

Song of Solomon 5:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy, and black as a raven.

Analysis

His head is as the most fine gold (rosho ketem paz, רָאשׁוֹ כְּתֵם פָּזֶ) —the bride begins describing her beloved in response to the daughters' question (verse 9). The phrase "most fine gold" (ketem paz, כְּתֵם פָּזֶ) means pure, refined gold of highest quality. The head represents supremacy, authority, and preeminence. Christ is the Church's head (Ephesians 5:23)—supreme authority and source of life. Pure gold symbolizes divine nature, incorruptible perfection, and supreme value.

His locks are bushy, and black as a raven (qevutsotav taltalim shechorot ka'orev, קְבָעֹתָיו תַּלְתָּלִים שְׁחֹרֹת קָעָרֶב) describes full, wavy, black hair—signs of youthful vigor and vitality. Ravens' black glossiness suggests lustrous beauty. The beloved combines supreme worth (gold head) with youthful strength (black locks). Christ is both eternal God and ever-living Savior—ancient of days yet forever young, unchanging yet always vital. This verse begins the bride's wasf (descriptive poem) of her beloved—answering what makes him supremely valuable.

Historical Context

This verse begins the bride's response to "What is thy beloved?"—she describes him from head to toe (verses 11-16), mirroring his earlier description of her (4:1-7). The wasf genre praised the beloved's physical beauty using metaphorical language. "Fine gold" evoked royal imagery—Solomon's throne was overlaid with pure gold (1 Kings 10:18). Black hair symbolized youth and vigor—gray hair

indicated age (Proverbs 20:29). The beloved's pure gold head and black locks combined supreme worth with youthful strength. Early church fathers saw Christ's "gold head" as His divine nature—pure, valuable, unchanging. His "black locks" represented His humanity—vital, strong, fully alive. The Reformers emphasized Christ's dual nature—fully God (gold) and fully human (vigorous youth). The Puritans taught that believers should meditate on Christ's attributes—His perfections, beauties, and excellencies—cultivating love through knowledge.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does meditating on Christ's supreme worth ("fine gold") and unfailing vitality ("black locks") kindle affection and devotion in your heart?
2. What specific attributes or beauties of Christ do you find most compelling—and how do you cultivate ongoing awareness of them?
3. When asked to explain what makes Christ uniquely valuable, can you articulate His specific excellencies as the bride does here?

Interlinear Text

רָאשׁ	וְ	תִּמְ	פְּ	זְ	קְוִיצוֹתִי	תְּלַתֵּל יִם	שְׁחַר וְתָ	כְּעֹזֶבֶן
His head	is as the most	fine gold	his locks		are bushy	and black		as a raven
H7218	H3800	H6337	H6977		H8534	H7838		H6158

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 1:14: His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire:

Daniel 7:9: I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.

Song of Solomon 7:5: Thine head upon thee is like Carmel, and the hair of thine head like purple; the king is held in the galleries.

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.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org