

Song of Solomon 2:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.

Analysis

The beloved speaks: 'Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.' The 'little foxes' (shualim qetanim, שְׁשָׁלִים קֶטָנִים) were destructive pests damaging vineyards by eating tender grapes before harvest. The command 'take us' (echez-lanu, אֶחֶז-לָנוּ) means catch or capture them. The reference to 'our vines' and 'tender grapes' suggests the couple's relationship (vineyards frequently symbolize intimacy in the Song). The verse warns against small threats that damage growing relationships—minor irritations, unresolved conflicts, neglected communication. 'Little foxes' aren't dramatic crises but subtle erosions. The verse teaches vigilance: protect covenant love from small but destructive influences. Spiritually, it warns against tolerating 'little sins' that damage relationship with God.

Historical Context

Palestinian vineyards faced constant threat from foxes and jackals that damaged vines and ate grapes (Judges 15:4-5; Nehemiah 4:3). Farmers vigilantly protected crops, especially during ripening season when grapes were vulnerable. The Song uses this agricultural reality metaphorically: relationships require protection from destructive influences. Early church fathers applied this to spiritual vigilance—guarding hearts against subtle temptations that damage faith. The 'little foxes' became proverbial for small sins tolerated but ultimately destructive. The Puritans emphasized careful examination of conscience, confessing even 'small' sins before

they multiplied. Modern application includes both marital wisdom (address small conflicts before they grow) and spiritual discipline (don't tolerate 'little' sins).

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What 'little foxes'—small conflicts, irritations, or neglected issues—are damaging your marriage or close relationships?
2. What seemingly minor sins are you tolerating that may be 'spoiling the vines' of your spiritual vitality?

Interlinear Text

אָחֲזוּ	לְנוֹ	שְׂעָלִים	שְׂעָלִים	קֹטְנֵי יָם	מְחַבְּלֵי יָם	וּכְרָמֵינוּ
Take	H0	foxes	foxes	the little	that spoil	for our vines
H270		H7776	H7776	H6996	H2254	H3754

וּכְרָמֵינוּ	סְמָדָרִים
for our vines	have tender grapes
H3754	H5563

Additional Cross-References

Luke 13:32: And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.

Song of Solomon 7:12: Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.

Revelation 2:2: I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

Psalms 80:13: The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.

Song of Solomon 2:13: The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

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