

# *The King Who Fell*

5



*Standing Watch in Vain*

## Beloved's Deadly Embrace



*“My lover thrust his hand  
through the latch-opening;  
my heart began to pound for him.*

*I arose to open for my lover,  
and my hands dripped with myrrh,  
my fingers with flowing myrrh,  
on the handles of the lock.” 5:4-5*

Then a strange development:

*“I opened for my lover,  
but my lover had left...”*

5:6



Where did he go?  
And why?

*“I opened for my lover,  
but my lover had left...”*

5:6



# Watchmen of Jerusalem



Theme: Protectors of a city;  
Obligated to defend **Ezek 33**

Precedental Biblical mention:  
A song of ascents. Of Solomon.  
*Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain. Ps 127:1*

Watchmen have no power if the king is ungodly

# The Bride & the Watchmen

## 1<sup>st</sup> Encounter:

Bride: *“All night long on my bed I looked for the one my heart loves; I looked for him but did not find him. I will get up now and go about the city, through its streets and squares...” The watchmen found me as they made their rounds in the city. “Have you seen the one my heart loves?” Scarcely had I passed them when I found the one my heart loves.* 3:1-4

## The watchmen learn:

- The Bride and the King rendezvous at night
- The Bride is intent on the union with the King
- The King is vulnerable

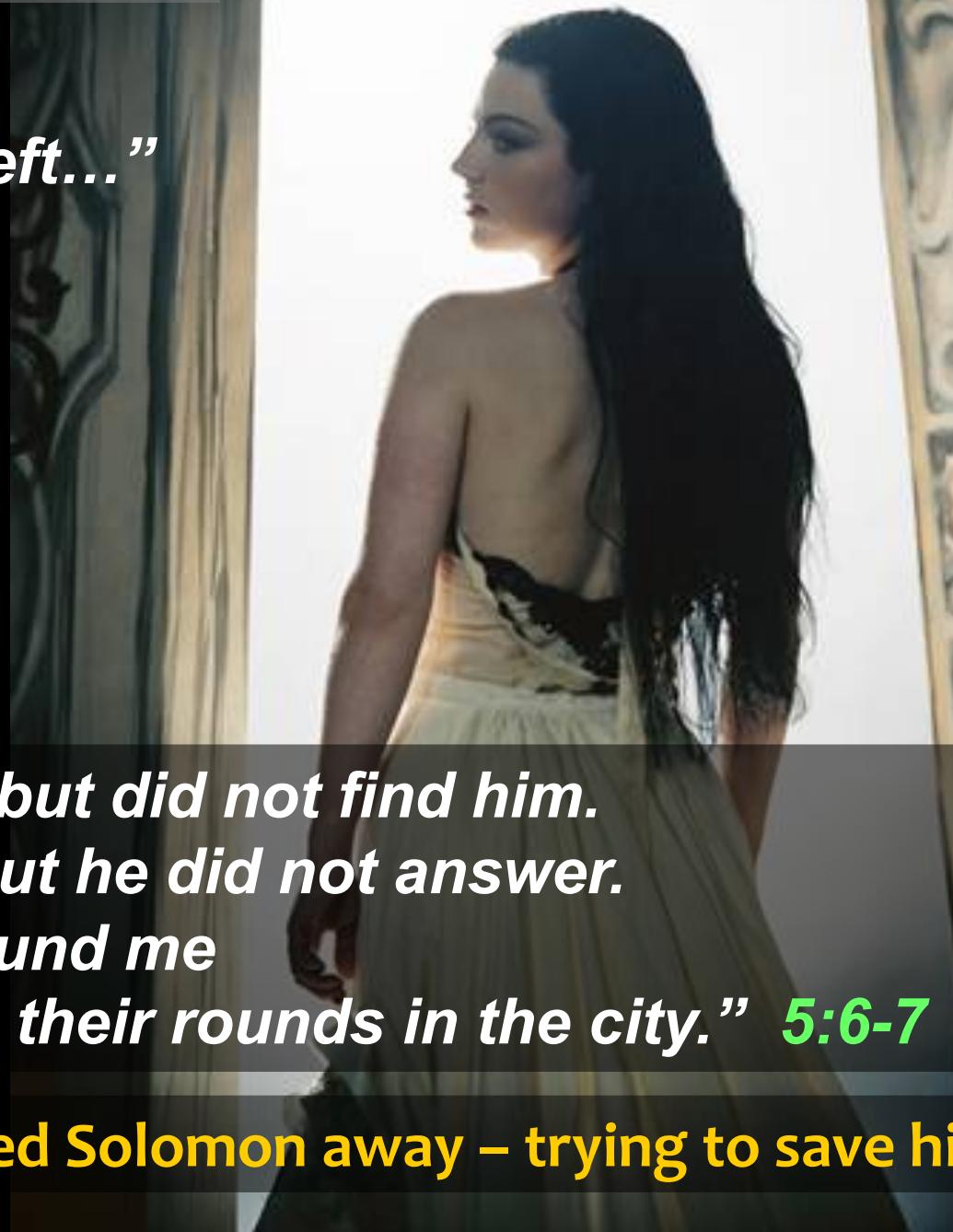
## The Bride & the Watchmen

*"I opened for my lover,  
but my lover had left..."*

**5:6**

*"I looked for him but did not find him.  
I called him but he did not answer.  
The watchmen found me  
as they made their rounds in the city." 5:6-7*

**The watchmen have snatched Solomon away – trying to save him**



# Conflict

2<sup>nd</sup> Encounter:

***“They beat me,  
they bruised me;  
they took away my  
cloak, [Heb: ra-diyd]  
those watchmen of  
the walls!” 5:7***



***In that day the Lord  
will snatch away  
[Judah's] finery...  
the linen garments  
and tiaras and  
shawls [Heb: ra-diyd]***  
***Isa 3:19-23***

**The watchmen do what God does**

- ⇒ They attempt to save the city (forfeit lives otherwise)  
but are powerless, fulfilling: ***Ps 127:1!***
- ⇒ The watchmen are not punished by Solomon...  
...he can't justify the union

## Central Couplet of the Song

Couplet is the Song's center:

- Literally (same # lines before and after)
- Thematically (sexual consummation a focus)

***"I have come into my garden, my sister, my bride;  
I have gathered my myrrh with my spice."*** 5:1

***"I have joined with you, my sister, my bride,  
I have gathered my death with my pleasure"***

DEATH



## Daughters of Jerusalem

*“I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,  
If you find my beloved,  
As to what you will tell him:  
For I am lovesick.”*

*“What kind of beloved is your beloved,  
That thus you adjure us?”*

**5:8-9, NASB**



- **Adjure = to compel an oath when not freely given**
- **This dynamic has friction**

**She stakes her claim**

*“This is my lover, this is my friend,  
O daughters of Jerusalem.”* **5:16**

## The Oath: “Don’t Interfere”

**“Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you by the gazelles and by the does of the field: Do not arouse or awaken love until it so desires.” 2:7; 3:5; 8:4**

**Traditional reading: Don’t start love before it is ready**

**Hebrew means:**

**“Do not disturb our lovemaking” Fox, 1985, p107-9**

**Beloved is aware the King of Jerusalem is mesmerized by her**

**She adjures the Daughters of Jerusalem not to split them up**



## Contextual Evidence for “Do Not Disturb”

For each oath (**2:7, 3:5, 8:4**) the verse before speaks of the onset of an intimate encounter

**“His left arm is under my head,  
And his right arm embraces me.”**

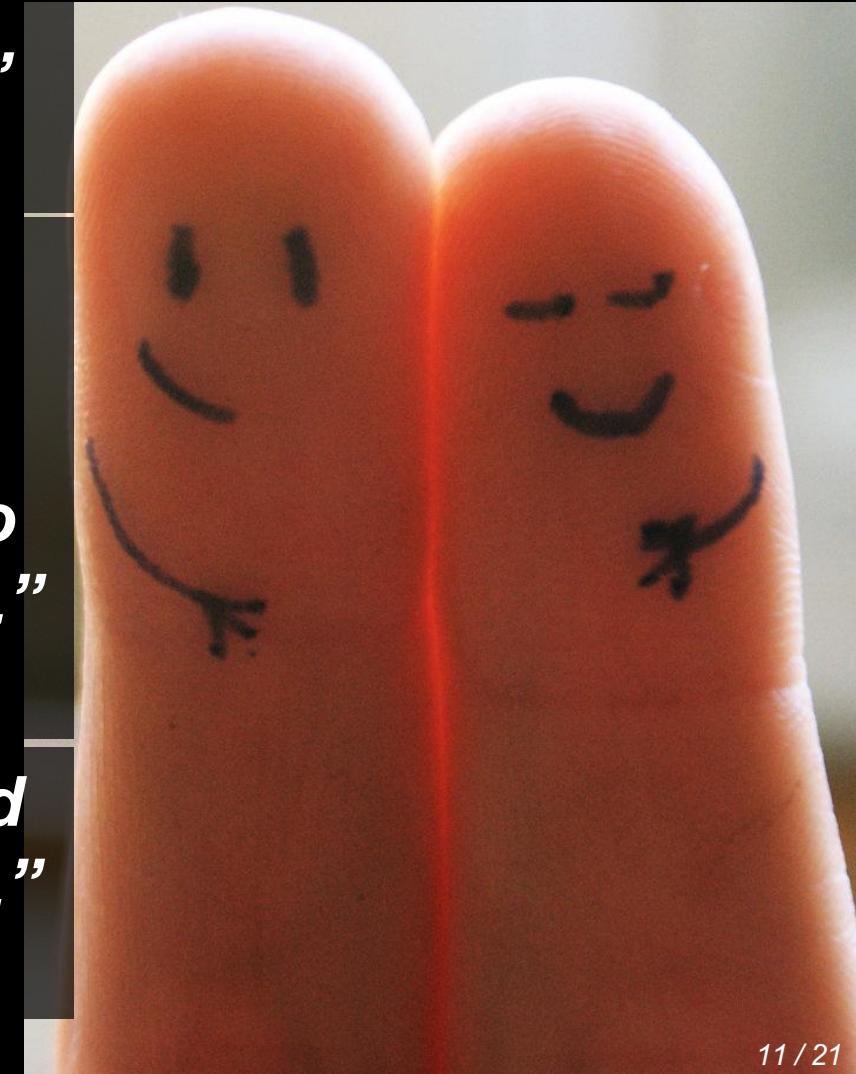
**2:6**

**“When I found him whom my soul loves; I held on to him and would not let him go; until I had brought him to my mother’s house, and into the room of her who conceived me.”**

**3:4**

**“Let his left hand be under my head  
And his right hand embrace me.”**

**8:3**



# A World Without God

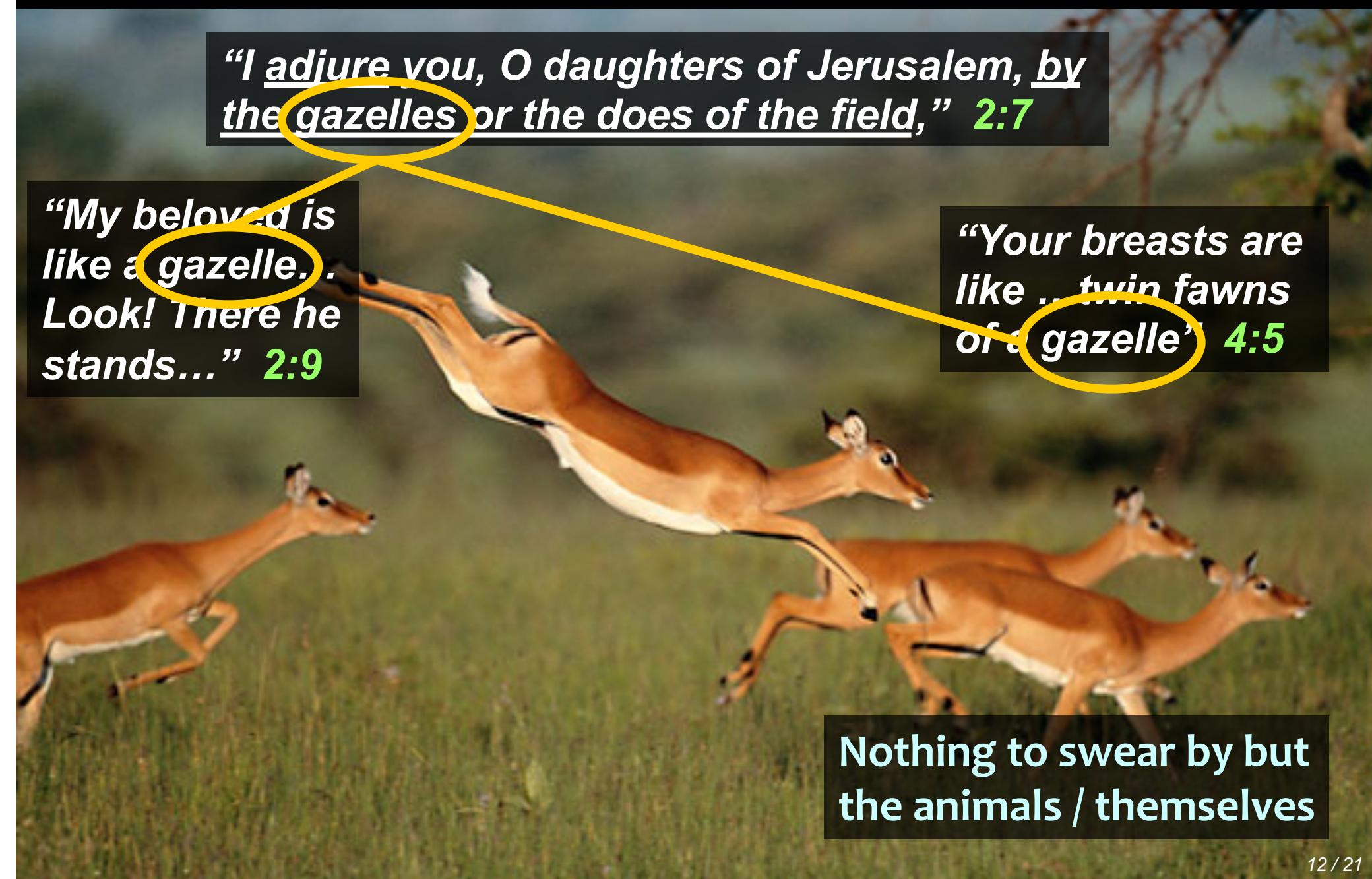
# No mention of God in the Song

*"I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles or the does of the field," 2:7*

*"My beloved is like a gazelle. Look! There he stands..." 2:9*

*"Your breasts are like . . twin fawns of a gazelle" 4:5*

Nothing to swear by but the animals / themselves



# Major Symbols

Song belongs  
in the Bible



*Mt 6:28-29*

BEAUTY



DEATH



*Gen 8:11*

*Mt 3:16*

*Jn 1-4*

*Hos 7:11*

NEW PATH



FERTILE  
WOMAN

Solomon's deadly new path  
chasing beautiful women

*Gen 9:4*  
*Mt 26:27-28*  
*Isa 1:29*

# Single Symbols



En Gedi



Mare in Egypt



60 guards / 60 queens



Leopard & gazelle



'Ra-diyd' shawl



Proverbs 7 girl



Mandrakes



'Tashuwqah' desire



A Love like Death

# A Mare Among Military Stallions



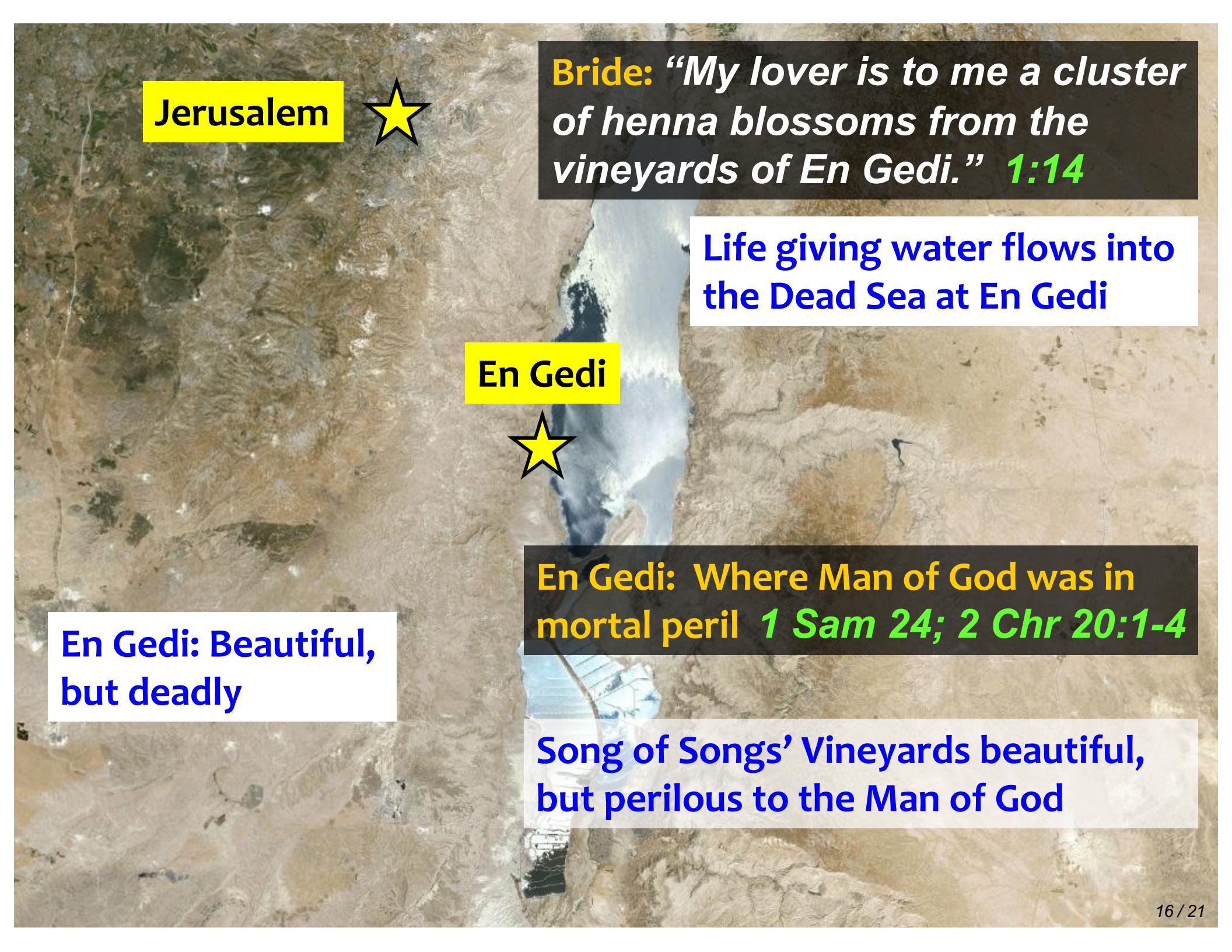
*“I liken you, my darling, to a mare among Pharaoh’s chariot horses.”*

1:9



Battle of Kadesh, 1274 BC: Hittites loosed mares in heat against Egyptian stallion-drawn chariots as a military tactic

Suggestion she may be enticing but deadly



Jerusalem



Bride: “*My lover is to me a cluster of henna blossoms from the vineyards of En Gedi.*” 1:14

Life giving water flows into the Dead Sea at En Gedi

En Gedi



En Gedi: Where Man of God was in mortal peril 1 Sam 24; 2 Chr 20:1-4

Song of Songs’ Vineyards beautiful, but perilous to the Man of God

En Gedi: Beautiful, but deadly

## The Veil [ra-diyd]

*they took away my cloak, [Heb: ra-diyd]  
those watchmen of the walls! 5:7*

\*Sole\* Biblical appearance: garment worn by prostitute Judah



*The Lord says, “The women of Zion are haughty... flirting with their eyes... strutting along with swaying hips... In that day the Lord will snatch away their finery: the bangles and headbands... and mirrors, and the linen garments and tiaras and shawls [Heb: ra-diyd].” Isa 3:16-23*

=> Bride is represented as sexually enticing; but in a dangerous context

## Mandrakes at her Door

*The mandrakes send out their fragrance,  
and at our door is every delicacy 7:13*

Hebrew: duda-'im; (c.f. dodi, lovemaking) believed aphrodisiac

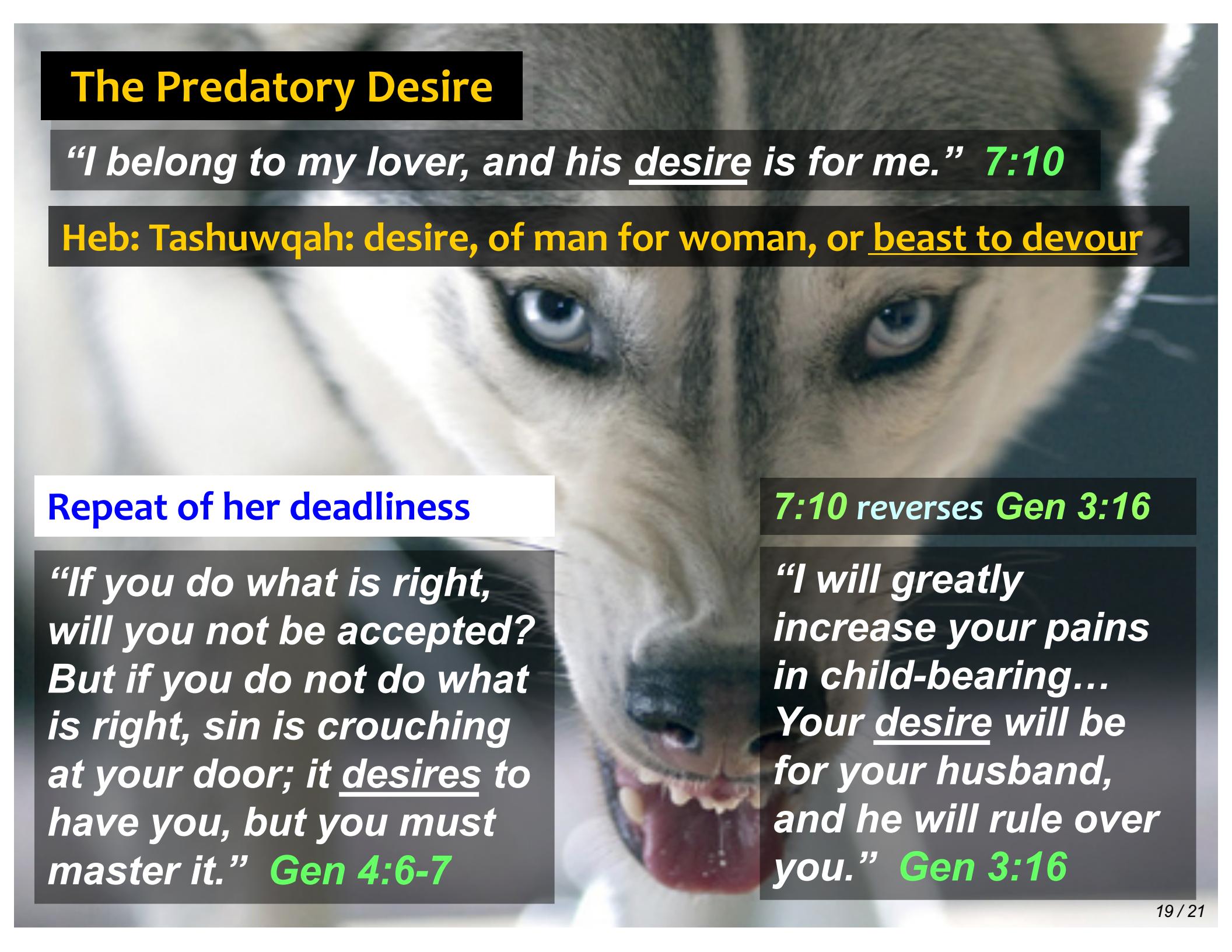


\*Sole\* Biblical appearance: Leah “buys” a night with Jacob with her mandrakes



*So when Jacob came in from the fields that evening, Leah went out to meet him. “You must sleep with me,” she said. “I have hired you with my son’s mandrakes.” So he slept with her that night. Gen 30:16*

=> Bride is represented as sexually enticing; but inappropriate

A close-up photograph of a wolf's face, showing its intense blue eyes and a slightly open mouth with visible teeth. The background is blurred.

## The Predatory Desire

*"I belong to my lover, and his desire is for me."* 7:10

Heb: Tashuwqah: desire, of man for woman, or beast to devour

Repeat of her deadliness

*"If you do what is right,  
will you not be accepted?  
But if you do not do what  
is right, sin is crouching  
at your door; it desires to  
have you, but you must  
master it."* Gen 4:6-7

7:10 reverses Gen 3:16

*"I will greatly  
increase your pains  
in child-bearing...  
Your desire will be  
for your husband,  
and he will rule over  
you."* Gen 3:16

# Predator and Prey

Solomon: “*Come with me from Lebanon,  
my bride... from the lions' dens and the  
mountain haunts of leopards.*” 4:8



Bride: “*Make haste,  
my beloved, and be  
like a gazelle or like a  
young stag...*” 8:14

Repeated emphasis that she is deadly to him



En Gedi



Mare in Egypt



60 guards / 60 queens



Leopard & gazelle

'Ra-diyd' shawl

Proverbs 7 girl



Subtle infusions of deadly concepts

Mandrakes

'Tashuwqah' desire

A Love like Death