

In this third Act the longing of the loving one after her beloved is finally appeased. The first scene represents her home-bringing into the royal city. A gorgeous procession which marches towards Jerusalem attracts the attention of the inhabitants of the city.

6 Who is this coming up from the wilderness
   Like pillars of smoke,
   Perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,
   With all aromatics of the merchants?

**Song 3:6.** It is possible that זֹאת and עֹלָה may be connected; but יִשְׁתַּא (Ps. 34:7 (this poor man, properly, this, a poor man), is not analogous, it ought to be זאת הָעלה. Thus zoth will either be closely connected with יִשְׁתַּא, and make the question sharper and more animated, as is that in Gen. 12:18, or it will be the subject which then, as in Isa. 63:1, Job 38:2, cf. below 7:5b, Jonah 4:17, Amos 9:12, is more closely written with indeterminate participles, according to which it is rightly accented. But we do not translate with Heiligst. quid est hoc quod ascendit, for mī asks after a person, mā after a thing, and only per attract. does mī stand for mā in Gen. 33:8; Judg. 13:17; Mic. 1:5; also not quis est hoc (Vaith.), for zoth after mī has a personal sense, thus: quis (quaenam) haec est. That it is a woman that is being brought forward those who ask know, even if she is yet too far off to be seen by them, because they recognise in the festal gorgeous procession a marriage party. That the company comes up from the wilderness, it may be through the wilderness which separates Jerusalem from Jericho, is in accordance with the fact that a maiden from Galilee is being brought up, and that the procession has taken the way through the Jordan valley (Ghôr); but the scene has also a typical colouring; for the wilderness is, since the time of the Mosaic deliverance out of Egypt, an emblem of the transition from a state of bondage to freedom, from humiliation to glory
(vid., under Isa. 40:3; Hos. 1:16; Ps. 68:5). The pomp is like that of a procession before which the censer of frankincense is swung. Columns of smoke from the burning incense mark the line of the procession before and after. The pomp is like that of a procession before which the censer of frankincense is swung. Columns of smoke from the burning incense mark the line of the procession before and after. תִּימְׁרות (תִּימֲ׳) here and at Job 3 (vid., Norzi) is formed, as it appears, from יָמַר, to strive upwards, a kindred form to אָמַר; cf. Isa. 61:6 with 17:6, Ps. 94:4; the verb תָּמַר, whence the date-palm receives the name תָּמָר, is a secondary formation, like תָּאַב to אָבָה. Certainly this form תִּימָרָה (cf. on the contrary, תּולָדָה) is not elsewhere to be supported; Schlottm. sees in it מְׁקֻצֶּרֶּת, from תְּׁמָרָה; but such an expansion of the word for Dag. dirimens is scarcely to be supposed. This naming of the pillars of smoke is poet., as Jonah 3:3; cf. “a pillar of smoke,” Judg. 20:40. She who approaches comes from the wilderness, brought up to Jerusalem, placed on an elevation, “like pillars of smoke,” i.e., not herself likened thereto, as Schlottm. supposes it must be interpreted (with the tertium comp. of the slender, precious, and lovely), but encompassed and perfumed by such. For her whom the procession brings this lavishing of spices is meant; it is she who is incensed or perfumed with myrrh and frankincense. Schlottm. maintains that מְׁקֻטֶּרֶּת cannot mean anything else than “perfumed,” and therefore he reads מֵקֻצֶּרֶּת (as Aq. ἀπὸ θωμάματος, and Jerome). But the word mekuttërēth does not certainly stand alone, but with the genit. foll.; and thus as “rent in their clothes,” 2 Sam. 13:31, signifies not such as are themselves rent, but those whose clothes are rent (Ewald, § 288b, compare also de Sacy, II § 321), so מֵקֻצֶּרֶּת can also mean those for whom (for whose honour) this incense is expended, and who are thus fumigated with it. מֵר, myrrh, (Arab.) murr (vid., above under 1:13), stands also in Ex. 30:23 and Ps. 45:9 at the head of the perfumes; it came from Arabia, as did also frankincense levônâ, Arab. lubân (later referred to benzoin); both of the names are Semitic, and the circumstance that the Tôra required myrrh as a component part of the holy oil, Ex. 30:23, and frankincense as a component part of the holy incense, Ex. 30:34, points to Arabia as the source whence they were obtained. To these two principal spices there is added מָסָל מְרַכְּבִּים (Masal merkâbim), which is related to אָכְבָּן as powder to dust (cf. abacus, a reckoning-table, so named from the sand by means of which arithmetical numbers were reckoned), is the name designating single drugs (i.e., dry wares; cf. the Arab. elixir = ξηρόν). Song 3:7, 8. The description of the palanquin now following, one easily attributes to another voice from the midst of the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

7 Lo! Solomon's palanquin,
Three score heroes are around it,
Of the heroes of Israel,
8 All of them armed with the sword, expert in war.

Each with his sword on his thigh,
Against fear in the nights.
not as in old times Rebecca did, riding on a camel, but is carried in a mittā, which is surrounded by an escort for protection and as a mark of honour. Her way certainly led through the wilderness, where it was necessary, by a safe convoy, to provide against the possibility (min in mippahad, cf. Isa. 4:6; 25:4) of being attacked by robbers; whereas it would be more difficult to understand why the marriage-bed in the palace of the king of peace (1 Chron. 22:9) should be surrounded by such an armed band for protection. That Solomon took care to have his chosen one brought to him with royal honours, is seen in the lavish expenditure of spices, the smoke and fragrance of which signalized from afar the approach of the procession,—the mittā, which is now described, can be no other than that in which, sitting or reclining, or half sitting, half reclining, she is placed, who is brought to him in such a cloud of incense. Thus mittā (from nāthā, to stretch oneself out), which elsewhere is also used of a bier, 2 Sam. 3:21 (like the Talm. למד = נושי), will here signify a portable bed, a sitting cushion hung round with curtains after the manner of the Indian palanquin, and such as is found on the Turkish caiques or the Venetian gondolas. 

The appositional nearer definition שֵׁלִישֵׁ֑י (which belonged to Solomon) (vid. under 6b), shows that it was a royal palanquin, not one belonging to one of the nobles of the people. The bearers are unnamed persons, regarding whom nothing is said; the sixty heroes form only the guard for safety and for honour (sauvegarde), or the escorte or convoi. The sixty are the tenth part (the élite) of the royal body-guard, 1 Sam. 27:2; 30:9, etc. (Schlottm.). If it be asked, Why just 60? we may perhaps not unsuitably reply: The number 60 is here, as at 6:8, the number of Israel multiplied by 5, the fraction of 10; so that thus 60 distinguished warriors form the half to the escort of a king of Israel. מַטְרֵּךְ (which properly means, held fast by the sword so that it goes not let them free, which, according to the sense = holding fast [= practised in the use of the sword]; the Syr. translation of the Apoc.

renders παντοκράτωρ by 'he who is held by all,” i.e., holding it (cf. Ewald, § 149b).

Song 3:9, 10. Another voice now describes the splendour of the bed of state which Solomon prepared in honour of Shulamith:

9 A bed of state hath King Solomon made for himself

Of the wood of Lebanon.
10 Its pillars hath he made of silver,

Its support of gold, its cushion of purple;

Its interior is adorned from love

By the daughters of Jerusalem.

The sound of the word, the connection and the description, led the Greek translators (the LXX, Venet., and perhaps also others) to render τρίφθηρα, by φορείον, litter palanquin (Vulg. ferculum). The appiryon here described has a silver pedestal and a purple cushion—as we read in Athenaeus v. 13 (II p. 317, ed. Schweigh.) that the philosopher and tyrant Athenion showed himself “on a silver-legged φορείον, with purple coverlet;” and the same author, v. 5 (II p. 253), also says, that on the occasion of a festal procession by Antiochus Epiphanes, behind 200 women who sprinkled ointments from golden urns came 80 women, sitting in pomp on golden-legged, and 500 on silver-legged, φορεία—this is the proper name for the costly women’s-litter (Suidas: φορείον γυναικείον), which, according to the number of bearers (Mart. VI 77: six Cappadocians and, ix. 2, eight Syrians), was called εξάφορον (hexaphorum, Mart. II 81) or ὀκτώφορον (octophorum, Cicero’s Verr. v. 10). The Mishna, Sota ix. 14, uses appiryon in the sense of phoreion: “in the last war (that of Hadrian) it was decreed that a bride should not pass through the town in an appiryon [on account of the danger], but our Rabbis sanctioned it later [for modesty’s sake];” as here, “to be carried in an appiryon,” so in Greek, προφεύναι (καταστείχειν) ἐν φορείῳ. In the Midrash also, Bamidbar rabba c. 12, and elsewhere, appiryon of this passage before us is taken in all sorts of allegorical significations in most of which the identity of the word with φορείον is supposed,
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which is also there written שפרין (after Aruch),
cf. Isa. 49:22, Targ., and is once interchanged with מזיף,  פאריל, papilio (parillon), pleasure-tent. But a Greek word in the Song is in itself so improbable, that Ewald describes this derivation of the word as a frivolous jest; so much the more improbable, as φορές as the name of a litter (lectica) occurs first in such authors (of the κοινή) as Plutarch, Polybios, Herodian, and the like, and therefore, with greater right, it may be supposed that it is originally a Semitic word, which the Greek language adopted at the time when the Oriental and Graeco-Roman customs began to be amalgamated. Hence, if mittā, 7a, means a portable bed,—as is evident from this, that it appears as the means of transport with an escort,—then appiryon cannot also mean a litter; the description, moreover, does not accord with a litter. We do not read of rings and carrying-poles, but, on the contrary, of pillars (as those of a tent-bed) instead, and, as might be expected, of feet. Schlottm., however, takes mittā and appiryon as different names for a portable bed; but the words, “an appiryon has King Solomon made,” etc., certainly indicate that he who thus speaks has not the appiryon before him, and also that this was something different from the mittā. While Schlottm. is inclined to take appiryon, in the sense of a litter, as a word borrowed from the Greek (but in the time of the first king?), Gesen. in his Thes. seeks to derive it, thus understood, from ה퍼, cito ferri, currere; but this significion of the verb is imaginary.

We expect here, in accordance with the progress of the scene, the name of the bridal couch; and on the supposition that appiryon, Sota 12a, as in the Mishna, means the litter (Aruch) of the bride, Arab. maziffat, and not torus nuptialis (Buxt.), then there is a possibility that appiryon is a more dignified word for ירוציא, 1:17, yet sufficient thereby to show that פָרָה is the usual Talm. name of the marriage-bed (e.g., Mezia 23b, where it stand, per meton., for concubitus), which is wittily explained by הרבח עלה (Kethuboth 10b, and elsewhere). The Targ, has for it the form פָרִי (vid., Levy). It thus designates a bed with a canopy (a tent-bed), Deut. 32:50, Jerus; so that the ideas of the bed of state and the palanquin (cf. בילד, canopy, and ורבין עליה, bridal-bed, Succa 11a) touch one another. In general, פָרִי (פוריא), as is also the case with appiryon, must have been originally a common designation of certain household furniture with a common characteristic; for the Syr. aprautha, plur. parjevatha (Wiseman’s Horae, p. 255), or also parha (Castell.), signifies a cradle. It is then to be inquired, whether this word is referable to a root-word which gives a common characteristic with manifold applications. But the Heb. פָרָה, from the R ליא, signifies to split, to tear asunder, to break forth, to bring fruit, to be fruitful, and nothing further. פָרָה has nowhere the significiation to run, as already remarked; only in the Palest.-Aram. פָרָה is found in this meaning (vid., Buxt.). The Arab. farr does not signify to run, but to flee; properly (like our “ausreissen” = be tear out, to break out), to break open by flight the rank in which one stands (as otherwise turned by horse-dealers: to open wide the horse’s mouth). But, moreover, we do not thus reach the common characteristic which we are in search of; for if we may say of the litter that it runs, yet we cannot say that of a bed or a cradle, etc. The Arab. farfār, species vehiculi muliebris, also does not help us; for the verb farfar, to vacillate, to shake, is its appropriate root-word. With better results shall we compare the Arab. fary, which, in Kal and Hiph., signifies to break open, to cut out (couper, tailler une étoffe), and also, figuratively, to bring forth something strange, something not yet existing (yafry alfaryya, according to the Arab. Lex. = yatı bal’a’jab fy ‘amalh, he accomplishes something wonderful); the primary meaning in Conj. viii. is evidently: yftarra kidban, to cut out lies, to meditate and to express that which is calumnious (a similar metaphor to khar’ā, findere, viii. fingere, to cut out something in the imagination; French, inventer, imaginer). With this fary, however, we
do not immediately reach שָׁרָה, פָרָה, אַפַרְׁסָנָא, אַפַרְׁסָנָא; for fara, as well as fara (farw), are used only of cutting to pieces, cutting out, sewing together of leather and other materials (cf. Arab. farwat, fur; farâ, furrier), but not of cutting and preparing wood.

But why should not the Semitic language have used ער, אַפַרְׁסָנָא, אַפַרְׁסָנָא, also, in the sense of the verb.Ac אַרְׁחָן, which signifies to cut and hew, in the sense of forming (cf. Pih. אַרְׁחָן, sculpere, Ezek. 21:24), as in the Arab. bara and bary, according to Lane, mean, “be formed or fashioned by cutting [a writing-reed, stick, bow], shaped out, or pared,” —in other words: Why should not the Semitic language have used in the Arab. of the cutting of leather, not be used, in the Heb. and Aram., of the preparing of wood, and thus of the fashioning of a bed or carriage? As פָרָה signifies a machine, and that the work of an engineer, so פָרָה signifies timber-work, carpenter-work, and, lengthened especially by Aleph prosthet., a product of the carpenter’s art, a bed of state. The Aleph prosth. would indeed favour the supposition that appiryon is a foreign word; for the Semitic language frequently forms words after this manner,—e.g., אַסְפָה, a magician; אַסְפָה, a stater. But apart from such words as אַסְפָה, אָסְפָה, אָסְפָה, oddly sounding in accord with קָאַמְרָל בּוֹ, as appiryon with פָרָה, אָסְפָה, אָסְפָה, are examples of genuine Heb. words with such a prosthesis, i.e., an Aleph, as in אָסְפָה, and the like.

The palace, Dan. 11:45, is, for its closer amalgamation by means of Dag., at least an analogous example; for thus it stands related to the Syr. opadna, as, e.g., (Syr.), oparsons, net, Ewald, § 163c, to the Jewish-Aram. אֶפֶדֶּנ, or אֶפֶדֶּנ, or פָרָה, פָרָה, פָרָה; cf. also פָרָה, פָרָה, פָרָה, “finally,” in relation to the Pehl. אָסְפָה (Spiegel’s Literatur der Parsen, p. 356). We think we have thus proved that אָסְפָה is a Heb. word, which, coming from the verb ער, to cut right, to make, frame, signifies a bed, and that, as Ewald also renders, a bed of state.

However, אָסְפָה (from אָסְפָה, to lift from beneath, sublevare, then sternere) is the head of the head of the bed; LXX ἀνάκλιτον; Jerome, reclinatorium, which, according to Isidore, is the Lat. vulgar name for the fulchra, the reclining (of the head and foot) of the bedstead. Schlottmann here involuntarily bears testimony that appiryon may at least be understood of a bed of state as well as of a litter of state; for he remarks: “The four sides of the bed were generally adorned with carved work, ivory, metal, or also, as in the case of most of the Oriental divans, with drapery.” “Nec mihi tunc,” says Porpertius, ii. 10, 11, “fulcro lectus sternatur eburno.” Here the fulcrum is not of ivory, but of gold.

A אָסְפָה (from אָסְפָה, to lie upon anything; Arab. II componere; Aethiop. adipisci) is that which one takes possession of, sitting or lying upon it, the cushion, e.g., of a saddle (Lev. 15:9); here, the divan (vid., Lane, Mod. Egypt, I 10) arranged on an elevated frame, serving both as a seat and as a couch. Red purple is called רְפִידָה, רְפִידָה, probably from הָפִּרְם, as material of variegated colour.

By the interior רְפִידָה of the bed, is probably meant a covering which lay above this cushion. רְפִידָה, to arrange together, to combine (whence רְפִידָה, pavement; Arab. rusafat, a paved way), is here meant like сторожник стражнич, whence стражом. And רְפִידָה is not equivalent to רְפִידָה (after the construction 1 Kings 22:10; Ezek. 9:2), inlaid with love, but is the adv. accus of the manner; “love” (cf. hhesed, Ps. 141:5) denotes the motive: laid out or made up as a bed from love on the part of the daughters of Jerusalem, i.e., the ladies of the palace—these from love to the king have procured a costly tapestry or tapestries, which they have spread over the purple cushion. Thus rightly Vaihinger in his Comm., and Merx, Archiv. Bd. II 111–114. Schlottmann finds this interpretation of מֶרְכָב, מֶרְכָב, probably no Grace Notes study
example of this, yet we point to Ps. 45 in illustration of the custom of presenting gifts to a newly-married pair. He himself understands אהבה personally, as do also Ewald, Heiligst., Böttcher; “the voice of the people,” says Ewald, “knows that the finest ornament with which the invisible interior of the couch is adorned, is a love from among the daughters of Jerusalem,—i.e., some one of the court ladies who was raised, from the king’s peculiar love to her, to the rank of a queen-consort. The speaker thus ingeniously names this newest favourite ‘a love,’ and at the same time designates her as the only thing with which this elegant structure, all adorned on the outside is adorned within.” Relatively better Böttcher: with a love (beloved one), prae filiis Hierus. But even though אהבה, like amor and amores, might be used of the beloved one herself, yet רצוף does not harmonize with this, seeing we cannot speak of being paved or tapestried with persons. Schlottm. in vain refers for the personal signification of אהבה to 2:7, where it means love and nothing else, and seeks to bring it into accord with רצוף; for he remarks, “as the stone in mosaic work fills the place destined for it, so the bride the interior of the litter, which is intended for just one person filling it.” But is this not more comical, without intending to be so, than Juvenal’s (i. 1. 32 s.): Causidici nova cum veniat lectica Mathonis Plena ipso ... But Schlottm. agrees with us in this, that the marriage which is here being prepared for was the consummation of the happiness of Solomon and Shulamith, not of another woman, and not the consummation of Solomon’s assault on the fidelity of Shulamith, who hates him to whom she now must belong, loving only one, the shepherd for whom she is said to sigh (Song 1:4a), that he would come and take her away. “This triumphal procession,” says Rocke, “was for her a mourning procession, the royal litter a bier; her heart died within her with longing for her beloved shepherd.” Touching, if it were only true! Nowhere do we see her up to this point resisting; much rather she is happy in her love. The shepherd-hypothesis cannot comprehend this marriage procession without introducing incongruous and imaginary things; it is a poem of the time of Gellert. Solomon the seducer, and Shulamith the heroine of virtue, are figures as from Gellert’s Swedish Countess; they are moral commonplaces personified, but not real human beings. In the litter sits Shulamith, and the appiryon waits for her. Solomon rejoices that now the reciprocal love-bond is to find its conclusion; and what Shulamith, who is brought from a lowly to so lofty a station, experiences, we shall hear her describe in the sequel.

Song 3:11. At the close of the scene, the call now goes forth to the daughters of Zion, i.e., the women of Jerusalem collectively, to behold the king, who now shows himself to the object of his love and to the jubilant crowd, as the festal procession approaches.

11 Come out, yet daughters of Zion, and see
King Solomon with the crown
With which his mother crowned him
On the day of his espousal,
And on the day of the gladness of his heart.
The women of the court, as distinguished from the Galilean maiden, are called “daughters of Jerusalem;” here, generally, the women of Zion or Jerusalem (Lam. 5:11) are called “daughters of Zion.” Instead of צאנה (since the verb Lamed Aleph is treated after the manner of verbs Lamed He, cf. Jer. 50:20; Ezek. 23:49), and that defect. צאנה, is used for the sake of assonance with ראהנה elsewhere also, as we have shown at Isa. 222:13, an unusual form is used for the sake of the sound. It is seen from the Sota (ix. 14) that the old custom for the bridgroom to wear a “crown” was abolished in consequence of the awful war with Vespasian. Rightly Epstein, against Grätz, shows from Job 31:36, Isa. 28:1, Ps. 103:4, that men also crowned themselves. באהנה (with the crown) is, according to the best authorities, without the art., and does not require it, since it is
determined by the relat. clause following. חתונה is the marriage (the word also used in the post-bibl. Heb., and interchanging with חופה, properly נמשלוע, Matt. 9:15), from the verb חתון, which, proceeding from the root-idea of cutting into (Arab. khatn, to circumcise; ר חתון, whence חתון, חותר, חותרת, חותם, חתר), denotes the pressing into, or going into, another family; חתן is he who enters into such a relation of affinity, and חותן the father of her who is taken away, who also on his part is related to the husband. Here also the seduction fable is shattered. The marriage with Shulamith takes place with the joyful consent of the queen-mother. In order to set aside this fatal circumstance, the “crown” is referred back to the time when Solomon was married to Pharaoh’s daughter. Cogitandus est Salomo, says Heiligst., qui cum Sulamitha pompa sollemni Hierosolyma redit, eadem corona nuptiali ornatus, qua quum filiam regis Aegyptiorum uxorem duxeret ornatus erat. But was he then so poor or niggardly as to require to bring forth this old crown? and so basely regardless of his legitimate wife, of equal rank with himself, as to wound her by placing this crown on his head in honour of a rival? No; at the time when this youthful love-history occurred, Pharaoh’s daughter was not yet married. The mention of his mother points us to the commencement of his reign. His head is not adorned with a crown which had already been worn, but with a fresh garland which his mother wreathed around the head of her youthful son. The men have already welcomed the procession from afar; but the king in his wedding attire has special attractions for the women—they are here called upon to observe the moment when the happy pair welcome one another.

Song of Solomon 4

Second Scene of the Third Act, 4:1–5:1

This scene contains a conversation between Solomon and his beloved, whom he at first calls friend, and then, drawing always nearer to her, bride. The place of the conversation is, as 5:1 shows, the marriage hall. That the guests there assembled hear what Solomon says to Shulamith, one need not suppose; but the poet has overheard it from the loving pair. Fairer than ever does Shulamith appear to the king. He praises her beauty, beginning with her eyes.

1a Lo, thou art fair, my friend! yes, thou art fair! Thine eyes are doves behind thy veil. Song 4:1. The Gr. Venet. translates, after Kimchi, “looking out from behind, thy hair flowing down from thy head like a mane.” Thus also Schultens, capillus plexus; and Hengst., who compares πλέγμα, 1 Tim. 2:9, and ἐ πλέγμα τρίχαν, 1 Pet. 3:3, passages which do not accord with the case of Shulamith; but neither צמא, Arab. šmm, nor תמנ signifies to plait; the latter is used of the hair when it is too abundant, and ready for the shears. To understand the hair as denoted here, is, moreover, inadmissible, inasmuch as מבעד cannot be used of the eyes in relation to the braids of hair hanging before them. Symm. rightly translates צמא by αλύρα [veil] (in the Song the LXX erroneously renders by συσφίσκος [behind thy silence]), Isa. 47:2. The verb צמא, (Arab.) šmam, a stopper, and (Arab.) alsamma, a plaid in which one veils himself, when he wraps it around him. The veil is so called, as that which closely hides the face. In the Aram. צמא, Palm. צמא, means directly to veil, as e.g., Bereshith rabba c. 45, extr., of a matron whom the king lets pass before him it is said, צמא ופייהו. Shulamith is thus veiled. As the Roman bride wore the velum flammeum, so also the Jewish bride was deeply veiled; cf. Gen. 24:65, where Rebecca veiled herself (Lat. nubit) before her betrothed. בעד, constr. בעד, a segolate noun, which denotes separation, is a prep. in the sense of pole, as in Arab. in that of post. Ewald, sec. 217m, supposes, contrary to the Arab., the fundamental idea of covering (cogn. בד); but that which surrounds is thought of as separating, and at the same time as covering, the thing which it encompasses. From behind her veil, which covered her face (vid.,
Bachmann, under Judg. 3:23), her eyes gleam out, which, without needing to be supplemented by עֵינֵי, are compared, as to their colour, motion, and lustre, to a pair of doves. From the eyes the praise passes to the hair.

1b Thy hair is like a flock of goats
Which repose downwards on Mount Gilead. The hair of the bride’s head was uncovered. We know from later times that she wore in it a wreath of myrtles and roses, or also a “golden city” (עיר של זהב, i.e., an ornament which emblematically represented Jerusalem. To see that this comparison is not incongruous, we must know that sheep in Syria and Palestine are for the most part white; but goats, for the most part, black, or at least dark coloured, as e.g., the brown gedi Mamri. The verb גָלַש is the Arab. jls, which signifies, to rest upon; and is distinguished from the synon. קָצַב in this, that the former is used of him who has previously lain down; the latter, of one who first stands and then sits down. The nejd bears also the name jals, as the high land raising itself, and like a dome sitting above the rest of the land. One has to think of the goats as having lain down, and thus with the upper parts of their bodies as raised up. מִן in מֵהַר is used almost as in מַר מִדְלִי, Isa. 40:15. A flock of goats encamped on a mountain (rising up, to one looking from a distance, as in a steep slope, and almost perpendicularly), and as if hanging down lengthwise on its sides, presents a lovely view adorning the landscape. Solomon likens to this the appearance of the locks of his beloved, which hang down over her shoulders. She was till now a shepherdess, therefore a second rural image follows:

2 Thy teeth are like a flock of shorn sheep
Which comes up from the washing
All bearing twins,
And a bereaved one is not among them.

Song 4:2. The verb קָצַב is, as the Arab. shows, in the sense of tondere oves, the synon. of מַתְׁאִימות. With shorn (not to be shorn) sheep, the teeth in regard to their smoothness, and with washed sheep in regard to their whiteness, are compared—as a rule the sheep of Palestine are white; in respect of their full number, in which in pairs they correspond to one another, the one above to the one below, like twin births in which there is no break. The parallel passage, 6:6, omits the point of comparison of the smoothness. That some days after the shearing the sheep were bathed, is evident from Columella 7:4. Regarding the incorrect exchange of mas. with fem. forms, vid., under 2:7. The part. Hiph. מַתְׁאִימות (cf. διδυμάτων) Theocr. i. 25) refers to the mothers, none of which has lost a twin of the pair she had borne. In “which come up from the washing,” there is perhaps thought of, at the same time with the whiteness, the saliva dentium. The moisture of the saliva, which heightens the glance of the teeth, is frequently mentioned in the love-songs of Mutenebbi, Hariri, and Deschami. And that the saliva of a clean and sound man is not offensive, is seen from this, that the Lord healed a blind man by means of His spittle.

Song 4:3. The mouth is next praised:

3a Like a thread of crimson thy lips,
And thy mouth is lovely,
She is, as distinguished from red-purple, properly shining, glistening; for this form has an active signification, like יָפָה, as well as a passive, like יָלַע (fully, יָלַע - signifies the kermes or worm-colour; the karmese, the red juice of the cochineal. מָצַכַר (מָצַכַר) is translated by the LXX “thy speech;” Jerome, eloquium; and the Venet. “thy dialogue;” but that would be expressed, though by a ἀσ. λεγ., by מִדְבָר. מִדְבָר is here the name of the mouth, the naming of which one expects; the preform. is the mem instrumenti: the mouth, as the instrument of speech, as the organ by which the soul expresses itself in word and in manner of speech. The poet needed for יָפָה a fuller, more select word; just as in Syria the nose is not called anf, but minchâr (from nachara, to blow, to breathe hard).

Praise of her temples.
3b Like a piece of pomegranate thy temples
    Behind thy veil.

רַקָה is the thin piece of the skull on both sides of
the eyes; Lat., mostly in the plur., tempor.a;
German, schläfe, from schlaffen, loose, slack, i.e.,
weaken = רַק. The figure points to that soft mixing
of colours which makes the colouring of the so-
called carnation one of the most difficult
accomplishments in the art of painting. The half
of a cut pomegranate (Jer. fragmen. mali punici)
is not meant after its outer side, as Zöckler
supposes, for he gives to the noun rákkā,
contrary to Judg. 4:21; 5:26, the meaning of
cheek, a meaning which it has not, but after its
inner side, which presents a red mixed and
tempered with the ruby colour,—a figure so
much the more appropriate, since the ground-
colour of Shulamith's countenance is a subdued
white. Up to this point the figures are borrowed
from the circle of vision of a shepherdess. Now
the king derives them from the sphere of his
own experience as the ruler of a kingdom. She
who has eyes like doves is in form like a born
queen.

4 Like the tower of David thy neck,
    Built in terraces;
    Thereon a thousand shields hang,
    All the armour of heroes.

Song 4:4. The tower of David, is, as it appears,
"the tower of the flock," Mic. 4:4, from which
David surveyed the flock of his people. In Neh.
3:25f. it is called the "tower which lieth out
from the king's high house," i.e., not the palace,
but a government house built on Zion, which
served as a co
...
in the Targ.: of the curtain of the tabernacle (בֶּית לופי, place of the joining together = חֹבֶּרֶת or מַחְׁבֶּרֶת of the Heb. text); and in the Talm.: of the roofs of two houses (Bathra 6a, הָלֶּחֶת, the joining). Accordingly ' kiếmתלו, if we interpret the Lamed not of the definition, but of the norm, may signify, "in ranks together." The Lamed has already been thus rendered by Döderl.: "in turns" (cf. לָפַת, to turn, to wind); and by Meier, Mr.: "in gradation;" and Aq. and Jerome also suppose that תלף׳ refers to component parts of the building itself, for they understand pinnacles or parapets (ἐπάλξεις, propugnacula); as also the Venet.: εἰς ἐπάλξεις χλίας. But the same for pinnacles is פינה, and their points, השמשות, while, on the contrary, " kiếmתלו is the more appropriate name for terraces which, connected together, rise the one above the other. Thus to build towers like terraces, and to place the one, as it were, above the other, was a Babylonian custom. The comparison lies in this, that Shulamith's neck was surrounded with ornaments so that it did not appear as a uniform whole, but as composed of terraces. That the neck is represented as hung round with ornaments, the remaining portion of the description shows.

מגן signifies a shield, as that which protects, like clupeus (clypeus), perhaps connected with καλωσθεν and χλία, from χλία = (Arab.) shalita, as a hard impenetrable armour. The latter is here the more common word, which comprehends, with על, the round shield; also בַּךְ, the oval shield, which covers the whole body; and other forms of shields. קנים, "the thousand shields,“ has the indicative, if not (vid., under 1:11) the generic article. The appositional למָּגנֶּה is not intended to mean: all shields of (von) heroes, which it would if the article were prefixed to col and omitted before gibborim, or if בַּךְ 3:8, were used; but it means: all the shields of heroes, as the accentuation also indicates. The article is also here significant. Solomon made, according to 1 Kings 10:16f., 200 golden targets and 300 golden shields, which he put in the house of the forest of Lebanon. These golden shields Pharaoh Shishak took away with him, and Rehoboam replaced them by "shields of brass," which the guards bore when they accompanied the king on his going into the temple (1 Kings 14:26–28; cf. 2 Chron. 12:9–11); these "shields of David," i.e., shields belonging to the king's house, were given to the captains of the guard on the occasion of the raising of Joash to the throne, 2 Kings 11:10; cf. 2 Chron. 23:9. Of these brazen shields, as well as of those of gold, it is expressly said how and where they were kept, nowhere that they were hung up outside on a tower, the tower of David. Such a display of the golden shields is also very improbable. We will perhaps have to suppose that 4b describes the tower of David, not as it actually was, but as one has to represent it to himself, that it might be a figure of Shulamith's neck. This is compared to the terraced tower of David, if one thinks of it as hung round by a thousand shields which the heroes bore, those heroes, namely, who formed the king's body-guard. Thus it is not strange that to the 200 + 300 golden shields are here added yet 500 more; the body-guard, reckoned in companies of 100 each, 2 Kings 11:4, is estimated as consisting of 1000 men. The description, moreover, corresponds with ancient custom. The words are תלף׳, not מָּגֵן, כֹּל שִלְׁטֵי הַגִ׳, the outer wall of the tower is thought of as decorated with shields hung upon it. That shields were thus hung round on tower-walls, Ezekiel shows in his prophecy regarding Tyre, 27:11; cf. 1 Macc. 4:57, and supra foris Capitolinae aedis, Pliny, Hist. Nat. xxxv. 3; and although we express the presumption that Solomon's imagination represented David's tower as more gorgeous than it actually was, yet we must confess that we are not sufficiently acquainted with Solomon's buildings to be able to pass judgment on this. These manifold inexplicable references of the Song to the unfolded splendour of Solomon's reign, are
favourable to the Solomonic authorship of the book. This grandiose picture of the distinguished beauty of the neck, and the heightening of this beauty by the ornament of chains, is now followed by a beautiful figure, which again goes back to the use of the language of shepherds, and terminates the description:

5  Thy two breasts are like two fawns,
    Twins of a gazelle,
    Which feed among lilies.

Song 4:5. The dual, originating in the inner differ. of the plur., which denotes in Heb. not two things of any sort, but two paired by nature or by art, exists only in the principal form; as soon as inflected, is unrecognisable, therefore here, where the pair as such is praised, the word שְׁנֵי is used. The breasts are compared to a twin pair of young gazelles in respect of their equality and youthful freshness, and the bosom on which they raise themselves is compared to a meadow covered with lilies, on which the twin-pair of young gazelles feed. With this tender lovely image the praise of the attractions of the chosen one is interrupted. If one counts the lips and the mouth as a part of the body, which they surely are, there are seven things here praised, as Hengst. rightly counts (the eyes, the hair, teeth, mouth, temples, neck, breasts); and Hahn speaks with right of the sevenfold beauty of the bride.

Song 4:6. Shulamith replies to these words of praise:

6  Until the day cools and the shadows flee,
    I will go forth to the mountain of myrrh
    And to the hill of frankincense.

All those interpreters who suppose these to be a continuation of Solomon’s words, lose themselves in absurdities. Most of them understand the mountain of myrrh and the hill of frankincense of Shulamith’s attractions, praised in v. 5, or of her beauty as a whole; but the figures would be grotesque (cf. on the other hand 5:13), and יָרָה יִרָא prosaic, wherefore it comes that the idea of betaking oneself away connects itself with יָשָׁר (Gen. 12:1; Ex. 18:27), or that it yet preponderates therein (Gen. 22:2; Jer. 5:5), and that, for יִרְאוּ in the passage before us in reference to 2:10, 11, the supposition holds that it will correspond with the French jè m’en irai. With right Louis de Leon sees in the mountain of myrrh and the hill of frankincense names of shady and fragrant places; but he supposes that Solomon says he wishes to go thither to enjoy a siesta, and that he invites Shulamith thither. But we read nothing of this invitation; and that a bridegroom should sleep a part of his marriage-day is yet more unnatural than that, e.g., Wilh. Budäus, the French philologist, spent a part of the same at work in his study. That not Solomon but Shulamith speaks here is manifest in the beginning, “until the day,” etc., which at 2:17 are also Shulamith’s words. Anton (1773) rightly remarks, "Shulamith says this to set herself free." But why does she seek to make herself free? It is answered, that she longs to be forth from Solomon’s too ardent eulogies; she says that, as soon as it is dark, she will escape to the blooming aromatic fields of her native home, where she hopes to meet with her beloved shepherd. Thus, e.g., Ginsburg (1868). But do myrrh and frankincense grow in North Palestine? Ginsburg rests on Florus’ Epitome Rerum Rom. iii. 6, where Pompey the Great is said to have passed over Lebanon and by Damascus “per nemora illa odorata, per thuris et balsami sylvas.” But by these thuris et balsami sylvae could be meant only the gardens of Damascus; for neither myrrh nor frankincense is indigenous to North Palestine, or generally to any part of Palestine. Friedrich (1866) therefore places Shulamith’s home at Engedi, and supposes that she here once more looks from the window and dotes on the mountain of myrrh and the hill of frankincense, “where, at the approach of twilight, she was wont to look out for her betrothed shepherd.” But Shulamith, as her name already denotes, is not from the south, but is a Galilean, and her betrothed shepherd is from Utopia! That myrrh and frankincense were planted in the gardens of
Engedi is possible, although (Song 1:14) mention is made only of the Al-henna there. But here places in the neighbourhood of the royal palace must be meant; for the myrrh tree, the gum of which, prized as an aroma, is the Arab. *Balsamodendron Myrrha*, and the frankincense tree, the resin of which is used for incense, is, like the myrrh tree, an Arab. amyr. The *Boswellia serrata*, indigenous to the East Indies, furnishes the best frankincense; the Israelites bought it from Sheba (Isa. 60:6; Jer. 6:20). The myrrh tree as well as the frankincense tree were thus exotics in Palestine, as they are in our own country; but Solomon, who had intercourse with Arabia and India by his own mercantile fleet, procured them for his own garden (Eccles. 2:5). The modest Shulamith shuns the loving words of praise; for she requests that she may be permitted to betake herself to the lonely places planted with myrrh and frankincense near the king’s palace, where she thinks to tarry in a frame of mind befitting this day till the approaching darkness calls her back to the king. It is the importance of the day which suggests to her this אִלַּכְי לי, a day in which she enters into the covenant of her God with Solomon (Prov. 2:17). Without wishing to allegorize, we may yet not omit to observe, that the mountain of myrrh and the hill of frankincense put us in mind of the temple, where incense, composed of myrrh, frankincense, and other spices, ascended up before God every morning and evening (Ex. 30:34ff.). This childlike modest disposition makes her yet more lovely in the eyes of the king. He breaks out in these words:

7 Thou art altogether fair, my love, And no blemish in thee.

Certainly he means, no blemish either of soul or body. In vv. 1–5 he has praised her external beauty; but in v. 6 her soul has disclosed itself: the fame of her spotless beauty is there extended to her would no less than to her external appearance. And as to her longing after freedom from the tumult and bustle of court life, he thus promises to her:

8 With me from Lebanon, my bride, With me from Lebanon shalt thou come; Shalt look from the top of Amana, From the top of Shenir and Hermon, From dens of lions, From mountains of leopards.

**Song 4:7.** Zöckl. interprets אָמְרוּ in the sense of אֵלַי, and תָּכִּי in the sense of journeying to this definite place: "he announces to her in overflowing fulness of expression that from this time forth, instead of the lonely mountainous regions, and the dangerous caves and dens, she shall inhabit with him the royal palace." Thus also Kingsbury. But the interpretation, however plausible, cannot be supported. For (1) such an idea ought to be expressed either by אֵלַי תב׳ or תב׳ וְׁאִתִּי תֵשֵּׁבִי, instead of אתּי תָּב׳ (2) Shulamith is not from Lebanon, nor from the Anti-Libanus, which looks toward Damascus; (3) this would be no answer to Shulamith’s longing for lonely quietness. We therefore hold by our explanation given in 1851. He seeks her to go with him up the steep heights of Lebanon, and to descend with him from thence; for while ascending the mountain one has no view before him, but when descending he has the whole panorama of the surrounding region lying at his feet. Thus in he is not to be understood as at Isa. 57:9, where it has the meaning of migrabas, but, as at Num. 23:9, it means spectabis. With המֵר the idea of prospect lies nearer than that of descending; besides, the meaning spectare is secondary, for המר signifies first "to go, proceed, journey," and then "going to view, to go in order to view." סֵר in Arab. means the scene,” and סֵר etmek in Turkish, “to contemplate” (cf. Arab.
Arab. tamasy, to walk, then, to contemplate.

Lebanon is the name of the Alpine range which lies in the N.-W. of the Holy Land, and stretches above 20 (German) miles from the Leontes (Nahr el-Kasmiâ) northwards to the Eleutheros (Nahr el-Kebîr). The other three names here found refer to the Anti-Libanus separated from the Lebanon by the Coelo-Syrian valley, and stretching from the Banis northwards to the plain of Hamâth.

Amana denotes that range of the Anti-Libanus from which the springs of the river Amana issue, one of the two rivers which the Syrian captain (2 Kings 5:12) named as better than all the waters of Israel. These are the Amana and Pharpar; i.e., the Baradâ and A wâdsh; to the union of the Baradâ (called by the Greeks Chrysorrhoas, i.e., “golden stream”) with the Feidshe, the environs of Damascus owe their ghwdat, their paradisaical beauty.

Hermon (from حَرَم, to cut of; cf. Arab. kharom and makhrim, the steep projection of a mountain) is the most southern peak of the Anti-Libanus chain, the lofty mountains (about 10,000 feet above the level of the sea) which form the north-eastern border of Palestine, and from which the springs of the Jordan take their rise.

Another section of the Anti-Libanus range is called Senir, not Shenir. The name, in all the three places where it occurs (Deut. 3:9; 1 Chron. 5:23), is, in accordance with tradition, to be written with Sin. The Onkelos Targum writes מַקְדֶּשׁ; the Jerusalem paraphrases עֶרֶב דְּמַסְרָי; the mountain whose fruits become putrid, viz., on account of their superabundance; the Midrash explains otherwise: שֶׁפֶגַע שֶׁבַע מִנְשָׁה (the mountain which resists being broken up by the plough)—everywhere the writing of the word with the letter Sin is supposed. According to Deut. 3:9, this was the Amorite name of Hermon. The expression then denotes that the Amorites called Hermon—i.e., the Anti-Libanus range, for they gave the name of a part to the whole range—by the name Senir; Abulfeda uses Arab. snîr as the name of the part to the north of Damascus, with which the statement of Schwarz (Das h. Land, p. 33) agrees, that the Hermon (Anti-Libanus) to the north-west of Damascus is called Senir.

The Anti-Libanus range is the most southern peak of the Anti-Libanus chain, the lofty mountains (about 4000 feet above the sea) which form the north-eastern border of Palestine, and from which the springs of the Jordan take their rise.

Near these beasts of prey, and yet inaccessible by them, shall she enjoy the prospect of the extensive pleasant land which was subject to the sceptre of him who held her safe on these cliffs, and accompanied her over these giddy heights. If “mountain of myrrh,” so also “the top of Amana” is not without subordinate reference. Amana, proceeding from the primary idea of firmness and verification, signifies fidelity and the faithful covenant as it is established between God and the congregation, for He betrothes it to Himself (בְּמַסְמָה בָּנים [“in faithfulness”), Hos. 2:22 [20]; the congregation of which the apostle (Eph. 5:27) says the same as is here said by Solomon of Shulamith. Here for the first time he calls her כָּלָה, and not כְּלוּלָה; for that, according to the usus loq., would mean “my daughter-in-law.” Accordingly, it appears that the idea of “daughter-in-law” is the primary, and that of “bride” the secondary one. כָּלָה, which is = כְּלוּלָה, as, a cake, is = כְּלוּלָה), that which is pierced through (cf. what was said regarding כְּלוּלָה under 3:11b) her being espoused; Jer. 2:2), appears to mean (cf. what was said regarding כְּלוּלָה under 3:11b) her who is comprehended with the family into which, leaving her parents’ house, she enters; not her who is embraced = crowned with a garland (cf. Arab. qkil, to be garlanded; tekllil, garlanding; ikkil, Syr. iklli, a wreath), or her who is brought to completion (cf. the verb, Ezek. 27:4, 11), i.e., has reached the goal of her
womanly calling. Besides, כַּלָה, like “Bräut” in the older German (e.g., Gudrun), means not only her who is betrothed, but also her who has been lately married.

**Song 4:9.** All that the king calls his, she now can call hers; for she has won his heart, and with his heart himself and all that is his.

9 Thou hast taken my heart, my sister-bride; Thou hast taken my heart with one of thy glances, With a little chain of thy necklace.

The *Piel* לִבֵּב may mean to make courageous, and it actually has this meaning in the Aram., wherefore the Syr. retains the word; Symm. renders it by ἐθά συ άς ε. But is it becoming in a man who is no coward, especially in a king, to say that the love he cherishes gives him heart, i.e., courage? It might be becoming, perhaps, in a warrior who is inspired by the thought of his beloved, whose respect and admiration he seeks to gain, to dare the utmost. But Solomon is no Antar, no wandering knight. Besides, the first effect of love is different: it influences those whom it governs, not as encouraging, in the first instance, but as disarming them; love responded to encourages, but love in its beginning, which is the subject here, overpowers. We would thus more naturally render: “thou hast unhearted me;” but “to unheart,” according to the Semitic and generally the ancient conception of the heart (Psychol. p. 254), does not so much mean to captivate the heart, as rather to deprive of understanding or of judgment (cf. Hos. 4:11).

Such denomin. *Pi.* of names of corporeal members signify not merely taking away, but also wounding, and generally any violent affection of it, as עַיִן, עַיִן עָנָק, Ewald, § 120c; accordingly the LXX, Venet., and Jerome: ἐκαρδιώσας με, vulnerasti cor meum. The meaning is the same for “thou hast wounded my heart” = “thou hast subdued my heart” (cf. Ps. 45:6b). With one of her glances, with a little chain of her necklace, she has overcome him as with a powerful charm: veni, visa sum, vici. The Keri changes בַּאַחַת into בֶּאַחַת, certainly is mostly fem. (e.g., Judg. 16:28), but not only the non-bibl. *usus loqu.,* which e.g., prefers רָע or רָע הַר, of a malignant bewitching look, but also the bibl. (vid., Zech. 3:9; 4:10) treats the word as of double gender. כַּלָה and כַּלָה are related to each other as a part is to the whole. With the subst. ending *ון,* the designation of an ornament designed for the neck is formed from זִנֵב, the “round tires like the moon” of the women’s toilet, Isa. 3:18ff. כַּלָה (connected with כַּלָה עָנָק, cervix) is a separate chain (Aram. עֲנָקָה) of this necklace. In the words רָע או, עַיִן, עָנָק, and אַחַד עֲנָק, occurring also out of genit. connection (Gen. 48:22; 2 Sam. 17:22), and the arrangement (vid., under Ps. 89:51) follows the analogy of the pure numerals אַחַד עֲנָק, so that a glance of the eye may pierce the heart, experience shows; but how can a little chain of a necklace do this? That also is intelligible. As beauty becomes unlike itself when the attire shows want of taste, so by means of tasteful clothing, which does not need to be splendid, but may even be of the simplest kind, it becomes mighty. Hence the charming attractive power of the impression one makes communicates itself to all that he wears, as, e.g., the woman with the issue of blood touched with joyful hope the hem of Jesus’ garment; for he who loves feels the soul of that which is loved in all that stands connected therewith, all that is, as it were, consecrated and charmed by the beloved object, and operates so much the more powerfully if it adorns it, because as an ornament of that which is beautiful, it appears so much the more beautiful. In the preceding verse, Solomon has for the first time addressed Shulamith by the title “bride.” Here with heightened cordiality he calls her “sister-bride.” In this change in the address the progress of the story is mirrored. Why he does not say כַּלָתִי (my bride), has already been explained, under 8a,
from the derivation of the word. Solomon’s mother might call Shulamith callathî, but he gives to the relation of affinity into which Shulamith has entered a reference to himself individually, for he says āhhothi callā (my sister-bride): she who as callā of his mother is to her a kind of daughter, is as callā in relation to himself, as it were, his sister.

**Song 4:10, 11.** He proceeds still further to praise her attractions.

10 How fair is thy love, my sister-bride! How much better thy love than wine! And the fragrance of thy unguents than all spices!

11 Thy lips drop honey, my bride; Honey and milk are under thy tongue; And the fragrance of thy garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon.

Regarding the connection of the *pluralet.* תדִים with the plur. of the pred., vid., at 1:2b. The pred. נָפַת praises her love in its manifestations according to its impression on the sight; נֹפֶת, from נָפַת, *ebullire* (vid., under Prov. 5:3, also Schultens), is virgin honey, *acetum,* Pliny, xi. 15), i.e., that which of itself flows from the combs (*צמרפָּת*). Honey drops from the lips which he kisses; milk and honey are under the tongue which whispers to him words of pure and inward joy; cf. the contrary, Ps. 140:4. The last line is an echo of Gen. 27:27. is מֹפֶת (from *complicare,* *complecti*) transposed (cf. from כְּפַשֵּׁה, *כָּפֵח* from קָפֶּשַׁ). As Jacob’s raiment had for his old father the fragrance of a field which God had blessed, so for Solomon the garments of the faultless and pure one, fresh from the woods and mountains of the north, gave forth a heart-strengthening savour like the fragrance of Lebanon (Hos. 4:7), viz., of its fragrant herbs and trees, chiefly of the balsamic odour of the apples of the cedar.

**Song 4:12.** The praise is sensuous, but it has a moral consecration.

12 A garden locked is my sister-bride; A spring locked, a fountain sealed. (according to rule masc. Böttch. § 658) denotes the garden from its enclosure; לָעָל (elsewhere לָעָל), the fountain (synon. מַבוּעַ), the waves bubbling forth (cf. Amos 5:24); and מַעְיָן, the place, as it were an eye of the earth, from which a fountain gushes forth. Luther distinguishes rightly between *gan* and *gal*; on the contrary, all the old translators (even the Venet.) render as if the word in both cases were *gan.* The *Pasek* between *gan* and *nā’ul,* and between *gal* and *nā’ul,* is designed to separate the two *Nuns,* as e.g., at 2 Chron. 2:9, Neh. 2:2, the two *Mems;* it is the orthophonic *Pasek,* already described under 2:7, which secures the independence of two similar or organically related sounds. Whether the sealed fountain (*fons signatus*) alludes to a definite fountain which Solomon had built for the upper city and the temple place, we do not now inquire. To a locked garden and spring no one has access but the rightful owner, and a sealed fountain is shut against all impurity. Thus she is closed against the world, and inaccessible to all that would disturb her pure heart, or desecrate her pure person. All the more beautiful and the greater is the fulness of the flowers and fruits which bloom and ripen in the garden of this life, closed against the world and its lust.

13 What sprouts forth for thee is a park of pomegranates; With most excellent fruits; Cypress flowers with nards; 14 Nard and crocus; calamus and cinnamon, With all kinds of incense trees;
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Myrrh and aloes,
With all the chief aromatics.

**Song 4:13, 14.** The common subject to all down to v. 15 inclusive is nard מָרְדִים ("what sprouts for thee" = "thy plants"), as a figurative designation, borrowed from plants, of all the "phenomena and life utterances" (Böttch.) of her personality. "If I only knew here," says Rocke, "how to disclose the meaning, certainly all these flowers and fruits, in the figurative language of the Orient, in the flower-language of love, had their beautiful interpretation." In the old German poetry, also, the phrase bluomen brechen [to break flowers] was equivalent to: to enjoy love; the flowers and fruits named are figures of all that the amata offers to the amator. Most of the plants here named are exotics; פרְדִים (heaping around, circumvallation, enclosing) is a garden or park, especially with foreign ornamental and fragrant plants—an old Persian word, the explanation of which, after Spiegel, first given in our exposition of the Song, 1851 (from pairi = περί, and déz. R. diz, a heap), has now become common property (Justi's Handb. der Zend sprache, p. 180). מְגָדִים (from מגגדים, which corresponds to The Arab. mejd, praise, honour, excellence; vid., Volck under Deut. 33:13) are fructus laudum, or lautitarium, excellent precious fruits, which in the more modern language are simply called נְגָדִים (Shabbath 127b, all kinds of fine fruits); cf. Syr. magdo, dried fruit. Regarding הבאם, vid., under 1:14; regarding מרגף, under 1:13; also regarding נְדַר under 1:12. The long vowel of נְדַר corresponds to the Pers. form nûrd, but near to which is also nard, Indian nalada (fragrance-giving); the ē is thus only the long accent, and can therefore disappear in the plur. For מְגָדִים, Grätz reads מְגָדִים, roses, because the poet would not have named nard twice. The conjecture is beautiful, but for us, who believe the poem to be Solomonic, is inconsistent with the history of roses (vid., under 2:1), and also unnecessary.

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tree (aloëxylon agallochum), particularly its dried root (agallochum or lignum aloës; ξυλ λη, according to which the Targ. here: אכסיל אלואין, after the phrase in Aruch) mouldered in the earth, which chiefly came from farther India. עִם, as everywhere, connects things contained together or in any way united (Song 5:1; cf. 1:11, as Ps. 87:4; cf. 1 Sam. 16:12).

The concluding phrase עִם כָּל־רַ׳ וגוֹ, cum praestantissimis quibusque aromatibus, is a poet. et cetera. ראש, with the gen. of the object whose value is estimated, denotes what is of meilleure qualité; or, as the Talm. says, what is אלפא, λφ, i.e., number one. Ezekiel, 27:22, in a similar sense, says, "with chief (ראש) of all spices."

**Song 4:15.** The panegyric returns now once more to the figure of a fountain.

15 A garden-fountain, a well of living water,
And torrents from Lebanon.

The tertium compar. in v. 12 was the collecting and sealing up; here, it is the inner life and its outward activity. A fountain in gardens (גַנִים, categ. pl.) is put to service for the benefit of the beds of plants round about, and it has in these gardens, as it were, its proper sphere of influence. A well of living water is one in which that which is distributes springs up from within, so that it is indeed given to it, but not without at the same time being its own true property. נָזַל is related, according to the Semitic usus loq., to אָזַל, as "niedergehen" (to go down) to "weggehen" (to go away) (vid., Prov. 5:15); similarly related are (Arab.) sar, to go, and sal (in which the letter ra is exchanged for lam, to express the softness of the liquid), to flow, whence syl (סֶלָ), impetuous stream, rushing water, kindred in meaning to נָזַל. Streams which come from Lebanon have a rapid descent, and (so far as they do not arise in the snow region) the water is not only fresh, but clear as crystal. All these figures understood sensuously would be insipid; but understood ethically, they are exceedingly appropriate, and are easily interpreted, so that the conjecture is natural, that on the supposition of the spiritual interpretation of the Song, Jesus has this saying in His mind when He says that streams of living water shall flow "out of the belly" of the believer; John 7:38.

**Song 4:16.** The king’s praise is for Shulamith proof of his love, which seeks a response. But as she is, she thinks herself yet unworthy of him; her modesty says to her that she needs preparation for him, preparation by that blowing which is the breath of God in the natural and in the spiritual world.

16 Awake, thou North (wind), and come, thou South!
Blow through my garden, cause its spices to flow—
Let my beloved come into his garden,
And eat the fruits which are precious to him.

The names of the north and south, denoting not only the regions of the heavens, but also the winds blowing from these regions, are of the fem. gender, Isa. 43:6. The east wind, קָדִים, is purposely not mentioned; the idea of that which is destructive and adverse is connected with it (vid., under Job 27:21). The north wind brings cold till ice is formed, Sir. 43:20; and if the south wind blow, it is hot, Luke 12:55. If cold and heat, coolness and sultriness, interchange at the proper time, then growth is promoted. And if the wind blow through a garden at one time from this direction and at another from that,—not so violently as when it shakes the trees of the forest, but softly and yet as powerfully as a garden can bear it,—then all the fragrance of the garden rises in waves, and it becomes like a sea of incense. The garden itself then blows, i.e., emits odours; for (甡 = the Arab. fakh, fah, cf. fawh, pl. afwâh, sweet odours, fragrant plants) as in גִּבְרָל, Gen. 3:8, the idea underlies the expression, that when it is evening the day itself blows, i.e., becomes cool, the causative גִּבְרָל, connected with the object-accus. of the garden, means to make the...
garden breezy and fragrant. נָזַל is here used of the odours which, set free as it were from the plants, flow out, being carried forth by the waves of air. Shulamith wishes that in her all that is worthy of love should be fully realized. What had to be done for Esther (Esth. 2:12) before she could be brought in to the king, Shulamith calls on the winds to accomplish for her, which are, as it were, the breath of the life of all nature, and as such, of the life-spirit, which is the sustaining background of all created things. If she is thus prepared for him who loves her, and whom she loves, he shall come into his garden and enjoy the precious fruit belonging to him. With words of such gentle tenderness, childlike purity, she gives herself to her beloved.

Song 5:1. She gives herself to him, and he has accepted her, and now celebrates the delight of possession and enjoyment.

1 I am come into my garden, my sister-bride; Have plucked my myrrh with my balsam; Have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; Have drunk my wine with my milk— Eat, drink, and be drunken, ye friends!

If the exclamation of Solomon, 1a, is immediately connected with the words of Shulamith, 4:16, then we must suppose that, influenced by these words, in which the ardour of love and humility express themselves, he thus in triumph exclaims, after he has embraced her in his arms as his own inalienable possession. But the exclamation denotes more than this. It supposes a union of love, such as is the conclusion of marriage following the betrothal, the God-ordained aim of sexual love within the limits fixed by morality. The poetic expression בָאתִי לְׁגַנִי, used of the entrance of a man into the woman’s chamber, to which the expression (Arab.) dakhal bihā (he went in with her), used of the introduction into the bride’s chamber, is compared. The road by which Solomon reached this full and entire possession was not short, and especially for his longing it was a lengthened one. He now triumphs in the final enjoyment which his ardent desire had found. A pleasant enjoyment which is reached in the way and within the limits of the divine order, and which therefore leaves no bitter fruits of self-reproach, is pleasant even in the retrospect. His words, beginning with “I am come into my garden,” breathe this pleasure in the retrospect. Ginsburg and others render incorrectly, “I am coming,” which would require the words to have been אֲנִי בָא (הִנֵה). The series of perfects beginning with בָאתִי cannot be meant otherwise than retrospectively. The “garden” is Shulamith herself, 4:12, in the fulness of her personal and spiritual attractions, 4:16; cf. כַרְׁמִי, 1:6. He may call her “my sister-bride;” the garden is then his by virtue of divine and human right, he has obtained possession of this garden, he has broken its costly rare flowers.

ארה (in the Mishna dialect the word used of plucking figs) signifies to pluck; the Aethiop. trans. ararku karbē, I have plucked myrrh; for the Aethiop. has arara instead of simply ארה. הבשא is here הבשא deflected. While הבשא, with its plur.-bsāmim, denotes fragrance in general, and only balsam specially, basām = (Arab.) bashām is the proper name of the balsam-tree (the Mecca balsam), amyris opobalsamum, which, according to Forskal, is indigenous in the central mountain region of Jemen (S. Arabia); it is also called (Arab.) balsaman; the word found its way in this enlarged form into the West, and then returned in the forms בַלְסָם, אָפַרְסְמָא (Syr. afrusomo), into the East. Balsam and other spices were brought in abundance to King Solomon as a present by the Queen of Sheba, 1 Kings 10:10; the celebrated balsam plantations of Jericho (vid., Winer’s Real-W.), which continued to be productive till the Roman period, might owe their origin to the friendly relations which Solomon sustained to the south Arab. princess. Instead of the Indian aloe, 4:14, the Jamanic balsam is here connected with myrrh as a figure of Shulamith’s excellences. The plucking, eating, and drinking
are only interchangeable figurative descriptions of the enjoyment of love.

“Honey and milk,” says Solomon, 4:11, “is under thy tongue.” יַעַר is like יַעֲרָה, 1 Sam. 14:27, the comb (favus) or cells containing the honey,—a designation which has perhaps been borrowed from porous lava. With honey and milk “under the tongue” wine is connected, to which, and that of the noblest kind, 7:10, Shulamith’s palate is compared. Wine and milk together are ἰ  γ λ, which Chloe presents to Daphnis (Longus, i. 23). Solomon and his Song here hover on the pinnacle of full enjoyment; but if one understands his figurative language as it interprets itself, it here also expresses that delight of satisfaction which the author of Ps. 19:6 transfers to the countenance of the rising sun, in words of a chaste purity which sexual love never abandons, as far as it is connected with esteem for a beloved wife, and with the preservation of mutual personal dignity. For this very reason the words of Solomon, 1a, cannot be thought of as spoken to the guests. Between 4:16 and 5:1 the bridal night intervenes. The words used in 1a are Solomon’s morning salutation to her who has now wholly become his own. The call addressed to the guests at the feast is given forth on the second day of the marriage, which, according to ancient custom, Gen. 29:28, Judg. 14:12, was wont to be celebrated for seven days, Tob. 11:18. The dramatrical character of the Song leads to this result, that the pauses are passed over, the scenes are quickly changed, and the times appear to be continuous.

The plur. דודים Hengst. thinks always designates “love” (Liebe); thus, after Prov. 7:28, also here: Eat, friends, drink and intoxicate yourselves in love. But the summons, inebriamini amoribus, has a meaning if regarded as directed by the guests to the married pair, but not as directed to the guests. And while we may say רֵעִים still, yet not yet שָׁארֵים דָּוִד, for shakar has always only the accus. of a spirituous liquor after it. Therefore none of the old translators (except only the Venet.: μεθοδοθητε ἐρωσιν) understood dodim, notwithstanding that elsewhere in the Song it means love, in another than a personal sense; and דודים are here the plur. of the elsewhere parallels דַּוִּים and הָרָע, e.g., 5:16b, according to which also (cf. on the contrary, 4:16b) they are accentuated. Those who are assembled are, as sympathizing friends, to participate in the pleasures of the feast. The Song of Songs has here reached its climax. A Paul would not hesitate, after Eph. 5:31f., to extend the mystical interpretation even to this. Of the antitype of the marriage pair it is said: “For the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready” (Rev. 19:7); and of the antitype of the marriage guests: “Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb” (Rev. 19:9).

Song of Solomon 5

Love Disdained But Won Again—Ch. 5:2–6:9

First Scene of the Fourth Act, 5:2–6:3

In this fourth Act we are not now carried back to the time when Solomon’s relation to Shulamith was first being formed. We are not placed here amid the scenes of their first love, but of those of their married life, and of their original ardour of affection maintaining itself not without trial. This is evident from the circumstance that in the first two Acts the beloved is addressed by the title רעיתי (my friend, beloved), and that the third Act rises to the title כלה (bride) and אחתי כלה (my sister-bride); in the fourth Act, on the other hand, along with the title ra’yaihi, we hear no longer calla, nor ahhothi calla, but simply ahhothi, —a title of address which contributes to heighten the relation, to idealize it, and give it a mystical background. We have here presented to us pictures from the life of the lovers after their marriage has been solemnized. Shulamith, having reached the goal of her longing, has a dream like that which she had (Song 3:1–4) before she reached that goal. But the dreams, however they resemble each other, are yet also different, as their issues show; in the former,
she seeks him, and having found him holds him fast; here, she seeks him and finds him not. That that which is related belongs to the dream-life in Song 3, was seen from the fact that it was inconceivable as happening in real life; here that which is related is expressly declared in the introductory words as having occurred in a dream.

2 I sleep, but my heart keeps waking—
   Hearken! my beloved is knocking:
   Open to me, my sister, my love,
   My dove, my perfect one;
   For my head is filled with dew,
   My locks (are) full of the drops of the night.

Song 5:2. The partic. subst. clauses, 2a, indicate the circumstances under which that which is related in 2b occurred. In the principal sentence in hist. prose the verb would be used; here, in the dramatic vivacity of the description, is found in its stead the interject. vocem = ausculta with the gen. foll., and a word designating state or condition added, thought of as accus. according to the Semitic syntax (like Gen. 4:10; Jer. 10:22; cf. 1 Kings 14:6). To sleep while the heart wakes signifies to dream, for sleep and distinct consciousness cannot be coexistent; the movements of thought either remain in obscurity or are projected as dreams. ἐγεί εἰς γεί = ’awir is formed from ἐγει, to be awake (in its root cogn. to the Aryan gar, of like import in γαρ γεί in τοῦ ἑαυτοῦ γεί), in the same way as ἐγείτις = mawith from ἑαυτός. The ἐ here has the conj. sense of “dieweil” (because), like asher in Eccles. 6:12; 8:15. The dag, which occurs several times elsewhere (vid., under Prov. 3:8; 14:10), is one of the inconsistencies of the system of punctuation, which in other instances does not double the γ, perhaps a relic of the Babylonian idiom, which was herein more accordant with the lingual nature of the ἐ than the Tiberian, which treated it as a semi-guttural. ἐγεί, a lock of hair, from ἐγεῖ = ἐγεῖ, abscedit, follows in the formation of the idea, the analogy of ἐγεί, in the sense of branch, from ἐγεῖ, desecuit; one so names a part which is removed without injury to the whole, and which presents itself conveniently for removal; cf. the oath sworn by Egyptian women, laḥājat mukûṣṣî, “by the life of my separated;” i.e., “of my locks” (Lane, Egypt, etc., I 38). The word still survives in the Talmud dialect. Of a beautiful young man who proposed to become a Nazarite, Nedarim 9a says the same as the Jer. Horajoth iii. 4 of a man who was a prostitute in Rome: his locks were arranged in separate masses, like heap upon heap; in Bereshith rabba c. lxv., under Gen. 27:11, קָתי, curly-haired, is placed over against קָתי, bald-headed, and the Syr. also has kausoto as the designation of locks of hair,—a word used by the Peshito as the rendering of the Heb. קָתי, as the Syro-Hexap. Job 16:12, the Greek κομή, from τόλło (Arab. tl, to moisten, viz., the ground; to squirt, viz., blood), is in Arabic drizzling rain, in Heb. dew; the drops of the night (דַּלְתָּרמ, from דַּלְתָּר וָדר), to sprinkle, to drizzle) are just drops of dew, for the precipitation of the damp air assumes this form in nights which are not so cold as to become frosty. Shulamith thus dreams that her beloved seeks admission to her. He comes a long way and at night. In the most tender words he entreats for that which he expects without delay. He addresses her, “my sister,” as one of equal rank with himself, and familiar as a sister with a brother; “my love” (רְעֶ׳), as one freely chosen by him to intimate fellowship; “my dove,” as beloved and prized by him on account of her purity, simplicity, and loveliness. The meaning of the fourth designation used by him, תַּמָֹּּתִי, is shown by the Arab. tam to be “wholly devoted,” whence teim, “one devoted” = a servant, and mutajjam, desperately in love with one. In addressing her תַּמָֹּּתִי, he thus designates this love as wholly undivided, devoting itself without evasion and without reserve. But on this occasion this love did not approve itself, at least not at once.

3 I have put off my dress,
How shall I put it on again?
I have washed my feet,
How shall I defile them again?

Song 5:3. She now lies unclothed in bed. חפתה is the χύτων worn next to the body, from רבדת, linen (diff. from the Arab. kutun, cotton, whence French coton, calico = cotton-stuff). She had already washed her feet, from which it is supposed that she had throughout the day walked barefooted,—how אֲרֹבָּךְ, how? both times with the tone on the penult.; cf. אֲרֹבָּךְ, where? 1:7) should she again put on her dress, which she had already put off and laid aside ( الفلسطيني, relating to the fem. again) her feet, that had been washed clean? Shulamith is here brought back to the customs as well as to the home of her earlier rural life; but although she should thus have been enabled to reach a deeper and more lively consciousness of the grace of the king, who stoops to an equality with her, yet she does not meet his love with an equal requital. She is unwilling for his sake to put herself to trouble, or to do that which is disagreeable to her. It cannot be thought that such an interview actually took place; and yet what she here dreamed had not only inward reality, but also full reality. For in a dream, that which is natural to us or that which belongs to our very constitution becomes manifest, and much that is kept down during our waking hours by the power of the will, by a sense of propriety, and by the activities of life, comes to light during sleep; for fancy then stirs up the ground of our nature and brings it forth in dreams, and thus exposes us to ourselves in such a way as oftentimes, when we waken, to make us ashamed and alarmed. Thus it was with Shulamith. In the dream it was inwardly manifest that she had lost her first love. She relates it with sorrow; for scarcely had she rejected him with these unworthy deceitful pretences when she comes to herself again.

And my heart was moved for him.

Song 5:4. from the verb רצון, in the sense of to break through (R. רד, whence also רדס, Arab. kharam, part. broken through, e.g., of a lattice-window), signifies foramen, a hole, also caverna (whence the name of the Troglydtes, יירוב, and the Hauràn, חור), here the loophole in the door above (like khawkht, the little door for the admission of individuals in the street or house-door). It does not properly mean a window, but a part of the door pierced through at the upper part of the lock of the door (the door-bolt). נזיר is understood from the standpoint of one who is within; “by the opening from without to within,” thus “through the opening;” stretching his hand through the door-opening as if to open the door, if possible, by the pressing back of the lock from within, he shows how greatly he longed after Shulamith. And she was again very deeply moved when she perceived this longing, which she had so coldly responded to: the interior of her body, with the organs which, after the bibl. idea, are the seat of the tenderest emotions, or rather, in which they reflect themselves, both such as are agreeable and such as are sorrowful, groaned within her,—an expression of deep sympathy so common, that “the sounding of the bowels,” Isa. 63:15, an expression used, and that anthropopathically of God Himself, is a direct designation of sympathy or inner participation. The phrase here wavers between נָפָשַׁי and נָפָשִׁי (thus, e.g., Nissel, 1662). Both forms are admissible. It is true we say elsewhere only naphshi ‘ālī, ruhi ‘ālī, liḥbi ‘ālī, for the Ego distinguishes itself from its substance (cf. System d. bibl. Psychologie, p. 151f.); mea‘i ‘alāi, instead of bi (בעצמי), would, however, be also explained from this, that the bowels are meant, not anatomically, but as psychical organs. But the old translators (LXX, Targ., Syr., Jerome, Venet.) rendered זהיל, which rests on later MS authority (vid., Norzi, and de Rossi), and is also more appropriate: her bowels are stirred, viz., over him, i.e., on account of him (Alkabez:
בעבורו. As she will now open to him, she is inwardly more ashamed, as he has come so full of love and longing to make her glad.

5 I arose to open to my beloved,
And my hands dropped with myrrh,
And my fingers with liquid myrrh,
On the handle of the bolt.

Song 5:5. The personal pron. stands without emphasis before the verb which already contains it; the common language of the people delights in such particularity. The Book of Hosea, the Ephraimite prophet’s work, is marked by such a style. מור, מחר, with which the parallel clause goes beyond the simple מִּיּוֹר, is myrrh flowing over, dropping out of itself, i.e., that which breaks through the bark of the balsamodendron myrrha, or which flows out if an incision is made in it; מִיִּרְחַה, of which Pliny (xii. 35) says: cui nulla praefertur, otherwise מִרְרָה stacte, from מָרָר, to gush out, to pour itself forth in rich jets. He has come perfumed as if for a festival, and the costly ointment which he brought with him has dropped on the handles of the bolts (מַנְעֹלָּה, קֵלֶבִית,Calavus, drawing on), viz., the inner bolt, which he wished to withdraw. A classical parallel is found in Lucretius, iv. 1171:

“At lacrimans exclusus amator limina saepe Floribus et sertis operit postesque superbos Unguit amaracino” ...

Böttch. here puts to Hitzig the question, “Did the shepherd, the peasant of Engedi, bring with him oil of myrrh?” Rejecting this reasonable explanation, he supposes that the Shulamitess, still in Solomon’s care, on rising up quickly dipped her hand in the oil of myrrh, that she might refresh her beloved. She thus had it near her before her bed, as a sick person her decoction. The right answer was, that the visitant by night is not that imaginary personage, but it is Solomon. She had dreamed that he stood before her door and knocked. But finding no response, he again in a moment withdrew, when it was proved that Shulamith did not requite his love and come forth to meet it in its fulness as she ought.

6 I opened to my beloved;
And my beloved had withdrawn, was gone:
My soul departed when he spake—
I sought him, and found him not;
I called him, and he answered me not.

Song 5:6. As the disciples at Emmaus, when the Lord had vanished from the midst of them, said to one another: Did not our heart burn within us when He spake with us? so Shulamith says that when he spake, i.e., sought admission to her, she was filled with alarm, and almost terrified to death. Love-ecstasy (ἐσθενεύω, as contrast to γενόσθαι ἐν ἑαυτῷ) is not here understood, for in such a state she would have flown to meet him; but a sinking of the soul, such as is described by Terence (And. 1.5.16): “Oratio haec me miseram exanimavit metu.”

The voice of her beloved struck her heart; but in the consciousness that she had estranged herself from him, she could not openly meet him and offer empty excuses. But now she recognises it with sorrow that she had not replied to the deep impression of his loving words; and seeing him disappear without finding him, she calls after him whom she had slighted, but he answers her not. The words: “My soul departed when he spake,” are the reason why she now sought him and called upon him, and they are not a supplementary remark (Zöckl.); nor is there need for the correction of the text, which should mean: (my soul departed) when he turned his back (Ewald), or, behind him (Hitz., Böttch.), from דָבַר (Arab.) dabara, tergum vertere, praeterire,—the Heb. has the word דָבַר, the hinder part, and as it appears, דָבַר, to act from behind (treacherously) and destroy, 2 Chron. 22:10; cf. under Gen. 34:13, but not the Kal דָבַר, in that Arab. signification. The meaning of חָמַק has been hit upon by Aquila (ἐκλάνετω), Symmachus (ἐπονεῦσας), and Jerome (declinaverat); it signifies to turn aside, to take a different direction, as the Hithpa. Jer. 31:22: to
turn oneself away; cf. חַמֹּוּקִים, turnings, bendings, 7:2. (cf. Gen. 32:25). Aethiop. hakafa, Amhar. akafa (reminding us of חָבַק, חָבַק, אָבַק (cf. Gen. 32:25), are usually compared; all of these, however, signify to “encompass;” but חָמַק does not denote a moving in a circle after something, but a half circular motion away from something; so that in the Arab. the prevailing reference to fools, aḥamḳ, does not appear to proceed from the idea of closeness, but of the oblique direction, pushed sideways. Turning himself away, he proceeded farther. In vain she sought him; she called without receiving any answer.

7 The watchmen who go about in the city found me,

They beat me, wounded me;
My upper garment took away from me,
The watchmen of the walls.

Song 5:7. She sought her beloved, not “in the midbar” (open field), nor “in the kepharim” (villages), but “in the city,”—a circumstance which is fatal to the shepherd-hypothesis here, as in the other dream. There in the city she is found by the watchmen who patrol the city, and have their proper posts on the walls to watch those who approach the city and depart from it (cf. Isa. 62:6). These rough, regardless men,—her story returns at the close like a palindromic to those previously named,—who judge only according to that which is external, and have neither an eye nor a heart for the sorrow of a loving soul, struck (רָכַב, רָכַב, to pierce, hit, strike) and wounded (פָצַע, פָצַע, R. פצאי, to divide, to inflict wounds in the flesh) the royal spouse as a common woman, and so treated her, that, in order to escape being made a prisoner, she was constrained to leave her upper robe in their hands (Gen. 39:12). This upper robe, not the veil which at 4:1, 3 we found was called tsammā, is called רְדִיד. Aben Ezra compares with it the Arab. ridâ, a plaid-like over-garment, which was thrown over the shoulders and veiled the upper parts of the body. But the words have not the same derivation. The ridâ has its name from its reaching downward,—probably from the circumstance that, originally, it hung down to the feet, so that one could tread on it; but the (Heb.) rdid (in Syr. the dalmatica of the deacons), from רְדִיד, Hiph., 1 Kings 6:32, Targ., Talm., Syr., רדיד, to make broad and thin, as expansum, i.e., a thin and light upper robe, viz., over the cottonēth, 3a. The LXX suitably translates it here and at Gen. 24:65 (hatsstsāiph, from ts’a’aph, to lay together, to fold, to make double or many-fold) by θέσποτος, a summer overdress. A modern painter, who represents Shulamith as stripped naked by the watchmen, follows his own sensual taste, without being able to distinguish between tunica and pallium; for neither Luther, who renders by schleier (veil), nor Jerome, who has pallium (cf. the saying of Plautus: tunica propior pallio est), gives any countenance to such a freak of imagination. The city watchmen tore from off her the upper garment, without knowing and without caring to know what might be the motive and the aim of this her nocturnal walk.

Song 5:8. All this Shulamith dreamed; but the painful feeling of repentance, of separation and misapprehension, which the dream left behind, entered as deeply into her soul as if it had been an actual external experience. Therefore she besought the daughters of Jerusalem:

8 I adjure you, ye daughters of Jerusalem,
If ye find my beloved,—
What shall ye then say to him?
“That I am sick of love.”

That א is here not to be interpreted as the negative particle of adjuration (Böttch.), as at 2:7; 3:5, at once appears from the absurdity arising from such an interpretation. The or. directa, following “I adjure you,” can also begin (Num. 5:19f.) with the usual א, which is followed by its conclusion. Instead of “that ye
say to him I am sick of love,” she asks the question: What shall ye say to him: and adds the answer: quod aegra sum amore, or, as Jerome rightly renders, in conformity with the root-idea of חלה: quia amore langueo; while, on the other hand, the LXX:ὅεηθυ saucia ὑγάτης ἕγω εἰμι, as if the word were חַלְׁלַת, from חָלָל.

The question proposed, with its answer, inculcates in a naive manner that which is to be said, as one examines beforehand a child who has to order something. She turns to the daughters of Jerusalem, because she can presuppose in them, in contrast with those cruel watchmen, a sympathy with her lovesorrow, on the ground of their having had similar experiences. They were also witnesses of the origin of this covenant of love, and graced the marriage festival by their sympathetic love.

Song 5:9. When, therefore, they put to her the question:

9 What is thy beloved before another (beloved),

Thou fairest of women?

What is thy beloved before another (beloved),

That thou dost adjure us thus?

the question thus asked cannot proceed from ignorance; it can only have the object of giving them the opportunity of hearing from Shulamith’s own mouth and heart her laudatory description of him, whom they also loved, although they were not deemed worthy to stand so near to him as she did who was thus questioned. Böttch. and Ewald, secs. 325a, 326a, interpret the מִן in מִדור partitively: quid amati (as in Cicero: quod hominis) amatus tuus; but then the words would have been מִדוּדִים, if such a phrase were admissible; for מִן, certainly of itself alone means quid amati, what kind of a beloved. Thus the מ is the comparative (prae amato), and רֵד the sing., representing the idea of species or kind; מִדָּד, here easily misunderstood, is purposely avoided. The use of the form מְבִיאתָנו for מְבִיאתִּינו is one of the many instances of the disregard of the generic distinction occurring in this Song, which purposely, after the manner of the vulgar language, ignores pedantic regularity.

Song 5:10. Hereupon Shulamith describes to them who ask what her beloved is. He is the fairest of men. Everything that is glorious in the kingdom of nature, and, so far as her look extends, everything in the sphere of art, she appropriates, so as to present a picture of his external appearance. Whatever is precious, lovely, and grand, is all combined in the living beauty of his person. She first praises the mingling of colours in the countenance of her beloved.

10 My beloved is dazzling white and ruddy,

Distinguished above ten thousand.

The verbal root צָח has the primary idea of purity, i.e., freedom from disturbance and muddines, which, in the stems springing from it, and in their manifold uses, is transferred to undisturbed health (Arab. saḥḥ, cf. baria, of smoothness of the skin), a temperate stomach and clear head, but particularly to the clearness and sunny brightness of the heavens, to dazzling whiteness (צָח, Lam. 4:7; cf. אדום, and then to parched dryness, resulting from the intense and continued rays of the sun; צַח is here adj. from צָח, Lam. 4:7, bearing almost the same relation to לָבָן as λαμπρός to λευκός, cogn. with lucere. R. אדום, to condense, is properly dark-red, called by the Turks kuju kirmesi (from kuju, thick, close, dark), by the French rouge foncé, of the same root as דם, the name for blood, or a thick and dark fluid. White, and indeed a dazzling white, is the colour of his flesh, and redness, deep redness, the colour of his blood tinging his flesh. Whiteness among all the race-colours is the one which best accords with the dignity of man; pure delicate whiteness is among the Caucasian races a mark of high rank, of superior training, of hereditary
noblility; wherefore, Lam. 4:7, the appearance of the nobles of Jerusalem is likened in whiteness to snow and milk, in redness to corals; and Homer, Il. iv. 141, says of Menelaus that he appeared stained with gore, "as when some woman tinges ivory with purple colour." In this mingling of white and red, this fulness of life and beauty, he is ἀκρόμιον, i.e., gold which has stood the fire-proof (obrassā) of the cupel or the crucible.

Grammatically regarded, the word-connection kethem paz is not genit., like kethem ophir, but appositional, like narrah bthulah, Deut. 22:28, zvahim shlamim, Ex. 24:5, etc. The point of comparison is the imposing nobility of the fine form and noble carriage of his head. In the description of the locks of his hair the LXX render ἀκρόμιον by ἀλάτα, Jerome by sicut elatae palmarum, like the young twigs, the young shoots of the palm. Ewald regards it as a harder parall. form of קַלְתֶּלֶת, Isa. 18:15, vine-branches; and Hitzig compares the Thousand and One Nights, iii. 180, where the loose hair of a maiden is likened to twisted clusters of grapes. The possibility of this meaning is indisputable, although (Arab.) taltalat, a drinking-vessel made of the inner bark of palm-branches, is named, not from taltalah, as the name of the palm-branch, but from taltala, to shake down, viz., in the throat. The palm-branch, or the vine-branch, would be named from זיוֹלְלִים אוֹבְרִיזָא, pendulum esse, to hang loosely and with a wavering motion, the freq. of ἀλατός, pendere. The Syr. also think on אֲשֵׂפָת, for it translates "spread out," i.e., a waving downward; and the Venet., which translates by ἀκταωφηρίματα. The point of comparison would be the freshness and flexibility of the abundant long hair of the head, in contrast to motionless close-lying smoothness. One may think of Jupiter, who, when he shakes his head, moves heaven and earth. But, as against this, we have the fact: (1) That the language has other names for palm-branches and vine-branches; the former are called in the Song 7:9, sansinnim. (2) That immediately referred to the hair, but not in the sense of "hanging locks" (Böttch.), is still in use in the post-bibl. Heb. (vid., under 5:2b); the Targ. also, in translating כֹּכַלָר, cumuli cumuli, thinks הַלָּלָתֶל = הַלָּלָתֶל = הַלָּלָתֶל.

Menachoth 29b. A hill is called זָן, (Arab.) tall, from זָן, prosternere, to throw along, as of
earth thrown out, sand, or rubbish; and מָלָא, after the form מַיִם, in use probably only in the plur., is a hilly country which rises like steps, or presents an undulating appearance. Seen from his neck upwards, his hair forms in undulating lines, hill upon hill. In colour, these locks of hair are black as a raven, which bears the Semitic name מָלָא (אָרֶב), but in India is called kārava from its blackness (אָרֶב), but in India is called kārava from its blackness. The raven-blackness of the hair contrasts with the whiteness and redness of the countenance, which shines forth as from a dark ground, from a black border. The eyes are next described.

12 His eyes like doves by the water-brooks, Bathing in milk, stones beautifully set

Song 5:12. The eyes in their glancing moistness (cf. ἀφρός τῶν ὀμμάτων, in Plutarch, of a languishing look), and in the movement of their pupils, are like doves which sip at the water-brooks, and move to and fro beside them. מִלֻאָה, from מַשְׁלָה, continere, is a watercourse, and then also the water itself flowing in it (vid., under Ps. 18:16), as (Arab.) wadin, a valley, and then the river flowing in the valley, bahr, the sea-basin (properly the cleft), and then also the sea itself. The pred. “bathing” refers to the eyes (cf. 4:9), not to the doves, if this figure is continued. The pupils of the eyes, thus compared with doves, seem as if bathing in milk, in that they swim, as it were, in the white in the eye. But it is a question whether the figure of the doves is continued also in מִלֻאָה. It would be the case of milleth meant “fulness of water,” as it is understood, after the after the analogy of the LXX, also by Aquila (ἐκχύσεως), Jerome (fluenta plenissima), and the Arab. (piscinas aqua referatas); among the moderns, by Döpke, Gesen., Hengst., and others. But this pred. would then bring nothing new to 12a; and although in the Syr. derivatives from mlā’ signify flood and high waters, yet the form מילֶל is especially without מִלֻאָה, to be capable of bearing this signification. Luther’s translation also, although in substance correct: und stehen in der fülle (and stand in fulness) (milleth, like שלמותא of the Syr., πληώρωσις of the Gr. Venet., still defended by Hitz.), yet does not bring out the full force of milleth, which, after the analogy of מַלָא, מַיִם, appears to have a concrete signification which is seen from a comparison of Ex. 25:7; 27:17, 20; 39:13. There מַלָא and מָלָא signify not the border with precious stones, but, as rightly maintained by Keil, against Knobel, their filling in, i.e., their bordering, setting. Accordingly, milleth will be a synon. technical expression: the description, passing from the figure of the dove, says further of the eyes, that they are firm on (in) their setting; מילֶל is suitable, for the precious stone is laid within the casket in which it is contained. Hitzig has, on the contrary, objected that מִלֻאָה and מָלָא denote filling up, and thus that מילֶל cannot be a filling up, and still less the place thereof. But as in the Talm. מִלְשָׁם signifies not only fullness, but also stuffed fowls or pies, and as πλήρωμα in its manifold aspects is used not only of that with which anything is filled, but also of that which is filled (e.g., of a ship that is manned, and Eph. 1:23 of the church in which Christ, as in His body, is immanent)—thus also milleth, like the German “Fassung,” may be used of a ring-casket (funda or pala) in which the precious stone is put. That the eyes are like a precious stone in its casket, does not merely signify that they fill the sockets,—for the bulbus of the eye in every one fills the orbita,—but that they are not sunk like the eyes of one who is sick, which fall back on their supporting edges in the orbita, and that they appear full and large as they press forward from wide and open eyelids. The cheeks are next described.

13a His cheeks like a bed of sweet herbs, Towers of spicys plants.

Song 5:13. A flower-bed is called עֲרוּגָה, from עָרַק, to be oblique, inclined. His cheeks are like such a soft raised bed, and the impression their appearance makes is like the fragrance which flows from such a bed planted with sweet-
scented flowers. Migdaloth are the tower-like or pyramidal mounds, and merkahhim are the plants used in spicery. The point of comparison here is thus the soft elevation; perhaps with reference to the mingling of colours, but the word chosen (merkahhim) rather refers to the lovely, attractive, heart-refreshing character of the impression. The Venet., keeping close to the existing text: ἱσγεσίως πόσιμον (thus [not ἀρωματισμόν] according to Gebhardt’s just conjecture). But is the punctuation here correct? The sing. כערוגת is explained from this, that the bed is presented as sloping from its height downward on two parallel sides; but the height would then be the nose dividing the face, and the plur. would thus be more suitable; and the LXX, Symm., and other ancient translators have, in fact, read כערוגת. But still less is the phrase migdloth merkahhim to be comprehended; for a tower, however diminutive it may be, it not a proper figure for a soft elevation, nor even a graduated flowery walk, or a terraced flowery hill,—a tower always presents, however round one may conceive it, too much the idea of a natural chubbiness, or of a diseased tumour. Therefore the expression used by the LXX, φύσεως ἀρωματίσσει, i.e., מְגַדְּלָתָּם מְרָכֹות, commends itself. Thus also Jerome: sicur areolae aromatum consistae a pigmentariis, and the Targ. (which refers ἐκ τῶν καρβῶν allegorically to the closed fingers of the law, and merkahhim to the refinements of the Halacha): “like the rows of a garden of aromatic plants which produce (pigmentes) deep, penetrating sciences, even as a (magnificent) garden, aromatic plants.” Since we read כערוגת, we do not refer migadloth, as Hitzig, who retains כערוגת, to the cheeks, although their name, like that of the other members (e.g., the ear, hand, foot), may be fem. (Böttch. § 649), but to the beds of spices; but in this carrying forward of the figure we find, as he does, a reference to the beard and down on the cheeks. 13b

6:5, as well as of cultivating plants; and it is a similar figure when Pindar, Nem. v. 11, compares the milk-hair of a young man to the fine woolly down of the expanding vine-leaves (vid., Passow). In merkahhim there scarcely lies anything further than that this flos juvenae on the blooming cheeks gives the impression of the young shoots of aromatic plants; at all events, the merkahhim, even although we refer this feature in the figure to the fragrance of the unguents on the beard, are not the perfumes themselves, to which mgadloth is not appropriate, but fragrant plants, so that in the first instance the growth of the beard is in view with the impression of its natural beauty.

Lilies, viz., red lilies (vid., under 2:1), unless the point of comparison is merely loveliness associated with dignity. She thinks of the lips as speaking. All that comes forth from them, the breath in itself, and the breath formed into words, is most precious myrrh, viz., such as of itself wells forth from the bark of the balsamodendron, the running over of the eyes (cf. myrrha in lacrimis, the most highly esteemed sort, as distinguished from myrrha in granis), with which Dillmann combines the Aethiop. name for myrrh, karbê (vid., under 5:5).

14a

Song 5:14. The figure, according to Gesen., Heb. Wörterbuch, and literally also Heilgst., is derived from the closed hand, and the stained nails are compared to precious stones. both statements are incorrect; for (1) although it is true that then Israelitish women, as at the present day Egyptian and Arabian women, stained their eyes with stibium (vid., under Isa. 54:11), yet it is nowhere shown that they, and particularly men, stained the nails of their feet and their toes with the orange-yellow of the Alhenna (Lane’s Egypt, l 33–35); and (2) the word used is not יָדָיו, but יִדֶּיהָ; it is thus the outstretched hands that are meant; and only
these, not the closed fist, could be compared to “lilies,” for כַּכִּי (Ve 40:9) signifies not a ring (Cocc., Döpke, Böttch., etc.), but that which is rolled up, a roller, cylinder (Esth. 1:6), from יב, which properly means not כְּלָלִין (Venet., after Gebhardt: κεκαλωμέναι), but כְּלַלע. The hands thus are meant in respect of the fingers, which on account of their noble and fine form, their full, round, fleshy mould, are compared to bars of gold formed like rollers, garnished (עי, like מִלָּא, Ex. 28:17) with stones of Tarshish, to which the nails are likened. The transparent horn-plates of the nails, with the lunula, the white segment of a circle at their roots, are certainly, when they are beautiful, an ornament to the hand, and, without our needing to think of their being stained, are worthily compared to the gold-yellow topaz. Tarshish is not the onyx, which derives its Heb. name שֶׁבֶם (from its likeness to the finger-nail, but the χρυσόλαβος, by which the word in this passage before us is translated by the Quinta and the Sexta, and elsewhere also by the LXX and Aquila. But the chrysolite is the precious stone which is now called the topaz. It receives the name Tarshish from Spain, the place where it was found. Pliny, xxxviii. 42, describes it as aureo fulgere tralucens. Bredow erroneously interprets Tarshish of amber. There is a kind of chrysolite, indeed, which is called chryselectron, because in colorem electri declinans. The comparison of the nails to such a precious stone (Luther, influenced by the consonance, and apparently warranted by the plena hyacinthis of the Vulg., has substituted golden rings, vol Türkissen, whose blue-green colour is not suitable here), in spite of Hengst., who finds it insipid, is as true to nature as it is tender and pleasing. The description now proceeds from the uncovered to the covered parts of his body, the whiteness of which is compared to ivory and marble.

14b His body an ivory work of art, Covered with sapphires.

The plur. מְׁעִים or מְׁעֶה (vid., under Ps. 16:6) signifies properly the tender parts, and that the inward parts of the body, but is here, like the Chald. מַעֵשׁ, Dan. 2:32, and the יב 7:3, which also properly signifies the inner part of the body, כְּלַלע, transferred to the body in its outward appearance. To the question how Shulamith should in such a manner praise that which is for the most part covered with clothing, it is not only to be answered that it is the poet who speaks by her mouth, but also that it is not the bride or the beloved, but the wife, whom he represents as thus speaking. מַעֵשׁ (from the peculiar Hebraeo-Chald. and Targ. מַעְעֶה, which, after Jer. 5:28, like khalak, creare, appears to proceed from the fundamental idea of smoothing) designates an artistic figure. Such a figure was Solomon’s throne, made of יב, the teeth of elephants, ivory, 1 Kings 10:18. Here Solomon’s own person, without reference to a definite admired work of art, is praised as being like an artistic figure made of ivory,—like it in regard to its glancing smoothness and its fine symmetrical form. When, now, this word of art is described as covered with sapphires (מְׁעַלֵּפֶּת, referred to מַעֵשׁ, as apparently gramm., or as ideal, fem.), a sapphire-coloured robe is not meant (Hitziq, Ginsburg); for עֶלֶף, which only means to disguise, would not at all be used of such a robe (Gen. 38:14; cf. 24:65), nor would the one uniform colour of the robe be designated by sapphires in the plur. The choice of the verb עֶלֶף (elsewhere used of veiling) indicates a covering shading the pure white, and in connection with הָעַל, thought of as accus., a moderating of the bright glance by a soft blue. For הָעַל (a genuine Semit. word, like the Chald. = כְּלַלע; vide, under Ps. 16:6) is the sky-blue sapphire (Ex. 24:10), including the Lasurstein (lapis lazuli), sprinkled with golden, or rather with gold-like glistening points of pyrites, from which, with the l omitted, sky-blue is called azur (azure) (vid., under Job 28:6). The word of art formed of ivory is quite covered over with sapphires fixed in it. That which is here compared is nothing
else than the branching blue veins under the white skin.

15a His legs white marble columns,
    Set on bases of fine gold.

Song 5:15. If the beauty of the living must be represented, not by colours, but in figurative language, this cannot otherwise be done than by the selection of minerals, plants, and things in general for the comparison, and the comparison must more or less come short, because dead soulless matter does not reach to a just and full representation of the living. Thus here, also, the description of the lower extremity, which reaches from the thighs and the legs down to the feet, of which last, in the words of an anatomist, it may be said that “they form the pedestal for the bony pillars of the legs.” The comparison is thus in accordance with fact; the שוקַיִם (from שוק = [Arab.] saḳ, to drive: the movers forward), in the structure of the human frame, take in reality the place of “pillars,” and the feet the place of “pedestals,” as in the tabernacle the wooden pillars rested on small supports in which they were fastened, Ex. 26:18f. But in point of fidelity to nature, the symbol is inferior to a rigid Egyptian figure. Not only is it without life; it is not even capable of expressing the curvilinear shape which belongs to the living. On the other hand, it loses itself in symbol; for although it is in conformity with nature that the legs are compared to pillars of white (according to Aquila and Theod., Parian) marble,—иш = [Heb.] ish, 1 Chron. 29:2 (material for the building of the temple), Talm. מַרְׁמְׁרָא, מַחֲמַדִים of the same verbal root as מַמְׁתַּקִים, and מַחֲמַדִים, the name of the white lily,—the comparison of the feet to bases of fine gold is yet purely symbolical. Gold is a figure of that which is sublime and noble, and with white marble represents greatness combined with purity. He who is here praised is not a shepherd, but a king. The comparisons are thus so grand because the beauty of the beloved is in itself heightened by his kingly dignity.

15b His aspect like Lebanon,
    Distinguished as the cedars.

By the Chald. thinks of “a young man” (from בָחוּר = [Heb.] bḥwr, to be matured, as at Ps. 89:20); but in that case we should have expected the word כָאֶּרֶּז instead of כָאֲרָזִים. Luther, with all other translators, rightly renders “chosen as the cedars.” His look, i.e., his appearance as a whole, is awe-inspiring, majestic, like Lebanon, the king of mountains; he (the praised one) is chosen, i.e., presents a rare aspect, rising high above the common man, like the cedars, those kings among trees, which as special witnesses of creative omnipotence are called “cedars of God,” Ps. 80:11 [10]. בָחוּר, electus, everywhere else an attribute of persons, does not here refer to the look, but to him whose the look is; and what it means in union with the cedars is seen from Jer. 22:7; cf. Isa. 37:24. Here also it is seen (what besides is manifest), that the fairest of the children of men is a king. In conclusion, the description returns from elevation of rank to loveliness.

16a His palate is sweets [sweetnesses],
And he is altogether precious [lovelinesses].

Song 5:16. The palate, פָחַד, is frequently named as the organ of speech, Job 6:30; 31:30, Prov. 5:3; 8:7; and it is also here used in this sense. The meaning, “the mouth for kissing,” which Böttch. gives to the word, is fanciful; פָחַד (= ḥnk, Arab. hanak) is the inner palate and the region of the throat, with the uvula underneath the chin. Partly with reference to his words, his lips have been already praised, 13b; but there the fragrance of his breath came into consideration, his breath both in itself and as serving for the formation of articulate words. But the naming of the palate can point to nothing else than his words. With this the description comes to a conclusion; for, from the speech, the most distinct and immediate expression of the personality, advance is made finally to the praise of the person. The pluraliatant. מַמְׁתַּקִים and מַחֲמַדִים designate what they mention in richest fulness. His palate, i.e., that which he speaks and the manner in which he speaks it, is true sweetness (cf. Prov. 16:21; Ps. 55:15), and
his whole being true loveliness. With justifiable pride Shulamith next says:

16b This is my beloved and this my friend,

Ye daughters of Jerusalem!
The emphatically repeated “this” is here pred. (Luth. “such an one is” ... ); on the other hand, it is subj. at Ex. 3:15 (Luth.: “that is” ... ).

Song of Solomon 6

Song 6:1. The daughters of Jerusalem now offer to seek along with Shulamith for her beloved, who had turned away and was gone.

1 Whither has thy beloved gone, Thou fairest of women?
Whither has thy beloved turned, That we may seek him with thee?
The longing remains with her even after she has wakened, as the after effect of her dream. In the morning she goes forth and meets with the daughters of Jerusalem. They cause Shulamith to describe her friend, and they ask whither he has gone. They wish to know the direction in which he disappeared from her, the way which he had probably taken ( posY, R. ℂ, to drive, to urge forward, to turn from one to another), that with her they might go to seek him (Vav of the consequence or the object, as at Ps. 83:17). The answer she gives proceeds on a conclusion which she draws from the inclination of her beloved.

2 My beloved has gone down into the garden, To the beds of sweet herbs, To feed in the gardens And gather lilies.

Song 6:2. He is certainly, she means to say, there to be found where he delights most to tarry. He will have gone down—viz. from the palace (Song 6:11; cf. 1 Kings 20:43 and Esth. 7:7)—into his garden, to the fragrant beds, there to feed in his garden and gather lilies (cf. Old Germ. “to collect rösen”); he is fond of gardens and flowers. Shulamith expresses this in her shepherd-dialect, as when Jesus says of His Father (John 15:1), “He is the husbandman.”

Flowerbeds are the feeding place (vid., regarding פָּרַע תְרוּ שׁוּר יִהְיֶה under 2:16) of her beloved. Solomon certainly took great delight in gardens and parks, Eccles. 2:5. But this historical fact is here idealized; the natural flora which Solomon delighted in with intelligent interest presents itself as a figure of a higher Loveliness which was therein as it were typically manifest (cf. Rev. 7:17, where the “Lamb,” “feeding,” and “fountains of water,” are applied as anagogics, i.e., heavenward-pointing types). Otherwise it is not to be comprehended why it is lilies that are named. Even if it were supposed to be implied that lilies were Solomon’s favourite flowers, we must assume that his taste was determined by something more than by form and colour. The words of Shulamith give us to understand that the inclination and the favourite resort of her friend corresponded to his nature, which is altogether thoughtfulness and depth of feeling (cf. under Ps. 92:5, the reference to Dante: the beautiful women who gather flowers representing the paradisiacal life); lilies, the emblems of unapproachable grandeur, purity inspiring reverence, high elevation above that which is common, bloom there wherever the lily-like one wanders, whom the lily of the valley calls her own. With the words:

3 I am my beloved’s, and my beloved is mine, Who feeds among the lilies,

Song 6:3. Shulamith farther proceeds, followed by the daughters of Jerusalem, to seek her friend lost through her own fault. She always says, not אישי, but רעִי and דודִי for love, although a passion common to mind and body, is in this Song of Songs viewed as much as possible apart from its basis in the animal nature. Also, that the description hovers between that of the clothed and the unclothed, gives to it an ideality favourable to the mystical interpretation. Nakedness is עֶרְוָה. But at the cross nakedness appears transported from the sphere of sense to that of the supersensuous.
Second Scene of the Fourth Act, 6:4–9

Song 6:4. With v. 4 Solomon’s address is resumed, and a new scene opens. Shulamith had found him again, and she who is beautiful in herself appears now so much the more beautiful, when the joy of seeing him again irradiates her whole being.

4 Beautiful art thou, my friend, as Tirzah, Comely as Jerusalem, Terrible as a battle-array.

In the praise of her beauty we hear the voice of the king. The cities which are the highest ornament of his kingdom serve him as the measure of her beauty, which is designated according to the root conceptions by יהּפָה, after the equality of completeness; by נָאוָה, after the quality of that which is well-becoming, pleasing. It is concluded, from the prominence given to Tirzah, that the Song was not composed till after the division of the kingdom, and that its author was an inhabitant of the northern kingdom; for Tirzah was the first royal city of this kingdom till the time of Omri, the founder of Samaria. But since, at all events, it is Solomon who here speaks, so great an historical judgment ought surely to be ascribed to a later poet who has imagined himself in the exact position of Solomon, that he would not represent the king of the undivided Israel as speaking like a king of the separate kingdom of Israel. The prominence given to Tirzah has another reason. Tirzah was discovered by Robinson on his second journey, 1852, in which Van de Velde accompanied him, on a height in the mountain range to the north of Nablûs, under the name Tullûzah. Brocardus and Breydenback had already pointed out a village called Thersa to the east of Samaria. This form of the name corresponds to the Heb. better than that Arab. Tullûzah; but the place is suitable, and if Tullûzah lies high and beautiful in a region of olive trees, then it still justifies its ancient name, which means pleasantness or sweetness. But it cannot be sweetness on account of which Tirzah is named before Jerusalem, for in the eye of the Israelites Jerusalem was “the perfection of beauty” (Ps. 50:2; Lam. 2:15). That there is gradation from Tirzah to Jerusalem (Hengst.) cannot be said; for יָפָה (בורה) and נָאוָה (זוקה) would be reversed if a climax were intended. The reason of it is rather this, that Shulamith is from the higher region, and is not a daughter of Jerusalem, and that therefore a beautiful city situated in the north toward Sunem must serve as a comparison of her beauty. That Shulamith is both beautiful and terrible is not contradiction: she is terrible in the irresistible power of the impression of her personality, terrible as nidgaloth, i.e., as troops going forth with their banners unfurled (cf. the kal of this v. denom., Ps. 20:6). We do not need to supply נָאָרוֹת, which is sometimes fem., Ps. 25:3, Gen. 32:9, although the attribute would here be appropriate, Num. 2:3, cf. 10:5; still less צְבָאות, which occurs in the sense of military service, Isa. 40:2, and a war-expedition, Dan. 8:12, but not in the sense of war-host, as fem. Much rather nidgaloth, thus neut., is meant of banded hosts, as צְבָאת (not צְבָאות, Isa. 21:13, of those that are marching. War-hosts with their banners, their standards, go forth confident of victory. Such is Shulamith’s whole appearance, although she is unconscious of it—a veni, vidi, vici. Solomon is completely vanquished by her. But seeking to maintain himself in freedom over against her, he cries out to her:

5a Turn away thine eyes from me, For overpoweringly they assail me.

Song 6:5a. Döpke translates, ferocte me faciunt; Hengst.: they make me proud; but although הרָה (רָה), after Ps. 138:3, may be thus used, yet that would be an effect produced by the eyes, which certainly would suggest the very opposite of the request to turn them away. The verb רָה means to be impetuous, and to press impetuously against any one; the Hiph. is the intens. of this trans. signification of the kal: to press overpoweringly against one, to infuse terror, terrorem incutere. The LXX translates it by ἀναπτεροῦν, which is also used of the effect
of terror (“to make to start up”), and the Syr. by *afred*, to put to flight, because *arheb* signifies to put in fear, as also *arhab* = *khawwaf*, terrefacere; but here the meaning of the verb corresponds more with the sense of Arab. *r’h*, to be placed in the state of *ro’b*, i.e., of paralyzing terror. If she directed her large, clear, penetrating eyes to him, he must sink his own: their glance is unbearable by him. This peculiar form the praise of her eyes here assume; but then the description proceeds as at 4:1b, 2:3b. The words used there in praise of her hair, her teeth, and her cheeks, are here repeated.

5b Thy hair is like a flock of goats
Which repose downwards on Giliad.

6 Thy teeth like a flock of lambs
Which come up from the washing,
All of them bearing twins,
And a bereaved one is not among them.

7 Like a piece of pomegranate thy temples
Behind thy veil.

**Song 6:5–7.** The repetition is literal, but yet not without change in the expression,—there, מֵהַר מִן־הַגִּילָּם, here, מֵהַר גִּילָּם; there, מִן־הַגִּילָם, tonsarum, here, הָרְחַל, in its proper signification, is like the Arab. *rachil*, *richl*, *richleh*, the female lamb, and particularly the ewe. Hitzig imagines that so Lomon here repeats to Shulamith what he had said to another *donna* chosen for marriage, and that the flattery becomes insipid by repetition to Shulamith, as well as also to the reader. But the romance which he finds in the Song is not this itself, but his own palimpsest, in the style of Lucian’s transformed ass. The repetition has a morally better reason, and not one so subtle. Shulamith appears to Solomon yet more beautiful than on the day when she was brought to him as his bride. His love is still the same, unchanged; and this both she and the reader or hearer must conclude from these words of praise, repeated now as they were then. There is no one among the ladies of the court whom he prefers to her,—these must themselves acknowledge her superiority.

8 There are sixty queens,
And eighty concubines,
And virgins without number.

9 One is my dove, my perfect one,—
The only one of her mother,
The choice one of her that bare her.
The daughters saw her and called her blessed,—
Queens and concubines, and they extolled her.

**Song 6:8, 9.** Even here, where, if anywhere, notice of the difference of gender was to be expected, מֵהַר מַמֵּה stands instead of the more accurate מֵהַר מַמָּה (e.g., Gen. 6:2). The number off the women of Solomon’s court, 1 Kings 11:3, is far greater (700 wives and 300 concubines); and those who deny the Solomonic authorship of the Song regard the poet, in this particular, as more historical than the historian. On our part, holding as we do the Solomonic authorship of the book, we conclude from these low numbers that the Song celebrates a love-relation of Solomon’s at the commencement of his reign: his luxury had not then reached the enormous height to which he, the same Solomon, looks back, and which he designates, Eccles. 2:8, as *vanitas vanitatum*. At any rate, the number of 60 מְלָכות, i.e., legitimate wives of equal rank with himself, is yet high enough; for, according to 2 Chron. 11:21, Rehoboam had 18 wives and 60 concubines. The 60 occurred before, at 3:7. If it be a round number, as sometimes, although rarely, *sexaginta* is thus used (Hitzig), it may be reduced only to 51, but not further, especially here, where 80 stands along with it. פִלֶּגֶּש (פִלֶּגֶּש), Gr. *πάλλαξ*, *παλλακή* (Lat. *pellex*), which in the form פִלַקְׁתָּא (פֶּלַקְׁתָא) came back from the Greek to the Aramaic, is a word as yet unexplained. According to the formation, it may be compared to *πελέκη*, from *πέλεκ*, to cut off; whence also the harem bears the (Arab.) name *haram*, or the separated *synaecomitis*, to which
access is denied. And ending in is (ש) is known to the Assy., but only as an adverbial ending, which, as 'istinis = יהב, alone, solus, shows is connected with the pron. su. These two nouns appear as thus requiring to be referred to quadrilitera, with the annexed ש; perhaps פלטש, in the sense of to break into splinters, from פלט, to divide (whence a brook, as dividing itself in its channels, has the name of פלט). This points to the polygamous relation as a breaking up of the marriage of one; so that a concubine has the name pillegesh, as a representant of polygamy in contrast to monogamy.

In the first line of v. 9 תמא is subj. (one, who is my dove, my perfect one); in the second line, on the contrary, it is pred. (one, unica, is she of her mother). That Shulamith was her mother's only child does not, however, follow from this; תמא, unica, is equivalent to unice dilecta, as ייח, Prov. 4:3, is equivalent to unice dilectus (cf. Keil's Zech. 14:7). The parall. דְּרַע has its nearest signification electa (LXX, Syr., Jerome), not pura (Venet.); the fundamental idea of cutting and separating divides itself into the ideas of choosing and purifying. The Aorists, 9b, are the only ones in this book; they denote that Shulamith's look had, on the part of the women, this immediate result, that they willingly assigned to her the good fortune of being preferred to them all,—that to her the prize was due. The words, as also at Prov. 31:28, are an echo of Gen. 30:13,—the books of the Chokma delight in references to Genesis, the book of pre-Israelitish origin. Here, in vv. 8, 9, the distinction between our typical and the allegorical interpretation is correctly seen. The latter is bound to explain what the 60 and the 80 mean, and how the wives, concubines, and "virgins" of the harem are to be distinguished from each other; but what till now has been attempted in this matter has, by reason of its very absurdity or folly, become an easy subject of wanton mockery. But to see an allegory of heavenly things in such a herd of women—a kind of thing which the Book of Genesis dates from the degradation of marriage in the line of Cain—is a profanation of that which is holy. The fact is, that by a violation of the law of God (Deut. 17:17), Solomon brings a cloud over the typical representation, which is not at all to be thought of in connection with the Antitype. Solomon, as Jul Sturm rightly remarks, is not to be considered by himself, but only in his relation to Shulamith. In Christ, on the contrary, is no imperfection; sin remains in the congregation. In the Song, the bride is purer than the bridegroom; but in the fulfilling of the Song this relation is reversed: the bridegroom is purer than the bride.

**Fifth Act**

**Shulamith, the Attractively Fair But Humble Princess—Ch. 6:10–8:4**

**First Scene of the Fifth Act, 6:10–7:6**

The fourth Act, notwithstanding the little disturbances, gives a clear view of the unchanging love of the newly-married pair. This fifth shows how Shulamith, although raised to a royal throne, yet remains, in her childlike disposition and fondness for nature, a lily of the valley. The first scene places us in the midst of the royal gardens. Shulamith comes to view from its recesses, and goes to the daughters of Jerusalem, who, overpowered by the beauty of her heavenly appearance, cry out:

10 Who is this that looketh forth like the morning-red,

Beautiful as the moon, pure as the sun,
Terrible as a battle-host?

**Song 6:10.** The question, "Who is this?" is the same as at 3:6. There, it refers to her who was brought to the king; here, it refers to her who moves in that which is his as her own. There, the "this" is followed by יהב appositionally; here, by ישן [looking forth] determ., and thus more closely connected with it; but then
indeterm., and thus apposit. predicates follow. The verb שָׁקַף signify to bend forward, to overhang; whence the Hiph. נִשְׁקַף and Niph. נִשְׁקַף, to look out, since in doing so one bends forward (vid., under Ps. 14:2). The LXX here translates it by ἐνυσσος, the Venet. by παρακύπτοσα, both of which signify to look toward something with the head inclined forward. The point of comparison is, the rising up from the background: Shulamith breaks through the shades of the garden-grove like the morning-red, the morning dawn; or, also: she comes nearer and nearer, as the morning-red rises behind the mountains, and then fills always the more widely the whole horizon. The Venet. translates ὡς ἑσφόρος; but the morning star is not שַחַר, but בֶּן־שַחַר, Isa. 14:12; shahhar, properly, the morning-dawn, means, in Heb., not only this, like the Arab. šaḥar, but rather, like the Arab. fajr, the morning-red,—i.e., the red tinge of the morning mist. From the morning-red the description proceeds to the moon, yet visible in the morning sky, before the sun has risen. It is usually called יָרֵחַ, as being yellow; but here it is called לְׁבָנָה, as being white; as also the sun, which here is spoken of as having risen (Judg. 5:31), is designated not by the word שָׁמֶש, as the unwearied (Ps. 19:6b, 6a), but, on account of the intensity of its warming light (Ps. 19:7b), is called חַמָֹה. These, in the language of poetry, are favourite names of the moon and the sun, because already the primitive meaning of the two other names had disappeared from common use; but with these, definite attributive ideas are immediately connected. Shulamith appears like the morning-red, which breaks through the darkness; beautiful, like the silver moon, which in soft still majesty shines in the heavens (Job 31:26); pure (vid., regarding גָוֵר, in this signification: smooth, bright, pure under Isa. 49:2) as the sun, whose light (cf. Ps with the Aram. אַרְעָה, mid-day brightness) is the purest of the pure, imposing as war-hosts with their standards (vid., 6:4b). The answer of her who was drawing near, to this exclamation, sounds homely and childlike:

11 To the nut garden I went down
    To look at the shrubs of the valley,
    To see whether the vine sprouted,
    The pomegranates budded.

12 I knew it not that my soul lifted me up
    To the royal chariots of my people, a noble (one).

Song 6:11, 12. In her loneliness she is happy; she finds her delight in quietly moving about in the vegetable world; the vine and the pomegranate, brought from her home, are her favourites. Her soul—viz. love for Solomon, which fills her soul—raised her to the royal chariots of her people, the royal chariots of a noble (one), where she sits besides the king, who drives the chariot; she knew this, but she also knew it not for what she had become without any cause of her own, that she is without self-elation and without disavowal of her origin. These are Shulamith's thoughts and feelings, which we think we derive from these two verses without reading between the lines and without refining. It went down, she says, viz., from the royal palace, cf. 6:2. Then, further, she speaks of a valley; and the whole sounds rural, so that we are led to think of Etam as the scene. This Etam, romantically (vid., Judg. 15:8f.) situated, was, as Josephus (Antt. viii. 7. 3) credibly informs us, Solomon's Belvedere. "In the royal stables," he says, "so great was the regard for beauty and swiftness, that nowhere else could horses of greater beauty or greater fleetness be found. All had to acknowledge that the appearance of the king's horses was wonderfully pleasing, and that their swiftness was incomparable. Their riders also served as an ornament to them. They were young men in the flower of their age, and were distinguished by their lofty stature and their flowing hair, and by their clothing, which was of Tyrian purple. They every day sprinkled their hair with dust of gold, so that their whole head sparkled when the sun shone upon it. In such array, armed and bearing bows, they formed a body-guard around the king, who was wont, clothed in a...
white garment, to go out of the city in the morning, and even to drive his chariot. These morning excursions were usually to a certain place which was about sixty stadia from Jerusalem, and which was called Etam; gardens and brooks made it as pleasant as it was fruitful.* This Etam, from whence (the waters) a watercourse, the ruins of which are still visible, supplied the temple with water, has been identified by Robinson with a village called Artas (by Lumley called Urtas), about a mile and a half to the south of Bethlehem. At the upper end of the winding valley, at a considerable height above the bottom, are three old Solomonic pools,—large, oblong basins of considerable compass placed one behind the other in terraces. Almost at an equal height with the highest pool, at a distance of several hundred steps there is a strong fountain, which is carefully built over, and to which there is a descent by means of stairs inside the building. By it principally were the pools, which are just large reservoirs, fed, and the water was conducted by a subterranea conduit into the upper pool. Riding along the way close to the aqueduct, which still exists, one sees even at the present day the valley below clothed in rich vegetation; and it is easy to understand that here there may have been rich gardens and pleasure-grounds (Moritz Lüttke's Mittheilung). A more suitable place for this first scene of the fifth Act cannot be thought of; and what Josephus relates serves remarkably to illustrate the manifold statements which follow. The first object was the nut garden. Then her intention was to observe the young shoots in the valley, which one has to think of as traversed by a river or brook; for אֶגֶז, like Wady, signifies both a valley and a valley-brook. The nut garden might lie in the valley, for the walnut tree is fond of a moderately cool, damp soil (Joseph. Bell. iii. 10. 8). But the אֶגֶז are the young shoots with which the banks of a brook and the damp valley are usually adorned in the spring-time. בּ, shoot, in the Heb. of budding and growth, in Aram. of the fruit-formation, comes from R. ב, the weaker power of הב, which signifies to expand and spread from within outward, and particularly to sprout up and to well forth. ב signifies here, as at Gen. 34:1, attentively to observe something, looking to be fixed upon it, to sink down into it. A further object was to observe whether the vine had broken out, or had budded (this is the meaning of הנץ, breaking out, to send forth, R. of, to break).—whether the pomegranate trees had gained flowers or flower-buds, דסנה, not as Gesen. in his Thes. and Heb. Lex. states, the Hiph. of דס, which would be דסנה, but from דס instead of דסנה, with the same omission of Dagesh, after the forms דסנה, דסנה, דסנה, cf. Prov. 7:13, R. דס, to glance, bloom (whence Nisan as the name of the flower-month, as Ab the name of the fruit-month). Why the pomegranate tree (Punica granatum L.), which derives this its Latin name from its fruit being full of grains, bears the Semitic name שלמא, (Arab.) rummân, is yet unexplained; the Arabians are so little acquainted with it, that they are uncertain whether ramm or raman (which, however, is not proved to exist) is to be regarded as the
root-word. The question goes along with that regarding the origin and signification of Rimmon, the name of the Syrian god, which appears to denote “sublimity;” and it is possible that the pomegranate tree has its name from this god as being consecrated to him.

In v. 12, Shulamith adds that, amid this her quiet delight in contemplating vegetable life, she had almost forgotten the position to which she had been elevated. לא ידעתי may, according to the connection in which it is sued, mean, “I know not,” Gen. 4:9; 21:26, as well as “I knew not,” Gen. 28:16, Prov. 23:35; here the latter (LXX, Aquila, Jerome, Venet., Luther), for the expression runs parallel to ירדתי, and is related to it as verifying or circumstantiating it. The connection לא ידעתי נפשי, whether we take the word נפשי as permut. of the subject (Luther: My soul knew it not) or as the accus. of the object: I knew not myself (after Job 9:21), is objectionable, because it robs the following ירדתי of its subject, and makes the course of thought inappropriate. The accusative, without doubt, hits on what is right, since it gives the Rebia, corresponding to our colon, to ירדי, for that which follows with ירדי נפשי is just what she acknowledges not to have known or considered. For the meaning cannot be that her soul had placed or brought her in an unconscious way, i.e., involuntarily or unexpectedly, etc., for “I knew not,” as such a declaration never forms the principal sentence, but, according to the nature of the case, always a subordinate sentence, and that either as a conditional clause with Vav, Job 9:5, or as a relative clause, Isa. 47:11; cf. Ps. 49:21. Thus “I knew not” will be followed by what she was unconscious of; it follows in oratio directa instead of obliqua, as also elsewhere after ידעתי, ידעתי, etc., elsewhere introducing the object of knowledge, is omitted, Ps. 9:21; Amos 5:12. But if it remains unknown to her, if it has escaped her consciousness that her soul placed her, etc., then naphsi is here her own self, and that on the side of desire (Job 23:13; Deut. 12:15); thus, in contrast to external constraint, her own most inward impulse, the leading of her heart.

Following this, she has been placed on the height on which she now finds herself, without being always mindful of it. It would certainly now be most natural to regard מרכבות, after the usual constr. of the verb ירד with the double accus., e.g., Gen. 28:22, Isa. 50:2, Ps. 39:9, as pred. accus. (Venet. ἐθετο με ὄχημα), as e.g., Hengst: I knew not, thus my soul brought me (i.e., brought me at unawares) to the chariots of my people, who are noble. But what does this mean? He adds the remark: “Shulamith stands in the place of the war-chariots of her people as their powerful protector, or by the heroic spirit residing in her.” But apart from the syntactically false rendering of לא ידעתי, and the unwarrantable allegorizing, this interpretation wrecks itself on this, that “chariots” in themselves are not for protection, and thus without something further, especially in this designation by the word מרכבות (2 Kings 6:17; cf. 2 Kings 2:12; 13:14), are not war-chariots. מרכ׳ will thus be the accus of the object of motion. It is thus understood, e.g., by Ewald (sec. 281 d): My soul brought me to the chariots, etc. The shepherd-hypothesis finds here the seduction of Shulamith. Holländer translates: “I perceived it not; suddenly, it can scarcely be said unconsciously, I was placed in the state-chariots of Amminidab.” But the Masora expressly remarks that עמי נדיב are not to be read as if forming one, but as two words, תרין מלין. Hitzig proportionally better, thus: without any apprehension of such a coincidence, she saw herself carried to the chariots of her noble people, i.e., as Gesen. in his Thes.: inter currus comitatus principis. Any other explanation, says Hitzig, is not possible, since the accus. מרכ׳ in itself signifies only in the direction wither, or in the neighbourhood whence. And certainly it is generally used of the aim or object toward which one directs himself or strives, e.g., Isa. 37:23. Kdesh, “toward the sanctuary,” Ps. 134:2; cf. hashshāʿārā, “toward
the gate,” Isa. 22:7. But the accus. màrom can also mean “on high,” Isa. 22:16, the accus. hashshāmaīm “in the heavens,” 1 Kings 8:32; and as shalah hāārĕts of being sent into the land, Num. 13:27, thus may also sim mĕrkāvāh be used for sim bmĕrkāvāh, 1 Sam. 8:11, according to which the Syr. (bmecabto) and the Quinta (εἰς ἅρμα) translate; on the contrary, Symm. and Jerome destroy the meaning by adopting the reading (my soul placed me in confusion). The plur. markvoth is thus meant amplifi., like richvē, 1:9, and battēnu, 1:17.

As regards the subject, 2 Sam. 15:1 is to be compared; it is the king’s chariot that is meant, yoked, according to 1:9, with Egypt horses. It is a question whether nadiv is related adject. to ammi: my people, a noble (people).—a connection which gives prominence to the attribute appositio. Gen. 37:2; Ps. 143:10; Ezek. 34:12,—or permutat., so that the first gen. is exchanged for one defining more closely: to the royal chariot of my people, a prince. The latter has the preference, not merely because (leaving out of view the proper name Amminidab) wherever נָדִיב and נָדִיב are used together they are meant of those who stand prominent above the people, Num. 21:18, Ps. 47:10; 113:8, but because this evidently stand in interchangeable relation. Yet, even though we take נָדִיב and נָדִיב together, the thought remains the same. Shulamith is not one who is abducted, but, as we read at 3:6 ff., one who is honourably brought home; and she here expressly says that no kind of external force but her own loving soul raised her to the royal chariots of her people and their king. That she gives to the fact of her elevation just this expression, arises from the circumstance that she places her joy in the loneliness of nature, in contrast to her driving along in a splendid chariot. Designating the chariot that of her noble people, or that of her people, and, indeed, of a prince, she sees in both cases in Solomon the concentration and climax of the people’s glory.

Song of Solomon 7

Song 7:1. Encouraged by Shulamith’s unassuming answer, the daughters of Jerusalem now give utterance to an entreaty which their astonishment at her beauty suggests to them.

1 Come back, come back, O Shulamith!

Come back, come back, that we may look upon thee!

She is now (Song 6:10 ff.) on the way from the garden to the palace. The fourfold “come back” entreats her earnestly, yea, with tears, to return thither with them once more, and for this purpose, that they might find delight in looking up her; for בָּחָז signifies to sink oneself into a thing, looking at it, to delight (feast) one’s eyes in looking on a thing. Here for the first time Shulamith is addressed by name. But cannot be a pure proper name, for the art. is vocat., as e.g., נְבָה יִרְועֵה, “O daughter of Jerusalem!” Pure proper names like שלמה are so determ. in themselves that they exclude the article; only such as are at the same time also nouns, like יַרְדֵן and לְׁבָנון, are susceptible of the article, particularly also of the vocat., Ps. 114:5; but cf. Zech. 11:1 with Isa. 10:34. Thus will be not so much a proper name as a name of descent, as generally nouns in ℓ (with a few exceptions, viz., of ordinal number, יָסְפֵּר, קָרֵד, etc.) are all gentilicia. The LXX render מַלְכָּה, i.e., she who is from Sunem. Thus also was designated the exceedingly beautiful Abishag, 1 Kings 1:3, Elisha’s excellent and pious hostess, 2 Kings 4:8 ff. Sunem was in the tribe of Issachar (Josh. 19:18), near to Little Hermon, from which it was separated by a valley, to the south-east of Carmel. This lower Galilean Sunem, which lies south from Nain, south-east from Nazareth, south-west from Tabor, is also called Shulem. Eusebius in his Onomasticon says regarding it: Σούλημ in tribe Issachar. et usque hodie vicus.
ostenditur nomine Sulem in quinto miliario montis Thabor contra australum plagam. This place if found at the present day under the name of Sûwlam (Sôlam), at the west end of Jebel ed-Duḥi (Little Hermon), not far from the great plain (Jisre‘el, now Zer‘în), which forms a convenient way of communication between Jordan and the sea-coast, but is yet so hidden in the mountain range that the Talmud is silent concerning this Sulem, as it is concerning Nazareth. Here was the home of the Shulamitess of the Song. The ancients interpret the name by εἰ ἡ η εὕς, or by ἐς ύλευ ἡ (vid., Lagarde’s Onomastica), the former after Aquila and the Quinta, the latter after Symm. The Targum has the interpretation: והשלמה בעמהו עִ בֵּ יָ מָ נֵ ה (vid., Rashi). But the form of the name (the Syr. writes שִילוּמִיתָא) is opposed to these allegorical interpretations. Rather it is to be assumed that the poet purposely used, not השוב׳, but הָשֹׁל׳, to assimilate her name to that of Solomon; and that it has the parallel meaning of one devoted to Solomon, and thus, as it were, of a passively-applied שְׁלוֹם = Σ λ η, is the more probable, as the daughters of Jerusalem would scarcely venture thus to address her who was raised to the rank of a princess unless this name accorded with that of Solomon.

Not conscious of the greatness of her beauty, Shulamith asks,—

1b α What do you see in Shulamith?
She is not aware that anything particular is to be seen in her; but the daughters of Jerusalem are of a different opinion, and answer this childlike, modest, but so much the more touching question,—

1b β As the dance of Mahanaim!
They would thus see in her something like the dance of Mahanâm. If this be here the name of the Levitical town (now Mahneh) in the tribe of Gad, north of Jabbok, where Ishbosheth resided for two years, and where David was hospitably entertained on his flight from Absalom (Luthr.: “the dance to Mahanân”), then we must suppose in this trans-Jordanic town such a popular festival as was kept in Shiloh, Judg. 21:19, and we may compare Abel-Meholah [= meadow of dancing], the name of Elisha’s birthplace (cf. also Herod. i. 16: “To dance the dance of the Arcadian town of Tegea”). But the Song delights in retrospective references to Genesis (cf. 4:11b, 7:11). At 32:3, however, by Mahanâm is meant the double encampment of angels who protected Jacob’s two companies (Song 32:8). The town of Mahanâm derives its name from this vision of Jacob’s. The word, as the name of a town, is always without the article; and here, where it has the article, it is to be understood apppellatively. The old translators, in rendering by “the dances of the camps” (Syr., Jerome, choros castrorum, Venet. θιαον στρατοπεδων), by which it remains uncertain whether a war-dance or a parade is meant, overlook the dual, and by exchanging מחנâים with מַחֲnants, they obtain a figure which in this connection is incongruous and obscure. But, in truth, the figure is an angelic one. The daughters of Jerusalem wish to see Shulamith dance, and they designate that as an angelic sight. Mahanâm became in the post-bibl. dialect a name directly for angels. The dance of angels is only a step beyond the responsive song of the seraphim, Isa. 6. Engelkoere [angel-choir] and “heavenly host” are associated in the old German poetry. The following description is undeniably that (let one only read how Hitzig in vain seeks to resist this interpretation) of one dancing. In this, according to biblical representation and ancient custom, there is nothing repulsive. The women of the ransomed people, with Miriam at their head, danced, as did also the women who celebrated David’s victory over Goliath (Ex. 15:20; 1 Sam. 18:6). David himself danced (2 Sam. 6) before the ark of the covenant. Joy and dancing are, according to Old Testament conception, inseparable (Eccles. 3:4); and joy not only as the happy feeling of youthful life, but also spiritual holy joy (Ps. 87:7). The dance which the ladies of the court here desire to see, falls under the point of view of a play of rival individual artistes reciprocally acting for the sake of amusement. The play also is capable of moral nobility, if it is enacted within the limits
of propriety, at the right time, in the right manner, and if the natural joyfulness, penetrated by intelligence, is consecrated by a spiritual aim. Thus Shulamith, when she dances, does not then become a Gaditanian (Martial, xiv. 203) or an Alma (the name given in Anterior Asia to those women who go about making it their business to dance mimic and partly lascivious dances); nor does she become a Bajadere (Isa. 23:15 f.), as also Miriam, Ex. 15:20, Jephthah’s daughter, Judg. 11:34, the “daughters of Shiloh,” Judg. 21:21, and the woman of Jerusalem, 1 Sam. 18:6, did not dishonour themselves by dancing; the dancing of virgins is even a feature of the times after the restoration, Jer. 31:13. But that Shulamith actually danced in compliance with the earnest entreaty of the daughters of Jerusalem, is seen from the following description of her attractions, which begins with her feet and the vibration of her thighs.

After throwing aside her upper garments, so that she had only the light clothing of a shepherdess or vinedresser, Shulamith danced to and fro before the daughters of Jerusalem, and displayed all her attractions before them. Her feet, previously (Song 5:3) naked, or as yet shod with sandals, she sets forth with the deportment of a prince’s daughter.

Song 7:2a. The noun נדיב, which signifies noble in disposition, and then noble by birth and rank (cf. the reverse relation of the meanings in generosus), is in the latter sense synon. and parallel to מנדיב and מנד, Shulamith is here called a prince’s daughter because she was raised to the rank of which Hannah, 1 Sam. 2:8, speaks, and to which she herself, 6:12 points. Her beauty, from the first associated with unaffected dignity, now appears in native princely grace and majesty. פס (from פס, pulsare, as in nunc pede libero pulsanda tellus) signifies step and foot,—in the latter sense the poet. Heb. and the vulgar Phoen. word for רגל; here the meanings pes and passus (Fr. pas, dance-step) flow into each other. The praise of the spectators now turns from the feet of the dancer to her thighs:

2b The vibration of thy thighs like ornamental chains,

The work of an artist’s hands.

Song 7:2b. The double-sided thighs, viewed from the spine and the lower part of the back, are called חלב, from the upper part of the legs upwards, and the breast downwards (the lumbar region), thus seen on the front and sidewise, כן, or קולות. Here the manifold twistings and windings of the upper part of the body by means of the thigh-joint are meant; such movements of a circular kind are called חצויים, from חצוי, 5:6. חצוי is the plur. of חצוי, (Arab.) haly, as also אמַנ (gazelles) of זב = zaby. The sing. חצוי or חצוי = [Arab.] hulyah) signifies a female ornament, consisting of gold, silver, or precious stones, and that (according to the connection, Prov. 25:2; Hos. 2:15) for the neck or the breast as a whole; the plur. חצוי, occurring only here, is therefore chosen because the bendings of the loins, full of life and beauty, are compared to the free swingings to and fro of such an ornament, and thus to a connected ornament of chains; for see בת with לָוֹת. Here the connection here requires movement. In accordance with the united idea of חצוי, the appos. is not מָעֲשֵׂי, but מַעֲשֵי (LXX, Targ., Syr., Venet.). The artist is called מַעֲשֵׂה (ommân) (the forms מַעֲשִׂים and מַעֲשֵׂים are also found). Syr. אמונ, Jewish-Aram. מָעַס; he has, as the master of stability, a name like יְסֵל, the right hand: the hand, and especially the right hand, is the artifex among the members. The eulogists pass from the loins to the middle part of the body. In dancing, especially in the Oriental style of dancing, which is the mimic representation of animated feeling, the breast and the body are raised, and the forms of the body appear through the clothing.
SONG OF SOLOMON

By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch

3 Thy navel is a well-rounded basin—
   Let not mixed wine be wanting to it
   Thy body is a heap of wheat,
   Set round with lilies.

Song 7:3. In interpreting these words, Hitzig proceeds as if a “voluptuary” were here speaking. He therefore changes שָרְרֵ into שָרַרֶךָ, “thy pudenda.” But (1) it is no voluptuary who speaks here, and particularly not a man, but women who speak; certainly, above all, it is the poet, who would not, however, be so inconsiderate as to put into the mouths of women immodest words which he could use if he wished to represent the king as speaking. Moreover (2) מַסַּה = (Arab.) surr, secret (that which is secret; in Ar. especially referred to the pudenda, both of man and woman), is a word that is foreign to the Heb. language, which has for “Geheimnis” [secret] the corresponding word רָם (vid., under Ps. 2:2; 25:14), after the root-signification of its verbal stem (viz., to be firm, pressed together); and (3) the reference—preferred by Döpke, Magnus, Hahn, and others, also without any change of punctuation—of מַסַּה to the interfemínium mulieris, is here excluded by the circumstance that the attractions of a woman dancing, as they unfold themselves, are here described. Like the Arab. surr, מַסַּה (= shurr), from מָסַ, to bind fast, denotes properly the umbilical cord, Ezek. 16:4, and then the umbilical scar. Thus, Prov. 3:8, where most recent critics prefer, for מַסַּה, to read, but without any proper reason, מָסַּה = מָסַ, “to thy flesh,” the navel comes there into view as the centre of the body,—which it always is with new-born infants, and is almost so with grown-up persons in respect of the length of the body,—and as, indeed, the centre. whence the pleasurable feeling of health diffuses its rays of heat. This middle and prominent point of the abdomen shows itself in one lightly clad and dancing when she breathes deeply, even through the clothing; and because the navel commonly forms a little funnel-like hollow (Böttch.: in the form almost of a whirling hollow in the water, as one may see in nude antique statues), therefore the daughters of Jerusalem compare Shulamith’s navel to a “basin of roundness,” i.e., which has this general property, and thus belongs to the class of things that are round. מַסַּה does not mean a Becher (a cup), but a Bechen (basin), pelvis; properly a washing basin, ijjanah (from מַסַּה = ajan, to full, to wash = בּוֹשׁ); then a sprinkling basin, Ex. 24:6; and generally a basin, Is. 22:24; here, a mixing basin, in which wine was mingled with a proportion of water to render it palatable (ἅμαρτηρ, from κεραυνόν, temperare).—In this sense this passage is interpreted allegorically, Sanhedrin 14b, 37a, and elsewhere (vid., Aruch under מַסַּה). מַסַּה is not spiced wine, which is otherwise designated (Song 8:2), but, as Hitzig rightly explains, mixed wine, i.e., mixed with water or snow (vid., under Isa. 5:22). מָסַּה is not borrowed from the Greek μυγαγαν (Grätz), but is a word native to all the three chief Semitic dialects,—the weaker form of מָצַר, which may have the meaning of “to pour in;” but not merely “to pour in,” but, at that same time, “to mix” (vid., under Isa. 5:22; Prov. 9:2). מָסַּה, with מַסַּ, represents the circular form (from מָסַּ = מָסַ, corresponding to the navel ring; Kimchi thinks that the moon must be understood (cf. מַסַּ, lunula): a moon-like round basin; according to which the Venet., also in Gr., choosing an excellent name for the moon, translates: ἡμισένθρον τής ἑκάτης. But “moon-basin” would be an insufficient expression for it; Ewald supposes that it is the name of a flower, without, however, establishing this opinion. The “basin of roundness” is the centre of the body a little depressed; and that which the clause, “may not mixed wine be lacking,” expresses, as their wish for her, is soundness of health, for which no more appropriate and delicate figure can be given than hot wine tempered with fresh water.

The comparison in 3b is the same as that of R. Johanan’s of beauty, Mezîa 84a: “He who would
gain an idea of beauty should take a silver cup, fill it with pomegranate flowers, and encircle its rim with a garland of roses.”

to the present day, winnowed and sifted corn is piled up in great heaps of symmetrical half-spherical form, which are then frequently stuck over with things that move in the wind, for the purpose of protecting them against birds. “The appearance of such heaps of wheat,” says Wetstein (Isa. p. 710), “which one may see in long parallel rows on the thrashing-floors of a village, is very pleasing to a peasant; and the comparison of the Song, 7:3, every Arabian will regard as beautiful.”

Such a corn-heap is to the present day called ṣubbah, while 'aramah is a heap of thrashed corn that has not yet been winnowed; here, with ʿarēmāh, is to be connected the idea of a ṣubbah, i.e., of a heap of wheat not only thrashed and winnowed, but also sifted (riddled). ḫaṭ, enclosed, fenced about (whence the post-bibl. ḥaṭ, a fence), is a part. pass. such as ṣeḏār, scattered (vid., under Ps. 92:12). The comparison refers to the beautiful appearance of the roundness, but, at the same time, also the flesh-colour shining through the dress; for fancy sees more than the eyes, and concludes regarding that which is veiled from that which is visible. A wheat-colour was, according to the Moslem Sunna, the tint of the first created man. Wheat-yellow and lily-white is a subdued white, and denotes at once purity and health; by ṣeḏār [wheat] one thinks of ṣeḏār—heaped up wheat develops a remarkable heat, a fact for which Biesenthal refers to Plutarch’s Quaest. In accordance with the progress of the description, the breasts are now spoken of:

Song 7:4. 4:5 is repeated, but with the omission of the attribute, “feeding among lilies,” since lilies have already been applied to another figure. Instead of ṣeḏār there, we have here ʿarēmāh (taōme), the former after the ground-form tiʿām, the latter after the ground-form toʾm (cf. יִנָּה, Neh. 8:29, from יָנָה).

5 a Thy neck like an ivory tower.

Song 7:5. The article in ב may be that designating species (vid., under 1:11); but, as at 7:5 and 4:4, it appears to be also here a definite tower which the comparison has in view: one covered externally with ivory tablets, a tower well known to all in and around Jerusalem, and visible far and wide, especially when the sun shone on it; had it been otherwise, as in the case of the comparison following, the locality would have been more definitely mentioned. So slender, so dazzlingly white, is imposing, and so captivating to the eye did Shulamith’s neck appear. These and the following figures would be open to the objection of being without any occasion, and monstrous, if they referred to an ordinary beauty; but they refer to Solomon’s spouse, they apply to a queen, and therefore are derived from that which is most splendid in the kingdom over which, along with him, she rules; and in this they have the justification of their grandeur.

5 b a Thine eyes pools in Heshbon,

At the gate of the populous (city).

Heshbon, formerly belonging to the Amorites, but at this time to the kingdom of Solomon, lay about 5 1/2 hours to the east of the northern point of the Dead Sea, on an extensive, undulating, fruitful, high table-land, with a far-reaching prospect. Below the town, now existing only in heaps of ruins, a brook, which here takes it rise, flows westward, and streams toward the Ghôr as the Nahr Hésbân. It joins the Jordan not far above its entrance into the Dead Sea. The situation of the town was richly watered. There still exists a huge reservoir of excellent masonry in the valley, about half a mile from the foot of the hill on which the town stood. The comparison here supposes two such pools, but which are not necessarily together, though both are before the gate, i.e., near by, outside the town. Since שֵׁשֶׁת, except at Isa.

14:31, is fem., הבדרים, in the sense of לֶבֶדֶה בֶּדֶרְבָּם, Lam. 1:1 (cf. for the non-determin. of the adj., Ezek. 21:25), is to be referred to the town, not to the gate (Hitz.); Blau’s conjectural reading.
bath-‘akrabbin, does not recommend itself, because the craggy heights of the “ascent of Akrabbin” (Num. 34:4; Josh. 15:3), which obliquely cross the Ghôr to the south of the Dead Sea, and from remote times formed the southern boundary of the kingdom of the Amorites (Judg. 1:36), were too far off, and too seldom visited, to give its name to a gate of Heshbon. But generally the crowds of men at the gate and the topography of the gate are here nothing to the purpose; the splendour of the town, however, is for the figure of the famed cisterns like a golden border. בְׁרֵכָה (from כְּבָר, to spread out, vid., Genesis, p. 98; Fleischer in Levy, I 420b) denotes a skilfully built round or square pool. The comparison of the eyes to a pool means, as Wetstein remarks, “either thus glistening like a water-mirror, or thus lovely in appearance, for the Arabian knows no greater pleasure than to look upon clear, gently rippling water.” Both are perhaps to be taken together; the mirroring glance of the moist eyes (cf. Ovid, De Arte Am. ii. 722: “Adspicies obulos tremulo fulgore micantes, Ut sol a liquida saepe refulget aqua”), and the spell of the charm holding fast the gaze of the beholder.

5b β Thy nose like the tower of Lebanon,
Which looks towards Damascus.

This comparison also places us in the midst of the architectural and artistic splendours of the Solomonic reign. A definite town is here meant; the art. determines it, and the part. following appositionally without the art., with the expression “towards Damascus” defining it more nearly (vid., under 3:6), describes it. הבִּלְבַּנְיָן designates here “the whole Alpine range of mountains in the north of the land of Israel” (Furrer); for a tower which looks in the direction of Damascus (пис, accus., as הַלְּבָנון, 1 Sam. 22:4) is to be thought of as standing on one of the eastern spurs of Hermon, or on the top of Amana (Song 4:8), whence the Amana (Barada) takes its rise, whether as a watch-tower (2 Sam. 8:6), or only as a look-out from which might be enjoyed the paradisaical prospect. The nose gives to the face especially its physiognomical expression, and conditions its beauty. Its comparison to a tower on a lofty height is occasioned by the fact that Shulamith’s nose, without being blunt or flat, formed a straight line from the brow downward, without bending to the right or left (Hitzig), a mark of symmetrical beauty combined with awe-inspiring dignity. After the praise of the nose it was natural to think of Carmel; Carmel is a promontory, and as such is called anf el-jebel (“nose of the mountain-range”).

6a α Thy head upon thee as Carmel.

Song 7:6. We say that the head is “on the man” (2 Kings 6:31; Judith 14:18), for we think of a man ideally as the central unity of the members forming the external appearance of his body. Shulamith’s head ruled her form, surpassing all in beauty and majesty, as Carmel with its noble and pleasing appearance ruled the land and sea at its feet. From the summit of Carmel, clothed with trees) Amos 9:3; 1 Kings 18:42), a transition is made to the hair on the head, which the Moslem poets are fond of comparing to long leaves, as vine leaves and palm branches; as, on the other hand, the thick leafy wood is called (vid., under Isa. 7:20) comata silva (cf. Oudendorp’s Apuleii Metam. p. 744). Grätz, proceeding on the supposition of the existence of Persian words in the Song, regards דָּרִיסֶל as the name of a colour; but (1) crimson is designated in the Heb.-Pers. not כַּרְּמֶל, but כַּרְּמִיל (vid., under Isa. 1:18; Prov. 31:21); (2) if the hair of the head (if might be directly understood of this) may indeed be compared to the glistening of purple, not, however, to the listening of carmese or scarlet, then red and not black hair must be meant. But it is not the locks of hair, but the hair in locks that is meant. From this the eulogium finally passes to the hair of the head itself.

6a β The flowing hair of thy head like purple—
A king fettered by locks.

Hitzig supposes that הַכַּרְּמִיל reminded the poet of כַּרְּמַל (carmese), and that thus he hit upon אֲרַגָּמָן (carmese), which does not recommend itself, because the craggy heights of the “ascent of Akrabbin” (Num. 34:4; Josh. 15:3), which obliquely cross the Ghôr to the south of the Dead Sea, and from remote times formed the southern boundary of the kingdom of the Amorites (Judg. 1:36), were too far off, and too seldom visited, to give its name to a gate of Heshbon. But generally the crowds of men at the gate and the topography of the gate are here nothing to the purpose; the splendour of the town, however, is for the figure of the famed cisterns like a golden border. בְׁרֵכָה (from כְּבָר, to spread out, vid., Genesis, p. 98; Fleischer in Levy, I 420b) denotes a skilfully built round or square pool. The comparison of the eyes to a pool means, as Wetstein remarks, “either thus glistening like a water-mirror, or thus lovely in appearance, for the Arabian knows no greater pleasure than to look upon clear, gently rippling water.” Both are perhaps to be taken together; the mirroring glance of the moist eyes (cf. Ovid, De Arte Am. ii. 722: “Adspicies obulos tremulo fulgore micantes, Ut sol a liquida saepe refulget aqua”), and the spell of the charm holding fast the gaze of the beholder.

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The locks of one beloved are frequently called in erotic poetry “the fetters” by which the lover is held fast, for “love wove her net in alluring ringlets” (Deshâmi in Joseph and Zuleika). Goethe in his Westöst. Divan presents as a bold yet moderate example: “There are more than fifty hooks in each lock of thy hair;” and, on the other hand, one offensively extravagant, when it is said of a Sultan: “In the bonds of thy locks lies fastened the neck of the enemy.” In Arabic frequently one enslaved by love: asîruhu is equivalent to her lover. The mention of the king now leads from the imagery of a dance to the scene which follows, where we again hear the king’s voice. The scene and situation are now manifestly changed. We are transferred from the garden to the palace, where the two, without the presence of any spectators, carry on the following dialogue.

**Second Scene of the Fifth Act, 7:7-8:4**

It is the fundamental thought forming the motive and aim of the Song which now expresses itself in the words of Solomon. 7 How beautiful art thou, and how charming, O love, among delights!

**Song 7:7.** It is a truth of all-embracing application which is here expressed. There is nothing more admirable than love, i.e., the uniting or mingling together of two lives, the one of which gives itself to the other, and so finds the complement of itself; nor than this self-devotion, which is at the same time self-enrichment. All this is true of earthly love, of which Walther v. d. Vogelweide says: “minne ist sweier herzen wünne” [love is the joy of two hearts], and it is true also of heavenly love; the former surpasses all earthly delights (also such as are purely sensuous, Eccles. 2:8), and the latter is, as the apostle expresses himself in his spiritual “Song of Songs,” 1 Cor. 13:13, in relation to faith and hope, “greater than these,” greater than both of them, for it is their sacred, eternal aim. In it, it is indicated that the idea, and in that the eudaemonistic feature of the human soul attains its satisfaction in love. The LXX, obliterating this so true and beautiful promotion of love above all other joys, translate ἐν ταῖς κραφαῖς σοῦ (in the enjoyment which thou impartest). The Syr., Jerome, and others also rob the Song of this its point of light and of elevation, by reading Ὀ αἰμβόλος [O beloved!] instead of Ὀ αἰμβόλος. The words then declare (yet...
contrary to the spirit of the Hebrew language, which knows neither אֲהוּבָה nor אֲהוּבָתִי as vocat.) what we already read at 4:10; while, according to the traditional form of the text, they are the prelude of the love-song, to love as such, which is continued in 8:6f.

Song 7:8–10a a. When Solomon now looks on the wife of his youth, she stands before him like a palm tree with its splendid leaf-branches, which the Arabians call ʾucht insân (the sisters of men); and like a vine which climbs up on the wall of the house, and therefore is an emblem of the housewife, Ps. 128:3.

8 Thy stature is like the palm tree; And thy breasts clusters.
9 I thought: I will climb the palm, Grasp its branches; And thy breasts shall be to me As clusters of the vine, And the breath of thy nose like apples, 10a. And thy palate like the best wine.

Shulamith stands before him. As he surveys her from head to foot, he finds her stature like the stature of a slender, tall date-palm, and her breasts like the clusters of sweet fruit, into which, in due season its blossoms are ripened. That ךְָנָמַת (thy stature) is not thought of as height apart from the person, but as along with the person (cf. Ezek. 13:18), scarcely needs to be remarked. The palm derives its name, tāmār, from its slender stem rising upwards (vid., under Isa. 17:9; 61:6). This name is specially given to the Phoenix dactylifera, which is indigenous from Egypt to India, and which is principally cultivated (vid., under Gen. 14:7), the female flowers of which, set in panicles, develope into large clusters of juicy sweet fruit. These dark-brown or golden-yellow clusters, which crown the summit of the stem and impart a wonderful beauty to the appearance of the palm, especially when seen in the evening twilight, are here called אַשְׁכֹלות (connecting form at Deut. 32:32), as by the Arabians ‘ithkal, plur. ‘ithakyl (botri dactyorum). The perf. אָמַרְתִּי signifies aequata est = aequa est; for אֵשֶּת רָע Prov. 6:24, a woman of a bad kind, i.e., a bad woman; the neut. thought of as adjct. is means, to make or to become plain, smooth, even. The perf. אֵשֶת רָע, on the other hand, will be meant retrospectively. As an expression of that which he just now purposed to do, it would be useless; and thus to notify with emphasis anything beforehand is unnatural and contrary to good taste and custom. But looking back, he can say that in view of this august attractive beauty the one thought filled him, to secure possession of her and of the enjoyment which she promised; as one climbs (עָלָה with ב, as Ps. 24:3) a palm tree and seizes (והָב, fut. והָב, and אֶאֱחֹז with ב, as at Job 23:11) its branches (סַנִּסִים, so called, as it appears, after the feather-like pointed leaves proceeding from the mid-rib on both sides), in order to break off the fulness of the sweet fruit under its leaves. As the cypress (sarwat), so also the palm is with the Moslem poets the figure of a loved one, and with the mystics, of God; and accordingly the idea of possession is here particularly intended. וְׁיִהְׁיוּ־נָא denotes what he then thought and aimed at. Instead of בַתָּמָר, 9a, the punctuation בַתָּמָר is undoubtedly to be preferred. The figure of the palm tree terminates with the words, "will grasp its branches." It was adequate in relation to stature, but less so in relation to the breasts; for dates are of a long oval form, and have a stony kernel. Therefore the figure departs from the date clusters to that of grape clusters, which are more appropriate, as they swell and become round and elastic the more they ripen. The breath of the nose, which is called אֶף, from breathing hard, is that of the air breathed, going in and out through it; for, as a rule, a man breathes through his nostrils with closed mouth. Apples present themselves the more naturally for comparison, that the apple has the name תַּפוּחַ (from נָפַח, after the form תַּמְכוּף), from the fragrance which it exhales.

יֵין הַטוב is wine of the good kind, i.e., the best, as אֵשֶת רָע, Prov. 6:24, a woman of a bad kind, i.e., a bad woman; the neut. thought of as adjct.
both times the gen. of the attribute, as at Prov. 24:25 it is the gen. of the *substratum.* The punctuation (*כַּיַּיִן הַטוב*) is also possible; it gives, however, the common instead of the delicate poetical expression. By the comparison one may think of the expressions, *jungere salivas oris* (Lucret.) and *oscula per longas jungere pressa moras* (Ovid). But if we have rightly understood 4:11; 5:16, the palate is mentioned much rather with reference to the words of love which she whispers in his ears when embracing her. Only thus is the further continuance of the comparison to be explained, and that it is Shulamith herself who continues it.

**Song 7:10a** 

The dramatic structure of the Song becomes here more strongly manifest than elsewhere before. Shulamith interrupts the king, and continues his words as if echoing them, but again breaks off.

10aβ Which goes down for my beloved smoothly,

Which makes the lips of sleepers move.

The LXX had here *לדודי* in the text. It might notwithstanding be a spurious reading. Hitzig suggests that it is erroneously repeated, as if from v. 11. Ewald also (*Hohesl.* p. 137) did that before,—Heiligstedt, as usual, following him. But, as Ewald afterwards objected, the line would then be “too short, and not corresponding to that which follows.” But how shall now connect itself with Solomon’s words? Ginsburg explains: “Her voice is not merely compared to wine, because it is sweet to everybody, but to such wine as would be sweet to a friend, and on that account is more valuable and pleasant.” But that furnishes a thought digressing εἰς ἅλα ἀγνός; and besides, Ewald rightly remarks that Shulamith always uses the word *לדַרְדָר* of her beloved, and that the king never uses it in a similar sense. He contends, however, against the idea that Shulamith here interrupts Solomon; for he replies to me (*Jahrb.* IV 75): “Such interruptions we certainly very frequently find in our ill-formed and dislocated plays; in the Song, however, not a solitary example of this is found, and one ought to hesitate in imagining such a thing.” He prefers the reading *לְׁדוֹדִים* [beloved ones], although possibly *לדודי,* with י, abbreviated after the popular style of speech from *יְשֵנִים,* may be the same word. But is this *Idodim* not a useless addition? Is excellent wine good to the taste of friends merely; and does it linger longer in the palate of those not beloved than of those loving? And is the circumstance that Shulamith interrupts the king, and carried forward his words, not that which frequently also occurs in the Greek drama, as e.g., Eurip. *Phoenissae,* v. 608? The text as it stands before us requires an interchange of the speakers, and nothing prevents the supposition of such an interchange. In this idea Hengstenberg for once agrees with us. The *Lamed* in *Idodi* is meant in the same sense as when the bride drinks to the bridegroom, using the expression *Idodi.* The *Lamed* in *לְׁמשָרִים* is that of the defining norm, as the *Beth* in *בָּעָר,* Prov. 23:31, is that of the accompanying circumstance: that which tastes badly sticks in the palate, but that which tastes pleasantly glides down directly and smoothly. But what dies the phrase *דובֵב שִׁelfast וגו׳* mean? The LXX translate by *ἵερες χείλεσί υ ὀσός,* “accommodating itself (Sym. ποστεφθέμενος) to my lips and teeth.” Similarly Jerome (omitting at least the false *υ,* which to my friend goes smoothly goes, and speaks of the previous year;” a rendering which supposes *יְשֵנִים* (as also the Venet.) instead of *יְשֵנִים* (good wine which, as it were, tells of former years), and, besides, disregards *שפתי.* The translation: “which comes at unawares upon the lips of the sleepers,” accords with the language (Heiligst., Hitz.). But that gives no meaning, as if one understood by *לְׁמשָרִים* (as also the Venet.), instead of *לְׁמשָרִים* (good wine which, as it were, tells of former years), and, besides, disregards *שפתי.* The translation: “which comes at unawares upon the lips of the sleepers,” accords with the language (Heiligst., Hitz.). But that gives no meaning, as if one understood by *לְׁמשָרִים* (as also the Venet.), instead of *לְׁמשָרִים* (good wine which, as it were, tells of former years), and, besides, disregards *שפתי.* The translation: “which comes at unawares upon the lips of the sleepers,” accords with the language (Heiligst., Hitz.). But that gives no meaning, as if one understood by *לְׁמשָרִים* (as also the Venet.), instead of *לְׁמשָרִים* (good wine which, as it were, tells of former years), and, besides, disregards *שפתי.*
have been קָבָטִים. Since, besides, such a thing is known as sleeping through drink or speaking in sleep, but not of drinking in sleep, our earlier translation approves itself: which causes the lips of sleepers to speak. This interpretation is also supported by a proverb in the Talm. 

Jebamoth 97 a, Jer. Moëd Katan, iii. 7, etc., which, with reference to the passage under review, says that if any one in this world adduces the saying of a righteous man in his name (דרשות), which the Syr. here translates, qui commovet loquuntur, and, accordingly, that this passage before us means loqui faciens. It rather means (vid., Aruch), bullire, stillare, manare (cogn., ἐπικρίνειν), since, as that proverb signifies, the deceased experiences an after-taste of his saying, and this experience expresses itself in the smack of the lips; and קְדָבָב, whether it be part. Kal or Po. = קְדוֹבָב, thus: brought into the condition of the overflowing the after-experience of drink that has been partaken of, and which returns again, as it were, ruminando. The meaning "to speak" is, in spite of Parchon and Kimchi (whom the Venet., with its φθεγγομένου follows), foreign to the verb; for הדב also means, not discourse, but sneaking, and particularly sneaking calumny, and, generally, fama repens. The calumniator is called in Arab. dabûb, as in Heb. דָבַב.

We now leave it undecided whether in דֵבֵב, of this passage before us, that special idea connected with it in the Gemara is contained; but the roots דֵבֵב and ב are certainly cogn. they have the fundamental idea of a soft, noiseless movement generally, and modify this according as they are referred to that which is solid or fluid. Consequently דֵבֵב, as it means in lente incedere (whence the bear has the name דֵב), is also capable of being interpreted leniter se movere, and trans. leniter movere, according to which the Syr. here translates, quod commovet labia mea et dentes meos (this absurd bringing in of the teeth is from the LXX and Aq.), and the Targ. allegorizes, and whatever also in general is the meaning of the Gemara as far as it exchanges דרשות for דובבות (vid., Levy under רְשָׁע). Besides, the translations qui commovet and qui loqui facit fall together according to the sense. For when it is said of generous wine, that it makes the lips of sleepers move, a movement is meant expressing itself in the sleeper speaking. But generous wine is a figure of the love-responses of the beloved, sipped in, as it were, with pleasing satisfaction, which hover still around the sleepers in delightful dreams, and fill them with hallucinations.

Song 7:11. It is impossible that לָדוּדִי in v. 10 has any other reference than it has in v. 11, where it is without doubt Shulamith who speaks.

11 I am my beloved's

And to me goeth forth his desire. After the words "I am my beloved's," we miss the "and my beloved is mine" of 6:3, cf. 2:16, which perhaps had dropped out. The second line here refers back to Gen. 3:16, for here, as there, מְלֹא, to fill, as it were, with pleasing satisfaction, which the love-exchange expresses itself in the sleeper speaking. But generous wine is a figure of the love-responses of the beloved, sipped in, as it were, with pleasing satisfaction, which hover still around the sleepers in delightful dreams, and fill them with hallucinations. It is impossible that לָדוּדִי in v. 10 has any other reference than it has in v. 11, where it is without doubt Shulamith who speaks.

12 Up, my lover, we will go into the country, Lodge in the villages.
Song 7:12. Hitzig here begins a new scene, to which he gives the superscription: “Shulamith making haste to return home with her lover.” The advocate of the shepherd-hypothesis thinks that the faithful Shulamith, after hearing Solomon’s panegyric, shakes her head and says: “I am my beloved’s.” To him she calls, “Come, my beloved;” for, as Ewald seeks to make this conceivable: the golden confidence of her near triumph lifts her in spirit forthwith above all that is present and all that is actual; only to him may she speak; and as if she were half here and half already there, in the midst of her rural home along with him, she says, “Let us go out into the fields,” etc. In fact, there is nothing more incredible than this Shulamitess, whose dialogue with Solomon consists of Solomon’s addresses, and of answers which are directed, not to Solomon, but in a monologue to her shepherd; and nothing more cowardly and more shadowy than this lover, who goes about in the moonlight seeking his beloved shepherdess whom he has lost, glancing here and there through the lattices of the windows and again disappearing. How much more justifiable is the drama of the Song by the French Jesuit C. F. Menestrier (born in Sion 1631, died 1705), who, in his two little works on the opera and the ballet, speaks of Solomon as the creator of the opera, and regards the Song as a shepherd-play, in which his love-relation to the daughter of the king of Egypt is set forth under the allegorical figures of the love of a shepherd and a shepherdess! For Shulamith is thought of as a רֹעָה [shepherdess], 1:8, and she thinks of Solomon as a רֹעֶה [shepherd]. She remains so in her inclination even after her elevation to the rank of a queen. The solitude and glory of external nature are dearer to her than the bustle and splendour of the city and the court. Hence her pressing out of the city to the country. The כפר (here and at 1 Chron. 27:25) is plur. of the unused form כפר ( constr. כפר, Josh. 18:24) or כפר, Arab. kafar (cf. the Syr. dimin. kafrūno, a little town), instead of which it is once pointed כפר, 1 Sam. 6:18, of that name of a district of level country with which a multitude of later Palest. names of places, such as כפר גרה, are connected. Ewald, indeed, understands kphārim as at 4:13: we will lodge among the fragrant Alhenna bushes. But yet cannot be equivalent to לִים כפרים, and since לִין (probably changed from לים, הָכפרים) 13a, stand together, we must suppose that they wished to find a bed in the henna bushes; which, if it were conceivable, would be too gipsy-like, even for a pair of lovers of the rank of shepherds (vid., Job 30:7). No. Shulamith’s words express a wish for a journey into the country: they will there be in freedom, and at night find shelter (בכף׳, as 1 Chron. 27:25 and Neh. 6:2, where also the plur. is similarly used), now in this and now in that country place. Spoken to the supposed shepherd, that would be comical, for a shepherd does not wander from village to village; and that, returning to their home, they wished to turn aside into villages and spend the night there, cannot at all be the meaning. But spoken of a shepherdess, or rather a vine-dresser, who has been raised to the rank of queen, it accords with her relation to Solomon,—they are married,—as well as with the inexpressible impulse of her heart after her earlier homely country-life. The former vine-dresser, the child of the Galilean hills, the lily of the valley, speaks in the verses following.

13 In the morning we will start for the vineyards,

See whether the vine is in bloom,
Whether the vine-blossoms have opened,
The pomegranates budded—
There will I give thee my love.

14 The mandrakes breathe a pleasant odour,
And over our doors are all kinds of excellent fruits,
New, also old,
Which, my beloved, I have kept for thee.
**SONG OF SOLOMON**  
By C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch  
a Grace Notes study

**Song 7:13, 14.** As the rising up early follows the tarrying over night, the description of that which is longed for moves forward. As דֹּדַי is denom. of לְכִ׳, and properly signifies only to shoulder, i.e., to rise, make oneself ready, when early going forth needs to be designated it has generally בָּךְרָּּא (cf. Josh. 6:15) along with it; yet this word may also be wanting, 1 Sam. 9:26; 17:16. נַשְׁךִ׳ לַכְּרָ׳, an abbreviation of the expression which is also found in hist. prose, Gen. 19:27; cf. 2 Kings 19:9. They wished in the morning, when the life of nature can best be observed, and its growth and progress and striving upwards best contemplated, to see whether the vine had opened, i.e., unfolded (thus, 6:11), whether the vine-blossom (vid., at 2:13) had expanded (LXX ἤθησεν ὁ υπὸ σὺς), whether the pomegranate had its flowers or flower-buds (مناسب, as at 6:11); פִתֵּחַ is here, as at Isa. 48:8; 60:11, used as internally transitive: to accomplish or to undergo the opening, as also (Arab.) fattaḥ is used of the blooming of flowers, for (Arab.) tafttaḥ (to unfold). The vineyards, inasmuch as she does not say כְּרָמֵנִים, are not alone those of her family, but generally those of her home, but of her home; for these are the object of her desire, which in this pleasant journey with her beloved she at once in imagination reaches, flying, as it were, over the intermediate space. There, in undisturbed quietness, and in a lovely region consecrating love, will she give herself to him in the entire fulness of her love. By קַרְמֵנִים she means the evidences of her love (vid., under 4:10; 1:2), which she will there grant to him as thankful responses to his own. Thus she speaks in the spring-time, in the month Ijjar, corresponding to our Wonnemond (pleasure-month, May), and seeks to give emphasis to her promise by this, that she directs him to the fragrant "mandragoras," and to the precious fruits of all kinds which she has kept for him on the shelf in her native home.

(after the form קַרְמֵנִים, love’s flower, is the *mandragora officinalis*, L., with whitish green flowers and yellow apples of the size of nutmegs, belonging to the Solanaceae; its fruits and roots are used as an aphrodisiac, therefore this plant was called by the Arabs *abd al-salām*, the servant of love, *postillon d’amour*; the son of Leah found such mandrakes (LXX Gen. 30:14, μῆλα μανδραγόριν) at the time of the vintage, which falls in the month of Ijjar; they have a strong but pleasant odour. In Jerusalem mandrakes are rare; but so much the more abundantly are they found growing wild in Galilee, whither Shulamith is transported in spirit. Regarding the *fattaḥ* (from פּוֹטֵחַ, occurring in the sing. exclusively in the blessing of Moses, Deut. 33), which in the Old Testament is peculiar to the Song, vid., 4:13, 16. From “over our doors,” down to “I have kept for thee,” is, according to the LXX, Syr., Jerome, and others, one sentence, which in itself is not inadmissible; for the object can precede its verb, 3:3b, and can stand as the subject between the place mentioned and the verb, Isa. 32:13a, also as the object, 2 Chron. 31:6, which, as in the passage before us, may be punctuated with *Atnach* for the sake of emphasis; in the bibl. Chald. this inverted sequence of the words is natural, e.g., Dan. 2:17b. But such a long-winded sentence is at least not in the style of the Song, and one does not rightly see why just “over our doors” has the first place in it. I therefore formerly translated it as did Luther, dividing it into parts: “and over our doors are all kinds of precious fruits; I have,” etc. But with this departure from the traditional division of the verse nothing is gained; for the "keeping" (laying up) refers naturally to the fruits of the preceding year, and in the first instance can by no means refer to fruits of this year, especially as Shulamith, according to the structure of the poem, has not visited her parental home since her home-bringing in marriage, and now for the first time, in the early summer, between the barley harvest and the wheat harvest, is carried away thither in her longing. Therefore the expression, "my beloved, I have kept for thee," is to be taken by itself, but not as an independent sentence (Böttch.), but is to be
rendered, with Ewald, as a relative clause; and this, with Hitz., is to be referred to יְׁשָנִים (old). Col refers to the many sorts of precious fruits which, after the time of their ingathering, are divided into “new and old” (Matt. 13:52). The plur. “our doors,” which as amplif. poet. would not be appropriate here, supposes several entrances into her parents’ home; and since “I have kept” refers to a particular preserving of choice fruits, יָד does not (Hitzig) refer to a floor, such as the floor above the family dwelling or above the barn, but to the shelf above the inner doors, a board placed over them, on which certain things are wont to be laid past for some particular object. She speaks to the king like a child; for although highly elevated, she yet remains, without self-elation, a child.

Song of Solomon 8

Song 8:1. If Solomon now complies with her request, yields to her invitation, then she will again see her parental home, where, in the days of her first love, she laid up for him that which was most precious, that she might thereby give him joy. Since she thus places herself with her whole soul back again in her home and amid its associations, the wish expressed in these words that follow rises up within her in the childlike purity of her love:

1 O that thou wert like a brother to me,
   Who sucked my mother’s breasts!
   If I found thee without, I would kiss thee;
   They also could not despise me.
2 I would lead thee, bring thee into my mother’s house;
   Thou wouldest instruct me—
   I would give thee to drink spiced wine,
   The must of my pomegranates.

Solomon is not her brother, who, with her, hung upon the same mother’s breast; but she wishes, carried away in her dream into the reality of that she wished for, that she had him as her brother, or rather, since she says, not יָד, but יָדָה (with יָד, which here has not, as at Ps. 35:14, the meaning of tanquam, but of instar, as at Job 24:14), that she had in him what a brother is to a sister. In that case, if she found him without, she would kiss him (hypoth. fut. in the protasis, and fut. without Vav in the apodosis, as at Job 20:24; Hos. 8:12; Ps. 139:18)—she could do this without putting any restraint on herself for the sake of propriety (cf. the kiss of the wanton harlot, Prov. 7:13), and also (יָד) without needing to fear that they who saw it would treat it scornfully (יְזָז, as in the reminiscence, Prov. 6:30). The close union which lies in the sisterly relationship thus appeared to her to be higher than the near connection established by the marriage relationship, and her childlike feeling deceived her not: the sisterly relationship is certainly purer, firmer, more enduring than that of marriage, so far as this does not deepen itself into an equality with the sisterly, and attain to friendship, yea, brotherhood (Prov. 17:17), within. That Shulamith thus feels herself happy in the thought that Solomon was to her as a brother, shows, in a characteristic manner, that “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life,” were foreign to her. If he were her brother, she would take him by the hand, and bring him into her mother’s house, and he would then, under the eye of their common mother, become her teacher, and she would become his scholar. The LXX adds, after the words “into my mother’s house,” the phrase, καὶ εἰς τὴν σύλλαμβον με, cf. 3:4. In the same manner also the Syr., which has not read the words διδάξεις με following, which are found in some Codd. of the LXX. Regarding the word tlammđēne (thou wouldest instruct me) as incongruous, Hitzig asks: What should he then teach her? He refers it to her mother: “who would teach me,” namely, from her own earlier experience, how I might do everything rightly for him. “Were the meaning,” he adds, “he should do it, then also it is she who ought to be represented as led home by him into his house, the bride by the bridegroom.” But, correctly, Jerome, the Venet., and Luther: “Thou wouldest (shouldest) instruct me;” also the Targ.: “I
would conduct thee, O King Messiah, and bring
Thee into the house of my sanctuary; and Thou
wouldest teach me (םָּתִי יָתִי) to fear God and
to walk in His ways.” Not her mother, but
Solomon, is in possession of the wisdom which
she covets; and if he were her brother, as she
wishes, then she would constrain him to devote
himself to her as her teacher. The view,
favoured by Leo Hebraeus (Dialog. de amore, c.
III), John Pordage (Metaphysik, II 617 ff.), and
Rosenmüller, and which commends itself, after
the analogy of the Gîtagovinda, Boethius, and
Dante, and appear also to show itself in the
that Shulamith is wisdom personified (cf. also 8:2
with Prov. 9:2, and 8:3; 2:6 with Prov. 4:8),
shatters itself against this 토אלמי; the fact is
rather the reverse: Solomon is wisdom in
person, and Shulamith is the wisdom
loving soul,—for Shulamith wishes to participate
in Solomon’s wisdom. What a deep view the “Thou
wouldest teach me” affords into Shulamith’s
heart! She knew how much she yet came short
of being to him all that a wife should be. But in
Jerusalem the bustle of court life and the
burden of his regal duties did not permit him to
devote himself to her; but in her mother’s
house, if he were once there, he would instruct
her, and she would requite him with her spiced
wine
and with the juice of the pomegranates.
ויַיִּין הָהִרְקַח,
vimum conditura, is appos. = genitiv. וּני
hiroth, vinum condituarum (ἀρωματίζεται in
 Dioscorides and Pliny), like מַיִם לַחַץ
מַיִּים לַחַץ 1 Kings 22:27, etc., vid., Philippi’s Stat.
Const. p. 86. כָּשְׁקַח carries forward כָּשְׁקַח in a
beautiful play upon words. כָּשְׁקַח designates the
juice as pressed out: the Chald. כָּשְׁקַח corresponds
to the Heb. דְּרַקְרַק, used of treading the grapes. It is
unnecessary to render כָּשְׁקַח as apoc. plur., like
כָּשְׁקַח Ps. 45:9 (Ewald, § 177a); rimmoni is the
name she gives to the pomegranate trees
belonging to her,—for it is true that this word,
rimon, can be used in a collective sense (Deut.
8:8); but the connection with the possessive

Song 8:3, 4. Resigning herself now dreamily to
the idea that Solomon is her brother, whom she
may freely and openly kiss, and her teacher
besides, with whom she may sit in confidential
intercourse under her mother’s eye, she feels
herself as if closely embraced by him, and calls
from a distance to the daughters of Jerusalem
not to disturb this her happy enjoyment:
3 His left hand is under my head,
And his right doth embrace me:
4 I adjure you, ye daughters of Jerusalem,
That ye awake not and disturb not love
Till she please!
Instead of וּתְוַאֵל יָתי, “underneath,” there is here, as
usual, וּתְוַאֵל וַהֲנָה (cf. 5b). Instead of במָה...בָּהֲנָה in the
adjuration, there is here the equivalent במָה ...
榜样; the interrogative榜样, which in the Arab. מה
becomes negat., appears here, as at Job 31:1, on
the way toward this change of meaning. The per
capreas vel per cervas agri is wanting, perhaps
because the natural side of love is here broken,
and the ἐρως strives up into ἀγάπη. The
daughters of Jerusalem must not break in upon
this holy love-festival, but leave it to its own
course.

The Ratification of the Covenant of Love in
Shulamith’s Native Home—Ch. 8:5–14

First Scene of the Sixth Act, 8:5–7

Shulamith’s longing wish attains its satisfaction.
Arm in arm with Solomon, she comes forth and
walks with him on her native ground. Sunem
(Sulem), at the west end of Little Hermon
(‘Gebel ed-Duhî), lay something more than 1 1/2
hour to the north of Jezreel (Zera‘în), which also
lay at the foot of a mountain, viz., on a N.-W. spur of Gilboa. Between the two lay the valley of Jezreel in the "great plain," which was called, 2 Chron. 35:22, Zech. 12:11, “the valley of Megiddo” [Esdraelon], now Merj ibn ‘Amir—an extensive level plain, which, seen from the south Galilean hills in the springtime, appears "like a green sea encompassed by gently sloping banks." From this we will have to suppose that the loving pair from the town of Jezreel, the highest point of which afforded a wide, pleasant prospect, wandered on foot through the "valley of Jezreel," a beautiful, well-watered, fruitful valley, which is here called דשא, as being uncultivated pasture land. They bend their way toward the little village lying in the valley, from which the dark sloping sides of Little Hermon rise up suddenly. Here in this valley are the countrymen (populares) of those wanderers, as yet unrecognised from a distance, into whose mouth the poet puts these words:

5a Who is this coming up out of the wilderness,

Leaning on her beloved?

Song 8:5. The third Act, 3:6, began with a similar question to that with which the sixth here commences. The former closed the description of the growth of the love-relation, the latter closes that of the consummated love-relation. Instead of “out of the wilderness,” the LXX has “clothed in white” (λελευθερωμένη); the translator has gathered מיתוח from the illegible consonants of his MS before him. On the contrary, he translates מיתוח from the illegible consonants of his MS before him. On the contrary, he translates מיתוח correctly by ἐπιστηριζομένη (Symm. ἐπερεσιδομένη, Venet. κεκμηκῶν ἐπί, wearily supporting herself on ...), while Jerome renders it unsuitably by deliciis affluens, interchanging the word with יפתקש. But חיתון, common to the Heb. with the Arab. and Aethiop. signifies to support oneself, from רפ, sublevare (French, soulagier), Arab.rafaka, rafuka, to be helpful, serviceable, compliant, and irtafaka, to support oneself on the elbow, or (with the elbow) on a pillow (cf. rakik, fellow-traveller, rufka, a company of fellow-travellers, from the primary idea of mutually supporting or being helpful to each other); Aethiop. rafaka, to encamp for the purpose of taking food, ἄνακτισσαθαί (cf. John 13:23). That Shulamith leant on her beloved, arose not merely from her weariness, with the view of supplementing her own weakness from his fulness of strength, but also from the ardour of the love which gives to the happy and proud Solomon, raised above all fears, the feeling of his having her in absolute possession. The road brings the loving couple near to the apple tree over against Shulamith’s parental home, which had been the witness of the beginning of their love.

5b Under the apple tree I waked thy love:

There thy mother travailed with thee;

There travailed she that bare thee.

The words, “under the apple tree I waked thee,” might be regarded as those of Shulamith to Solomon: here, under this apple tree, where Solomon met with her, she won his first love; for the words cannot mean that she wakened him from sleep under the apple tree, since עור has nowhere the meaning of ה_minus and הMinus here given to it by Hitzig, but only that of “to stir, to stir up, to arouse;” and only when sleep or a sleepy condition is the subject, does it mean “to shake out of sleep, to rouse up” (vid., under 2:7). But it is impossible that “there” can be used by Shulamith even in the sense of the shepherd hypothesis; for the pair of lovers do not wander to the parental home of the lover, but of his beloved. We must then here altogether change the punctuation of the text, and throughout restore the fem. suffix forms as those originally used: נברך, חינה, אמא, וילדה (cf.褰, Isa. 47:10), in which we follow the example of the Syr. The allegorizing interpreters also meet only with trouble in regarding the words as those of Shulamith to Solomon. If הפתוח were an emblem of the Mount of Olives, which, being wonderfully divided, gives back Israel’s dead (Targ.), or an emblem of Sinai (Rashi), in both cases the words are more appropriately regarded as
spoken to Shulamith than by her. Aben-Ezra correctly reads them as the words of Shulamith to Solomon, for he thinks on prayers, which are like golden apples in silver bowls; Hahn, for he understands by the apple tree, Canaan, where with sorrow his people brought him forth as their king; Hengstenberg, rising up to a remote lying comparison, says, “the mother of the heavenly Solomon is at the same time the mother of Shulamith.” Hoelemann thinks on Sur. 19:32 f., according to which ‘Isa, Miriam’s son, was born under a palm tree; but he is not able to answer the question, What now is the meaning here of the apple tree as Solomon’s birthplace? If it were indeed to be interpreted allegorically, then by the apple tree we would rather understand the “tree of knowledge” of Paradise, of which Aquila, followed by Jerome, with his ἐκεῖ διεφόρων, appears to think,—a view which recently Godet approves of; there Shulamith, i.e., poor humanity, awakened the compassionate love of the heavenly Solomon, who then gave her, as a pledge of this love, the Protevangelium, and in the neighbourhood of this apple tree, i.e., on the ground and soil of humanity fallen, but yet destined to be saved, Shulamith’s mother, i.e., the pre-Christian O.T. church, brought forth the Saviour from itself, who in love raised Shulamith from the depths to regal honour. But the Song of Songs does not anywhere set before us the task of extracting from it by an allegorizing process such far fetched thoughts. If the masc. suff. is changed into the fem., we have a conversation perfectly corresponding to the situation. Solomon reminds Shulamith by that memorable apple tree of the time when he kindled within her the fire of first love;/audio עזר עזר signifies energy (Ps. 80:3), or passion (Prov. 10:12), put into a state of violent commotion; connected with the accus. of the person, it signifies, Zech. 9:13, excited in a warlike manner; here, placed in a state of pleasant excitement of love that has not yet attained its object. Of how many references to contrasted affections the reflex. התע׳ is capable, is seen from Job 17:8; 31:29; why not thus also?

With Solomon’s words are continued, but not in such a way as that what follows also took place under the apple tree. For Shulamith is not the child of Beduins, who in that case might even have been born under an apple tree. Among the Beduins, a maiden accidentally born at the watering-place (menhil), on the way (rahil), in the dew (tall) or snow (thelg), is called from that circumstance Munêhil, Ruhêla, Talla, or Thelga. The birthplace of her love is not also the birthplace of her life. As הַתפוחħַתפוח the masc. suff. is changed into the fem., we have a conversation perfectly corresponding to the situation. Solomon reminds Shulamith by that memorable apple tree of the time when he kindled within her the fire of first love;/audio עזר עזר elsewhere signifies energy (Ps. 80:3), or passion (Prov. 10:12), put into a state of violent commotion; connected with the accus. of the person, it signifies, Zech. 9:13, excited in a warlike manner; here, placed in a state of pleasant excitement of love that has not yet attained its object. Of how many references to contrasted affections the reflex. התע׳ is capable, is seen from Job 17:8; 31:29; why not thus also?

6 Place me as a signet-ring on thy heart, As a signet-ring on thine arm! For strong as death is love; Inexorable as hell is jealousy: Its flames are flames of fire, A flame of Jah.

7 Mighty waters are unable to quench such love, And rivers cannot overflow it.
If a man would give
All the wealth of his house for love,—
He would only be contemned.

The signet-ring, which is called חותם (chōtām, to impress), was carried either by a string on the breast, Gen. 38:18, or also, as that which is called צבעת denotes (from צבע, to sink into), on the hand, Jer. 22:4, cf. Gen. 41:42, Esth. 3:12, but not on the arm, like a bracelet, 2 Sam. 1:10; and since it is certainly permissible to say "hand" for "finger," but not "arm" for "hand," so we may not refer "on thine arm" to the figure if the signet-ring, as if Shulamith had said, as the poet might also introduce her as saying: Make me like a signet-ring (כחותם) on thy breast; make me like a signet-ring "on thy hand," or "on thy right hand." The words, "set me on thy heart," and "(set me) on thine arm," must thus also, without regard to "as a signet-ring," express independent thoughts, although שימני is chosen (vid., Hag. 2:23) instead of קחנני, in view of the comparison. Thus, with right, Hitzig finds the thought therein expressed: "Press me close to thy breast, enclose me in thine arms." But it is the first request, and not the second, which is in the form (שימני) על זרועך, and not על זרועה, which refers to embracing, since the subject is not the relation of person and thing, but of person and person. The signet-ring comes into view as a jewel, which one does not separate from himself; and the first request is to this effect, that he would bear her thus inalienably (the art. is that of the specific idea) on his heart (Ex. 28:29); the meaning of the second, that he would take her thus inseparably as a signet-ring on his arm (cf. Hos. 11:3: "I have taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms"), so that she might lie always on his heart, and have him always at her side (cf. Ps. 110:5): she wishes to be united and bound to him indissolubly in the affection of love and in the community of life's experience.

The reason for the double request following כי, abstracted from the individual case, rises to the universality of the fact realized by experience, which specializes itself herein, and celebrates the praise of love; for, assigning a reason for her "set me," she does not say, "my love," nor "thy love," but אהבה, "love" (as also in the address at 7:7). She means love undivided, unfeigned, entire, and not transient, but enduring; thus true and genuine love, such as is real, what the word denotes, which exhausts the conception corresponding to the idea of love.

זלאה, which is here parallel to "love," is the jealousy of love asserting its possession and right of property; the reaction of love against any diminution of its possession, against any reserve in its response, the "self-vindication of angry love." Love is a passion, i.e., a human affection, powerful and lasting, as it comes to light in "jealousy." Zelus, as defined by Dav. Chyträus, est affectus mixtus ex amore et ira, cum videlicet amans aliquid irascitur illi, a quo laeditur res amata, wherefore here the adjectives עז (strong) and קשה (hard, inexorable, firm, severe) are respectively assigned to "love" and "jealousy," as at Gen. 49:7 to "anger" and "wrath." It is much more remarkable that the energy of love, which, so to say, is the life of life, is compared to the energy of death and Hades; with at least equal right ממית and משה (might be used, for love scorns both, outlasts both, triumphs over both (Rom. 8:38f.; 1 Cor. 15:54f.). But the text does not speak of surpassing, but of equality; not of love and jealousy that they surpass death and Hades, but that they are equal to it. The point of comparison in both cases is to be obtained from the predicates. עז, powerful, designates the person who, being assailed, cannot be overcome (Num. 13:28), and, assailing, cannot be withstood (Judg. 14:18). Death is obviously thought of as the assailer (Jer. 9:20), against which nothing can hold its ground, from which nothing can escape, to whose sceptre all must finally yield (vid., Ps. 49). Love is like it in this, that it also seizes upon men with irresistible force (Böttcher: "He whom Death assails must die, whom Love assails must love"); and when
she has once assailed him, she rests not till she has him wholly under her power; she kills him, as it were, in regard to everything else that is not the object of his love. רַכְּךָ, hard (opposed to דָּר, 2 Sam. 3:39), σκληρός designates one on whom no impression is made, who will not yield (Ps. 48:4; 19:4), or one whom stern fate has made inwardly stubborn and obtuse (1 Sam. 1:15). Here the point of comparison is inflexibility; for Sheol, thought of with חָשְׁא, to ask (vid., under Isa. 5:14), is the God-ordained messenger of wrath, who inexorably gathers in all that are on the earth, and holds them fast when once they are swallowed up by him. So the jealousy of love wholly takes possession of the beloved object not only in arrest, but also in safe keeping; she holds her possession firmly, that it cannot be taken from her (Wisd. 2:1), and burns relentlessly and inexorably against any one who does injury to her possession (Prov. 6:34 f.). But when Shulamith wishes, in the words, "set me," etc., to be bound to the heart and to the arm of Solomon, has she in the clause assigning a reason the love in view with which she wishes to fill, and believes that she does fill, her beloved. If this is so, then with "for strong as death is love," she gives herself up to this love on the condition that it confesses itself willing to live only for her, and to be as if dead for all others; and with "inexorable as hell is jealousy," in such a manner that she takes shelter in the jealousy of this love against the occurrence of any fit of infidelity, since she consents therein to be wholly and completely absorbed by it.

To כָּנָּה, which proceeds from the primary idea of a red glow, there is connected the further description of this love to the sheltering and protecting power of which she gives herself up: "its flames, רֶפֶּסִים, are flames of fire;" its sparkling is the sparkling of fire. The verb רָשָׁפ, in Syr. and Arab., to creep along, to make short steps; in Heb. and Chalde., to sparkle, to flame, which in Samar. is referred to impetuosity. Symmachus translates, after the Samar. (which Hitzig approves of): αἱ ὀρμαὶ αὐτοῦ ὀρμαὶ πῦρνοι; the Venet., after Kimchi, ἀνθρακίζει, for he exchanges רַשַּׁפ with the probably non.-cogn. רָפַת; others render it all with words which denote the bright glancings of fire. רִשְׁפ (so here, according to the Masora; on the contrary, at Ps. 76:4, רִשֲׁפ) are effulgurations; the pred. says that these are not only of a bright shining, but of a fiery nature, which, as they proceed from fire, so also produce fire, for they set on fire and kindle. Love, in its flashings up, is like fiery flashes of lightning; in short, it is שְׁלַהְבּהָ, which is thus to be written as one word with ה רָפַת, according to the Masora; but in this form of the word ה is also the name of God, and more than a meaningless superlative strengthening of the idea. As רַבּוּ is formed from the Kal לָהַב to flame (R. כִּי, to lick, like לוּ, לָה, to twist), so is רַשִּׁפ, from the Shafel תָּבְטִיב to cause to flame; this active stem is frequently found, especially in the Aram., and has in the Assyrian almost wholly supplanted the Afel (vid., Schrader in Deut. Morg. Zeit. xxvi. 275). שָלִּיהַב is thus related primarily to לָהַב, as inflammatio to (Ger.) Flamme; ה thus presents itself the more naturally to be interpreted as gen. subjecti. Love of a right kind is a flame not kindled and inflamed by man (Job 20:26), but by God—the divinely-influenced free inclination of two souls to each other, and at the same time, as is now further said, 7a, 7b, a situation supporting all adversities and assaults, and a pure personal relation conditioned by nothing material. It is a fire-flame which mighty waters (כננה, great and many, as at Hab. 3:15; cf. סַחַף, wild, Isa. 43:16) cannot extinguish, and streams cannot overflow it (cf. Ps. 69:3; 124:4) or sweep it away (cf. Job 14:19; Isa. 28:17). Hitzig adopts the latter signification, but the figure of the fire makes the
former more natural; no heaping up of adverse circumstances can extinguish true love, as many waters extinguish elemental fire; no earthly power can suppress it by the strength of its assault, as streams drench all they sweep over in their flow—the flame of Jah is inextinguishable.

Nor can this love be bought; any attempt to buy it would be scorned and counted madness. The expressions is like Prov. 6:30 f., cf. Num. 22:18; 1 Cor. 13:3. Regarding הון (from היה, (Arab.) han, levem esse), convenience, and that by which life is made comfortable, vid., at Prov. 1:13. According to the shepherd-hypothesis, here occurs the expression of the peculiar point of the story of the intercourse between Solomon and Shulamith; she scorns the offers of Solomon; her love is not to be bought, and it already belongs to another. But of offers we read nothing beyond 1:11, where, as in the following v. 12, it is manifest that Shulamith is in reality excited in love. Hitzig also remarks under 1:12: “When the speaker says the fragrance of her nard is connected with the presence of the king, she means that only then does she smell the fragrance of nard, i.e., only his presence awakens in her heart pleasant sensations or sweet feelings.” Shulamith manifestly thus speaks, also emphasizing 6:12, the spontaneity of her relation to Solomon; but Hitzig adds: “These words, 1:12, are certainly spoken by a court lady.” But the Song knows only a chorus of the “Daughters of Jerusalem”—that court lady is only a phantom, by means of which Hitzig’s ingenuity seeks to prop up the shepherd-hypothesis, the weakness of which his penetration has discerned. As we understand the Song, v. 7 refers to the love with which Shulamith loves, as decidedly as 6b to the love with which she is loved. Nothing in all the world is able to separate her from loving the king; it is love to his person, not love called forth by a desire for riches which he disposes of, not even by the splendour of the position which awaited her, but free, responsive love with which she answered free love making its approach to her. The poet here represents Shulamith herself as expressing the idea of love embodied in her. That apple tree, where he awakened first love in her, is a witness of the renewal of their mutual covenant of love; and it is significant that only here, just directly here, where the idea of the whole is expressed more fully, and in a richer manner than at 7:7, is God denoted by His name, and that by His name as revealed in the history of redemption. Hitzig, Ewald, Olshausen, Böttcher, expand this concluding word, for the sake of rhythmic symmetry, to שַלְׁהֲבֹתֶּיהָ שַלְׁהֲבֹת יָה [its flames are flames of Jah]; but a similar conclusion is found at Ps. 24:6; 48:7, and elsewhere.

“I would almost close the book,” says Herder in his Lied der Lieder (Song of Songs), 1778, “with this divine seal. It is even as good as closed, for what follows appears only as an appended echo.” Daniel Sanders (1845) closes it with v. 7, places v. 12 after 1:6, and cuts off vv. 8–11, 13, 14, as not original. Anthologists, like Döpke and Magnus, who treat the Song as the Fragmentists do the Pentateuch, find here their confused medley sanctioned. Umbreit also, 1820, although as for the rest recognising the Song as a compact whole, explains 8:8–12, 13, 14 as a fragment, not belonging to the work itself. Hoelemann, however, in his Krone des Hohenliedes [Crown of the Song], 1856 (thus he names the “concluding Act,” 8:5–14), believes that there is here represented, not only in vv. 6, 7, but further also in vv. 8–12, the essence of true love—what it is, and how it is won; and then in 8:13 f. he hears the Song come to an end in pure idyllic tones. We see in v. 8 ff. the continuation of the love story practically idealized and set forth in dramatic figures. There is no inner necessity for this continuance. It shapes itself after that which has happened; and although in all history divine reason and moral ideas realize themselves, yet the material by means of which this is done consists of accidental circumstances and free actions passing thereby into reciprocal action. But v. 8 ff. is the actual continuance of the story on to the completed conclusion, not a mere appendix, which might be wanting without anything being
thereby missed. For after the poet has set before us the loving pair as they wander arm in arm through the green pasture-land between Jezreel and Sunem till they reach the environs of the parental home, which reminds them of the commencement of their love relations, he cannot represent them as there turning back, but must present to us still a glimpse of what transpired on the occasion of their visit there. After that first Act of the concluding scene, there is yet wanting a second, to which the first points.

Second Scene of the Fifth Act, 8:8–14

Song 8:8. The locality of this scene is Shulamith’s parental home. It is she herself who speaks in these words:

8  We have a sister, a little one,
     And she has no breasts:
     What shall we do with our sister
     In the day when she will be sued for?

Between vv. 8 and 7 is a blank. The figure of the wanderers is followed by the figure of the visitors. But who speaks here? The interchange of the scene permits that Shulamith conclude the one scene and begin the other, as in the first Act; or also that at the same time with the change of scene there is an interchange of persons, as e.g., in the third Act. But if Shulamith speaks, all her words are not by any means included in what is said from v. 8 to v. 10. Since, without doubt, she also speaks in v. 11 f., this whole second figure consists of Shulamith’s words, as does also the second of the second Act, 3:1–5. But there Shulamith’s address presents itself as the narrative of an experience, and the narrative dramatically framed in itself is thoroughly penetrated by the I of the speaker; but here, as e.g., Ewald, Heiligst., and Böttch. explain, she would begin with a dialogue with her brothers referable to herself, one that had formerly taken place—that little sister, Ewald remarks under v. 10, stands here now grown up she took notice of that severe word formerly spoken by her brothers, and can now joyfully before all exclaim, taking up the same flowery language, that she is a wall, etc. But that a monologue should begin with a dialogue without any introduction, is an impossibility; in this case the poet ought to have left the expression, “of old my mother’s sons said,” to be supplemented by the reader or hearer. It is true, at 3:2; 5:3, we have a former address introduced without any formal indication of the fact; but it is the address of the narrator herself. With v. 8 there will thus begin a colloquy arising out of present circumstances. That in this conversation v. 8 appertains to the brothers, is evident. This harsh entweder oder (aut ... aut) is not appropriate as coming from Shulamith’s mouth; it is her brothers alone, as Hoelemann rightly remarks, who utter these words, as might have been expected from them in view of 1:6. But does v. 8 belong also to them? There may be two of them, says Hitzig, and the one may in v. 9 reply to the question of the other in v. 8; Shulamith, who has heard their conversation, suddenly interposes with v. 10. But the transition from the first to the second scene is more easily explained if Shulamith proposes the question of v. 8 for consideration. This is not set aside by Hitzig’s questions: “Has she to determine in regard to her sister? and has she now for the first time come to do nothing in haste?” For (1) the dramatic figures of the Song follow each other chronologically, but not without blanks; and the poet does not at all require us to regard v. 8 as Shulamith’s first words after her entrance into her parental home; (2) but it is altogether seeming for Shulamith, who has now become independent, and who has been raised so high, to throw out this question of loving care for her sister. Besides, from the fact that with v. 8 there commences the representation of a present occurrence, it is proved that the sister here spoken of is not Shulamith herself. If it were Shulamith herself, the words of vv. 8, 9 would look back to what had previously taken place, which, as we have shown, is impossible. Or does 6:9 require that we should think of Shulamith as having no sister? Certainly not; for so understood, these words would be purposeless. The “only one,” then, does not mean the only...
one numerically, but, as at Prov. 4:3, it is emphatic (Hitzig); she is called by Solomon the “only one” of her mother in this sense, that she had one not her equal. Thus it is Shulamith who here speaks, and she is not the “sister” referred to. The words, “we have a sister ...,” spoken in the family circle, whether regarded as uttered by Shulamith or not, have something strange in them, for one member of a family does not need thus to speak to another. We expect: With regard to our sister, who is as yet little and not of full age, the question arises, What will be done when she has grown to maturity to guard her innocence? Thus the expression would have stood, but the poet separates it into little symmetrical sentences; for poetry present facts in a different style from prose. Hoelem. has on this remarked that the words are not to be translated: we have a little sister, which the order of the words אָחות קְּן וגו׳ would presuppose, Gen. 40:20; cf. 2 Sam. 4:4; 12:2 f.; Isa. 26:1; 33:21. “Little” is not immediately connected with “sister,” but follows it as an apposition; and this appositional description lays the ground for the question: We may be now without concern; but when she is grown up and will be courted, what then? “Little” refers to age, as at 2 Kings 5:2; cf. Gen. 44:20. The description of the child in the words, “she has no breasts,” has neither in itself nor particularly for Oriental feeling anything indecent in it (cf. mammae sororiarunt, Ezek. 16:7). The following רֹמְצֵה הבָּשָׁם is here not thus purely the dat. commodi, as e.g., Isa. 64:3 (to act for some one), but indif. dat. (what shall we do for her?). but דָּם כָּלָה is, according to the connection, as at Gen. 27:37, 1 Sam. 10:2, Isa. 5:4, equivalent to: What conducing to her advantage? Instead of בָּשָׁם, as the form בָּשָׁם lay syntactically nearer (cf. Ex. 6:28); the art. in דָּם כָּלָה is, as at Eccles. 12:3, understood demonstr.: that day when she will be spoken for, i.e., will attract the attention of a suitor. בַּיְם לָשָׁם after זָרַע מֵאַרְּסָא may have manifold significations (vid., under Ps. 87:3); thus the general signification of “concerning,” 1 Sam. 19:3, is modified in the sense of courting a wife, 1 Sam. 25:39. The brothers now take speech in hand, and answer Shulamith’s question as to what will have to be done for the future safety of their little sister when the time comes that she shall be sought for:

9 If she be a wall,  
   We will build upon her a pinnacle of silver;  
   And if she be a door,  
   We will block her up with a board of cedar-wood.

Song 8:9. The brothers are the nearest guardians and counsellors of the sister, and, particularly in the matter of marriage, have the precedence even of the father and mother, Gen. 24:50, 55; 34:6–8 ... They suppose two cases which stand in contrast to each other, and announce their purpose with reference to each case. Hoelem. here affects a synonymous instead of the antithetic parallelism; for he maintains that אם ... אם nowhere denotes a contrast, but, like sive ... sive, essential indifference. But examples such as Deut. 18:3 (sive bovem, sive ovem) are not applicable here; for this correl. ... אם ... אם, denoting essential equality, never begins the antecedents of two principal sentences, but always stands in the component parts of one principal sentence. Wherever ... אם commences two parallel conditional clauses, the parallelism is always, according to the contents of these clauses, either synonymous, Gen. 31:50, Amos 9:2–4, Eccles. 11:3 (where the first אם signifies ac si, and the second sive), or antithetic, Num. 16:29 f.; Job 36:11 f.; Isa. 1:19 f. The contrast between חומָה (from חָמָה, Modern Syr. chamo, to preserve, protect) and דְלֵת (from דָּלַל, to hang loose, of doors, Prov. 26:14, which move hither and thither on their hinges) is obvious. A wall stands firm and withstands every assault if it serves its purpose (which is here presupposed, where it is used as a figure of firmness of character). A door, on the contrary, is moveable; and though it be for the present closed (דְלֵת is intentionally used, and...
not פֶּתַח, vid., Gen. 19:6), yet it is so formed that it can be opened again. A maiden inaccessible to seduction is like a wall, and one accessible to it is like a door. In the apodosis, 9a, the LXX correctly renders נֶתֶר by ἐπάλξεις; Jerome, by propugnaculis. But it is not necessary to read נֶתֶר. The verb נֶטַר, cogn. דור, signifies to surround, whence tirah (= Arab. duâr), a round encampment, Gen. 25:16, and, generally, a habitation, Ps. 69:25; and then also, to range together, whence זָרְרָה, a rank, row (cf. Arab.thur and dour, which, in the manifoldness of their meanings, are parallel with the French tour), or also tirah, which, Ezek. 46:23 (vid., Keil), denotes the row or layer of masonry,—in the passage before us, a row of battlements (Ew.), or a crown of the wall (Hitz.), i.e., battlements as a wreath on the summit of a wall. Is she a wall,—i.e., does she firmly and successfully withstand all immoral approaches?—then they will adorn this wall with silver pinnacles (cf. Isa. 54:12), i.e., will bestow upon her the high honour which is due to her maidenly purity and firmness; silver is the symbol of holiness, as gold is the symbol of nobility. In the apodosis 9b, צוּר עַל is not otherwise meant than when used in a military sense of enclosing by means of besieging, but, like Isa. 29:3, with the obj.- accus., of that which is pressed against that which is to be excluded; צוּר here means, forcibly to press against, asobar, Gen. 2:21, to unite by closing up.

לְחָם אֵלֶּז is a board or plank (cf. Ezek. 27:5, of the double planks of a ship’s side) of cedar wood (cf. Zeph. 2:14, אָרֵז, cedar wainscot). Cedar wood comes here into view not on account of the beautiful polish which it takes on, but merely because of its hardness and durability. Is she a door, i.e., accessible to seduction? They will enclose this door around with a cedar plank, i.e., watch her in such a manner that no seducer or lover will be able to approach her. By this morally stern but faithful answer, Shulamith is carried back to the period of her own maidenhood, when her brothers, with good intention, dealt severely with her. Looking back to this time, she could joyfully confess:

10 I was a wall,
And my breasts like towers;
Then I became in his eyes
Like one who findeth peace.

Song 8:10. In the language of prose, the statement would be: Your conduct is good and wise, as my own example shows; of me also ye thus faithfully took care; and that I met this your solicitude with strenuous self-preservation, has become, to my joy and yours, the happiness of my life. That in this connection אָז חוּדָה but חוּדָה אֵלֶּז has to be used, is clear: she compares herself with her sister, and the praise she takes to herself she takes to the honour of her brothers. The comparison of her breasts to towers is suggested by the comparison of her person to a wall; Kleuker rightly remarks that here the comparison is not of thing with thing, but of relation with relation: the breasts were those of her person, as the towers were of the wall, which, by virtue of the power of defence which they conceal within themselves, never permit the enemy, whose attention they attract, to approach them. The two substantival clauses, murus et ubera mea instar turrium, have not naturally a retrospective signification, as they would in a historical connection (vid., under Gen. 2:10); but they become retrospective by the following "then I became," like Deut. 26:5, by the historical tense following, where, however, it is to be remarked that the expression, having in itself no relation to time, which is incapable of being expressed in German, mentions the past not in a way that excludes the present, but as including it. She was a wall, and her breasts like the towers, i.e., all seductions rebounded from her, and ventured not near her awe-inspiring attractions; then (אָז, temporal, but at the same time consequent; thereupon, and for this reason, as at Ps. 40:8, Jer. 22:15, etc.) she became in his (Solomon’s) eyes as one who findeth peace. According to the shepherd-hypothesis, she says here: he deemed it good to
forbear any further attempts, and to let me remain in peace (Ewald, Hitz., and others). But how is that possible? "מצא שָלום בעיני" is a variation of the frequently occurring "מצא חֵן בעיני," which is used especially of a woman gaining the affections of a man, Esth. 2:17, Deut. 24:1, Jer. 31:2 f.; and the expression here used, "thus I was in his eyes as one who findeth peace" is only the more circumstantial expression for, "then I found (אז מָצָאתִי) in his eyes peace," which doubtless means more than: I brought it to this, that he left me further unmolested; "שלום" in this case, as syn. of "חֵן," means inward agreement, confidence, friendship, as at Ps. 41:10; there it means, as in the salutation of peace and in a hundred other cases, a positive good. And why should she use "שלום" instead of "חֵן," but that she might form a play upon the name which she immediately, thereafter utters, "שלמה," which signifies, 1 Chron. 22:9, "The man of peace." That Shulamith had found "shalom" (peace) with Shlomoh (Solomon), cannot be intended to mean that uninjured she escaped from him, but that she had entered into a relation to him which seemed to her a state of blessed peace. The delicate description, "in his eyes," is designed to indicate that she appeared to him in the time of her youthful discipline as one finding peace. The "ך" is ך veritatis, i.e., the comparison of the fact with its idea, Isa. 29:2, or of the individual with the general and common, Isa. 13:6; Ezek. 26:10; Zech. 14:3. Here the meaning is, that Shulamith appeared to him corresponding to the idea of one finding peace, and thus as worthy to find peace with him. One "finding peace" is one who gains the heart of a man, so that he enters into a relation of esteem and affection for her. This generalization of the idea also opposes the notion of a history of seduction. "מציאת" is from the ground-form "matsiat," the parallel form to "מצאת," 2 Sam. 18:22. Solomon has won her, not by persuasion or violence; but because she could be no other man’s, he entered with her into the marriage covenant of peace (cf. Prov. 2:17 with Isa. 54:10).

**Song 8:11, 12.** It now lies near, at least rather so than remote, that Shulamith, thinking of her brothers, presents her request before her royal husband:

11 Solomon had a vineyard in Baal-hamon;
   He committed the vineyard to the keepers,
   That each should bring for its fruit
   A thousand in silver.

12 I myself disposed of my own vineyard:
   The thousand is thine, Solomon,
   And two hundred for the keepers of its fruit!

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that he did not in reality retain the vineyard, 
which, as Hitzig supposes, if he possessed it, he 
also “probably” retained, whether he gave it 
away or exchanged it, or sold it, we know not; 
but the poet might suppose that Shulamith 
knew it, since it refers to a piece of land lying 
not far from her home. For ḫwšl ḥmɔn, LXX 
Bεελαμών, is certainly the same as that 
mentioned in Judith 8:3, according to which 
Judith’s husband died from sunstroke in 
Bethulia, and was beside his fathers “between Dothan and Balamôn” (probably, as 
the sound of the word denotes, Belmen, or, 
more accurately, Belmain, as it is also called in 
Judith 4:4, with which Kleuker in Schenkel’s 
Bibl. Lex., de Bruyn in his Karte, and others, 
terchange it; and ḥmɔn, Josh. 19:28, lying in the 
tribe of Asher). This Balamôn lay not far from 
Dothan, and thus not far from Edrāelon; for 
Dothan lay (cf. Judith 3:10) south of the plain of 
Jezreel, where it has been discovered, under the 
name of Tell Dotan, in the midst of a smaller 
plain which lies embosomed in the hills of the 
south. The ancients, since Aquila, Symm., Targ., 
Syr., and Jerome, make the name of the place 
Baal-hamon subservient to their allegorizing 
interpretation, but only by the aid of soap-
bubble-like fancies; e.g., Hengst. makes Baal-
hamon designate the world; nothrim [keepers], 
the nations; the 1000 pieces in silver, the duties 
comprehended in the ten commandments. 
Hamon is there understood of a large, noisy 
crowd. The place may, indeed, have its name 
from the multitude of its inhabitants, or from an 
annual market held there, or otherwise from 
revelry and riot; for, according to Hitzig, there 
is no ground for co-ordinating it with names 
such as Baal-Gad and Baal-Zephon, in which 
Baal is the general, and what follows the special 
name of God. Amon, the Sun-God, specially 
worshipped in Egyptian Thebes, has the bibl. 
name ⲫⲧⲧⲣⲟⲩ, with which, after the sound of the 
word, accords the name of a place lying, 
according to Jer. Demaï ii. 1, in the region of 
Tyrus, but no ⲫⲧⲧⲣⲟⲩ. The reference to the Egypt. 
Amon Ra, which would direct rather to Baalbec, 
the Coele-Syrian Heliopolis, is improbable; 
because the poet would certainly not have 
introduced into his poem the name of the place 
where the vineyard lay, if this name did not call 
forth an idea corresponding to the connection. 
The Shulamitess, now become Solomon’s, in 
order to support the request she makes to the 
king, relates an incident of no historical value in 
itself of the near-lying Sunem (Sulem), situated 
not far from Baal-hamon to the north, on the 
farther side of the plain of Jezreel. She belongs 
to a family whose inheritance consisted in 
vineyards, and she herself had acted in the 
capacity of the keeper of a vineyard, 1:6, —so 
much the less therefore is it to be wondered at 
that she takes an interest in the vineyard of 
Baal-hamon, which Solomon had let out to 
keepers on the condition that they should pay 
to him for its fruit-harvest the sum of 1000 
shekels of silver (shekel is, according to Ges. § 
120. 4, Anm. 2, to be supplied). 
וּבַעַל הָמון, since we have interpreted 
the word, might also indeed be rendered 
imperfect, as equivalent to afferebat; or, 
according to Ewald, § 136c, afferre solebat; but 
since וֹ = ἐξέτησο, Matt. 21:33, denotes a gift 
laying the recipients under an obligation, יָבִא 
is used in the sense of locatio conductio; but יָבִא 
is not to be supplied (Symm. ἐνέργεια), but יָבִא 
in itself signifies afferre debeat (he ought 
to bring), like יָבִא, Dan. 1:5, they should stand 
(wait upon), Ewald, § 136g. Certainly יַעֲשֵׂה 
does not mean tenants, but watchers,—the post-bibl. 
language has תָּכּרָה, to lease, יֵבֹּס, to take on lease, 
חִכיָר, rent, e.g., Mezia ix. 2, —but the subject 
here is a locatio conductio; for the vine-plants of 
that region are entrusted to the “keepers” for a 
rent, which they have to pay, not in fruits but in 
money, as the equivalent of a share of the 
produce (the בֵּרֶקֶן is the בֵּרֶקֶן הַצֹּפֶּה). Isa. 7:23 is 
usually compared; but there the money value of a 
particularly valuable portion of a vineyard, 
consisting of 1000 vines, is given at “1000 
silverlings” (1 shekel); while, on the other hand, 
the 1000 shekels here are the rent for a portion
of a vineyard, the extent of which is not mentioned. But that passage in Isaiah contains something explanatory of the one before us, inasmuch as we see from it that a vineyard was divided into portions of a definite number of vines in each. Such a division into mkomoth is also here supposed. For if each "keeper" to whom the vineyard was entrusted had to count 1000 shekels for its produce, then the vineyard was at the same time committed to several keepers, and thus was divided into small sections (Hitzig). It is self-evident that the gain of the produce that remained over after paying the rent fell to the "keepers;" but since the produce varied, and also the price of wine, this gain was not the same every year, and only in general are we to suppose from 12b, that it yielded on an average about 20 per cent. For the vineyard which Shulamith means in 12b is altogether different from that of Baal-hamon. It is of herself she says, 1:6, that as the keeper of a vineyard, exposed to the heat of the day, she was not in a position to take care of her own vineyard. This her own vineyard is not her beloved (Hoelem.), which not only does not harmonize with 1:6 (for she there looks back to the time prior to her elevation), but her own person, as comprehending everything pleasant and lovely which constitutes her personality (Song 4:12–5:1), as kerem is the sum-total of the vines which together form a vineyard. Of this figurative vineyard she says: כַרְׁמִי שֶּּלִי לְפָנָי. This must mean, according to Hitzig, Hoelem., and others, that it was under her protection; but although the idea of affectionate care may, in certain circumstances, be connected with לפני, Gen. 17:18, Prov. 4:3, yet the phrase: this or that is לפני, wherever it has not merely a local or temporal, but an ethical significiation, can mean nothing else than: it stands under my direction, Gen. 13:9; 20:15; 47:6; 2 Chron. 14:6; Gen. 24:51; 1 Sam. 16:16. Rightly Heiligst., after Ewald: in potestate mea est. Shulamith also has a vineyard, which she is as free to dispose of as Solomon of his at Baal-hamon. It is the totality of her personal and mental endowments. This vineyard has been given over with free and joyful cordiality into Solomon’s possession. This vineyard also has keepers (one here sees with what intention the poet has chosen in 11a just that word נטרים—to whom Shulamith herself and to whom Solomon also owes it that as a chaste and virtuous maiden she became his possession. These are her brothers, the true keepers and protectors of her innocence. Must these be unrewarded? The full thousands, she says, turning to the king, which like the annual produce of the vineyard of Baal-hamon will thus also be the fruit of my own personal worth, shall belong to none else, O Solomon, than to thee, and two hundred to the keepers of its fruit! If the keepers in Baal-hamon do not unrewarded watch the vineyard, so the king owes thanks to those who so faithfully guarded his Shulamith. The poetry would be reduced to prose if there were found in Shulamith’s words a hint that the king should reward her brothers with a gratification of 200 shekels. She makes the case of the vineyard in Baal-hamon a parable of her relation to Solomon on the one hand, and of her relation to her brothers on the other. From מָאתַיִם, one may conclude that there were two brothers, thus that the rendering of thanks is thought of as מַעֲשֵר (a tenth part); but so that the 200 are meant not as a tax on the thousand, but as a reward for the faithful rendering up of the thousand.

Song 8:13. The king who seems to this point to have silently looked on in inmost sympathy, now, on being addressed by Shulamith, takes speech in hand; he does not expressly refer to her request, but one perceives from his words that he heard it with pleasure. He expresses to her the wish that she would gratify the companions of her youth who were assembled around her, as well as himself, with a song, such as in former times she was wont to sing in these mountains and valleys.

13 O thou (who art) at home in the gardens,
Companions are listening for thy voice;
Let me hear!
We observe that in the rural paradise with which she is surrounded, she finds herself in her element. It is a primary feature of her character which herein comes to view: her longing after quietness and peace, her love for collectedness of mind and for contemplation; her delight in thoughts of the Creator suggested by the vegetable world, and particularly by the manifold soft beauty of flowers; she is again in the gardens of her home, but the address, “O thou at home in the gardens!” denotes that wherever she is, these gardens are as a fundamental feature of her nature. The הֲבֵרִים are not Solomon’s companions, for she has come hither with Solomon alone, leaning on his arm. Also it is indicated in the expression: “are listening for thy voice,” that they are such as have not for a long time heard the dear voice which was wont to cheer their hearts. The הֲבֵרִים are the companions of the former shepherdess and keeper of a vineyard, 1:6 f., the playmates of her youth, the friends of her home. With a fine tact the poet does not represent Solomon as saying Очевидно, что здесь не было выражения, ни одно-стороннего, ни двустороннего. Что “for thy voice” refers not to her voice as speaking, but as the old good friends wish, as singing, is evident from הק苠א in connection with 2:14, where also蟆לך is to be supplied, and the voice of song is meant. She complies with the request, and thus begins:

14 Flee, my beloved,
And be thou like a gazelle,
Or a young one of the harts,
Upon spicy mountains.

Song 8:14. Hitzig supposes that with these words of refusal she bids him away from her, without, however, as “my beloved” shows, meaning them in a bad sense. They would thus, as Renan says, be bantering coquetry. If it is Solomon who makes the request, and thus also he who is addressed here, not the imaginary shepherd violently introduced into this closing scene in spite of the words " (the thousand) is thine, Solomon" (v. 12), then Shulamith’s ignoring of his request is scornful, for it would be as unseemly if she sang of her own accord to please her friends, as it would be wilful if she kept silent when requested by her royal husband. So far the Spanish author, Soto Major, is right (1599): jussa et rogata id non debuit nec potuit recusare. Thus with “flee” she begins a song which she sings, as at 2:15 she commences one, in response to a similar request, with “catch us.” Hoelem. finds in her present happiness, which fills her more than ever, the thought here expressed that her beloved, if he again went from her for a moment, would yet very speedily return to his longing, waiting bride. But apart from the circumstance that Shulamith is no longer a bride, but is married, and that the wedding festival is long past, there is not a syllable of that thought in the text; the words must at least have been נֹאְר הֲבֵרָה, if נֹאְר signifies generally to hasten hither, and not to hasten forth. Thus, at least as little as מַס, 2:17, without אֵלַי, signifies “turn thyself hither,” can this בְׁרַח mean “flee hither.” The words of the song thus invite Solomon to disport himself, i.e., give way to frolicsome and aimless mirth on these spicy mountains. As sov lcha is enlarged to sov dmeh-lcha, 2:17, for the sake of the added figures (vid., under 2:9), so here brahh-lcha (Gen. 27:43) is enlarged to brahh udmeh (udāמֵה) lcha. That “mountains of spices” occurs here instead of “cleft mountains,” 2:17b, has its reason, as has already been there remarked, and as Hitzig, Hoelem., and others have discovered, in the aim of the poet to conclude the pleasant song of love that has reached perfection and refinement with an absolutely pleasant word.

But with what intention does he call on Shulamith to sing to her beloved this הֲבֵרִים, which obviously has here not the meaning of escaping away (according to the fundamental meaning, transversum currere), but only, as where it is
used of fleeting time, Job 9:25; 14:2, the sense of hastening? One might suppose that she whom he has addressed as at home in gardens replied to his request with the invitation to hasten forth among the mountains,—an exercise which gives pleasure to a man. But (1) Solomon, according to 2:16; 6:2 f., is also fond of gardens and flowers; and (2) if he took pleasure in ascending mountains, it doubled his joy, according to 4:8, to share this joy with Shulamith; and (3) we ask, would this closing scene, and along with it the entire series of dramatic pictures, find a satisfactory conclusion, if either Solomon remained and gave no response to Shulamith's call, or if he, as directed, disappeared alone, and left Shulamith by herself among the men who surrounded her? Neither of these two things can have been intended by the poet, who shows himself elsewhere a master in the art of composition. In 2:17 the matter lies otherwise. There the love-relation is as yet in progress, and the abandonment of love to uninterrupted fellowship places a limit to itself. Now, however, Shulamith is married, and the summons is unlimited. It reconciles itself neither with the strength of her love nor with the tenderness of the relation, that she should with so cheerful a spirit give occasion to her husband to leave her alone for an indefinite time. We will thus have to suppose that, when Shulamith sings the song, "Flee, my beloved," she goes forth leaning on Solomon's arm out into the country, or that she presumes that he will not make this flight into the mountains of her native home without her. With this song breaking forth in the joy of love and of life, the poet represents the loving couple as disappearing over the flowery hills, and at the same time the sweet charm of the Song of Songs, leaping gazelle-like from one fragrant scene to another, vanishes away.

Appendix

Remarks on the Song by Dr. J. G. Wetzstein

The following aphoristic elucidations of the Song are partly collected from epistolary communications, but for the most part are taken from my friend's "Treatise on the Syrian thrashing-table" (in Bastian's Zeitsch. für Ethnographie, 1873), but not without these extracts having been submitted to him, and here and there enlarged by him.

The thrashing-table (lôḥ ed-derās) is an agricultural implement in common use from ancient times in the countries round the Mediterranean Sea. It consists of two boards of nut-tree wood or of oak, bound together by two cross timbers. These boards are bent upwards in front, after the manner of a sledge, so as to be able to glide without interruption over the heaps of straw; underneath they are set with stones (of porous basalt) in oblique rows, thus forming a rubbing and cutting apparatus, which serves to thrash out the grain and to chop the straw; for the thrashing-table drawn by one or two animals yoked to it, and driven by their keeper, moves round on the straw-heaps spread on the barn floor. The thrashing-table may have sometimes been used in ancient times for the purpose of destroying prisoners of war by a horrible death (2 Sam. 12:31); at the present day it serves as the seat of honour for the bride and bridegroom, and also as a bier whereon the master of the house is laid when dead. The former of these its two functions is that which has given an opportunity to Wetzstein to sketch in that Treatise, under the title of "The Table in the King's-week," a picture of the marriage festival among the Syrian peasantry. This sketch contains not a few things that serve to throw light on the Song, which we here place in order, intermixed with other remarks by Wetzstein with reference to the Song and to our commentary on it.

1:6. In August 1861, when on a visit to the hot springs El-hamma, between Domeir and Roheiba to the north of Damascus, I was the guest of the Sheik 'Id, who was encamped with his tribe, a branch of the Solêb, at the sulphurous stream there (nahar el-mukebret). Since the language of this people (who inhabited the Syrian desert previous to the Moslem period, were longest confessor
kept themselves free from intermingling with the tribes that at a later period had migrated from the peninsula) possesses its own remarkable peculiarities, I embraced the opportunity of having dictated and explained to me, for three whole days, Solebian poems. The introduction to one of these is as follows: “The poet is Solèbi Tuwêés, nephew of (the already mentioned) Râshid. The latter had had a dispute with a certain Bishr; that Tuwêés came to know, and now sent the following kasidah (poem) to Bishr, which begins with praise in regard to his uncle, and finally advises Bishr to let that man rest, lest he (Tuwêés) should become his adversary and that of his party.” The last verse is in these words:

“That say I to you, I shall become the adversary of the disturber of the peace,

Bend my right knee before him, and, as a second Zir, show myself on the field of battle (the menâch).”

Zir is a hero celebrated in the Divân of Benî Hilâl; and to bend the right knee is to enter into a conflict for life or death: the figure is derived from the sword-dance.

So much regarding the poem of Solèbi. From this can nothing be gained for the explanation of נחר of the Song? This is for the most part interpreted as the Niph. of נחר (to be inflamed, to be angry with one); but why not as the Pîh. of נחר? It is certainly most natural to interpret this נחר in the sense of nakhar, to breathe, snort; but the LXX, Symm., Theod., in rendering by μαχάσαντο διωμαχάσαντο, appear to have connected with nihharu the meaning of that (Arab.) tanahar, which comes from tahnr, the front of the neck. The outstretched neck of the camel, the breast, the head, the face, the brow, the nose, are, it is well known in the Arab., mere symbols for that which stands forward according to place, time, and rank. Of this nahnr, not only the Old Arab. (vid., Kâmûs under the word) but also the Modern Arab. has denom. verbal forms. In Damascus they say, alsyl nahara min alystan, “the torrent tore away a part of the garden opposing it;” and according to the Deutsch. morg. Zeitschr. xxii. 142, nahhar flana is “to strive forward after one.” Hence tanaharua, to step opposite to (in a hostile manner), like takabalua, then to contend in words, to dispute; and nahir is, according to a vulgar mode of expression, one who places himself coram another, sits down to talk, discourses with him. These denominativa do not in themselves and without further addition express in the modern idioms the idea of “to take an opponent by the neck,” or “to fight hand to hand with him.”

1:7. For the Arab. נחר presents itself for comparison; with inhabitants of the town, as well as of the desert (Hâdar and Bedu), alghadwat, “the (maiden) languishing with love,” a very favourite designation for a maiden fatally in love; the mas. alghady (plur. alghudat) is used in the same sense of a young man. According to its proper signification, it denotes a maiden with a languishing eye, the deeply sunk glimmerings of whose eyelids veil the eye. In Damascus such eyes are called ’iwan dubbal, “pressed down eyes;” and in the Haurân, ’iwan myghharribat, “broken eyes;” and they are not often wanting in love songs there. Accordingly, she who speaks seeks to avoid the neighbourhood of the shepherds, from fear of the hatkalsitr, i.e., for fear lest those who mocked would thus see the secret of her love, in accordance with the verse:

“By its symptoms love discovers itself to the world,

As musk which one carries discovers itself by its aroma.”

1:17. The cypress never bears the name snawbar, which always denotes only the pine, one of the pine tribe. The cypress is only called serwa, collect. seru. Since it is now very probable that ברות is the old Heb. name of the cypress, and since there can at no time have been cypresses on the downs of Beirût, the connection of Arab. birût with ברות is to be given up. Instead of the difficult Heb. word rahhitênu, there is perhaps to be read vhhêthênu (from hhâith = hhâits), “and our
walls.” The word-form Arab. ḥ'ayt may have come from the idiom of the Ḥigâz, or from some other impure source, into the written language; the living language knows only ḥayt (חַיִט), plur. ḥîṭân (Syr. Egypt.) and ḥîjâṭ (Berbery). The written language itself has only the plur. ḥîṭàn, and uses יט as an actual sing. For the transition of the letter tsade into teth in the Song, cf. מִנָּה.

2:11 “For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over— is gone.” These are the words of the enticing love of the bridgroom to his beloved, whom he seeks to raise to the rank of queen. “The fairest period in the life of a Syrian peasant,” thus Wetzstein’s description begins, “are the first seven days after his marriage, in which, along with his young wife, he plays the part of king (melik) and she of queen (melika), and both are treated and served as such in their own district and by the neighbouring communities.” The greater part of village weddings take place for the most part in the month of March, the most beautiful month of the Syrian year, called from its loveliness (sahhr) ḍâr = “prachtmonat” (magnificent month), to which the proverb refers: “If any one would see Paradise in its flowery splendour (fî ezhârihâ), let him contemplate the earth in its month of splendour (fî ḍârîhâ).” Since the winter rains are past, and the sun now refreshes and revives, and does not, as in the following months, oppress by its heat, weddings are celebrated in the open air on the village thrashing-floor, which at this time, with few exceptions, is a flowery meadow. March is also suitable as the season for festivals, because at such a time there is little field labour, and, moreover, everything then abounds that is needed for a festival. During the winter the flocks have brought forth their young,—there are now lambs and kids, butter, milk, and cheese, and cattle for the slaughter, which have become fat on the spring pasture; the neighbouring desert yields for it brown, yellow, and white earth-nuts in such abundance, that a few children in one day may gather several camel-loads.” The description passes over the marriage day itself, with its pomp, the sword-dance of the bride, and the great marriage feast, and begins where the newly married, on the morning after the marriage night,—which the young husband, even to this day, like the young Tobiah, spends sometimes in prayer,—appear as king and queen, and in their wedding attire receive the representative of the bride’s-men, now their minister (mezêr), who presents them with a morning meal. The bride’s-men come, fetch the thrashing-table (“corn-drag”) from the straw storehouse (metben), and erect a scaffolding on the thrashing-floor, with the table above it, which is spread with a variegated carpet, and with two ostrich-feather cushions studded with gold, which is the seat of honour (merteba) for the king and queen during the seven days. This beautiful custom has a good reason for it, and also fulfils a noble end. For the more oppressive, troublesome, and unhappy the condition of the Syro-Palestinian peasant, so much the more reasonable does it appear that he should be honoured for a few days at least, and be celebrated and made happy. Ad considering the facility and wantonness of divorces in the Orient, the recollection of the marriage week, begun so joyfully, serves as a counterpoise to hinder a separation.

3:11. כַּעֲנֵר. The custom of crowning the bridgroom no longer exists in Syria. The bride’s crown, called in Damascus tâg-el’arûs, is called in the Haurân ’orga (עָרְגָה). This consists of a silver circlet, which is covered with a net of strings of corals of about three fingers’ breadth. Gold coins are fastened in rows to this net, the largest being on the lowest row, those in the other rows upward becoming always smaller. At the wedding feast the hair of the bride is untied, and falls freely down over her neck and breast; and that it might not lose its wavy form, it is only oiled with some fragrant substances. The crowning thus begins: the headband is first raised to the rank of queen. “The fairest period in the life of a Syrian peasant,” according to Wetzstein, begins, “are the first seven days after his marriage, in which, along with his young wife, he plays the part of king (melik), and she of queen (melika), and both are treated and served as such in their own district and by the neighbouring communities.” The greater part of village weddings take place for the most part in the month of March, the most beautiful month of the Syrian year, called from its loveliness (sahhr) ḍâr = “prachtmonat” (magnificent month), to which the proverb refers: “If any one would see Paradise in its flowery splendour (fî ezhârihâ), let him contemplate the earth in its month of splendour (fî ḍârîhâ).” Since the winter rains are past, and the sun now refreshes and revives, and does not, as in the following months, oppress by its heat, weddings are celebrated in the open air on the village thrashing-floor, which at this time, with few exceptions, is a flowery meadow. March is also suitable as the season for festivals, because at such a time there is little field labour, and, moreover, everything then abounds that is needed for a festival. During the winter the flocks have brought forth their young,—there are now lambs and kids, butter, milk, and cheese, and cattle for the slaughter, which have become fat on the spring pasture; the neighbouring desert yields for it brown, yellow, and white earth-nuts in such abundance, that a few children in one day may gather several camel-loads.” The description passes over the marriage day itself, with its pomp, the sword-dance of the bride, and the great marriage feast, and begins where the newly married, on the morning after the marriage night,—which the young husband, even to this day, like the young Tobiah, spends sometimes in prayer,—appear as king and queen, and in their wedding attire receive the representative of the bride’s-men, now their minister (mezêr), who presents them with a morning meal. The bride’s-men come, fetch the thrashing-table (“corn-drag”) from the straw storehouse (metben), and erect a scaffolding on the thrashing-floor, with the table above it, which is spread with a variegated carpet, and with two ostrich-feather cushions studded with gold, which is the seat of honour (merteba) for the king and queen during the seven days. This beautiful custom has a good reason for it, and also fulfils a noble end. For the more oppressive, troublesome, and unhappy the condition of the Syro-Palestinian peasant, so much the more reasonable does it appear that he should be honoured for a few days at least, and be celebrated and made happy. Ad considering the facility and wantonness of divorces in the Orient, the recollection of the marriage week, begun so joyfully, serves as a counterpoise to hinder a separation.
adorned at both ends with fringes, between which the Sumûch, silver, half-spherical little bells, hang down. The ends of the Kesmâja fall on both sides of the head, the one on the breast and the other on the back, so that the sound of the Sumûch is distinctly perceptible only during the sword-dance of the bride. Over the Kesmâja the crown is now placed in such a way that it rests more on the front of the head, and the front gold pieces of the under row come to lie on the naked brow. In the Sahkâ, partly referred to under 7:2, the poet addresses the goldsmith:

“And beat (for the bride) little bells, which constantly swing and ring like the tymbals (nakkârât);
And (beat) the crown, one of four rows, and let Gihâdis be on the brow.”

Etymologically considered, I believe that the word ‘orga’ must be regarded as parallel with ‘argûn (אֵרְגוּן), which in the Haurân is the foot-buckle; so that, from the root ‘arag, “to be bent,” it is the designation of a bow or circlet, which the word taj also certainly means. However, on one occasion in Korêa (to the east of Boṣrâ), while we were looking at a bride’s crown, one said to me: “They call it ‘orga, because the coral strings do not hang directly down, but, running oblique (mu’arwajat), form a net of an elongated square.”

4:14. Who recognises in the Moorish nîf, “the nose,” the Heb. אף? And yet the two words are the same. The word אף, enf, “the nose,” is used by the wandering Arabs, who are fond of the dimin. אנו, nîf, which is changed into אינ; for א in the beginning of a word, particularly before a grave and accented syllable, readily falls away. From nîf (neîf), finally, comes nîf, because the idiom of the Moorish Arabians rejects the diphthong ei.

Thus, also, it fared with the word אַנְַף, “the little tent,” אֲהָלות, “the little house,” as the three-cornered capsules of the cardamum are called,—an aromatic plant which is to the present day so ardently loved by the Hadar and the Bedu, on account of its heat, and especially its sweet aroma, that one would have been led to wonder if it were wanting in this passage of the Song. From אָהִיל there is formed the dimin. אֳהָלה, and this is shortened into hêl, which is at the present day the name of the cardamum, while the unabbreviated hel is retained as the caritative of the original meaning,—we say, jâ hêlî, “my dear tent—(i.e., tribal) companions.”

This linguistic process is observable in all the Semitic languages; it has given rise to a mass of new roots. That it began at an early period, is shown by the Phoenician language; for the bibl. names Hiram and Huram are abbreviated from Ahî-ram and Ahu-ram; and the Punic stones supply many analogues, e.g., the proper names Himilcath (= Ahhi-Milcath, restrictus reginae coell) with Hethmilcath (= Ahith-Milcath) and the like. On one of the stones which I myself brought from Carthage is found the word אֲיוּד instead of אֱיוֹד, “sir, master.” In a similar way, the watering-lace which receives so many diverse names by travellers, the Wêba (Weiba), in the Araba valley, will be an abbreviation of אֲיוֹבָה, and this the dimin. of inform, the name of an encampment of the Israelites in the wilderness (Num. 21:10). It had the name ‘en ovoth, “the fountain of the water-bottles,” perhaps from the multitude of water-bottles filled here by water-drawers, waiting one after another. This encampment has been sought elsewhere—certainly incorrectly. Of the harbour-town Elath (on the Red Sea), it has been said, in the geography of Ibn el-Bennâ (MSS of the Royal Lib. in Berlin, Sect. Spr. Nr. 5), published in Jerusalem about the year 1000: “Weila, at the north end of the (eastern) arm of the Red Sea; prosperous and distinguished; rich in palms and fishes; the harbour of Palestine, and the granary of Higâz; is called Aila by the common people; but Aila is laid waste,—it lies quite in the neighbourhood.” Thus it will be correct to say, that the name Weila is abbreviated from אֲיוֹל, “Little-Aila,” and designated a settlement which gradually grew up in the neighbourhood of the old Aila, and to
which, when the former was at last destroyed, the name was transferred, so that “Little-Aila” became Aila; therefore it is that the later Arab. geographers know nothing of Weila. I have already elsewhere mentioned, that at the root of the name of the well-known Port Suês lies the Arab. sâs (= אֲשִיש), which, among all the Syrian tribes, has lost the initial letter Elif, and takes the form of Sâs. Hence the name Suês (Suwês), the diminutive. The place has its name from this, that it was built on the foundations of an older harbour.

Silv. de Sacy already (vid., Gesen. Thes. p. 33b) conjectured that אהלות קקלה means cardamums. But, as it appears, he based his proof less on the identity of the two words hêl and ahalôt, than on the circumstance that he found the word kâkula—the Jemanic, and perhaps originally Indian name of cardamums—in the hâhula of the Egyptians of the present day. But the Egyptian does not pronounce the k like h; he does not utter it at all, or at most like a Hamza, so that kâkula is sounded by him not hâhula, but ʾâ fora. And who could presuppose the antiquity of this word, or that of its present pronunciation, in a land which has so radically changed both its language and its inhabitants as Egypt? And why should the Palestinians have received their Indian spices, together with their names, from Egypt? Why not much rather from Aila, to which they were brought from Jemen, either by ships or by the well-organized caravans (vid., Strabo, xvi. 4) which traded in the maritime country Tihâma? Or from Têma, the chief place in the desert (Job 6:19; Isa. 21:14), whither they were brought from ʾAkir, the harbour of Gerrha, which, according to Strabo (as above), was the great Arab. spice market? But if Palestine obtained its spices from thence, it would also, with them, receive the foreign name for them unchanged,— kâkula,—since all the Arab tribes express the k sound very distinctly. In short, the word אהלות קקלה has nothing to do with kâkula; it is shown to be a pure Semitic word by the plur. formations ahaloth and ahalim (Prov. 7:17). The punctuation does not contradict this. The inhabitants of Palestine received the word, with the thing itself, through the medium of the Arabs, among whom the Heb. אהלות קקלה is at the present time, as in ancient times, pronounced אהלות קקלה; thus the Arab vocalization is simply retained to distinguish it from אהלות קקלה in its proper signification, without the name of the spice becoming thereby a meaningless foreign word. That the living language had a sing. for “a cardamum capsule” is self-evident. Interesting is the manner and way in which the modern Arabs help themselves with reference to this sing. Since hêl does not discover the mutilated אהלות קקלה, and the Arab. âhlun, besides, has modified its meaning (it signifies tent- and house-companions), the nom. unit. hêla, “a cardamum capsule,” is no longer formed from hêl; the word geras, “the little bell,” is therefore adopted, thereby forming a comparison of the firmly closed seed capsules, in which the loose seeds, on being shaken, give forth an audible rustling, with the little bells which are hung round the bell-wether and the leading camel. Thus they say: take three or four little bells (ebras), and not: telât, arba’ hêlat (which at most, as a mercantile expression, would denote, “parcels or kinds” of cardamum); they speak also of geras-el-hêl (”hêl little bells”) and geras-et-ṭib (“spice little bells”). This “little bell” illustrates the ancient אהלות קקלה. Supposing that kâkula might have been the true name of the cardamum, then these would have been called אהלות קקלה קפסール, “kâkula capsules,” by the Heb. traders in spicery, who, as a matter of course, knew the foreign name; while, on the contrary, the people, ignoring the foreign name, would use the words אהלות קקלה קפסול, “spice-capsules,” or only ahaloth. Imported spices the people named from their appearance, without troubling themselves about their native names. An Arabian called the nutmeg gôz-et-ṭib, “spice-nut,” which would correspond to a Heb. אהלות קקלה קפסול, So he called the clove-blossom mismâr-et-ṭib, “spice-clove,” as we do, or merely mismâr, “clove.” The spice-merchant knows only the
foreign word *gurumful*, “clove.” It is very probable that *hel*, divested of its appellative signification by the word *geras*, in process of time disappeared from the living language. That pounded cardamum is one of the usual ingredients in Arab. coffee, we see from a poem, only a single very defective copy of which could be obtained by Wallin (vid., *Deutsch. morg. Zeit.* vi. 373). The verse alluded to, with a few grammatical and metrical changes which were required, is as follows:

“With a pot (of coffee) in which must be cardamum and nutmeg,
And twenty cloves, the right proportion for connoisseurs.”

The nut is not, as Wallin supposes, the cocoa-nut (*gôz-el-Hind*), but the nutmeg; and *ûd* = “the small piece of wood,” is the clove, as Wallin also, rightly; elsewhere *ûd* and *ûda* is the little stalk of the raisin.

5:1. “Eat, friends, drink and be drunken, beloved.” With מְרִיתָם יָדִיעְךָ here is compared מְרִית מְרִית, Heb. *mirjâ*, and at the present day in Syria, *shebâb el-arîs*, i.e., the bridegroom’s young men; their chief is called the *Shebîn*. The designation ‘bride’s-men’ (Nymphagogen) is not wholly suitable. Certainly they have also to do service to the bride; and if she is a stranger, they form the essential part of the armed escort on horseback which heads the marriage procession (*el-fûridâ*), and with mock fighting, which is enacted before the bride and the bride’s-maids (*el-ferrûdât*), leads it into the bridegroom’s village; but the chief duties of the *shebâb* on the marriage day and during the ‘king’s week’ belong properly to the bridegroom. This escort must be an ancient institution of the country. Perhaps it had its origin in a time of general insecurity in the land, when the ‘young men’ formed a watch-guard, during the festival, against attacks.” The names מְרִית and רֵעַ Wetzstein derives from a רֵעִים, “to be closely connected,” which is nearly related to רעה; for he takes רֵעַ, Job 6:27, as the etymologically closer description of the former, and מְרִית מְרִית כְּלַיְיוּת (*murî), he places parallel to the Arab. word *mirjâ*, which signifies “the inseparable companion,” and among all the Syrian nomad tribes is the designation of the bell-wether, because it follows closely the steps of the shepherd, carries his bread-pouch, and receives a portion at every meal-time.

7:1 What would ye see in Shulamith?—
“As the dance of Mahanaim.”

“*The sports during the days of the marriage festival are from time to time diversified with dances. The various kinds of dances are comprehended under the general names of *sahka* and *debka*. The *sahka*, pronounced by the Beduin *sahée* (= *sahtsche*), is a graceful solitary dance, danced by a single person, or in itself not involving several persons. The *debka*, “hanging dance,” because the dancers link themselves together by their little fingers; if they were linked together by their hands, this would give the opportunity of pressing hands, which required to be avoided, because Arab ladies would not permit this from men who were strangers to them. For the most part, the *debka* appears as a circular dance. If it is danced by both sexes, it is called *debkk muwadda’a* = ‘the variegated debka.’ The *sahka* must be of Beduin origin, and is accordingly always danced with a *kasidah* (poem or song) in the nomad idiom; the *debka* is the peculiar national dance of the Syrian peasantry (Haḍarî), and the songs with which it is danced are exclusively in the language of the Haḍarî. They have the prevailing metre of the so-called Andalusian ode (—υ——|—υ——|—υ——|—υ——), and it is peculiar to the *debka*, that its strophes hang together like the links of a chain, or like the fingers of the dancers, while each following strophe begins with the words with which the preceding one closes [similar to the step-like rhythm of the psalms of degrees; vid., *Psalmen*, ii. 257]. For the *sahka* and the *debka* they have a solo singer. Whenever he has sung a verse, the chorus of dancers and spectators takes up the *kehrvers*
(meredd), which in the debka always consists of the two last lines of the first strophe of the poem. Instrumental music is not preferred in dancing; only a little timbrel (deff), used by the solo singer, who is not himself (or herself) dancing, gently accompanies the song to give the proper beat (cf. Ex. 15:20f., and Ps. 68:26). To the sahka, which is danced after at kasidah (for the most part with the metre——υ——υ——υ——υ——) without the kehrvers in 2/4 time, belongs the sword-dance, which the bride dances on her marriage day. Wetzstein thus describes it in Deutsch. morg. Zeit. xxii. 106, having twice witnessed it: "The figure of the dancer (el-hâshi, 'she who fills the ring,' or abū hwêsh, 'she who is in the ring'), the waving dark hair of her locks cast loose, her serious noble bearing, her downcast eyes, her graceful movements, the quick and secure step of her naked feet, the lightning-like flashing of the blade, the skilful movements of her left hand, in which the dancer holds a handkerchief, the exact keeping of time, although the song of the munshid (the leader) becomes gradually quicker and the dance more animated—this is a scene which has imprinted itself indelibly on my memory. It is completed by the ring (hwêsh), the one half of which is composed of men and the other of women. They stand upright, gently move their shoulders, and accompany the beat of the time with a swaying to and fro of the upper part of their bodies, and a gentle beating of their hands stretched upwards before their breasts. The whole scene is brightened by a fire that has been kindled. The constant repetition of the words jâ ḥalâlí jâ mâlâ, O my own, O my possession! [vid. Psalmen, ii. 384, Anm.], and the sword with which the husband protects his family and his property in the hand of the maiden, give to the sahka, celebrated in the days of domestic happiness, the stamp of an expression of thanks and joy over the possession of that which makes life pleasant—the family and property; for with the Ḥadarî and the Bedawî the word ḥalâl includes wife and child."

"When the sahka is danced by a man, it is always a sword-dance. Only the form of this dance (it is called sahkât el-Gawâfina), as it is performed in Gôf, is after the manner of the contre-dance, danced by two rows of men standing opposite each other. The dancers do not move their hands, but only their shoulders; the women form the ring, and sing the refrain of the song led by the munshid, who may here be also one of the dancers."

7:2 "How beautiful are thy steps in the shoes, O prince's daughter!"

After the maidenhood of the newly married damsel has been established (cf. Deut. 22:13–21) before the tribunal (dîvân) of the wedding festival, there begins a great dance; the song sung to it refers only to the young couple, and the inevitable wasf, i.e., a description of the personal perfections and beauty of the two, forms its principal contents. Such a wasf was sung also yesterday during the sword-dance of the bride; that of to-day (the first of the seven wedding-festival days) is wholly in praise of the queen; and because she is now a wife, commends more those attractions which are visible than those which are veiled. In the Song, only 7:2–6 is compared to this wasf. As for the rest, it is the lovers themselves who reciprocally sing. Yet this may also have been done under the influence of the custom of the wasf. The repetition, 4:1–5 and 6:4–7, are wholly after the manner of the wasf; in the Syrian wedding songs also, where encomiums are after one pattern.

We quote here by way of example such an encomium. It forms the conclusion of a sahka, which had its origin under the following circumstances: When, some forty years ago, the sheik of Nawâ gave away his daughter in marriage, she declared on her wedding day that she would dance the usual sword-dance only along with a kasidah, composed specially for her by a noted Hauran poet. Otherwise nothing was to be done, for the Hauranian chief admired the pride of his daughter, because it was believed it would guard her from errors, and afford security for her family honour. The most distinguished poet of the district at that time was Kasîm el-Chinn, who had just shortly
before returned from a journey to Mesopotamia to the phylarch of the Gerbâ tribe, who had bestowed on him royal gifts. He lived in the district of Gâsim, famed from of old for its poets, a mile (German) to the north of Nawâ. A messenger on horseback was sent for him. The poet had no time to lose; he stuck some writing materials and paper into his girdle, mounted his ass, and composed his poem whilst on the way, the messenger going before him to announce his arrival. When Kâsim came, the fire was already kindled on the ground, the wedding guests were waiting, and the dancer in bridal attire, and with the sword in her hand, stood ready. Kâsim kissed her hand and took the place of leader of the song, since from want of time no one could repeat the poem; moreover, Kâsim had a fine voice. When the dance was over, the bride took her kesmâja from off her head, folded twenty Gâzi (about thirty thalers) in it, and threw it to the poet,—a large present considering the circumstances, for the kesmâja of a rich bride is costly. On the other hand, she required the poem to be delivered up to her. The plan of the poem shows great skill. Nawâ, lying in the midst of the extremely fruitful Batanian plain, is interested in agriculture to an extent unequalled in any other part of Syria and Palestine; its sheik is proud of the fact that formerly Job's 500 yoke ploughed there, and Nawâ claims to be Job's town. Since the peasant, according to the well-known proverb, de bobus arator, has thought and concern for nothing more than for agriculture; so the poet might with certainty reckon on an understanding and an approbation of his poem if he makes it move within the sphere of country life. He does this. He begins with this, that a shekâra, i.e., a benefice, is sown for the dancer, which is wont to be sown only to the honour of one of great merit about the place. That the benefice might be worthy of the recipient, four sauwâmen (a sauwâma consists of six yoke) are required, and the poet has opportunity to present to his audience pleasing pictures of the great shekâra, of harvests, thrashings, measuring, loading, selling. Of the produce of the wheat the portion of the dancer is now bought, first the clothes, then the ornaments; both are described. The wasf forms the conclusion, which is here given below. In the autumn of 1860, I received the poem from a young man of Nawâ at the same time along with other poems of Kâsim's, all of which he knew by heart. The rest are much more artistic and complete in form than the sahka. Who can say how many of the (particularly metrically) weak points of the latter are to be attributed to the poet, and to the rapidity with which it was composed; and how many are to be laid to the account of those by whom it was preserved? "Here hast thou thy ornament, O beautiful one! put it on, let nothing be forgotten! Put it on, and live when the coward and the liar are long dead.

She said: Now shalt thou celebrate me in song, describe me in verse from head to foot! I say: O fair one, thine attractions I am never able to relate, And only the few will I describe which my eyes permit me to see: Her head is like the crystal goblet, her hair like the black night, Her black hair like the seven nights, the like are not in the whole year; In waves it moves hither and thither, like the rope of her who draws water, And her side locks breathe all manner of fragrance, which kills me. The new moon beams on her brow, and dimly illuminated are the balances, And her eyebrows like the arch of the Nûn drawn by an artist's hand. The witchery of her eyes makes me groan as if they were the eyes of a Kufic lady; Her nose is like the date of Irâk, the edge of the Indian sword; Her face like the full moon, and heart-breaking are her cheeks. Her mouth is a little crystal ring, and her teeth rows of pearls, And her tongue scatters pearls; and, ah me, how beautiful her lips!
Her spittle pure virgin honey, and healing for
the bite of a viper.
Comparable to elegant writing, the Seijal waves
downwards on her chin,
Thus black seeds of the fragrant Kezha show
themselves on white bread.
The Mâni draws the neck down to itself with
the spell written in Syrian letters;
Her neck is like the neck of the roe which
drinks out of the fountain of Kanawât.
Her breast like polished marble tablets, as ships
bring them to Šêdâ (Sidon),
Thereon like apples of the pomegranate two
glittering piles of jewels.
Her arms are drawn swords, peeled
cucumbers—oh that I had such!
And incomparably beautiful her hands in the
rose-red of the Ḥinnâ-leaf;
Her smooth, fine fingers are like the writing
reed not yet cut;
The glance of her nails like the Dura-seeds
which have lain overnight in milk;
Her body is a mass of cotton wool which a
master’s hand has shaken into down,
And her legs marble pillars in the sacred house
of the Omajads.
There hast thou, fair one, thy attractions,
receive this, nothing would be forgotten,
And live and flourish when the coward and the
liar are long ago dead!”
7:3 “Thy body a heap of wheat, set round with
lilies.”

In the fifth Excursus regarding the winnowing
shovel and the winnowing fork in my Comment.
on Isaiah, Wetzstein’s illustration of this figure
was before me. The dissertation regarding the
thrashing-table contains many instructive
supplements thereto. When the grain is
thrashed, from that which is thrashed (derîs),
which consists of corn, chopped straw, and
chaff, there is formed a new heap of
winnowings, which is called ‘arama. “According
to its derivation (from ‘aram, to be uncovered),
‘arama means heaps of rubbish destitute of
vegetation; ‘arama, ‘oreîma, ‘îrâm, are, in the
Haurân and Golân, proper names of several
Puys (conical hills formed by an eruption)
covered with yellow or red volcanic rubbish. In
the terminology of the thrashing-floor, the
word always and without exception denotes the
derîs-heaps not yet winnowed; in the Heb., on
the contrary, corn-heaps already winnowed.
Such a heap serves (Ruth 3:7) Boaz as a pillow
for his head when he lay down and watched his
property. Luther there incorrectly renders by
‘behind a Mandel,” i.e., a heap of (fifteen)
shaves; on the contrary, correctly at the
passage before us (Song 7:3), ‘like a heap of
wheat,’ viz., a heap of winnowed wheat. The
wheat colour (el-lôn el-hîntî) is in Syria
regarded as the most beautiful colour of the
human body.”