

**\*150.**

(801-7) Song of Songs 2:8-10, 14, 16a; 8:6-7a

*Stern as death is love.*

**A reading from the Song of Songs**

**Hark! my lover—here he comes  
springing across the mountains,  
leaping across the hills.**

**My lover is like a gazelle  
or a young stag.**

**Here he stands behind our wall,  
gazing through the windows,  
peering through the lattices.**

**My lover speaks; he says to me,  
“Arise, my beloved, my dove, my beautiful one,  
and come!**

**“O my dove in the clefts of the rock,  
in the secret recesses of the cliff,**

**Let me see you,  
let me hear your voice,**

**For your voice is sweet,  
and you are lovely.”**

**My lover belongs to me and I to him.  
He says to me:**

**“Set me as a seal on your heart,  
as a seal on your arm;  
For stern as death is love,  
relentless as the nether-world is devotion;  
its flames are a blazing fire.**

**Deep waters cannot quench love,  
nor floods sweep it away.”**

**The word of the Lord.**