

# Song of Solomon 1:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed is green.

## Analysis

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The bride responds to the bridegroom: 'Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed is green.' The bride mirrors the bridegroom's affirmation (verse 15), declaring him 'fair' (yapheh, יָפֵה) and 'pleasant' (na'im, נָעִים)—delightful, lovely, agreeable. This reciprocal delight models mutual appreciation in covenant relationship, not one-sided admiration. The phrase 'our bed is green' (Hebrew 'areshenu ra'anah, עֲרֵשָׁנוּ רָאָנָה') literally means 'our couch is verdant/luxuriant.' The imagery suggests freshness, vitality, and natural beauty—perhaps describing an outdoor resting place surrounded by greenery, or metaphorically celebrating the vibrant, life-giving nature of their intimate relationship. 'Green' symbolizes life, growth, and flourishing throughout Scripture (Psalm 1:3, 23:2, 92:14). The verse teaches that godly marriage involves mutual delight, reciprocal affirmation, and shared joy in physical intimacy within the beauty of God's created order. The 'green bed' anticipates the eschatological imagery of the marriage supper of the Lamb and the renewal of all creation (Revelation 19:9; 21:1-2).

## Historical Context

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Ancient Israelite couples often enjoyed outdoor settings for romantic encounters—gardens, fields, and vineyards feature prominently in the Song. The 'green bed' may reference pastoral settings where shepherds and rural dwellers rested, or metaphorically celebrate the vitality and beauty of marital love. In a predominantly agricultural culture, 'green' and 'verdant' carried powerful associations with divine blessing, fertility, and abundance. The image counters ancient Near Eastern

fertility cult practices by affirming sexuality within exclusive covenant rather than ritualistic promiscuity. Church tradition interpreted the 'green bed' allegorically as the Church refreshed and renewed by Christ's presence, or as Scripture providing nourishing rest for believers (Psalm 119:165). The Puritans emphasized that marital intimacy should be characterized by mutual delight, beauty, and renewal—not mere duty or selfish gratification. Modern application affirms that Christian marriage is meant to be life-giving, mutually satisfying, and reflective of creation's goodness before the fall.

## Related Passages

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**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## Study Questions

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1. How does mutual affirmation and delight—'thou art fair,' echoed by both bride and bridegroom—strengthen covenant relationships, whether in marriage or in Christian community?
2. What practices cultivate the 'greenness' and vitality of your marriage or your relationship with Christ, preventing staleness or neglect?

## Interlinear Text

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הִנֵּה	תִּשְׁאַל	דָּלִלִי	אֵן	תְּאַמֵּן	עֲרֵשׂ	נוּ
H2005	<b>Behold thou art fair</b> H3303	<b>my beloved</b> H1730	H637	<b>yea pleasant</b> H5273	H637	<b>also our bed</b> H6210

כִּי־  
is green

H7488

## Additional Cross-References

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**Song of Solomon 2:3:** As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

**Psalms 45:2:** Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.

**Zechariah 9:17:** For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids.

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