

Song of Solomon 2:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love.

Analysis

The bride exclaims, 'Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love.' The Hebrew 'raphad' (רָפַד, stay/sustain) suggests supporting or strengthening, while 'samakh' (סָמַח, comfort) means uphold or refresh. The 'flagons' (ashishot, אֲשִׁישׁוֹת) were likely raisin cakes—sweet, nourishing food. Apples (tappuchim, תַּפּוּחִים) provide refreshment. The bride feels faint—'sick of love' (cholat ahavah, חוֹלַת אֶהָבָה) describes lovesickness, overwhelming desire for the beloved. Love's intensity creates physical effects requiring sustenance. This verse celebrates passion's power—legitimate desire within covenant relationship so strong it requires physical refreshment. Spiritually, it represents the soul's intense longing for God that can feel overwhelming, requiring spiritual nourishment through Word and sacrament.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern culture understood lovesickness as genuine physical condition—intense desire affecting body and emotions. Raisin cakes appear elsewhere in Scripture in festive, celebratory contexts (2 Samuel 6:19). The imagery suggests that intense desire within covenant relationship is healthy, not shameful. Early church mystics used this language for spiritual experience—intense desire for God sometimes overwhelming the soul. Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross described ecstatic longing for divine presence using marital imagery. The Puritans balanced this: marriage includes appropriate passion, while spiritual

life involves intense desire for God. Modern readers see both affirmation of marital desire and the soul's hunger for God.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. Have you experienced spiritual 'lovesickness'—overwhelming desire for God's presence that requires refreshment through His means of grace?
2. How does this verse affirm that intense desire within marriage is godly rather than shameful?

Interlinear Text

סֵמֶךְ וְנִי	בְּאַשִׁישׁ וְת	רַפָּד וְנִי	בְּתַפּוּחַ יָם	כִּי	חֹלֵל ת
Stay	me with flagons	comfort	me with apples	H3588	for I am sick
H5564	H809	H7502	H8598		H2470

אֶהְבֶּה ה	אֲנִי:
of love	H589
H160	

Additional Cross-References

Song of Solomon 5:8: I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am sick of love.

Hosea 3:1: Then said the LORD unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine.

2 Samuel 6:19: And he dealt among all the people, even among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. So all the people departed every one to his house.

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