

# Song of Solomon 7:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples;

## Analysis

**I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof** (אָמַרְתִּי אָעַלֶה בְּתַפְרַת אָחַזְתָּה בְּסֶנְפָנִיו)—the bridegroom declares his intention to climb the palm and grasp its branches. The Hebrew e'eleh (אָעַלֶה, I will ascend) and ochazah (אָחַזְתָּה, I will take hold) express active pursuit and passionate embrace. This is covenantal intimacy within marriage—mutual, desired, and celebrated. **Now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples** (וְיַיְהֵנָּא שְׂדֵךְ כְּאַשְׁכָלֹת הַגָּפָן וְרַיִם אַפְנָן כְּתַפְפּוּחִים)—the imagery shifts from grapes to vine clusters and adds the fragrance of apples, emphasizing sensory delight: sight, touch, taste, smell.

This verse celebrates marital sexuality as God's good gift—passionate, mutual, multi-sensory delight within covenant commitment. The bridegroom's declaration of intent ('I said, I will...') demonstrates that covenant love is both passionate and purposeful, spontaneous and committed. Church tradition allegorically read this as Christ's union with His Church or the soul's mystical communion with God.

## Historical Context

Palm trees were climbed to harvest dates or for pruning. The imagery is intimate and purposeful—the beloved doesn't merely admire the palm but actively engages with it. The combination of grapes (vine clusters) and apples creates a garden of delights, recalling Eden before the fall. Apples (or possibly apricots—Hebrew

tappuach, תַּפּוּחַ) were celebrated for fragrance and flavor (2:5; 8:5). The Song's frank celebration of physical intimacy countered both pagan fertility cults (which separated sexuality from covenant) and ascetic denial of the body's goodness. Church fathers like Origen and Bernard interpreted this mystically as the soul ascending to God. The Puritans recovered appreciation for marital sexuality as holy and delightful when practiced within covenant.

## Related Passages

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

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does the Bible's frank celebration of marital sexuality challenge both cultural shame and cultural idolatry around sex?
2. What does purposeful, committed passion ('I said, I will...') look like in your covenant relationships?
3. How can you cultivate multi-sensory appreciation (sight, touch, smell, taste) in appropriate contexts of covenant relationship?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיֹּאמֶר יְהֹוָה אֶל־אַבְנָל הַבְּתִימָר אֶל־אַבְנָל רְתִי

I said I will go up to the palm tree I will take hold of the boughs H1961

H559

H5927

H8558

H270

H5577

בְּאַתְּ

שְׁדֵךְ יְרֵךְ

פְּאַשְׁכָּל וְתָ

רְקָמָן

וְתָ

H4994

thereof now also thy breasts

shall be as clusters

of the vine

and the smell

H7699

H811

H1612

H7381

כַּפְרְפָרְחִים: אֶפְרַיִם

of thy nose like apples

H639

H8598

## Additional Cross-References

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**2 Corinthians 2:14:** Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

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