

Song of Solomon 1:9-2:1

Song of Solomon 1:9,14 (The man is speaking) You remind me of Pharaoh's well-groomed and satiny mares. (The woman is speaking) My beloved is a bouquet of wildflowers picked just for me from the fields of En Gedi. (The Message)

Notice first that the attitude has changed. The man who was evasive about his whereabouts is now fully engaged by their now blossoming relationship. This is typical of love, one party's reluctance can quickly turn into enthusiasm. We make decisions about love and the heart can follow the mind as the mind can follow the heart.

Our couple speaks freely to one another in the language of the metaphor. He tells her that she reminds him of "Pharaoh's well groomed and satiny mares." She tells him that he is to her "a bouquet of wildflowers picked just for me from the fields of En Gedi." Communication on this level requires the confidence that the one spoken to will seek to understand what was meant and intended by the speaker even when an obvious and negative interpretation is possible. A woman might not immediately take a comparison to a horse as complimentary nor might a man be flattered to be compared to a bouquet of

flowers but here both the man and woman are fully invested in their language of love.

But what is being said? She has dressed up and he sees her as beautiful. The jewelry she put on has enhanced her attractiveness so that he thinks of the best of the best, decked out and on display. He imagines her adorned in the gifts of jewels that he intends to bring to her. In turn, she imagines him present with her alone and in bed. Her perfume fills the room and she holds him close as if he were the pouch of a necklace suspended on her chest. He is to her like a bouquet from En Gedi, an oasis isolated in a harsh and barren desert wilderness. He calls her beautiful and friend and her eyes remind him of doves. She responds with endearment and calls him handsome imagining them as lovers in a forest that is fragrant and green. She is amazed that all of this could come to her. She feels unworthy, as if this is all more than a girl such as herself, a mere wildflower, should expect of life.

As we make decisions about love, we also make decisions about God. He has already made up His mind. Whether He loves us or not was settled on the cross when Jesus died there for our sins. So He waits to see what we will do with the love that He has

given. You can receive His love or reject it, just as you would the love of a man or woman. To receive His love is to begin a love journey with God. To reject His love is to walk away from all the good that He intended for you. It is to live without Him when you could have lived with Him.

As love enhances the beauty of the one who is loved, so, relationship with God enlarges the lives of those who walk with Him. Walking with the Lord makes us first the beloved of God. In life, we receive our sense of value from the love we receive from others. The more significant a person is to us, the more deeply their love will impact our lives. This is true in terms of family, of spouses, of friends, and of those who in some way represent our values. God's love is sure and reliable and an alternative to the insecurities derived from the failings of human love. When rejection or disappointment comes your way from the most beloved of the people in your life, recall the simplicity of your faith. "Jesus loves me this I know," will keep in front of you a true estimate of your value and significance.

And then, our assurance of God's love will make us a channel of that love to others for He loves my neighbor as much as myself.