

Song of Solomon 7:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved,
that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are
asleep to speak.

Analysis

And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved (וְהַחֶפֶץ בְּיַיִן הַטּוֹב)—the bridegroom continues celebrating sensory delights, comparing the bride's kisses to finest wine. Wine represented joy, celebration, and covenant blessing (Psalm 104:15). 'Best wine' (yayin hattov, יַיִן הַטּוֹב) emphasizes quality and excellence. **That goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak** (הוֹלֵךְ לְדוֹדֵי לְמִישָׁרִים דּוֹבֵב שְׁפָתַי יְשָׁנִים)—the wine 'goes down smoothly' (lemesharim, לְמִישָׁרִים) and has remarkable effects, even making sleepers' lips move.

Some translations attribute the end of verse 9 to the bride responding: 'going down smoothly for my beloved, gliding over lips and teeth.' This reading shows the bride affirming that she belongs to her beloved and desires to bring him delight—mutuality in covenant love. Church fathers saw the 'best wine' as Christ's love that surpasses all earthly pleasures, or as the word of God that refreshes and invigorates believers. The reference to 'those that are asleep' suggests love's power to awaken and enliven.

Historical Context

In ancient Israel, wine was served at feasts, weddings, and celebrations—the best wine was reserved for honored guests and special occasions (John 2:10). The phrase 'causing lips of those that are asleep to speak' is enigmatic but suggests

wine's enlivening, loosening effect—even sleeping persons might murmur or move their lips. Some interpreters see this as describing wine's quality (so smooth it seems to flow even to unconscious persons), others as the bride's playful hyperbole about her beloved's kisses. Church tradition connected this to Christ as the true vine (John 15:1) whose love invigorates spiritually dead souls. Early monastics saw the 'best wine' as contemplative union with God that surpasses all earthly pleasures.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does Christ's love function as 'the best wine' in your life—bringing joy, celebration, and refreshment?
2. What does mutual delight in covenant relationship look like practically—how do both parties seek to bring pleasure to the other?
3. In what ways does God's love 'awaken' you from spiritual sleep or numbness?

Interlinear Text

וְחֶפֶז רֹאשׁ	כֵּן יִין	הַטּוֹב	הוֹלֵךְ	לְדוֹדִי י
And the roof of thy mouth	wine	like the best	that goeth	for my beloved
H2441	H3196	H2896	H1980	H1730
לְמִישָׁר יָם	דוֹבֵב	שִׁפְתֵי י	יֹשְׁנִים:	
down sweetly	to speak	causing the lips	of those that are asleep	
H4339	H1680	H8193	H3463	

Additional Cross-References

Song of Solomon 5:16: His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

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