

Song of Solomon 2:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.

Analysis

The bridegroom calls to his beloved: 'O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.' The 'dove' (yonati, יוֹנָתִי) symbolizes purity, gentleness, and faithfulness. The phrase 'clefts of the rock' (chagvey hasela, חַגְוֵי הַסֵּלָע) suggests hidden refuge—the dove finding safety in rock crevices. The bridegroom invites the bride from hiding into his presence. The dual requests—'let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice'—express desire for both visual and verbal communion. The affirmations—'sweet is thy voice, comely is thy countenance'—provide reassuring acceptance. This verse celebrates the beloved's desire to draw the shy or fearful into secure intimacy. Christ similarly calls believers from fearful hiding into confident fellowship.

Historical Context

Doves in ancient Palestine nested in rock clefts, seeking safety from predators. The imagery would resonate with shepherding culture familiar with rocky terrain. The bridegroom's invitation reflects courtship patience—drawing the beloved from reserve into confident relationship. Early church fathers saw Christ calling the timid soul from fearful hiding into His presence. The 'clefts of the rock' became imagery for refuge in Christ (Exodus 33:22; Isaiah 2:21). Bernard of Clairvaux

preached on this verse, emphasizing Christ's gentle invitation to fearful sinners. The Reformers taught that Christ doesn't coerce but graciously invites; the Spirit enables responsive coming. Modern readers see both courtship wisdom (patient drawing out shy partners) and gospel invitation (Christ calling fearful sinners to Himself).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What makes you hide 'in clefts of the rock'—fear, shame, unworthiness—and how does Christ's invitation to come forth address these?
2. How can you emulate the bridegroom's approach—gently inviting others from hiding with reassuring affirmations rather than harsh demands?

Interlinear Text

יוֹנֶת י	בְּחִגּוֹ י	הַסֵּלֶע	בְּסֵתֶר	הַמִּדְרָגָה		
O my dove	that art in the clefts	of the rock	in the secret	places of the stairs		
H3123	H2288	H5553	H5643	H4095		
הִרְאֵה יְנִי	אֶת	וּמִרְאֵה יְךָ	הַשְּׁמִיעַ נִי	אֶת	קוֹלְךָ	כִּי
let me see	H853	and thy countenance	let me hear	H853	is thy voice	H3588
H7200		H4758	H8085		H6963	
קוֹלְךָ	עֵרֶב ב	וּמִרְאֵה יְךָ	נְאוּהָ:			
is thy voice	for sweet	and thy countenance	is comely			
H6963	H6156	H4758	H5000			

Additional Cross-References

Song of Solomon 1:5: I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.

Exodus 3:6: Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

Song of Solomon 5:2: I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.

Song of Solomon 8:13: Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear it.

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