

# Song of Solomon 4:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.

## Analysis

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The bridegroom speaks to his bride: 'Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.' The verb 'ravished' (Hebrew 'libbabbtini,' לִבַּבְתִּי) literally means 'you have made my heart beat' or 'you have stolen my heart'—expressing overwhelming emotional and affectional impact. The beloved's beauty and character have captured the bridegroom's heart completely. The dual terms 'my sister, my spouse' employ familial and marital language together. 'Sister' (achoti, אחותי) suggests intimate companionship, shared life, and covenant kinship, while 'spouse' (kallah, כלה) denotes marital covenant and exclusive intimacy. Together they present marriage as both friendship and romance, companionship and passion. The phrase 'with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck' suggests that even a single glance or ornament overwhelms the bridegroom—the bride's slightest gesture or adornment powerfully affects him. This verse teaches that godly love involves passionate emotional engagement, that marriage encompasses both friendship ('sister') and intimacy ('spouse'), and that small expressions of love carry great power.

## Historical Context

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The combination of 'sister' and 'spouse' appears repeatedly in the Song (4:9, 10, 12; 5:1). While this may sound strange to modern ears, ancient Near Eastern love poetry commonly employed sibling language to express intimate companionship

without incestuous implications. 'Sister' conveyed covenant kinship, trusted companionship, and equal partnership. Egyptian love poetry particularly used 'sister' and 'brother' for beloved and lover. The reference to 'chains of thy neck' denotes jewelry—necklaces were common adornments for brides in ancient Israel (Genesis 24:47; Isaiah 3:19). The bridegroom finds even simple ornaments overwhelmingly attractive when worn by his beloved. Early church tradition interpreted the dual title as Christ's relationship with the Church: she is His 'sister' (co-heir, companion, Hebrews 2:11) and His 'spouse' (bride, Ephesians 5:25-27). The Puritans emphasized that Christian marriage should combine affectionate companionship with passionate romance—friendship and eros together. Modern application affirms that thriving marriages balance intimate friendship with romantic passion, treating the spouse as both cherished companion and exclusive lover.

## **Related Passages**

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

## **Study Questions**

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1. How does the combination of 'my sister, my spouse' inform your understanding of marriage as requiring both deep friendship and romantic passion?
2. In what ways has Christ's heart been 'ravished' by His Church—how does God passionately love His people despite our unworthiness?

## Interlinear Text

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|                             |               |            |                             |              |
|-----------------------------|---------------|------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| לִבִּבְתִּי נִי             | אָחֹתִי י     | כָּל ה     | לִבִּבְתִּי נִי             |              |
| Thou hast ravished my heart | my sister     | my spouse  | Thou hast ravished my heart |              |
| H3823                       | H269          | H3618      | H3823                       |              |
| בְּאַחַד ד                  | מֵעֵינַי יְיָ | בְּאַחַד ד | עַנְךָ ק                    | מִצְרְנֶיךָ: |
| with one                    | of thine eyes | with one   | chain                       | of thy neck  |
| H259                        | H5869         | H259       | H6060                       | H6677        |

## Additional Cross-References

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**Song of Solomon 4:12:** A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.

**2 Corinthians 11:2:** For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

**Song of Solomon 7:10:** I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me.

**Revelation 21:2:** And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

**Isaiah 62:5:** For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.

**Isaiah 54:5:** For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

**Psalms 45:9:** Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.

**John 3:29:** He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

**Ezekiel 16:8:** Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness:

yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine.

**Zephaniah 3:17:** The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing.

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