

Songs- Arise, and Come with Me (2:8-17)



In the previous season, the bride spent much time, growing in deep spiritual intimacy with the Lord. But now the new season has dawned, and a new challenge is given to her by the Lord to a deeper partnership.

There are two challenges of spiritual life. The main focus of :

- (i) Ch 1 is sitting at the table of the LORD, drawn away in intimacy.
- (ii) Ch 2 is to come away with Him to the mountains, running in ministry.

This speaks of waiting on the Lord VS serving the Lord. Or Life of hiddenness in God VS Life of ministry in public. Often this can bring conflict in our Christian life. But true service comes out of waiting on the Lord and hearing His voice. Our hope and prayer are that our inner life of devotion to the Lord is always greater than the external ministry. But that great day will reveal the truth.

A. 2:8-9 - Jesus Leaping upon the Mountains

The Lord's Voice to the Shulamite and Her New Perspective on the Lord (v8-9)

1. Previously she saw the Lord as the Good Shepherd who feeds the flock (1:7-10), and the Apple Tree that refreshes her weary soul (2:3). Here the Lord is revealed as a powerful gazelle and a young stag (male deer) energetically jumping and scaling the hills and the mountains with boundless energy. Typical gazelle can run up to 70 km/h and jump 3.5m high. They can out-manuever and out last cheetahs!
2. This is a fresh revelation of the Lord as the conquering King. He powerfully and joyously leaps over all the mountains and hills. Nothing can stop Him or restrain Him. There are seven active verbs describing Him here. (i) coming, (ii) leaping, (iii) skipping, (iv) standing, (v) looking, (vi) gazing, (vii) speaking.

'For by You I can run against a troop, by My God I can leap over a wall... It is God who arms me with strength, and makes my way perfect. He makes my feet like the feet of deer, and sets me on my high places.' (Ps 18:29-33)

3. 'Mountains' are (i) the picture of obstacles and adversities in life. The hills are smaller troubles (Mk 11:23 C.f. Zech 4:7). (ii) the picture of a spiritual summit fraught with dangers. E.g., 'lions dens' and 'mountains of leopards' (3:8). We often fear to ascend the heights. (iii) The place of costly sacrifice and obedience. E.g., Mt Moriah. The mountain ranges are not the place the Shulamite would naturally feel comfortable.

The Lord is Gazing through the Lattice (v9)

1. At first, the Shulamite is aware of the sound of the Lord jumping on the mountains. Then she is aware of the Lord's presence standing outside the wall, 'our wall' of intimacy (2:4). She is not in sin. Then why is the Lord suddenly standing outside the wall? Because now He is coming to her in a different way.
2. Suddenly the Shulamite is aware of the Lord's eyes looking in through the lattice. So, the Lord's face is half-concealed and half-revealed. Then the Shulamite hears the voice of the Lord inviting her to come away with Him into the deeper terrains of the mountains - into a deeper partnership with Him.

Moses sought to know the Lord's ways - *'...show me now Your way that I may know You.'* (Ex 33:13) *'Your way was in the sea, Your path in the great waters, and Your footsteps were not known.'* (Ps 77:19)

B. 2:10-14 Invitation to Deeper Partnership for Harvest and Intimacy

Invitation to Deeper Partnership (v10)

'Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.' (Repeated in 2:9, 13) - (i) 'Rise up' VS 'sitting under apple tree'; (ii) 'my love' (repeated 22 times) & 'my beloved' (repeated 22 times); (iii) 'Come away' = 'Come along' (NASV).

1. Where to? The exact location is not clear, but the invitation is to accompany the Lord all the way to the mountain on which He jumps and skips as if these rough terrains are nothing. But the pathway leads to a place described as 'the cleft of rock' and 'the secret places of the cliff' (2:14).
2. The question in the Shulamite's heart is, 'Is it safe to follow the Lord to the mountains?' Israel's mountains were not known to be a safe place. They are described as *the lion's dens* and *the mountains of the*

leopards! 'Come with Me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon. Look from the top of Amana, from the top of Senir and Hermon, from the lion's dens, from the mountains of the leopards.' (4:8).

Can the Shulamite believe that the banner of the Lord over her is 'LOVE' out on the dangerous mountains as much as she did inside the banqueting hall? (c.f. 2:4) This call to a deeper partnership with the Lord shakes her sense of comfort and security! This invitation of His is both exciting and terrifying. Many have experienced this call of the Lord. The Lord is calling them through the lattice – His face is half-concealed and half-revealed. Is this truly the voice of the Lord? How can I be sure? Is the Lord's leadership safe?

3. When Jesus called the twelve disciples He said, *'Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men.'* (Matt 4:19) What is a fisher of men? Nobody knew what it was. The Lord is saying here, 'Come with Me to a life of faith and adventure in the unknown (It is known to Him). Together we will leap over the hills and the mountains of challenge and sacrifice, and enjoy the exciting life and journey.' Peter asked the Lord in the raging storm, *'Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.'* (Matt 24:28)

Is it safer to go to Jesus on the water? Or is it safer to stay in the boat without Jesus?

[Invitation to the Harvest \(2:11-13\)](#)

The voice of the Lord is very tender and persuasive. He mentions the seven signs of the new season. It will lead to the new joys of the harvest. *This is an invitation to join the Lord in the coming harvest in costly obedience.*

1. *'Lo, the winter is past'* – 'behold/see' or 'think/remember', 'the old season is gone and the new season has come.' The Lord is saying, 'If I was faithful to you in the past winter season of difficulties, then I will be faithful to you in the season of the harvest also.'
2. *'The rain is over and gone'* – (i) The cold and damp winter rain has passed. (ii) The early rain for flowers to bloom has already done its work. The early sign of the flowers blooming is the guarantee for the full harvest to come.
3. *'The flowers appear on the earth'* – It's the spring season (spiritually). Now the sign of the new life begins to appear from the hardened ground of the winter soil; The spring is a time of sowing for harvest.
4. *'The time of singing has come'* – It's the time of joy and time of refreshing! Usually, the time of singing refers to harvest time. But here it might be referring to the last-minute pre-harvest preparation. E.g., 'time has arrived for pruning the vines.' (NASV)
5. *'And the voice of turtle dove is heard in our land'* – turtledoves are heard during the harvest time. Doves also represent the Holy Spirit.
6. *'The fig tree puts forth her green figs' and 'the vines with tender grapes'* – again, both fruits are the early signs of the harvest - August or September. The fig tree and the vine represent the people of God – Israel and the church. It points to the appointed time of destiny (Matt 24:32).

The Lord had the vision of the harvest four months before the harvest: *'Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!'* (John 4:35)

[Invitation to Intimacy – 'Cleft and Cliff' Encounter \(2:14\)](#)

The ultimate and the only motive of the Lord's invitation is for greater intimacy with His bride.

1. *'O My dove'* – Dove is a symbol of purity and loyalty. It is the Lord's affirmation and encouragement of His bride. *'Though you lie down among the sheepfolds, you will be like the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.'* (Ps 68:13)
2. *'in the cleft of the rock'* – this is the safe place to hide.

C.f. Cross of Christ – 'They drank of that spiritual Rock... and that Rock was Christ... (1 Cor. 10:4)

'...Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. (Ex 33:21-22)

3. *'in the secret places of the cliffs'* – 'In the secret place of steep pathway' (NASV) or 'stairs' (KJV). (C.f. Ps 91:1; Gen 28:12-17 – Jacob's ladder opening up to heaven). When the Lord challenges you to follow Him closely in costly obedience, will you say, 'Yes'?
4. *'Let Me see your face. Let me hear your voice. For your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.'* - The Lord desires to see our face and hear our voice in the secret place of worship and prayer. This is the Lord's motivation for calling us into the harvest.

Elijah stood at the *cave* of the mountain of God. (C.f. 1 Kings 19:8-10) How many have heard the Lord's call to follow Him to the mountains because of His invitation to partner with Him in the vision of the harvest, and then found the secret place in God as the ultimate treasure? Even though we can only behold Him dimly as in a mirror, that limitation does not exist on the Lord's side. He enjoys seeing and hearing us perfectly now. (1 Cor 13:12)

C. [2:15-17 Turn away](#)

1. *'Catch us the foxes. The little foxes that spoil the vines.'*
 - a. This voice is attributed to (i) her brothers (NKJV heading); (ii) the bridegroom (NIV heading); (iii) the bride. The natural reading is either the bridegroom or the bride or even both.
 - b. Little foxes are cunning and hard to catch. They work at night and they are fast. They are cute to look at, but they ruin the vineyard fast because they pick off the tender grapes.

The bride is calling for partnership with the Lord to catch these little foxes - the little compromises in her life that ruin God's work in her heart. E.g., our fears, sinful words, thoughts, compromises, etc.
2. *'My beloved is mine and I am His.'* – Her confession here marks the early stage of maturing in love. Her self-understanding and identity mature over time as follows.
 - a. *'My beloved is to me a cluster of henna bloom'* (1:14) – She focuses on her enjoyment of who Jesus is.
 - b. *'My beloved is mine and I am His'* (2:16) – She focuses on belonging to each other.
 - c. *'I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine.'* (6:3) – She focuses on the Lord as the centre.
 - d. *'I am my beloved's, and His desire is toward me. (7:10) – She focuses entirely on the Lord as everything.*
3. *'He feeds his flock among the lilies.'* (Plural, C.f. 2:1-2, 5:3, 13, 6:2-3) – The bride is a 'lily' (2:1), and she confesses that the Lord dwells among His pure and obedient followers.
4. *'Until the day breaks and the shadows flee away, turn...upon the mountains of Bether (Heb. separation).'* – The bride tells him to go ahead of her until darkness breaks away. She is too afraid to follow Him right now. The Lord is a perfect gentleman, and His presence withdraws from her - temporarily (c.f. 3:1-2), but the bride is never abandoned.

Soon she will wake up in the middle of the night and realise that she does not have the same presence of the Lord inside the safe walls. She will decide to pay any price to have the Lord's presence with her.