

SONG *of* SONGS

*The Journey of a Believer's
Pursuit of Passion for Jesus*



A STUDY GUIDE BY KAY-CHONG YEO

FORERUNNER RESOURCE

The Song of Songs

The Journey of a Believer's Pursuit of Jesus

Kay-Chong Yeo
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**The Song of Songs: The Journey of
a Believer's Pursuit of Jesus**

by Kay-Chong Yeo

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CONTENTS

Preface

	Title	Page
Chapter 1	Introduction to the Song of Songs	1
Chapter 2	Overview of the Song of Songs (Song. 1:2–4)	11
Chapter 3	The Bridal Vision for Intimacy with Jesus (Song. 1:2–4)	19
Chapter 4	The Seven-Fold Divine Kiss (Song. 1:2)	33
Chapter 5	Her Journey Begins (Song. 1: 5–11)	43
Appendix 1	Understanding God’s Heart Towards People	55
Chapter 6	Establishing of the Bridal Identity (Song. 1:15–17)	59
Chapter 7	Declaration of the Bride’s Identity and Life Purpose (Song. 2:1–7)	71
Chapter 8	Challenging The Comfort Zone (Song. 2:8–17)	83
Chapter 9	The Divine Discipline of Jesus (Song. 3: 1–5)	97
Chapter 10	Jesus as a Safe Savior (Song. 3:6–11)	109
Chapter 11	The Cherishing Heart of Jesus (Song. 4:1–8)	123
Chapter 12	The Ravished Heart of the Bridegroom (Song. 4:9 – 5:1)	137
Chapter 13	The Two-Fold Test of the Bride (Song. 5:2–8)	151
Chapter 14	The Bridal Response to the Two-Fold Test (Song. 5:8 – 6:3)	163
Chapter 15	The Transcendent Beauty of Jesus (Song. 5:10–16)	173
Chapter 16	Jesus’ Praise for and Affirmation of the Bride (Song 6: 4–10)	189
Chapter 17	Vindication of the Bride (Song. 6:11 – 7:9)	205
Chapter 18	The Bride’s Mature Partnership With Jesus (Song 7:9b – 8:4)	217
Chapter 19	The Bridal Seal of Mature Love (Song 8:5–7)	231
Chapter 20	The Bride’s Final Intercession and Commission (Song 8:8–14)	245
Chart	The Bridal Journey of Holy Passion — Presented in a Chiastic Framework	262
About us.....		263

IHOP - ONE THING MINISTRIES

Preface

At the International House of Prayer – One Thing Ministries, we are committed to Prayer with Worship, the Prophetic and the Great Commission.

We embrace and seek to live out the following four heart standards (embodied in the acronym “IHOP”), in order to be a people who will partner with God in these Last Days:

- **Intercession:** a people of prayer, expressed corporately through night and day prayer and worship;
- **Holiness:** a people who have set ourselves apart for intimacy with God, and who live out the Sermon on the Mount lifestyle;
- **Offering:** a people who give extravagantly to God for the advancement of His Kingdom, and who live a fasted lifestyle (i.e. living simply for ourselves);
- **Prophetic:** a people who stand boldly in faith, move in the power of God and have confidence in His provision, protection and direction.

As a **missions base**, we seek to equip and send missionaries as dedicated intercessors and evangelists with a forerunner spirit who will labor to see revival and a great harvest all over Asia.

The **heart of our missions base** is 24/7 worship and prayer; thus, we seek to establish a 24/7 House of Prayer in Singapore – a perpetual sacred assembly gathering corporately to fast and pray in the spirit of the Tabernacle of David.

Two historical figures from the Bible who inspire us are Anna, the first evangelist and forerunner in the New Testament, and King David from the Old Testament. Anna prayed and fasted for over sixty years before Jesus’ first coming (Luke 2:37), and King David organized and paid 4,000 musicians and 288 singers to worship God night and day (1 Chron. 23:1 – 25:31).

Our **mandate** is to train believers, from this place of night and day prayer, to love Jesus and people wholeheartedly as they go forth to preach the Word, heal the sick, serve the poor, plant Houses of Prayer and proclaim the return of Jesus across the earth.

Introduction to the Song of Songs

A. Introduction

1. There are two significant books of the Bible we must know as the generation that Jesus is returning:
 - a. **Song of Songs** – a book that describes the journey of the pursuit of passion for Jesus.
 - b. **Revelation** – a book that answers the fundamental and foundational question of “Who is Jesus?” in Matthew 16:15.
 - c. Both books emphasis the Person and our Relationship with Jesus.
2. Song of Songs is one of the most beautiful books in the Bible pertaining to our pursuit of intimate relationship with Jesus.
3. It is a “must know” book in our pursuit of intimacy and passion for Jesus as it serves as a divine “roadmap”, “sign-post” and instruction menu in guiding us in this journey of pursuing of holy passion.

B. Three focuses of the Song of Songs

1. Through the Song of Songs, the Holy Spirit records the principles necessary in the progression involved in growing into full passion for Jesus.
 - a. It sets forth the Divine Principle of growing in intimacy and love for Jesus. This is the perfect transcript given by Holy Spirit and cannot be improved on.
 - b. It sets forth the Divine Pattern of growing in maturity in our faith.
 - i. It reveals the significant and necessary themes within the whole council of God that are necessary in the process of growing into maturity in Christ.
 - ii. It is an unbroken love song that continues for over eight chapters growing progressively into matured passion. The end goal of the entire book is Song 8:5 is a Bride that comes out of the wilderness leaning on her Beloved.
 - iii. All the major principals essential to being trained and prepared in spiritual maturity are clearly set forth in the Song of Songs.
 - iv. The order and sequence of the progression is magnificent and perfect.

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- c. It sets forth the Divine Understanding in the journey of our faith.
 - i. The pattern of the book will help us to locate and identify the issues that God is specifically dealing with in our lives in a specific season.
 - ii. Song of Songs helps us realize that He is dealing with all of us with the exact same principles yet there are different applications because we all have different needs in our heart. God uses the same principles to train each of us.
 - iii. We will also be better equipped to discern the seasons of our lives in this pattern and the resulting knowledge assists us in our progression to spiritual maturity.
 - iv. We can find ourselves in two different places in this Song during the same timeframe. And in different seasons of our life, we will go back and forth to different places of testing or blessing described throughout this Song.
 2. The Song of Songs gives us insight of the eight-fold revelations of Jesus.
 - a. Each reveals a unique aspect of His relationship with the Bride and the Bride's relationship with Him.
 - b. The purpose is to strengthen our faith and to build confidence in Jesus in each season.
 - c. The eight revelations are
 - i. The counseling and tender-hearted Shepherd. (Song 1:8)
 - ii. The affectionate Father. (Song 1:12 – 2:6)
 - iii. The sovereign and conquering King. (Song 2:8 – 9)
 - iv. The safe and trustworthy Savior. (Song 3:6 – 8)
 - v. The passionate Bridegroom. (Song 4:1 – 15)
 - vi. The suffering and humble Servant. (Song 5:2)
 - vii. The majestic and beautiful God. (Song 5:10 – 16)
 - v. All consuming Fire (Song 8:6 – 7)
 3. The Song of Songs helps us understand and grow in the three fundamental principles in the pursuing of intimacy with God. These are vital keys in giving us confidence in approaching God. (Eph. 3:12)
 - a. How we view God – Who is God.
 - b. Knowing how God view us – God's feeling and emotion towards us.
 - c. How we view ourselves – Who are we (i.e. our spiritual identity in Christ).
-

C. Our Approach to the Song of Songs

1. It is important to be biblical in our study of all the Books in the Bible.
2. Our desire is to equip everyone with understanding by giving information about the context and principles of interpretation so as to see the big picture of the Song of Songs.
3. The subsequent sessions are primarily targeting the heart to supply inspiration and transformation by the power of the Holy Spirit through the Song of Songs.
4. There are two general interpretations of Song of Songs throughout Church history. Both approaches are valid, biblical and edifying. (NOTE: We must not be critical of the other approaches as long as it is biblical.)

a. Natural Interpretation

- i. This school of interpretation depicts a literal human love story between King Solomon and his Bride, the Shulamite. It is a natural love story based on biblical principles written to honor and inspire deeper love within marriage.
- ii. It is a wonderful love story that gives symbolic principles on the beauty of married love. There are many excellent commentaries written from this point of view. The natural interpretation has become very popular in the last hundred years.
- iii. There are two basic story lines when viewing the book as a natural love story:
 - The most popular one depicts a young maiden wooed by the handsome and rich King Solomon. He progressively wins her heart throughout the story.
 - The other main approach to the natural interpretation is of a godly young maiden who deeply loves a poor young shepherd in her hometown. One day the great King Solomon was passing by her vineyard and noticed her extraordinary beauty. He then sought to win her from her loyalty to the poor shepherd. But she remains loyal to the poor shepherd boy even in the temptations that come from the presence of King Solomon's wealth and power.

b. Allegorical interpretation

- i. It depicts a story that is totally symbolic without any historical facts as its basis. Natural details of facts are not important.
- ii. This interpretation says Solomon was writing a love song to describe spiritual truth about the love relationship with the coming Messiah.
- iii. This is the most common interpretation for the 1900 years of Church history and the 2800 years since Solomon first wrote it (which includes the rabbinical tradition).

NOTE:

- i. The Bible itself affirms the use of allegorical interpretations. In Galatians 4, Paul allegorically speaks of things that happened with Hagar and Sarah. There are several other references in the bible to allegorical interpretation. The book of Esther is entirely written in allegorical form with no mention of God.
- ii. But allegorical interpretations must be based and established on the truth of the New Testament Scriptures and not based on subjective opinions or interpretations. They are powerful in illustrating important truths with emotions.

D. Three Common Allegorical Interpretations

1. The relationship between God as the Bridegroom and Israel as the Bride. (Jer. 2:2; Hos. 2:16 – 20; Ezk. 16:8 – 14, 20 – 21, 32, 38; Isa. 54:5 – 6)
 - a. This is primarily how Old Testament believers interpreted this Book – knowing God's deep bridal love for Israel.
 - b. Some Jewish rabbis still interpret the Song of Songs till this day in this allegorical way. They interpret it from a messianic point of view without understanding the person of Jesus. They believed in God and they interpreted strictly from the point of view of the Bride being natural Israel – Yahweh, the heavenly Bridegroom, in love with Israel as the Bride.
2. The relationship between Jesus and the corporate Church of Christ. (Rev. 19:7 – 9, 21:9; Eph. 5:23 – 25; 2 Cor. 11:1 – 2)
 - a. One common allegorical interpretation of the Song of Songs is to see the Bride as the universal church throughout all history and within each generation that has “made herself ready”. (Rev. 19:7)
 - b. This has been used mostly from the early Church to about the 16th century by the Catholic Church. They interpreted the Song of Songs mostly through the view of the Bride as the corporate Body of Christ.
3. The relationship between Jesus and the individual believers describing the progression of spiritual development to maturity.
 - a. **The focus of this study is to interpret the book as an allegorical love song between Jesus and the individual believer as His bride.**
 - b. This approach offers practical spiritual insight for our personal lives as we relate to growing in personal passion for Jesus. In this particular study our focus will be on principles that aid individuals in a progression of passion for Jesus.

NOTE:

- a. it is important to understand that some groups interpret the Bride as a very small and spiritually elite remnant within the larger body of Christ. This is not biblically correct as the Bible teaches that the whole Church is the Bride.

- b. In heaven and in eternity, all believers are mature in love. Some will press in more on this side of eternity, but on the other side of eternity the Holy Spirit will bring His work to full completion.
- c. 4 biblical reasons why all believers will be the Bride:
 - i. The maturity of the bride is the fruit of Jesus' prayer. (John 17:26)
 - ii. The power of full revelation in eternity transforms all believers to become the Bride. (1 John 3:2)
 - iii. The ravished heart of God that assures us of our Bridal destiny. (Song 4:9)
 - iv. There will be only one people in heaven and in eternity. (John 17:21)

E. Five Main Characters in the Song of Songs

1. King Solomon as a picture of resurrected Jesus Christ.
 - a. King Solomon is depicted in the allegorical interpretation as a type of the triumphant resurrected Jesus Christ who is the Lord of Lords and King of Kings.
 - b. Jesus is the real king and Solomon is only the type of Christ.
2. The Shulamite woman as a picture of the Bride of Christ
 - a. She is introduced as a young maiden who becomes the mature Bride. She was initially being introduced as the maiden and later as the Bride.
 - b. She becomes a bride as she becomes spiritually mature. This transition is recorded in the middle of the Song of Songs. (Song 4:6)
 - c. She starts off in the book as an immature maiden. She is fervent, but she is immature. By the end of the Book, she is the mature Bride who is full of glory.
 - d. The name Shulamite is mentioned only one time in the entire Song of Songs. (Song 6:13)
 - e. Shunam was a very small city in Israel located several miles north of Jezreel. The maiden lived in the city of Shunam, therefore she is called the Shulamite.
3. Daughters of Jerusalem as a picture of immature fellow believers.
 - a. The "daughters of Jerusalem" are a group that appears regularly throughout the Song of Songs.
 - b. They are most characterized by a spiritual dullness and passivity and yet they clearly possess an inquisitive and sincere spirit to seek Jesus. They often ask questions and ponder what it is that makes the bride so fervent.

- c. This group seems to refer to those who are genuinely born again. They love the King in a sincere yet immature way. They seem to personify the condition of immature believers in a general way.
4. Watchmen in the city as a picture of shepherds or spiritual leaders in the Body of Christ. They can both be good and bad.
5. The Voice that proclaimed in Song 2:7, 3:5 – 6 and 8:4 – 5 as a picture of the Holy Spirit who made a few declarations of “who Jesus is” or “who the Bride is”.

F. Uniqueness of the Song of Songs

1. Solomon wrote three books in the Old Testament: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs. It was common for the Jewish fathers to relate the three books of Solomon to the temple he built.
 - a. They related the book of Proverbs to the outer court of Solomon’s temple.
 - b. They related the book of Ecclesiastes to the inner court of Solomon’s temple.
 - c. They related the Song to the Holy of Holies in Solomon’s temple.
2. The Song of Songs must be studied with Ecclesiastes as it will give us an even greater insight and understand of the heart of the Song of Songs.
 - a. Ecclesiastes was written to reveal the vanity of vanities of life and the emptiness of life without God. Song of Songs provides the answer in how to have that emptiness being fulfilled.
 - b. Ecclesiastes targets the mind that grows in practical understanding of life. Song of Songs targets the heart that grows in passionate intimacy with God and having our satisfaction being fulfilled in God.
 - c. Ecclesiastes stresses how impossible it is to be truly satisfied with even the most desirable external circumstances. Thus, the book speaks of the endless wanderings of man who cannot find rest apart from God. Song of Songs reveals the true joy of life that can be attained without any regard to external circumstances. It highlights how meaningful and full life is when our one consuming passion is to love and know the glorious Lord Jesus.
 - d. Ecclesiastes speaks of life without rest and fulfillment based on worldly experience, knowledge, and self-assertion. Song of Songs speaks of entering rest and total fulfillment through humility, submission and the divine impartation of love.
 - e. Ecclesiastes speaks of pursuing the best things found in earthly life while Song of Songs speaks of pursuing the best things found in heavenly life.

- f. If Ecclesiastes is properly understood it, it is a book that prepares us to fully understand and appreciate the Book of Song of Songs. The book of Ecclesiastes leads us to the awakened fervency that begins the journey of Song 1:5.

G. Important Signposts in Song of Songs

There are seven signposts in the Song of Songs. These are helpful keys to understand the book as they guide us in our progressive journey in the pursuit of holy passion for Jesus.

1. **Divine Metaphors** – There are three divine metaphors that teach us how to encounter the truths of Who Jesus is.
 - a. Divine Kiss (Song 1:2) – this speaks of the Spirit of revelation.
 - b. Divine Embrace (Song 2:6; 8:3) – this speaks of the unseen work of God in our life.
 - c. Divine Seal (Song 8:6) – this is the Spirit of grace and fire of the Holy Spirit.
2. **Inheritance Statements** – There are four inheritance statements that are strategically placed throughout the Book (Song 1:14; 2:16; 6:3; 7:10). They show the progression of the maturity of the Bride in the journey. They are important signposts in revealing our journey or progression in our level of maturity.
3. **Revelations of Jesus** – There are eight-fold revelation of Jesus in this entire Book.
4. **Passion and Emotions of Jesus towards the Bride** – These can be found in different parts of the Book where it reveals the feeling and emotions of Jesus towards us. (E.g. Song 1:15; 4:9)
5. **Different Seasons of the Bride's Journey** – Song of Songs lays out the different seasons where we progress in our journey into maturity. Growth is the process of becoming and therefore, we go through seasons in life. For a baby to become an adult, he or she must experience the seasons of life as a toddler, a child, a teenager, etc.
6. **Confession and Declaration of the Bride** – There are many truths hidden in the Book. It is vital for us to lay hold of these truths and we must take these declarations and proclaim them over our own lives so that they become a reality and are established in our life. Romans 10:14 teaches us to confess with our mouth of the truth of who we are in Christ and in according to the Word of God.
7. **Prayers of the Bride** – Song of Songs gives us many bible prayers as the foundation for our conversation with Jesus as our Bridegroom.

H. Conclusion

1. The general purpose of this book is to fully capture people's heart by the greatest prophetic song ever. There are several very clear unique distinctive related to the Song:
 - a. A condensed revelation of the passionate affections in Jesus' personality including His enjoyment and affection for weak yet sincere believers.
 - b. Insight into the beauty of Jesus specifically as a Bridegroom King.
 - c. The revelation of the unique beauty and loveliness of the individual believer.
 - d. The revelation of the honor and beauty of the corporate Church through history.
 - e. The principles related specifically to growing in the first commandment and mature bridal partnership with Jesus.
2. The Song of Songs is a vital book for the Global Worship and Prayer Movement at the End-of-the-Age that God is raising up.
 - a. King Solomon wrote 1005 songs (1 Kings 4:32). This is his best song, thus referred to as the Song of Songs.
 - c. When Solomon describes this song as the Song of Songs, it conveys in the Hebrew language, the Highest of the Highest. There's no song higher than the Song of all songs.
 - d. This Song is named with the highest honor. It is the greatest song ever penned by the redeemed in all redemptive history. It is probably the greatest prophetic song given to the Church age.
 - e. The Book of Revelation gives us about 23 songs. All the songs in the Book of Revelation point us to the hint of the full meaning of songs in heaven and eternity. This 8-chapter love song is a hint to the fullness of this song as it exists in the heart of God. It is the Song that Jesus will sing over us in eternity (Heb 2:12) as well as the song we will sing to Him.
 - f. Revelation 15:2 – 3 describes two songs that will be sung in eternity: song of Moses (i.e. Exodus 15:1 – 21 and Deuteronomy 31:30 – 32:47) and the song of the Lamb.
 - g. If the Song of Moses is recorded in the Bible, it is inconceivable that Song of Jesus is not in the Holy Scripture. If it is found in the Scripture then it cannot be second to the Song of All Songs. It is my personal belief that this is the Song of the Lamb.
 - h. The Song of Songs is meant to be sung. It is my challenge for all of us to sing through the Song of Songs as a daily devotion. It is my prayer and conviction that there is going to be a revival of interest in the Song of Songs in the final generation.

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- i. The Holy Spirit will cause this Song of All Songs to become prominent again and will raise up men and women, young and old that will proclaim it, sing it, write about it and intercede it back to God until a revival of Holy Passion breaks out worldwide!

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Overview of the Song of Songs

(Song. 1:2-4)

A. The Bridal Cry for Intimacy and The Bride's Life Vision (Song 1:2 – 4)

1. This passage is the summary of the Bride's theology on how to grow in holy passion. It lays out the theme of the entire book.
 - a. The theme of the Song of Songs is the Bride's spiritual journey - to be drawn near to Jesus in intimacy and then to run in deep partnership with Him in ministry.
 - b. The Bride states her 2-fold life vision: "Draw me away and let us run". She wants to be drawn into intimacy with God and also to run in service for God.
2. She matures in these two realities as she experiences the kisses of God's word touching her heart.

B. Her journey begins - Spiritual Crisis and Divine Affection (Song 1:5 – 11)

1. The first revelation of Jesus in the Song reveals Him as a counseling shepherd (1:8 – 9a). At this point, her journey begins with the paradox of grace: she discovers that she is dark in her heart but lovely to God (1:5 – 6b).
 - a. The paradox of our faith is that we are dark in our heart yet we are lovely to God.
 - b. Both truths must be held in tension to understand who we are before God. Some emphasize how sinful we are (darkness of our heart) and others emphasize how beautiful we are to God (lovely in Christ).
2. We are lovely before God even in our weakness for four reasons.
 - a. God's personality: is filled with tender loving emotions for His people. God sees us through His heart that is filled with tender love.
 - b. The gift of righteousness: we receive the beauty of Jesus' righteousness as a free gift. (2 Cor. 5:21)
 - c. The Spirit's impartation: of a sincere and willing spirit of obedience that cries for God. The "yes" in our heart. (Rom. 8:15)
 - d. Our eternal destiny: as Jesus' Bride. God sees the end from the beginning. He sees us in light of the billions of years in which we will be perfect in obedience.

3. Her journey begins with a spiritual crisis of sin, rejection and shame (1:6), yet she receives a fresh revelation of her beauty in God that flows out of divine affection.
4. She has a desperate cry to have more of Jesus. She wants Him to personally feed her spirit. (Song 1:7)
5. Jesus tenderly reveals His heart for her. Then He reaffirms her sincerity. (1:8–11)

C. Understanding Her Identity in God's Beauty (Song 1:12 – 2:7)

1. The second revelation of Jesus in the Song reveals Him as a King expressing the affectionate heart of the Father. (1:12 – 14)
 - a. Her 3-fold response to the King's provision. (1:12b – 14)
 - b. She has an introductory revelation of the beauty & fragrance of Jesus. (1:13 – 14)
2. She experiences the joy of seeing the King's beauty and His desire for her. This is an exhilarating time for her life. The Lord loves and enjoys her, even in her weakness. She sees her identity in His beauty & in the provision of the cross. (1:15)
3. She has an initial revelation of the beauty of Jesus and the pleasure of knowing Him. (Song 1:16 – 17)
4. She receives revelation of her identity in Christ as a beautiful rose in God's sight. (Song 2:1)
5. Jesus is sweet to her heart as she rests under the shade of the finished work of the cross. She experiences the superior pleasures of knowing God as she feeds at His table and lives under the banner of His excellent leadership. (Song 2:3 – 5)
 - a. In this she becomes lovesick. The goal of her life is her own spiritual happiness. This happens best when she experiences God's Presence.
 - b. In the future, her goal will be to walk as His inheritance regardless of the cost.

D. Challenging the Comfort Zone (Song 2:8 – 17)

1. The third revelation of Jesus in the Song reveals Him as a sovereign King (2:8 – 9a). Jesus is pictured as effortlessly skipping and leaping over the mountains as He does the work of fulfilling the Great Commission. The mountains speak of obstacles (human, demonic). Jesus has power over all of them. (2:3 – 5)
2. Jesus is calling her out of the comfort zone (2:10 – 16). This speaks of the difficult assignments that He gives His people that will enhance their partnership with Him. He desires partnership with her. He is calling her into Bridal Partnership.

3. She refuses Him by telling Him to turn and go to the mountain without her (2:17).
 - a. Her painful compromise is due to her immaturity and fear and not rebellion. She fears that total obedience will be too difficult and costly.
 - b. She loves Him, but does not think she has the strength to fully obey Him.
 - c. She prays for help to overcome her weakness. Her compromise is due to her immaturity but her love for the LORD is sincere.

E. Divine Chastisement (Song 3:1 – 5)

1. The young and immature Bride experiences the discipline of God. His divine chastisement is revealed as He hides His manifested presence from her. The sweetness of Song 2 is gone. He disciplines her out of His affections for her. (Heb. 12:5 – 12)
2. God's correction is not the same thing as His rejection. The Father promises to pry our fingers off what holds us in bondage. The Father loves us too much to allow us to come up short in partnering with Jesus as His Bride.
3. Eventually, she "arises" to obey the call to leave her comfort zone. (3:2)
4. Jesus suddenly renews His presence in response to her obedience. (3:4 – 5)

F. A Fresh Revelation of Jesus as a "Safe Savior" (Song 3:6 – 11)

1. Jesus reveals Himself as one who is safe to obey 100%. She believes that "100% obedience is the only safe place in life."
2. The Bride's eyes are opened as she sees the extravagant protecting ministry of the Holy Spirit (3:7 – 8) and Jesus' redemption of the Bride. (3:9 – 10)
3. This revelation is given to win her heart to a deeper confidence in Jesus. This proves to be the turning point for the Bride.

G. The Prophetic Heart of the Bridegroom God (Song 4:1 – 8)

1. The fifth revelation of Jesus in the Song reveals Him as a heavenly Bridegroom with a special focus on His prophetic heart. (4:1 – 8)
2. The King reveals how beautiful the maiden is to Him. He describes eight distinct virtues of her beauty that He sees emerging in her life. (4:1 – 5)
 - a. Jesus prophetically proclaims her "budding virtues". He calls things that are not as though they were (Rom. 4:17).
 - b. He sees the cry in her spirit, not just her failures. God defines us by the cries in our spirit not just by our struggles.

3. This is the transition point of the Song where the Bride's focus is completely changed. She gives her commitment to 100% obedience. She understands that she is Jesus' inheritance and is chosen by God to co-reign with Him. (4:6)
 - a. A life of total commitment is foundational for all who wants to be mature in ministry. (4:6)
 - b. Initially, she refused His call to come to the mountain (2:9 – 10). However, in this season she commits to go to the mountain. She is only in the initial stage of her obedience.
4. Jesus calls her again to Bridal Partnership. (4:7 – 8)

H. The Ravished Heart of the Bridegroom God (Song 4:9 – 5:1)

1. The King is now revealed as a Bridegroom. His heart is ravished with desire for her.
 - a. Jesus has passionate affections for His Bride. This revelation of His heart, equips her to fully embrace the cross. (Song 4:9)
 - b. Jesus describes His pleasure over her character. (4:10d – 11)
2. Jesus gives her a 7-fold description of her purity (4:12 – 15). Her garden speaks of her heart before God. She wants the fragrance of God's spices to increase in her life.
3. The Bride is ruined with lovesickness and responds with a 2-fold prayer for an increased anointing for consecration. She cries out for her life to be filled with His spices and invites Him to come and take full ownership of His garden. (4:16)
 - a. The north wind speaks of the cold bitter winds of winter. The south wind speaks of the warm refreshing winds of the summer.
 - b. She is no longer afraid of the testing of God. She desires that Jesus receive His inheritance in her and cries, "Let my Beloved come to His garden."
4. The Bridegroom responds to her cry by declaring His ownership of her life and ministry. Nine times He uses the ownership word "My". (Song 5:1)
5. In the first 4 chapters she was concerned with her inheritance (her garden). However, in the last 4 chapters, Jesus' inheritance in her is her focus. From now on, her heart is His garden not hers. She now defines her life radically different.

I. The Ultimate 2-Fold Test of Maturity (Song 5:2 – 8)

1. The sixth revelation of Jesus in the Song reveals Him as the suffering Servant – Jesus embraced the cross in the long and lonely night in Gethsemane. Jesus comes to her as the man of sorrows in Gethsemane (5:2) and invites her to share His sufferings (Phil. 3:10).

2. Jesus asks her to, “Open up that He may come to her as the Man of Gethsemane.” Jesus wants to be the pursuit of her life, and not just the steppingstone to her agenda of success and happiness.
3. She responds in obedience saying she took off her dirty robes and washed her feet in His grace (5:3).
 - a. She is not afraid of obeying Jesus and thus, asked for the bitter north winds. She rises immediately with a heart yearning in love for Him. (Song 4:16)
 - b. The locks of her heart have myrrh on them, which speak of her heart’s commitment to embrace death in her pursuit of Jesus.
4. She experiences her first test as God withdraws His presence. (5:6)
 - a. This affects her ability to experience intimacy with God. In this passage, His presence leaves her for the second time in the Song.
 - b. However, this time it is not related to disobedience (as in 3:1 – 2), but rather to her mature obedience. Some medieval teachers called this “the dark night of the soul.”
5. She experiences her second test as her ministry is rejected (5:7). The watchmen or the leaders strike and wound her taking her veil (spiritual covering) so she can no longer function in ministry in the Body. Her ministry is gone. How will she respond to Him now?
6. The Lord is asking her, “Will you be Mine even if I withhold the things you deeply desire? Are you Mine when you cannot feel My Presence? Will you still love and trust Me when you are disappointed by circumstances?” She responds, “I am Yours, at the deepest level of love. She responds in humility by asking for help from the daughters of Jerusalem. (Song 5:8)
7. Summary: Jesus called her to join Him in Gethsemane. She responded in obedience. He gave her a 2-fold test related to her life vision to be drawn near Him and to run with Him (Song 1:2 – 4).

J. The Bride’s Response to the 2-Fold Test (Song 5:9 – 6:3)

1. The seventh revelation of Jesus in the Song reveals Jesus as the majestic God. (5:10 – 16)
2. The daughters of Jerusalem ask the Bride a question. In essence, they ask, “Why do you love Him so much that you charge us to go find Him? He has abandoned you. He took His presence away from you (v. 6) and lets the elders wound you as they took their ministry from you (5:7). The Bride’s deep love for Jesus has provoked them. (5:9)

3. Her answer reveals her love for Jesus. She gives 10 descriptions of Jesus' majestic beauty (5:10-16). This is one of the greatest proclamations on Jesus' beauty in the Scripture.
4. Because of the passion of the Bride for her beloved, the daughters of Jerusalem are now seeking after Jesus. (6:1)

K. Jesus praises her after the Season of Testing (Song 6:4 – 10)

1. Her 2-fold test is now over. Jesus breaks the silence as He lavishes affection on her and describes her beauty. (Song 6:4)
 - a. He declares that she is as beautiful as Tirzah (became the capital city of the northern kingdom of Israel) and as lovely as Jerusalem (the capital of Israel, spiritually and politically).
 - b. He proclaimed that she is as awesome as a victorious army with banners. When an army in the ancient world returned victorious from battle, they would display their banners in a military procession.
 - c. She defeated her greatest enemies, those found in her heart.
2. Jesus is "conquered" only by His Bride's extravagant love. (Song 6:5)
 - a. Our eyes of devotion deeply touch the King's heart.
 - b. All the armies in hell cannot conquer Jesus, but the eyes of His Bride "conquer" Him when they are true to Him in times of testing.
3. Jesus describes the Bride's maturity and devotion. (6:5c – 7)
4. Jesus describes the Bride's pre-eminence in the King's court. Jesus' attendants around His heavenly court are seraphim, cherubim, archangels and angels without number. (Song 6:8 – 9)
5. The Holy Spirit describes the Bride's crown of glory. (6:10)

L. The Vindication of the Persecuted Bride (Song 6:11 – 7:9a)

1. As the Bride walks in this revelation of who she is before the Lord, she is persecuted. Mature love and commitment to serve the whole church (6:11) overcomes her (6:12).
2. She receives a sincere response from some in the church (6:13a,b) yet a hostile response from carnal believers within the Church (6:13c,d).
3. The Bride is vindicated by discerning saints (7:1 – 5). The Bride is vindicated by Jesus (7:6 – 9a)

M. The Bride's Mature Partnership with Jesus (Song 7:9b – 8:4)

She walks out a life of mature bridal partnership with Jesus, which is expressed in obedience. (7:9b – 10)

1. She expresses Bridal partnership in mature obedience to Jesus. (7:9b – 10)
2. She expresses Bridal partnership in her intercession for more power. (7:11 – 13)
3. She expresses Bridal partnership in her boldness in public ministry. (8:1 – 2)
4. She expresses Bridal partnership in their full union. (8:3 – 4)

N. The Bridal Seal of Mature Love (Song 8:5 – 7)

1. The eighth revelation of Jesus in the Song reveals Jesus as the All Consuming Fire. (5:10 – 16)
2. Jesus invites her to receive the seal of fire upon her heart and to walk with Him in holy jealous love.
3. God is a consuming fire and desires to impart His fire into our hearts. (Deut. 4:24)
4. This is His supernatural love that seals our heart. It empowers us to live without the fire of our love being quenched.

O. The Bride's Final Intercession and Revelation (Song 8:8 – 14)

1. The Bride intercedes for the church (8:8 – 9) and for Jesus' return (8:14). In Song 8:8 – 9, her apostolic passion for the church is seen.
2. In Song 8:10, her 3-fold confidence is as a wall (selfless motives), as a tower (her supernatural abilities to nurture) and as one with peace (emotional hindrances are removed).
3. In Song 8:11-12, she experiences the power and enjoyment of living before His eyes instead of before the eyes of men. Her sense of importance is rooted in eternity as she has revelation of giving account before God (8:11). The Bride has a revelation of her own spiritual maturity before God (8:12).
4. Jesus' final commission to the Bride (8:13 – 14). The Bride's urgency is expressed in intercession. (Rev. 22:17)

IHOP - ONE THING MINISTRIES

The Bridal Vision for Intimacy with Jesus

(Song. 1:2–4)

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Song. 1:2 – 4 describes the Bride's Life Vision and her Cry for Intimacy with Jesus. It is a powerful divine invitation of God for every believer through these three verses to enter into a journey of pursuit for God.
2. This passage sets the pattern for our faith. Our salvation in Christ is much more than saving us from hell's fire or just receiving blessings from God. The ultimate goal of salvation is:
 - a. To know God. (John 17:3)
 - b. To become mature as the Bride of Christ. (Rev. 19:7)
 - c. To partner with Jesus in fulfilling the Great Commission. (Matt. 28:19 – 20)

B. OVERVIEW AND OUTLINE

1. Song. 1:2 – 4 sums up the main theme, the primary focus and the theology of the entire book.
2. Song. 1:2 – 4 gives us a summarized version of the entire book. The entire heartbeat of the Song of Songs is defined in these three verses. Understanding these 3 verses will give us a glimpse of what Song of Songs is about.
3. There are three metaphors of intimacy with God in Song of Songs:
 - a. The Divine Kiss (Song. 1:2)
 - i. The kiss of God unlocks closed hearts. The unlocked heart means a seeing and perceiving heart. (Eph. 1:17)
 - ii. The request for the kiss of God is a request for the spirit of revelation that will help our hearts perceive the things of God. (1 Cor. 2:9 – 10)
 - b. The Divine Embrace (Song. 2:6; 8:3) can come in two ways:
 - i. The invisible activity of God – God's left hand touching under her head speaks of His indiscernible activity which she can't see because His hand is under her head.
 - ii. The manifest presence of God – This speaks of the sweet manifest presence of God that can be seen, felt and discerned. The right hand of God is the

part that embraces. This is the cherishing embrace that we can feel and discern.

- c. The Divine Seal (Song. 8:6)
 - i. The seal of God is the very flame of God's love that sets our hearts ablaze for Jesus.
 - ii. Our hearts are set ablaze as a result of holy passion and love for God.
4. Song. 1: 2 – 4 introduces the first divine metaphor in the Song of Songs which is the Divine Kiss of the God.
5. There are seven-fold aspects of Divine Kiss of God in the Song of Songs.
 - a. It is vital for us to understand and to experience all seven aspects because it's the basis for our understanding of the Bridal Paradigm.
 - b. The understanding of the Bridal Paradigm is fundamental in helping us know how Jesus sees us and how He feels towards us as His Bride.
6. Song. 1: 2 – 4 is primarily the declaration and prayers of the Bride.
 - a. She is declaring the ultimate vision and focus of her life.
 - b. She is asking the Father to grant her the desire and longing of heart, which is intimacy and passion for Jesus.
7. Simple Outline of Song. 1:2 – 4
 - a. Bridal Cry for Intimacy with Jesus (verse 2a)
 - i. An invitation to go deep with God and be passionate for Him, instead of "casual" and "passive" Christianity.
 - b. Two-Fold Reason for her Desire and Cry for Intimacy (verse 2b – 3)
 - i. Superior pleasure of God's love. (Song. 1: 2b)
 - ii. Revelation of the Beauty of Jesus. (Song. 1: 3)
 - c. Two-Fold Vision of the Bride (verse 4a – b)
 - i. The biblical pattern, order and priority of our faith.
 - ii. The Old Testament version of the First and Second Commandment in Matthew 22:37 – 40.
 - d. God's Response to her Request for Intimacy (verse 4c)
 - d. Exhortation for the Journey of pursuit for Holy Passion (verse 4d)

C. THREE-FOLD DIRECTION OF THE BRIDE'S COMMUNICATION

It is important to acknowledge that the Bride is speaking in three directions in this passage. This is necessary in order to best understand the full meaning of the passage:

1. She speaks directly to the Father (verse 2a)
 - She is speaking to the One who has authority over the King.
2. She speaks directly to Jesus (verse 2b – 4)
 - She acknowledges the superior pleasures in Jesus.
3. She speaks to all sincere believers (verse 4c)
 - She exhorts and encourages all to imitate her faith.

D. THE BRIDAL CRY FOR INTIMACY WITH JESUS

Song.1:2a: "Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth..."

1. The entire Song of Songs unfolds with this Supreme Request by the Bride to the Father for intimacy with Jesus. This is the highest and the most important request anyone can ask from the Father – to know and understand the deep things of God. (Jer. 9:23 – 24; 1 Cor. 2:9 – 10)
2. The cry of the Bride reveals the focus and the pursuit of her heart and her life.
 - a. The Bride could have asked for anything (e.g. anointing, blessings, prominence, fame, health, wealth, etc.) but she requested for the "kisses" of God (i.e. intimacy with God).
 - b. The supreme request of our heart to God reveals the ultimate desire of our heart.
3. In a similar way, the Lord has invited the Church to ask for anything in His will.
 - a. As the Bride, we stand in the Father's presence to ask for what we want most. We cry: "Father, let Him kiss me with the kisses of His Word."
 - b. We ask for the deepest things that God will give to the human spirit. (Matt. 21:22; Mark 11:23; John 14:13,14)
4. God continues to test His people by allowing them to ask for anything.
 - a. The Bride's supreme request from the Father is the Divine kiss of the Word. She wants this more than power, prominence and earthly comforts.
 - b. God is raising up a people whose supreme request is for the kisses of God's Word. There are many necessary things to ask for, but they are secondary. The greatest prayer of faith is to receive grace to love God with all our heart and strength.

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5. She is crying out to the Father for His Son and He would give her the deepest parts of who He is. The Father will unlock her heart with words of His mouth which will enable her to live in another realm of understanding of who He is.
 6. God defines our life by what we want and not by what we attain.
 - a. We must distinguish between our intentions to passionately seek Jesus and our attainment of spiritual maturity.
 - i. Our intention speaks of the cry of our spirit or the setting of the course of our heart.
 - ii. If our intention is ordered according to the Word of God, then our attainment of maturity will follow in due time.
 - b. The Lord does not want us to focus on our attainment.
 - i. We can end up in pride when we do well, or we can end up in condemnation when we do badly.
 - ii. We should focus on setting our intentions to fully obey and then leave the attainment to the Lord.
 - c. The pitfall of focusing on attainment:
 - i. When we succeed, we become proud and self-righteous.
 - ii. When we fail, we become discouraged.
 - iii. There is a place to evaluate but we must not over-evaluate.
 7. We must also distinguish between our desire and our intention to pursue intimacy with Jesus. (Ps. 27:4)
 - a. Many desire intimacy but not many have intentionally gone after intimacy with Jesus.
 - b. Desire causes us to say “yes” but intention propels us to “do something deliberately and proactively”.
 8. Song. 1: 2a sets the theme for the entire book and the pursuit of her life – the pursuing of intimacy with Jesus. This should be the ultimate and supreme vision for every believer.
 9. There are two different “kisses” that are mentioned in this verse:
 - a. “Let Him kiss me...” – She is requesting for the “divine kiss” of God to unlock her heart so that she could receive a greater revelation of Jesus. (Eph. 1:17)
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- b. "...with the kisses of His mouth..." – The "kisses of His mouth" is referring to intimacy with Jesus. She is making a prayer for intimacy with Jesus. There are different kinds of "kisses" in the Bible that are metaphors of our relationship with God:
- i. Kiss of the Feet – "master-servant" relationship.
 - ii. Kiss of the Hand/ Cheek – Relationship between friends.
 - iii. Kiss of the Mouth – A metaphor of our relationship between Jesus as the Bridegroom and us as His Bride (intimacy with Jesus).

Note: This is only a Divine Metaphor and Not a literal kiss. It is an allegorical picture of Intimacy with God in our heart and there is nothing sensual or sexual.

E. THE SUPERIOR PLEASURE IN THE LOVE OF GOD

Song. 1:2b: "For your love is better than wine."

1. After asking the Father for the kisses of God's mouth, she gives the reason for wanting the kisses of the Mouth or the Word.
2. She speaks directly to Jesus in the second person, "For Your love (affection) is better than wine." We can use the word "because" in place of the word "for". She is saying that experiencing Jesus' affection is better than the wine of this fallen world. (Song. 1:2).
3. She uses the term "wine" because wine "exhilarates" the heart. Wine, in the context of this marriage metaphor is "the drink of earthly celebration".
 - a. It is the drink of gladness that makes people happy. It speaks of the intoxicating things of this world, both good and bad.
 - b. There is the "good wine" of God's blessing and also the "bad wine" of our sin. She is saying more than, "Your love is better than sin." That is obvious. She is saying, "Experiencing Your love is better than all the other privileges in this life."
 - c. The good blessings of God in our circumstances include financial increase, favor in relationships, physical health, new spheres of influence in ministry, etc. The wine speaks of the best experiences that we can have in the natural realm.
 - d. As wonderful as God's blessings are, they are not to be the primary focus of our heart. Many experience God's blessings in the increase of finances or prominence, etc. without their hearts being enlarged in the love of God. They often gradually decrease in their love for Jesus. (Rev. 2:4 – 5)
4. The Bride introduces the priority that the "superior pleasures" of gospel have in her life. This reveals her theology of her life and her pursuit of holiness. (Song. 1:2)

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5. "Is better than", "is superior to" or "is more delightful than" points to the superior pleasures that come from growing in revelation of God's heart and affection. These superior pleasures are in contrast to the inferior pleasures of sin. God frees us from the dominion of inferior pleasures of sin by allowing us to experience superior pleasures that are far more powerful.
 6. There are many different categories of pleasures that we are to celebrate under the leadership of Jesus.
 - a. There are physical, emotional, and mental pleasures. God is the author of these. God made us spiritually, physically and emotionally hungry or needy.
 - b. We long for happiness and yearn deeply for pleasure because we are designed by God to be pleasure seekers. This in itself is not sinful; but the search for pleasure in unrighteousness is sinful.
 7. God created the human spirit with seven longings that draw us to Him and reflect His glory in us.
 - a. These longings are common in all of us. They give insight into the way God had designed our spirit.
 - b. Each longing is a reflection of God's personality. We were made in His image, and thus we have these longings. We feel delight because He is filled with delight, we experience happiness because He too experience happiness.
 - c. The seven longings are: the longing for the assurance that we are enjoyed by God; the longing to be fascinated; the longing to be beautiful; the longing to be great; the longing for intimacy without shame; the longing to be wholehearted and passionate; and the longing to make a deep and lasting impact. (You can find out more about the seven longings in our "Bride of Christ" teaching series.)
 8. These cravings were put into us strategically by God. They will never ever go away.
 - a. The reason food is so good is because we were created to be hungry. The reason God satisfies us with pleasure is because He created a hunger for pleasure in us.
 - b. They each have an element of delight, pain and ache as they woo us into God's presence. The enemy uses these cravings to woo us into darkness as well.
 - c. When these longings are not touched in the grace of God they leave us empty; they leave us with pain, mourning, and dissatisfaction. God created us with a "God shaped vacuum" or gnawing emptiness in our heart that can only be filled by God.
 9. Satan counterfeits the pleasures that God created so that he might draw us away from God. (Eph. 4:22; Heb. 3:13)
 - a. Sin produces immediate pleasure. No one sins out of obligation. We sin because we believe that it will provide a pleasure that is superior to obeying God.
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- b. The power of temptation rests on a deceptive promise that sin will bring more satisfaction than living for God, thus, it is referred to as the deceitfulness of sin or deceitful lusts.
10. The greatest “pleasures” that we can experience are spiritual ones. These are best experienced by encountering Jesus as the Bridegroom God.
- a. This intoxicates our heart and makes us lovesick. God does not call us to holiness so that He can test us by keeping us from a life of pleasure.
 - b. Holiness is not drudgery. It is a call to pleasure that is perfect and eternal. (Ps. 16:11)
 - c. The Bride develops the theme of the superior pleasure in God throughout the Song. (Song. 2:3)
11. Sin is pleasurable and sin appears to be the most pleasurable thing that the human spirit can experience until we experience the full truth of the gospel. The superior pleasures of the Spirit are far more powerful than the inferior pleasure of sin.
12. God’s main strategy is to raise up a holy people and restore the first commandment to first place in the generation in which the Lord returns. This strategy will introduce the superior pleasures of the gospel.

F. INTRODUCING AFFECTION-BASED OBEDIENCE: MOTIVATED BY SATISFACTION IN JESUS

1. Affection-based obedience is obedience that flows from experiencing Jesus’ love and affection. We understand He has affection for us and we experience an impartation of it back to Him. This is the strongest kind of obedience because it results in the deepest and most consistent obedience. A lovesick person will embrace and endure anything for the sake of love.
2. Obedience by faith or obedience without feeling God’s presence is still required in God’s Word. In other words, we must continue to obey God when we do not feel like it.
3. Fear-based obedience or “shame-based obedience” is obedience that flows from the fear of being put to shame or the fear of suffering negative consequences. This is biblical. However, it is not enough to motivate us to consistently resist the pleasures of sin for many years. In other words, it is not the most effective approach to obedience.
4. Experiencing God is more effective in motivating us to resist sin than the fear of consequences. Why?
 - a. Because the temptation to experience the immediate pleasure of sin is usually more powerful than the fear of punishment. This fear of sin’s consequences does not – and cannot - overpower the tendency in our hearts to sin.

- b. Instead, fear of sin's consequences will cause us to sin in secret, in more creative ways. We sin because we enjoy the pleasure it brings.
 - c. We sin when our heart is hungry and unsatisfied with God. Our struggle for holiness must be set in context against our pursuit to live satisfied lives in God.
5. The pleasures of God are a banquet set before us, a table of spiritual delights that can deliver us from the emptiness of seeking pleasure in sin. The way to free the heart from the domination of sin is by delighting in God. Encountering Jesus is a superior pleasure that transcends anything that sin can offer us.
 6. Holiness has often been presented in a negative way with endless lists of threats and warnings of the consequences of sin. The Word of God teaches about the consequences of deliberate, sinful rebellion. The Bible is full of don'ts and prohibitions, but these laws and rules were never designed by God to supernaturally transform the human heart.
 7. The approach of many is to only use shame and fear to motivate people into keeping a list of dos and don'ts. But in the end, the allure of the immediate pleasure of sin is often more powerful than the fear of long-term consequences.
 8. Yes, we must continue to present the consequences of sin, but we must do so realizing that this alone is not sufficient. Something more is needed. Warning people about the social and spiritual consequences of sin does not often cause them to reject pornography, greed, lying and cheating.

G. REVELATION BASED DESIRE FOR GOD

Song. 1:3a, b: "Because of the fragrance of Your good ointments, Your name is ointment poured forth..."

1. The Bride reveals the source of her fervency for Jesus – the beauty and the knowledge of Jesus. Her encounter with the beauty of Jesus has awakened her passion and fervency for God!
2. The knowledge of God awakens our heart to fervency. In other words, to know Him is to love Him. To understand Him is to enjoy Him. More understanding of God's character causes us to enjoy Him more.
3. We desire "little" of God because we know "little" about God. When we know more of who God is and encounter more of His beauty, it will cause us to long and desire for more of God.
4. Apostle Paul wrote that the excellence of the knowledge of the Man Christ Jesus was the motivation of His great zeal. This is a very important theological premise. (Phil.3:7 – 14)

5. In Song. 1:3, the Bride is introducing the revelation-based desire for God. We will love Jesus more as the knowledge of God is poured forth. The Church will love Jesus as the Father pours forth or reveals more of the beauty of His name.
6. The Bride knows that the beauty of Jesus will cause all believers (i.e. virgins) to love Jesus. God's name is like good perfume. Its mystery, beauty and wonder powerfully impact us. (Song. 1:3)
 - a. The virgins are referred to as the daughters of Jerusalem in the Song of Songs. They are genuine yet immature believers who seek Jesus throughout the Song of Songs but are never fully committed as the Bride is.
 - b. All believers in the Church will eventually become extravagant lovers of Jesus even if they do not become so until eternity.
7. She understands how God changes the human heart. There is only one "perfumed name" that effectively transforms us. (Isa. 4:2)
8. When God reveals God to the human spirit it exhilarates us. There is nothing more powerful or pleasurable than when God reveals God to the human spirit. To understand Jesus more is to love and enjoy Him more. Our zeal for Jesus is strengthened by receiving the knowledge of God. This motivated Paul to suffer loss and endure hardship. (Phil. 3:8)
9. Jesus declares the Father's name to awaken our hearts to love God. (John 17:26)
 - a. We will love Jesus with the love which the Father loves Him. Loving Jesus in the overflow of the Father's affection for Jesus is our inheritance and our destiny.
 - b. There is nothing more glorious than loving God by the power of God. The Bride will love Jesus just as the Father loves Jesus.
10. How do we grow in passion for Jesus? We do this by understanding the passion of God's heart for us. The revelation of God's desire for us empowers us to desire God. If you want to love God more, fill your mind with truths related to His love and affection for you.

H. THE FRAGRANCE OF GOD

Song. 1:3a: "Because of the fragrance of your good ointment..."

1. The fragrance or perfume is not an activity or a visible substance. When perfume is in the air you cannot grab a handful of it, but we can still feel its impact. It can still stir our heart. It is something we can feel.
2. The fragrance of God speaks of Jesus' lovely personality – Who He is, which especially includes His beauty, His passion and affection, His emotion, His thoughts, His will and His pleasure for His people.

3. The presence of fragrance is not speaking of something we do. In Song. 1:3, it speaks of something God is – the sweet perfume of God's heart.
4. His Fragrance is not speaking of His actions. His fragrance is speaking of the essence of God's personality. This speaks of the fragrance of who He is, in the beauty of His being.
 - a. The revelation of the sweet perfume of God speaks of God's thought life and His emotional make- up.
 - b. The sweet perfume of God speaks of His emotional beauty.
 - c. Throughout the Song of Solomon perfume is pictured as thoughts and feelings.
 - d. It expresses the beauty of what is on the inside of one's personality like a rose. The fragrance of the rose comes from the beauty of its internal condition.
5. It is the picture language of expressing internal beauty. The perfumes in the ancient world came from the inside of a plant being outwardly manifest. And if you crushed the plants, then the fragrance would come out. It was the internal presence of the beauty of a flower's fragrance.
6. 2 Cor. 2:14 talks about the fragrance of Jesus Christ. God literally has fragrance. It is not just a metaphor.
7. The doctrine of the affection of God militates against legalism on one hand and pride on the other hand which are always the two evils of every powerful doctrine.

I. THE NAME OF GOD

Song. 1:3b: "Your name is ointment poured forth"

1. This speaks of the unique exaltation of His Name. It also speaks of His attributes being openly revealed or poured forth. When God's name is poured forth, His name is exalted and openly revealed. His name is revealed through His actions.
2. This speaks of Jesus' lovely and wise acts in redemption and His manifest leadership throughout history. He is the sovereign leader of history, and she has now finally seen how wise and good His dealings are in her personal life, as well as, in history. (Rom. 2:4; 8:28)

J. AWAKENING OF THE UNIVERSAL BRIDE IN MATURE LOVE

Song. 1:3c: "Therefore the virgins love You."

1. She speaks from what she observes through her journey. The Bride knows that God's love will be eventually worked into all believers referred to as virgins.

2. The virgins are genuine yet immature believers. They represent the carnal majority in the Church that will eventually be won over to become extravagant lovers of Jesus.
3. The revelation of the knowledge of God as described in Song. 1:3 will produce this love towards God even in the weak daughters of Jerusalem. This is the inevitable result of the Holy Spirit's revelation of Jesus' beauty to our hearts.
4. The carnal Church of this generation will see the excellence of God's beauty as it produces love and worship in them.
5. This will be the strategy of God at the End-of-the-Age in preparing a Church to fully walk in the First Commandment. The Holy Spirit will release the full revelation of the Beauty of Jesus. (Matt. 22:37 – 38; Eph. 1: 17; Rev. 19: 10; Isa. 4: 2)

K. THE BRIDE'S TWO-FOLD LIFE VISION

Song. 1:4a, b: "Draw me away, we will run after You."

1. Her 2-fold life vision expresses her goals in the form of a prayer to God. (Song. 1:4)
2. The NAS translates this as "draw me after You." The words "after You" modifies "draw me" in many Bible translations. In the NKJ the "after You" modifies the verb "running."
3. She firstly prays, "Jesus, draw me away." She longs to be drawn close to God's heart in deep intimacy as an extravagant worshipper who loves God with all her heart. (Matt. 22:37)
4. She prays, "We will run after You." The "we" refers to running with Jesus and His people.
 - a. Being drawn to God is singular but running with Him is plural. She longs to serve people in ministry partnership with Jesus and those who love Him.
 - b. Running represents a life of service motivated by compassion for people. It involves obedience in action, reaching out to others, and stepping out in faith.
 - c. We run behind Jesus, who sets the pace and in relationship with other people. (Matt. 22:39)
5. The balance is to have passion for Jesus and compassion for people. There is a constant tension throughout our entire spiritual journey between "drawing" and "running." At the beginning, most are focused on running in ministry without being drawn in intimacy.
6. We have to be "drawn to Him" and "run with Him" in each season. It is not enough to be only drawn near to God's heart in intimacy. Nor is it enough to only run in ministry.

7. The general order of the Kingdom is to first be drawn in intimacy and then to run in ministry in the overflow of our close relationship with Jesus.
8. The First Commandment focus to love God with all our heart empowers us to more effectively walk out the Second Commandment focus to relate to and serve others.

L. THE CHAMBER EXPERIENCE

Song. 1:4c: "The King has brought me into His chamber."

1. The King's chamber is a bridal chamber. It refers to the times when she develops her secret life in God.
 - a. We all have a secret history in God where Jesus draws us to Himself, particularly into His Word. The times in the chamber form and fashion our inner man. During these times, the Lord woos and warns us, give us promises and confronts us so that we grow in the Spirit.
 - b. The King's chamber is a time of preparation where we love and obey Jesus with all our heart, even as He fashions us for future tasks to run with Him in active service.
2. The young Bride asked the Lord to draw her, to take the initiative in helping her.
 - a. Jesus answered by carrying her into His chambers. (Song. 2:4)
 - b. Jesus described the good shepherd as carrying the lost sheep on His shoulders of grace. (Luke 15:5)
3. The chamber experiences refer to the times that God carries us to Himself by granting us unusual experiences in the Spirit – revelations, encounters and impartations.

M. THE PROPHETIC EXHORTATION

Song. 1:4d: "We will be glad, and rejoice in You, we will remember Your love more than wine!"

1. The Bride ends this passage with an important three-fold exhortation for the journey in pursuing intimacy with Jesus. It is an important advice for us to "hold on" in this long journey because there will be challenges which will cause us to feel like quitting (e.g. weaknesses and failures), feel distracted (e.g. temptations) or have a sense of condemnation.
2. We will be glad and rejoice in Jesus and remember His love in three ways:
 - a. We rejoice in and remember His tender mercy in our weakness even as we refuse condemnation.
 - b. We rejoice in and remember His Excellencies and exhilarating affections that are superior to the wines of sinful pleasures.

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- c. We rejoice in and remember His leadership over our lives in times of difficulty and testing.
 3. This faith confession in times of despair and testing is an expression of spiritual warfare as we declare that God is good and the devil is a liar.
 4. The goodness of Jesus' love powerfully causes us to love Him. When believers in the Church remember Jesus' love and goodness, their hearts are awakened to the three-fold love of God – love from God ignites our love for God, which then overflows into love for others. The Bride understands how God changes the human heart. (Song. 1:4d)
 5. The Bride is showing the way to maintain the fervency she received in the chamber experience.
 - a. In the chamber experience, we receive personal encouragement and assurances from God.
 - b. It is not enough to have these experiences. God holds us accountable to remember them and to act on them by setting our soul to agree with what God spoke to us in these times.
 6. Our soul remembers Jesus' love by faith and refuses to draw back. We must regularly re-align our soul to God's Word. There is a place to set our soul to be glad by faith.
 - a. In difficult circumstances, we actively rejoice in God and confess His loving leadership instead of sinking into anxiety. We declare that we are gladdened by His good leadership. In the darkness of the midnight hour, we remember the revelation He gave us in His chambers. (Song. 2:4; Rom. 8:28)
 - b. In temptation, we actively rejoice in God and confess that His affections and promises are better than the wines of this fallen world. (Heb. 11:20 – 30)
 - c. In failure, we confess His love as we believe in His tender mercy instead of wallowing in condemnation. We will not accept the accusations of the enemy. Satan tells many they are rejected by God causing them to run from God instead of to Him in weakness.
 7. In difficult circumstances, temptation and failure, we must declare that the Lord is good and His mercy endures forever. (1 Chron. 16:34, 41; 2 Chron. 5:13; 7:3, 6; 20:21; Ezra 3:11; Jer. 33:11; Ps. 52:1; 100:5; 106:1; 107:1; 117:2; 118:1 – 4, 29; 138).
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IHOP - ONE THING MINISTRIES

The Seven-Fold Divine Kiss

(Song. 1:2)

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Song. 1:2 is the bridal cry for intimacy with Jesus.
 - a. This is a supreme request by the Bride as she asks for "divine kisses" of Jesus.
 - b. She is given a "blank cheque" by Jesus and she could have asked for anything but she has requested for the "divine kisses" of Jesus.
2. This is because she knows that there is nothing better and nothing more satisfying to her heart than intimacy with Jesus.
 - a. The phrase "for your love is better than wine," is a reality to her.
 - b. Likewise, we must have this reality in our walk with Jesus. If we encounter this truth, we will consider everything as rubbish. (Phil. 3:7 – 12)
3. Song. 1:2 is the ultimate cry of all human hearts. It answers the three cries of the human hearts in all human history – the Prophetic Cry, the Philosophical Cry and the Psychological Cry.
4. The entire eight chapters of Song of Songs unfold the implications related to this supreme request for the "kisses of His mouth". The entire Song of Songs tells us how God answers her request for the "divine kisses"
5. There are seven-fold "Divine kiss" in the Song that are related to the seven-longings of our heart. It is something that cannot be denied, cannot be deprived of and cannot be repented away from. These longings have to be fulfilled. It can only be fully fulfilled in intimacy with God. It's God's way to draw us to Him

"God is most glorified when man is most satisfied in Him!" John Piper

B. THE "DIVINE KISSES"

1. The Divine kiss is a metaphor for intimacy with God.
 - a. We are to think of God's hand touching our heart by the Holy Spirit to expand our capacity to receive His love and to give ourselves back to Him in love.
 - i. It speaks of God's invitation to go deep with Jesus.
 - ii. The kisses of His mouth involve the release of the Word of God that tenderizes our hearts in the love of God.

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- b. We are Not to think of kissing Jesus on the mouth. This is entirely outside the boundaries of God's Word. We renounce all interpretations of the "kisses of the Word" that come from sensual imagination.
 2. The Word of God covers many different subjects such as relationship skills, ministry skills or apostolic strategies for outreach (e.g. Book of Acts). All these are valuable and important. However, in Song. 1:2, the Bride cried out specifically to receive the Word of God in a way that would reveal and impart God's love to her heart.
 3. The "divine kiss" a metaphor to describe how God motivates and empowers our heart with passion for Jesus. He does this when we encounter the following aspects of God: affection, beauty, mystery, pleasure of God, delight, gladness, joy.
 4. This is called the holy romance of the Gospel where Jesus as Bridegroom is "wooing" the heart of His Bride.
 5. There are three metaphors of intimacy with God in the Song:
 - a. The Divine Kiss (Song. 1:2)
 - i. The kiss of God unlocks closed hearts. The unlocked heart means a seeing and perceiving heart. (Eph. 1:17)
 - ii. The request for the kiss of God is a request for the spirit of revelation that will help our hearts perceive the things of God. (1 Cor. 2:9 – 10)
 - b. The Divine Embrace (Song. 2:6; 8:3)
 - i. The invisible activity of God – God's left hand touching under her head speaks of His indiscernible activity which she can't see because His hand is under her head.
 - ii. The manifest presence of God – This speaks of the sweet manifest presence of God that can be seen, felt and discerned. The right hand of God is the part that embraces. This is the cherishing embrace that we can feel and discern.
 - c. The Divine Seal (Song. 8:6)
 - i. The seal of God is the very flame of God's love that sets our hearts ablaze for Jesus.
 - ii. Our hearts are set ablaze as a result of holy passion and love for God.
 6. The Bride's journey starts with a longing for the kisses of His Word (Song. 1:2) and ends with encountering Jesus in His holy jealous love (Song. 8:6 – 7). He came to seal her heart with holy jealous love which is the ultimate expression of maturity in Song of Songs.
 7. How the "Kisses" are communicated:
 - a. Personal meditation on the Word of God. (Refer to Appendix C)
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- b. The Word of God through others – i.e. sermons, songs, testimonies of others.
 - c. Prophetic revelation of the Holy Spirit.
 - d. Through the ministry of other people.
8. Three-fold anointing of the Divine Kiss:
- a. The anointing to Perceive (Eph. 1:17) – an impartation of understanding and revelation of our Divine Bridegroom and who we are as the Bride of Christ.
 - b. The anointing to Love (Eph. 3:16) – a Holy Spirit energized heart of love through our devotion and abandonment.
 - c. The anointing to Make Known (Eph. 3:8) – to communicate with power as we run in partnership with God.

C. THE HOLY ROMANCE OF THE GOSPEL

1. The holy romance has nothing to do with earthly sensuality but how God “romances” our heart. It is a term basically to describe:
 - a. How God pursues His people (Luke 15:11 – 24; Song. 4:9)
 - b. How God motivates His people (Ps. 16:11)
 - c. How God empowers His people by fascinating our hearts with the beauty of Christ Jesus (Isa. 4:2; Ps. 27:4)
 - d. How God feels about us (Isa. 62:4 – 5; Zep. 3:17)
 - e. What He will impart to His people (Song. 8:6)
2. To put it simply, it is about how God woos and “wows” our hearts to Him.
3. The romance starts in the heart of God. God expresses His heart by His affection, His gladness and His desires towards us. (Song. 7:10)
4. It is a “new way” how God motivates us that is beyond discipline and dedication. God is empowering and motivating us with: Affection; Fascination; Beauty; Mystery; Pleasure; Delight; and Gladness. (Isa. 4:2)
5. We must recognize that it is the Lord who ordained and is the Creator and origin of human pleasures before sin entered the human experience.
6. It is in the place of awesome pleasure when God reveals God to the human spirit. It fascinates the human spirit. When God reveals God to the human spirit, beyond

being awestruck, we also experience exceeding pleasure. Revelation of who God is fascinates the human spirit. (Ps. 16:11)

7. God adds to our experience of life the superior pleasures of the Gospel to minimize and break the dominion of sin in our experience. This provides a whole new grid of obedience. This is called "obedience out of lovesickness" or obedience out of desire, affection and fascination. (Song. 5:8)
8. This is the romance of the Gospel. It is a heart that is fascinated and captured by the romance of love and therefore be joyfully and exuberantly extravagant in our response of obedience. It is beyond "teeth gritting" obedience.
9. This holy romance is a reality that speaks of radical obedience that flows out of a heart fascinated with Jesus. This romance is not parallel with earthly sensuality.
10. The romance of the Gospel is a heart that is made glad and happy in love. A heart that overflows with gladness and joy because it is lovesick before a Divine Bridegroom.

D. THE THREE-FOLD NATURE OF THE CRY FOR THE KISS OF GOD'S WORD

The Bride's desire and intention to receive the kisses of Jesus touches three important realities in life:

1. The Prophetic Cry of what God is doing on the earth.
 - a. This is the prophetic theme of the Holy Spirit in the church right now where the Spirit is awakening a new cry in the heart of God's people.
 - b. The Body of Christ will never be satisfied, except by the kisses of His mouth. The Holy Spirit's greatest desire is to fully capture the hearts of people for the Son of God.
 - c. In Deut. 30:6, God told Moses that He would personally circumcise the heart of His people so that they love God with all their heart. The promise of Deut. 30:6 will take place. God is going to have a people that love Him with all of their strength. (John 17:26)
 - d. The cry for the kisses is the number one agenda of the Holy Spirit. It is to put the First and Great Commandment in the first place in the Body of Christ. The Holy Spirit is awakening a new cry for wholehearted love in the hearts of God's people.
2. The Philosophical Cry in answering why we exist on planet earth and in eternity.
 - a. This is the definition of our success and purpose. In the "absolute sense" we succeed, no matter what else happens if we are lovers of God.

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- b. It is our inheritance to be lovers of God. God simply made us that way. When this is my main definition of success, then I can succeed in life. If you know you are loved from the Lord and it is your desire to be a lover of God, you are successful no matter what happens.
 - c. Being successful doesn't depend on anybody else doing something for you. In the most absolute definition of success, your identity is being loved and being a lover. If you are loved and you are a lover of God, then you have success in the most absolute way.
 - d. We may go through a season where there are relational collisions or a financial collapse. We may go through a season where our ministry is failing or we may fall in sin and cause a scandal for a season. But, no matter what the circumstance may be, we can know that there is something bigger going on in life – We are loved and a lover, that is our identity. We are successful no matter what else happens on planet earth. We have the title deed to a successful life.
3. The Psychological Cry in answering how our heart functions.
- a. It defines how the human heart is satisfied, or how we experience happiness.
 - b. God has so designed our human soul that the experience of the love of God, by the revelation of the Spirit, is the most enjoyable and pleasurable experience available to the human makeup.
 - c. There is nothing as exhilarating to the human make-up than when the Holy Spirit reveals the kisses of God to the human spirit. The human heart was created to love God with a whole heart.
 - d. There is no success in counselling to bring people to wholeness apart from the pursuit of wholeheartedness towards God. It simply doesn't work. You are not made that way. You were made to cry for the kisses of His mouth.
 - e. In Matt. 22:37 Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all of your heart". Jesus knows that we were created to passionately love God. When we do not love God with a passionate heart, then our emotional life is out of balance.
 - f. Jesus is the author and creator of the human heart. You do not function properly unless you are reaching to God to love Him passionately. You were simply made to be a passionate lover of God and when we do not pursue that, we simply do not work in a right way emotionally.
 - g. We were never made to have wholeness or to be healed emotionally outside of the pursuit of being wholehearted for God. We are simply designed to only function right in the pursuit of wholeheartedness.
 - h. If you have nothing to die for, you have nothing to live for. This is simply how God made the human heart. So much of the human race (including the Body of
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Christ) is dying of boredom right now because they don't understand we were created to be passionate lovers of God.

- i. Devotion and obedience are more important than your finances, your image, comfort zone, and sexuality. It is not just that we should love passionately, we have to in order to function right.
- j. The power of the captivating kisses of God is yet to be fully seen. It is the lack of this that is causing the Body of Christ to compromise. These kisses make us loyal in the issues of money, sexuality and prominence.

E. THE BRIDAL PARADIGM – THE SEVEN LONGINGS OF THE BRIDE

1. The Bridal paradigm is not a precise theological term commonly used by scholars. It is a practical term that communicates a cluster of truths drawing us into the experience of the “superior pleasures” of the Gospel.
 - a. It describes seven longings of the human heart. It is a mechanism that points us to God.
 - b. The Bridal Paradigm describes how God “wired” us to long for pleasure. Thus the longing for pleasure is not sin.
 - c. But instead of choosing to fulfill these pleasures in God and by God, we choose the inferior pleasures of sin.
2. God’s main strategy in freeing us from the “inferior pleasures” of sin is by introducing us to the deeper and superior “spiritual pleasures” of the Gospel.
3. These superior pleasures are experienced as the Holy Spirit makes known to us specific truths related to seven longings of the heart that are common to all. In other words, we are best equipped to resist the lesser pleasures of sin as we experience satisfaction in intimacy with God.
4. The seven-fold divine kisses are seven spiritual revelations that empower our heart to experience the superior pleasures of God. This will fulfill the seven longings in our human heart.
5. These seven longings are expressions of what I mean by being exhilarated by the holy romance. It is how we live exhilarated, how we live in the fullness of happiness and how we enter into these seven superior pleasures.
6. Seven Longings of the Bride
 - a. In His sovereignty, God has placed seven longings in us, and it is His will for these longings to be fulfilled by Him.

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- b. These seven desires are the foundations of the Bridal Paradigm of the Kingdom. These seven longings are also seven unique privileges that we have as the Bride of Christ.
- c. These seven desires reflect seven different emotions in God's personality and are aspects of our own creative design, and these emotions are also in us. They illustrate the superior pleasures of the Gospel and what it means to be romanced by the Holy Spirit.
- d. They are best fulfilled by the seven-fold divine kisses.
- e. The Seven longings of our heart are:
- i. The longing for the Assurance that we are enjoyed by God (Song. 1:12 – 14, 2:4, 4:1, 4:9, 4:10d – 12, 6:5a)
 - There is a craving in every heart to be pursued, delighted in and enjoyed first by God, then by our families and friends. We can become crippled with emotional impairment as we feel rejection and shame from God and people.
 - The LORD answers this longing through the revelation of the finished work of the cross and God's emotional capacities as both a Father and a Bridegroom.
 - ii. The longing to be Fascinated (Song. 1:8, 2:8, 3:6, 5:10 – 16)
 - The longing to be deeply moved is something we all long for. We need to marvel and experience wonder and awe in order to function emotionally.
 - The secular entertainment industry has identified this human longing and has targeted it commercially. For without this sense of awe, we live aimless and spiritually bored.
 - The LORD will answer this longing by an unprecedented unveiling of the beauty of Jesus. (Ps. 27:4, 145:5; Isa. 4:2, 33:17)
 - iii. The longing to be Beautiful (Song. 1:15, 4:1 – 5)
 - Our heart vigorously chases after the realm of beauty. All humans have an obsession with physical appearance and vanity as it seeks to answer this longing in a wrong way.
 - The Lord answers this longing through the revelation of Jesus' divine beauty imparted to the redeemed. (Isa. 61:3; Ps. 90:17, 149:4)
 - The glorious news is that the beauty of God is not just something He possesses but it is something He imparts through redemption! God's beauty is transferable to human beings through Jesus.
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- iv. The longing to be Great (Song. 6:8 – 9, 7:7 – 8)
- In the core of our being, we long to be successful and great. We cannot repent of the God given longing to be great, only of pursuing it in the wrong way! We are made for greatness and honor!
 - The Lord satisfied this longing by the revelation of the redeemed as enthroned with Jesus at His right hand. Jesus enthrones His Bride in the highest position of government in created order, entrusting us with the most significant tasks in the eternal city. (Rev. 3:21; Song. 6:8)
- v. The longing for Intimacy without shame (Song. 1:8 – 11)
- We long to know and to be known before the Lord. He satisfies this longing through the revelation of the tender affections of the heavenly Bridegroom. We partake of the bridal affection that enables us to experience intimacy with the Godhead beyond all others in creation.
 - As the Bride, we experience deep mutual sharing with Jesus as He reveals His holy secrets. He understands all the secret aspects of our life that are unknown, unnoticed and misunderstood by others.
- vi. The longing to be Wholehearted and Passionate (Song. 1:2 – 4)
- We cannot function properly unless we have passionately given our heart to a Person and purpose beyond ourselves. We long to possess the power to be abandoned to the Lord so that we might never be dulled by spiritual boredom, disloyalty or compromise that leaves us broken and discontent.
 - The Lord satisfies this longing by the impartation of divine love to our hearts (Rom. 5:5). He imparts to us the power to be passionate because He is a passionate God! This is also the Greatest Commandment.
- vii. The longing to make a Deep Impact (Song. 4:9, 16; 6:3)
- We are desperate for a life of meaning that is filled with relevance and significance. We enjoy bringing the Good News to others. We delight to exhilarate others.
 - This longing is fulfilled by anointed service resulting in rewards that literally last forever! God designed His people to make a relevant impact in the lives of others. (Matt. 10:42; 3 John 4)
7. The seven longings of our heart is necessary for us to understand and receive the seven-fold divine kisses.
8. It is vital to receive all seven kisses as each reveal different dimensions of God. And each has differing effect on our heart.
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F. CONCLUSION

1. The need for the divine kisses is especially necessary in the generation that we are living in, which is the End-Time generation.
2. The Bible makes it clear that the final generation before Jesus returns will be the most emotionally broken in all human history:
 - a. Most intense pressure of sin (Dan. 8:23)
 - b. Greatest release of occult (Rev. 9:21)
 - c. Highest offense in our heart (Matt. 24:10)
3. There will be seven negative emotional realities that will dominate the earth just before Jesus returns:
 - a. Anger and rage (Ps. 2:1 – 3)
 - b. Cold love (Matt. 24:12)
 - c. Lawlessness which will result in defiance and rebellion (Matt. 24:12)
 - d. Betrayal (Matt. 24:10)
 - e. Hatred (Matt. 24:10)
 - f. Sexual perversion (2 Tim. 4:1 – 3)
 - g. Occult (1 Tim. 4:1 – 3)
4. Our only solution is to encounter the “divine kisses” of God and to receive the “divine seal”. This is the strategy of God to empower us in overcoming the coldest, most lawless, fearful, demonic and sexually perverted generation.

IHOP - ONE THING MINISTRIES

Her Journey Begins

(Song. 1:5–11)

A. REVIEW

1. Song. 1:2 – 4 reveals the main theme of the entire book. It reveals the confession, resolution and the commitment of the Bride in her pursuit of intimacy with Jesus.
2. Song. 1:2 gives us an insight into the ultimate cry of every human heart. The request for the divine kisses of God is the three-fold cry of all-ages.
 - a. The Prophetic Cry
 - b. The Philosophical Cry
 - c. The Psychological Cry
3. Song. 1:2 – 4 sets forth the divine pattern for our pursuit of holy passion for Jesus! It is a divine “roadmap” set for us to emulate and a guide in the journey of pursuing Jesus.

B. OVERVIEW

1. Song. 1:5 – 11 is the beginning of the Bride’s journey of pursuit for intimacy with Jesus.
 - a. This is the place where every believer begins.
 - b. This is a powerful “road-map” in guiding us in the journey of pursuit.
 - c. The seven verses set forth a divine pattern of our progression for Holy Passion.
2. Song. 1:5 – 11 gives us three important keys that are vital in sustaining us in this long journey of pursuing Jesus:
 - a. The Paradox of Grace (Song. 1:5)
 - b. The Revelation of Jesus as the Tender-Hearted Shepherd (Songs 1:8 – 11)
- He is willing and He is able to lead and guide us. (2 Cor. 2:14)
 - c. How do we respond in times of pressure, sin, stumbling and crisis. (Songs 1:7)

C. THE PARADOX OF GRACE (Song. 1:5)

1. The Bride's spiritual journey begins with a spiritual crisis common to every sincere believer as seen in her two-fold confession of faith. (Song. 1:5)
 - a. This is the "paradox of grace" because as she discovers her sin, she also knows that she is lovely to God.
 - b. The Holy Spirit allows her to see her sinfulness as well as her loveliness to God. This describes a sincere but weak believer.
2. This is a powerful and vital truth that is expressed through her two-fold confession in Songs 1:5a, "I am dark but lovely..."
 - a. This is a statement that gives us a significant two-fold description of how the heart of a redeemed operates.
 - b. This is also a statement that gives us the revelation of how God views and feels towards us when we are weak or when we stumble.
3. Song. 1:5a is an essential truth for our spiritual growth and our pursuit of God.
 - a. Most believers do not get very far in our walk with God because we did not lay the right foundation and we do not grapple with this truth.
 - b. As a result, we run away from God when we stumble instead of running to Him. This is due to our lack of understanding of the truth in Song 1:5a and therefore, lacking confidence in running to God even when we are weak and immature. (Eph. 3:12)
4. Many believers' relationship with God is often shame-based because for many years, they only understand and see the darkness of their heart.
 - a. They are extremely sincere in their repentance. But they do not enter into the enjoyment or delight that God feels for them.
 - b. They do not experience "the love that is better than wine." They have a sincere heart but a closed spirit before God.
 - c. A closed spirit says, "Jesus, I love You but please forgive me and do not reject me. I swear I will never do this sin again."
 - d. In other words, they continually negotiate their relationship with God while they worship Him. The issue is one of understanding God's affections and in what way He imparts beauty to us in the grace of God so that we can say, "I am dark, but lovely. I know I sin but You are ravished over me."
5. This is a powerful place of confidence. It empowers us to run to God instead of from Him when we stumble.

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6. Two-fold aspects of the heart the redeemed (Matt. 26:41)
 - a. Weak flesh but a Willing Heart – We are sincere in wanting to love God wholeheartedly even though we are weak in our heart.
 - b. All believers can be generally categorized in four categories:
 - i. Rebellious (e.g. King Saul)
 - ii. Immature (e.g. Peter)
 - iii. Weak (e.g. King David)
 - iv. Mature (e.g. Moses, Samuel)
 - c. Most believers are weak or immature while very few are rebellious or mature.
 7. Three essential truths in sustaining our journey of Holy Passion.
 - a. Recognition of our weak flesh
 - i. Knowledge of our weak flesh is an important aspect of the truth about who we are, although it is not the whole truth of who we are.
 - ii. God knows about the depth of our sin before we are saved. He does not discover our sin because we do. He is aware of it when He declares His love for us.
 - iii. God did not over commit Himself to love us without first understanding the gravity of our sin.
 - iv. We are sometimes surprised when we sin. At such times, we can be overwhelmed with grief. We think that because we are surprised by our sin then surely God must also be surprised.
 - v. If He is surprised with the new information about us then we fear that He may want to renegotiate our relationship with Him or that He might reconsider His love for us.
 - b. Recognition of our willing spirit
 - i. Awareness of our weak flesh is important but this is not the whole truth of who we are.
 - ii. We must not merely define ourselves by our weakness or by our failure but by the sincerity of our hearts.
 - iii. To grow spiritually consistently, we need to know that we are lovely to God while we are in the process of discovering the darkness of our heart because God primarily defines us by the sincerity and the intention of our heart.
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- c. Revelation of how God views and feels towards us when we weak
 - i. A correct view of how God feels towards us will give us confidence in running to Him.
 - ii. God does not define us simply by our weakness and failure. God defines us by the sincerity of our hearts.
 - iii. God measures us more than just by attainment, but by our “yes” in our spirit and our sincere intention to obey.
 - iv. God is able to differentiate between the sincerity of our heart and the rebellious spirit.

(Refer to the teaching on “The 7 Foundational Principles of Intimacy with God”)

D. HER JOURNEY BEGINS (Song. 1:5 – 6)

1. The crisis the young bride is facing in Song. 1:5 is the same crisis that every believer will face in our pursuit of intimacy with Jesus.
 - a. Dark of heart (i.e. sinful desires): Our weak flesh is dark to God.
 - b. Lovely to God (i.e. sincere intentions to obey Jesus): Our willing spirit is lovely to God.
2. The dark tents of Kedar speak of the darkness of the flesh. They were blackened tents that were made out of the dark skins of wild goats. This analogy was easily understood in that day.
3. The curtains of Solomon were the white curtains in the holy place in the Temple. They speak of the inward work of grace in her life. The beauty of these curtains was not seen by all in the outer court but only by the priests who could go into the holy place.
4. She is saying, “I am like dark tents on the outside, but inside I am beautiful like the curtains of Solomon in the holy place.” Outwardly, people see her as the dark tents of Kedar. Inwardly, God sees that she is lovely like the white curtains of Solomon.
5. This is a spiritual crisis that is common to every fervent believer in our journey to holy passion and maturity – the discovery of the darkness in our hearts. The issue is:
 - a. How are we going to relate to God when we discover our own sinfulness?
 - b. How are we going to relate to God when we discover we have weak flesh and a dark heart?
 - c. What we do and how we respond in this crisis is a very important part of our spiritual life.

5. Many run from God instead of to Him in this spiritual crisis because they misunderstand how God looks at them. They resign, give up and get entrenched into a mindset of shame.
6. A life of shame leads to a life of sin. If you feel dirty before God, then you will live dirty. The Lord does not want us to resign ourselves to a second-class status.

Lesson 1

To consistently grow spiritually, we need to know (i.e. our conviction and belief) that we are lovely to God (i.e. God enjoys and likes us) while we are in the process of overcoming darkness in our heart.

7. It is essential for our spiritual growth to see that we are lovely as we see more of our sinfulness. The combination of these two truths causes us to grow in confidence and gratitude in our relationship with Jesus.
 - a. Some streams in the body of Christ focus on the darkness of our heart or on how sinful we are.
 - b. To emphasize this without emphasizing how lovely we are to God destroys our confidence before the Lord and produces shame-filled believers.
 - c. They are sincere in their repentance but shame has paralyzed their relationship with Jesus emotionally.

Lesson 2

The pathway to maturity is recognizing and be honest with our sins yet having confidence in God. We must not choose to turn a "blind eye" to our weakness.

E. FOUR REASONS WHY WE ARE BEAUTIFUL TO GOD EVEN IN OUR WEAKNESS

1. We have received the gift of righteousness
 - a. Our loveliness comes from our receiving the gift of righteousness or the same beautiful and righteous garments that Jesus possesses.
 - b. Sinful people are made lovely in God's sight because of what Jesus did, not because of what we do. (2 Cor. 5:17 – 21)
2. We have a willing spirit
 - a. At the new birth, the Holy Spirit put a "Yes" in our spirit towards God. We agree to change our behavior before the change actually occurs. The "yes" in our spirit to God is beautiful to Him. (Matt. 26:41)
 - b. Each movement of our heart to God is the result of the work of the Spirit in us. This is a willing spirit. David prayed to be sustained by a willing spirit. (Ps. 51:12)
3. The nature of God's personality
 - a. Our beauty is related to God's emotional make up. The very affections and passions in God's heart determine how He feels towards us. (Isa. 55:7 – 9)

- b. Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder. It is because of the heart of the Beholder, that we are beautiful to God. If God was mostly angry, we would not be beautiful in His sight by virtue of having a willing spirit.
 - c. The way He views people flows out of what is in His heart. His point of view is what determines who and what is beautiful. If someone else were looking at the exact same information about us, they would not call us beautiful. God views things very differently from man. (1 Sam. 16:7)
4. Our eternal destiny as Jesus' bride
God sees us through the lens of who we are and how we will live for billions of years in the grace of God as the enthroned Bride with Jesus. This is a significant part of who we are in God's sight.

F. UNDERSTAND THREE BIBLICAL STAGES TOWARDS VICTORY

1. Our sincere intention to obey God
 - a. The first step to spiritual victory is our sincere desire to obey God. Our sincere intentions must be distinguished from mature attainment of obedience. Our victory begins at the start-point of our sincere intentions.
 - b. The Spirit is the author of such sincere desires – not the devil, nor our flesh. Part of how God measures and defines our life is by these intentions. He rejoices in them. Some measure their life only by their attainments, resulting in condemnation.
2. Partial breakthrough yet with a continued struggle
We are victorious on a regular basis yet still war with our flesh in some areas of our life. (Rom. 8:2 – 13; Gal. 5:16 – 17)
3. Substantial breakthrough with transformed desires
Our desires are dramatically changed so that we rarely even struggle in previous areas of sin. (Rom. 6:14 – 23)

Lesson 3

Victory in life is often a process and it is progressive. Victory is not merely achieved when we have totally subdued our flesh. The very sincere intention to obey God is the beginning of victory.

G. HER SPIRITUAL CRISIS: REJECTION AND SHAME (Song. 1:6)

1. She describes five different pressures related to her spiritual crisis:
 - a. She feels ashamed by those staring at her because of her failure. (Song. 1:6a, b)
 - b. She is being rejected by her angry brothers. (Song. 1:6c)

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- c. She is being overworked by being made to keep other vineyards. (Song. 1:6d)
 - d. She is allowing her own vineyard (i.e. heart) to become unkempt, with no fresh love for Jesus. (Song. 1:6e)
 - e. She is serving Jesus at a distance. (Song. 1:7d, e)
2. She describes her brothers as her “mother’s sons”. Throughout Song of Songs, the mother speaks of the Church since we are born of God through the agency of the Church by the Spirit. (Song. 1:6; 3:4, 11; 8:2, 5)
 - a. Paul and others wrote of the Church and its leaders and the New Jerusalem as a “mother”. (Gal. 4:19, 26; 1 Thess. 2:6 – 7)
 - b. Those who do God's will are His mother and brothers. God is our father and the church is spoken of as our mother. (Matt. 12:46 – 50)
 - c. Jesus, the foundation of the Church was born from the seed of a woman. (Gen. 3:15)
 3. The sons were angry at her youthful zeal. They represent older spiritually dull leaders who do not appreciate fervent young believers. Why?
 - a. Zealous believers bring conviction to spiritually dull believers who often simply dismiss true spiritual zeal as legalism.
 - b. The untampered zeal and pride of zealous believers often make spiritually dull leaders angry. Our zeal must be seasoned with wisdom and humility.
 - i. It is common for those with new fervency for Jesus to be self-absorbed and prideful in the way they call others to be wholehearted.
 - ii. Some exalt themselves and condemn others who do not express devotion to God in the same way they do.
 4. She was mistreated by the angry sons who overworked her by taking advantage of her fervency by giving her many responsibilities in different vineyards (note the plural).
 - a. She burns out spiritually. Burn-out doesn't come from hard work as much as from a religious yoke, which speaks of working without connecting to the Holy Spirit in the work.
 - b. Embracing too many responsibilities out of the fear of man and the desire to be noticed by others, leads to burn out.
 5. She kept other vineyards, but did not keep her own vineyard (i.e. heart). (Song. 1:6)
 - a. Our first responsibility before God is our own personal walk with Jesus. Originally, what she wanted most were the kisses of His Word. However, as time goes by her vineyard or the garden of her heart got choked by the weeds of spiritual coldness, sin, and shame.
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- b. Taking care of her own vineyard means nurturing her personal communion with God and doing His will.
6. She feels the pain of serving Jesus at a distance. This happens when we serve without connecting to the Holy Spirit. She feels like the veiled woman who served the Shepherd at a distance. (Song. 1:7)
 - a. In the ancient world, women veiled themselves when working with strangers whom they were unfamiliar with. She cried out, “Why should I serve down the road and not near to You like I used to?”
 - b. These two issues speak of living at a distance from the Shepherd that she so loves. She wants to be with Him wherever He is.
 - c. She lost the sweetness in her communion with God. She longs for the kisses of His Word and her chamber experiences with the Lord.

H. HER DESPERATE CRY TO JESUS (Song. 1:7)

1. Song. 1:7 is the crucial and vital verse in the midst of spiritual crisis. How we respond in spiritual crisis will determine how we turn out in our journey.
2. In the midst of this crisis, she cries out with a desperate prayer. She remembers the kisses of His Word and her chamber experiences.
3. She asks the great Shepherd for counsel, “Tell me, where do you feed Your flock?” We can only offer this desperate cry if we have confidence that we are lovely to God even in our weakness.
4. She still loves Him and cries out, “Tell me, O You whom I love”. She knows that she failed in her weak love.
 - a. Weak love is not false love.
 - b. She is still a genuine lover of God. She is not a hopeless hypocrite as the enemy wants her to believe.
 - c. She has confidence that her love is real even in her crisis and spiritual dullness.
 - d. She did not say, “Tell me, since I am a helpless hypocrite.”
5. At noon, or in the heat of the day, a sheep will lie down if its stomach is full. God wants us to rest in the midst of the heat of the day or the pressure of this life by connecting to Him, not just working for Him. (Ps. 23:2)
 - a. She offers her prayer in the language of the shepherd. “Where will You satisfy me under the heat of the pressures of the day?”

- b. She longs to be satisfied again with Jesus or to rest amid the heat of noon. She is saying: "I have been fed by others, but now I want You to feed me. How will You satisfy the cry of my spirit?"
6. Jesus longs that we pray this prayer.
- a. He does not want us to give up and give in to a spiritually dull life in God. He does not want us to write ourselves off as hopeless hypocrites.
 - b. It pleases Him when we cry out, "Feed my heart like You used to. I am a veiled woman. I am serving at a distance. My own vineyard has weeds in it. Many things are going wrong. I am failing and the people are angry. I need to touch You, whom I love."

Pastoral Question:

How do we respond in the midst of spiritual crisis? Turn to God and contend or just settle for the "realistic"?

I. JESUS' GLORIOUS ANSWER: SEVEN ESSENTIAL STATEMENTS (Song. 1:8)

1. Jesus came as the "tendered-hearted Shepherd". This is the first revelation of Jesus in the journey of progression in Holy Passion.
 2. Jesus hears her desperate prayer (Song. 1:7) and personally answers her (Song. 1:8 – 11). He gives her seven statements that answer where she can find Him.
 - a. He gives a general answer – affirms her as beautiful in His eyes. (Song. 1:8a)
 - b. He gives her a three-fold answer – where to find Him (Song. 1:8b, c, d)
 - c. He gives her a three-fold affirmation – His commitment in building her up (Song. 1:9 – 11)
2. She responds with great gratitude. (Song. 1:12)
 - a. A vital part of the theology of holy passion is found in Jesus' answer. This is the first revelation of Jesus to the Bride on her journey.
 - b. He shows Himself as the "Wonderful Counselor" or the Shepherd who gives her practical counsel in how to go forward even amid her weakness.
3. Jesus begins with an general answer. He addresses the Bride as, "O fairest of women."
 - a. The word "fair" is translated in most other versions of the bible as "beautiful" (NAS/NIV). Jesus is saying, "O most beautiful of women."
 - b. He is saying, "I know there are weeds in your garden and that you serve Me at a distance, but I see the cry in your heart to love Me." He woos her heart with the beauty she possesses in Him.

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4. Jesus starts by saying, "If you do not know."
 - a. His answer shocks many people. We would expect a rebuke.
 - b. He knows our garden isn't being kept and that we are serving Him at a distance. However, we are most beautiful to Him. He calls us beautiful even in the midst of our disorientation and failure.
 - c. We might be unlovely to the angry sons but we are most beautiful to Him. We may despise ourselves but we are most beautiful to Him. He speaks to her shame and rejection.
 5. Jesus calls her the most beautiful woman. She is still beautiful to Him even in her weakness and immaturity.
 - a. He knows that she is not perfect yet He is affirming her sincerity so as granting her confidence and to rekindle her passion.
 - b. In Song. 1:4e, the Bride taught the virgins, "We will remember His love." Jesus is causing her to remember His love by telling her how He views her in her weakness.
 6. Jesus first speaks to our heart in our crisis by calling us, "most beautiful." Then He gives us instructions.
 7. Jesus' three-fold answer to the question of where He feeds His flock establishes us in intimacy with God and emphasizes the importance of Body life. All three answers relate to life in the Body as well as answering the three most powerful temptations that are common to all. (Song. 1:8)
 - a. Commitment to Body life (Song. 1:8c): refuse unsanctified isolation.
 - i. He tells her to follow in the footsteps of the flock or get involved in the fellowship of the Body. The 'footsteps of the flock' is the place where all the sheep walk with God.
 - ii. The Lord says follow in the place where the Body walks. He is saying, "Get back into fellowship, do not over-react to the angry brothers who judge and mistreat you."
 - iii. Isolation from the Body is not motivated by a desire to seek God, but by rejection, bitterness and shame. The devil wants us to be isolated so he can destroy us. (Heb. 10:25)
 - b. Commitment to servant ministry (Song. 1:8d): refuse unsanctified idleness.
 - i. We have to take care of our God-given responsibilities even as we refuse unsanctified idleness. We are to feed the little flock that God sets before us.
 - ii. Jesus will give us more of Himself as we take on the responsibility to feed the young ones or the little flock that God sends to us.
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- c. Commitment to spiritual authority (Song. 1:8e): refuse unsanctified independence.
 - i. We need to submit to spiritual authority by refusing unsanctified independence. She serves the Body beside the tents of the true shepherds.
 - ii. Jesus wants us to have an open spirit to the shepherds and leaders that He places us under. The spirit of lawlessness is abounding. (Matt. 24:12)
 - iii. God knows that every leader that He has ever placed over you is an imperfect leader. We find Jesus in deep ways as we relate to such imperfect leaders. God uses imperfect shepherds to temper us and to reveal the unsettled things in our heart.
 - iv. When we see the faults of the imperfect leaders that God has put over us we are tempted to resist dwelling by their tents with a teachable spirit. Submission is about humility and having an open spirit to authority.
 - 8. Drawing is singular because it is intimacy. Running is plural because it is ministry. God does not want us running in ministry in isolation, idleness or with an independent spirit.

J. THREE-FOLD AFFIRMATION BY THE LORD OF HER SINCERITY (Song. 1:9 – 11)

- 1. In Song. 1:9 – 10, He compares her to three things that reaffirm the loveliness of her sincerity and willing spirit before God.
- 2. Then He gives her a promise in Song. 1:11. The first thing He does is to speak to her heart to affirm her by calling her “My love.” He speaks with love to her heart again.
- 3. God sees her sincere and strong desire to follow Jesus in righteousness. She is as a filly among Pharaoh’s chariots. (Song. 1:9)
 - a. A filly is a horse. The horse is a symbol of strength and power. The context speaks of her strength in righteousness.
 - b. Pharaoh’s chariots had the greatest and most trained and skilled horses on earth. He likens her strength to them. “Among Pharaoh’s chariots” speaks of the finest and strongest war horses in the world.
 - c. The horses of Egypt were well-known throughout the world in those days. Pharaoh had the most highly skilled and trained horses in the earth. Pharaoh chose the very best horses of all the horses of Egypt to pull his own chariot. Pharaoh’s own chariot had the best of the best horses. Pharaoh had thousands of horses in his great stables and the one that pulls his personal chariot is the best one.
 - d. As the wealthiest man in the world, Solomon bought many of Pharaoh’s horses. He was one of the few that could afford them.

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4. Our emotions are attractive to Him. He has touched our emotions with His Spirit. The emotional dimension of her life has been touched by God even as she expresses her sincere devotion for Jesus. (Song. 1:10)
 - a. The cheeks speak of emotion throughout the Song. They reveal anger and joy, etc. When we look at somebody's cheeks, we can tell if there is joy in their heart or if there is anger or sadness. The emotions of a person are expressed through the cheeks.
 - b. The ornaments are created by the skillful work of an artist to beautify its object. Jesus is the artist that has worked to beautify us (Isa. 61:3). Though God sees lust and anger in us, He also sees passion growing in us for Him. God is saying, "Your emotions are lovely, I have skillfully worked in you a "Yes!" for My Son. That moves the very heart of God.
 5. God sees her submission to divine authority and her resolute will to obey Jesus. (Song. 1:10 – 11)
 - a. The neck speaks symbolically of the will. The Bible speaks of people that are stiff-necked, which means a stubborn or rebellious person. The neck also speaks of godly submission. The neck is what turns the head as it chooses which way to go, right or left. When a King triumphed over another nation, the conquering general put his foot over that defeated king's neck which spoke of submission.
 - b. The chains of gold speak of royal authority. Only a king had chains of gold. In those days, few people could afford a chain of gold besides a King. A chain of gold was rare and expensive because it was only worn by royalty. A chain of gold with the king's emblem on it was worn by the prince as he walked through the town.
 6. The Lord's promise to finish that which he began in us. (Song. 1:11)
 - a. Ornaments of gold speak of divine character. She will be Christ-like in her golden character. This speaks of believers purified with fire. (Mal. 3:1 – 4)
 - b. Studs of silver speak of redemption. She will be used to bring redemption to other people. She will be equipped to deliver others.
 - c. "We will make you" is a Divine promise to complete His work in her.
 - i. He is still answering her question from Song. 1:7, "Where will You feed me?" God promises to work something special in her.
 - ii. He will make us into a person who fully chooses divine character (gold) and is equipped with silver to deliver others. He promises us victory in the areas we have stumbled and we will become an agent of redemption to others. (Phil. 1:6)
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Appendix I

Understanding God's Heart Towards People

A. Introduction

1. God has different emotions related to how people respond to Him. Some live confused without knowing whether God is mad, sad or glad at them. We do not want to think God is mad when He is delighting over us, thus living in condemnation. Nor do we want to think He delights in us if He is grieved because of our compromise, thus living in presumption.
2. We receive God's righteousness and favor because of what Jesus did, not because of what we do. Even though salvation is a gift, it is still necessary to sincerely repent to receive it. Repentance is a change of the attitude that turns from sin and to God according to the "light of understanding" that we have at each season in our spiritual journey. (2 Cor. 5:17 – 21)
3. Foundational principle in understanding God's heart about people is that God is able to differentiate between sincerity and hypocrisy, as well as between spiritual immaturity and rebellion.
 - a. Spiritual immaturity is not the same as rebellion. At times they look the same outwardly yet they come from very different heart responses. A sincere yet immature believer shows their sincerity by quickly repenting and renewing their war against the sin they had just stumbled in.
 - b. A genuine lover of God has a willing spirit because they sincerely seek to obey Him. Our obedience and love for God are sincere even while they are weak and flawed. Weak love is not false love. The sincere intention to pursue full obedience is different from the attainment of it. (Matt. 26:41)
4. David seemed to commit more serious sins than Saul, but God's favor continued with David. Why?
 - a. When David sinned his heart was wounded because he grieved God's heart. He cared more about his relationship with God than the consequences of getting caught by man.
 - b. Saul gave an outward show of repentance, even while he planned to continue in rebellion. (1 Sam. 15:22 – 23)
5. A hypocrite is not someone who fails, but one who says one thing and does not seek to obey it.

B. Seven principles of how God feels toward people**1. God loves and blesses unbelievers**

- a. God loves unbelievers even when they rebel against Him and have no regard for Him. (John 3:16)
- b. God blesses evil people. We are not to mistake His blessings on them as His approval of them. (Matt. 5:45)

2. God enjoys sincere yet immature believers

- a. The Father's affection for Jesus is the measure of His affection for us. Jesus gave this revelation of His love to help the apostles recover from betraying Him that night. This is the ultimate statement of our worth. It gives all believers confidence to be "God's favorite". (Matt. 26:41; John 15:9)
- b. We are lovely to God even in our weakness. He is pleased with us from the moment we repent and reset the intention of our heart to obey. This work of God in us is the beginning of victory. (Song. 1:5)
- c. One reason Jesus enjoys us is because He has more gladness than any man in history. Joy fills His personality. Many think of God as being mostly mad or sad when they relate to Him. (Heb. 1:9)
- d. God rejoices over His people as they repent. This is long before we attain mature obedience. (Luke 15:4 – 5)
- e. God enjoys His prodigal children even in their weakness. His enjoyment is seen in immediately giving them the favor of the best robes. This is before they mature in their areas of failure. (Luke 15:18 – 22)
- f. God delights in showing us mercy (Jer. 9:24). He wants us to run to Him instead of from Him. (Mic. 7:18)
- g. We can stand with confidence in His favor and have a new beginning by "pushing delete" after we sincerely repent. This is different from "pushing delete" on the process of emotional healing. (Lam. 3:22 – 23)

3. God's love is not the same as His full approval

- a. God enjoying us does not mean that He approves all that we do or overlooks areas needing transformation. He loves us even when we need rebuking because of a failure to repent in a certain area. (Rev. 3:19)
- b. God smiles over our life in a general sense, while He deals with particular sins in us. Several areas of immaturity do not define our entire relationship with God. We are defined by God's passion for us, receiving the gift of righteousness, and by our heart cry to obey Jesus.
- c. God is longsuffering to those He loves. He woos us to repent in areas of failure in our life. (1 Cor. 13:4 – 7; Rom. 2:4)
- d. We must not confuse His patience with His approval. He has patience for a season even when we refuse to fully respond to Him. Jesus gave Jezebel and her disciples in Thyatira, time to repent. (Rev. 2:21)

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4. God's discipline is not the same as His rejection of us
 - a. God's correction is not rejection. It is proof of His love. He delights in those He disciplines. (Prov. 3:12)
 - b. He corrects the areas that He disapproves of so that He might remove all things that hinders love in us. (Heb. 12:10)
 - c. God does not discipline us to the degree we deserve nor changes the way He feels about us. (Ps. 103:10 – 11)
 - d. To be disciplined means God cares and has not given up on us. It is a terrible thing to "get away with" sin long-term because that means God is giving that person over to their sin. (Rom. 1:24; 1 Cor. 11:32)
 5. God is grieved over the persistent sin of His people
 - a. Jesus spoke of vomiting lukewarm believers out of His mouth. He does not despise them, nor has He lost interest in them or cast them away. He is grieved or heart sick with concern over them and what they were losing out on. He feels like vomiting over their condition. (Rev. 3:16 – 17; Eph. 4:30)
 - b. God feels the pain of those He disciplines and continues to consider them as His dearly beloved. (Jer. 12:7)
 - c. God will manifest His jealousy over us as He requires our wholehearted love and obedience. He zealously insists on that which deepens our relationship with Him and results in our greatness. (Jas. 4:5)
 - d. When we neglect to thoroughly confront sin in our heart, we are not loved less by God but we do suffer loss in several ways. We minimize our ability to experience the joy of our salvation, the spirit of revelation, God's power, fellowship with God and others, and receiving eternal rewards.
 6. Spiritual disciplines do not earn us God's favor
 - a. Spiritual disciplines (i.e. prayer, fasting, meditation, etc.) are ordained by God as a necessary way to posture our heart to freely receive more grace. These activities do not earn us God's favor. The power is in the fire of God's presence and not in our cold hearts that are positioned before it.
 - b. God gives to our heart on the basis of how much we hunger for relationship with Him not on how much He loves us. (Matt. 5:6)
 - c. God honors the value we put on the relationship by giving us more according to our spiritual hunger, but He does not love us more. He will not enjoy an obedient believer more in a billion years than He does now. (Mal. 3:6).
 7. Spiritual maturity allows us to receive more but not be loved more
 - a. God loves us all yet He entrusts a greater measure of power to the mature. He determines the measure of power that He has planned for each to walk in. This measure is different for each believer. Our obedience positions us to walk in whatever that full measure is. (Matt. 25:15)
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- b. People with greater power in ministry or influence in business are not loved more by God. He will entrust more to us as we mature because it will not damage us or others. The gifts of the Spirit are given to us by faith. (Acts 3:11 – 12; Gal. 3:5)
 - c. They are not earned by our discipline. However, our spiritual maturity provides added protection from the counterattack of Satan on those operating in the anointing. Four things increase as we experience more of the Holy Spirit's power:
 - i. God's zeal
 - ii. Satan's rage
 - iii. Man's demands
 - iv. Our emotional capacities

IHOP – ONE THING MINISTRIES

Establishing of the Bridal Identity

(Song. 1:15–17)

A. INTRODUCTION

1. In Song. 1:15 – 17, the Bride is entering into second phase in her journey of pursuing holy passion for Jesus.
2. Jesus the King expresses the revelation of the affectionate heart of the Father where He provides a table, He embraces and affirms her at His table.
3. The purpose of this revelation is to establish the reality of the Bridal Identity in her life.
4. Bridal Identity – knowing who we are in Christ is a significant truth and identity of us that is essential to enter into our pursuit of Holy Passion.
 - a. Song. 1: 5 is the truth of “how God views and feels towards us even when we are weak”.
 - b. Song. 1: 15 – 17 is the truth of “who we are – the Bride of Christ.”
5. There are three vital and foundational truths in our pursuit of intimacy with Jesus. These are vital keys in giving us confidence in approaching God.
 - a. A correct and biblical view of who God is.
 - b. A correct and biblical view of how God view us (even when we are weak).
 - c. A correct and biblical view of who we are in Christ.
6. If these foundational truths are not being established in our life, we will not be able to understand and embrace more difficult truths in our journey with God (e.g. wholeheartedly, obedience, discipline of God, etc.). Many believers do not go very far in their pursuit of holy passion because these truths are not a reality in their life.
7. The entire Song of Songs is a journey of progression of: intimacy with Jesus, growing in our holy passion and the progression into maturity.
 - a. The first four chapters focus on the Bride’s inheritance in Jesus and the last four chapters focus on Jesus’ inheritance in the Bride.
 - b. He wants us to understand that as we seek something from Him, He also seeks something that He wants from us. He wants our whole hearts.
 - c. The focus of the book completely shifts in the middle of the Song. (4:16 – 5:1)

- d. The first four chapters focus on the Bride understanding and enjoying her inheritance in Christ.
 - i. These chapters emphasize God's ravished heart of compassion to win her and to cause her to enjoy Him for her own pleasure and good.
 - ii. During this season of her life, she is immature though sincere, self-absorbed and self-centered. Jesus is the means and not the end to her. She thinks of the Lord mostly in terms of what she can get instead of what the Lord desires in her.
- e. The last four chapters focus on the other foundational pillar of the Gospel where He wants her to live for the glory of God with passion for Jesus.

B. FOUR INHERITANCE STATEMENTS OF PROGRESSION

1. Song of Songs describes her progression from self-centeredness to God-centeredness through four inheritance statements.
2. Four times through the book she changes and redefines her experience. She starts from being only self-conscious and ends up with a mature God centeredness.
3. We can follow her maturity throughout Song of Songs through these four statements which are in strategic places. They are statements of the progression of her maturity.
4. Notice the transition from "self-centeredness" to a "God-centeredness" focus in the four inheritance statements (Song. 1:14; 2:16; 6:3; 7:10).
 - a. In the beginning stages, her own enjoyment of Jesus is her only focus. She talks about what He is to her without much awareness of what she is to Him. (Song. 1:14)
 - b. In Song. 2:16 and Song. 6:3 and then finally in Song. 7:10, she uses this same language but changes the order to express her concern about what she is to Jesus.
 - i. In Song. 2:16, she has grown and progressed in her maturity. She realized that Jesus is her inheritance, but she is also the inheritance of Jesus. But she still comes first.
 - ii. In Song 6:3, the order has changed. Now Jesus comes first and she is second.
 - iii. In Song 7:10, she is fully mature now. She is totally concerned about who she is to Jesus, and what the concern of Jesus' heart is.

C. REVIEW AND OVERVIEW

1. In Song. 1:5 – 11, she begins her journey of pursuing intimacy when she faces a spiritual crisis. Instead of quitting, the Bride asked Jesus, "Where will You feed me?" (Song. 1:7).
2. Jesus came as the tender-hearted Shepherd. He gave her a seven-fold answer declaring her beauty (Song. 1:8a) then gives her a three-fold instruction (Song. 1:8b, c, d) and a three-fold affirmation (Song. 1:9 – 11).
3. In Song. 1:12 – 17, Jesus answers her cry by bringing her to the table of God.
4. In Song. 1:12 – 17, she gives a three-fold response of after being fed by the Lord at His table.
 - a. Spontaneous worship and adoration for Jesus.
 - b. Meditation on why and what Jesus did for her on the cross.
 - c. Seeing the beauty and delightfulness of Jesus.
5. In Song. 1:15, she receives the revelation of her beauty to God.
6. In Song. 1: 16 – 17, she gives a three-fold response of how she views Jesus.

D. THE SECOND REVELATION OF JESUS EXPRESSING THE HEART OF THE FATHER (Song. 1:12)

1. In Song. 1:12a, the Bride receives a fresh revelation of what He provided for her through the cross.
 - a. Jesus the King expresses the revelation of the affectionate heart of the Father where He provided a table for her and He embraces and affirms her at His table.
 - b. It is important to note that Jesus is not the Father. Both the Father and Jesus are two distinct personalities in the Holy Trinity. But Jesus is revealing the Father's heart. (Isa. 9:6; John 14: 7, 9; Col. 1: 15)
2. He feeds her spirit on the revelation of who He is and what He did. His table is the revelation of the cross. She partakes of the free gift of redemption. The table of salvation is taught to her in the beginning of her spiritual growth. (Rom. 3 – 8)
3. There is an abundance of food at His table. The "table of God" is a place where God feeds, strengthen and builds us. When we neglect the King's table, our spirit starves and becomes weak. The Bible talks about different "tables" of God:
 - a. A place where we develop confidence in God. (Ps. 23:5)
 - b. A place where our spirit is fed and strengthened. (Isa. 55:1 – 2)
 - c. A place where we grow in intimacy with Jesus. (Rev. 3: 20)

- d. A place where we encounter His love. (Song. 2: 4)
 - e. A place where we discover the revelation of the cross. (Rom. 3 – 8)
4. The Bride sits and rests at the table of God with Jesus. She is feeding on the truth related specifically to the cross and the truth related to the redemptive work of Jesus.
 5. In all of His kindness as the tender Lamb of God, He is still the great King. He is not just the Lamb, but He is also the Lion of the tribe of Judah, that roars with great passion for us. The Lion and the Lamb come together in Song. 1:12. It is important to see that He is a glorious King at the table.
 - a. She has her first glimpse of Jesus as the King who has all authority.
 - b. It is from this authority that He speaks of His affection. Therefore, we can trust that His affection will actually prevail because He is a King.
 6. The question in Song. 1:7, "Where will You feed me?" is partially answered in Song. 1:8 – 11. He is feeding her at His table with the fruit of His redemption. She is being fed by the truth.

E. MEDITATION ON THE CROSS (Song. 1:13)

1. She receives revelation of Jesus' love and provision for us in His going to the cross. (Rom. 3 – 8)
 - a. Myrrh speaks of the suffering and work of Jesus on the cross. It is being mentioned eight times in Song of Songs.
 - b. Myrrh is an aromatic gum resin produced by various trees and shrubs in India, Arabia, and East Africa. It was very expensive and used in making perfume. (Prov. 7:17). The holy anointing oil is used to burn incense (Exd. 30:23) and in preparing a body for a funeral (John 19:39 – 40). It has a bitter taste.
 - c. The three wise kings brought myrrh to Jesus' birth as a prophetic symbol of His death (Matt. 2:11). On the cross, Jesus was offered myrrh (Mark 15:23). It speaks of Jesus' death (Ps. 45:8).
 - d. Myrrh speaks of the fragrant yet bitter reality of embracing death to our fleshly ways.
 - e. Esther's beauty preparations included bathing in myrrh and other perfumes (Esth. 2:12). Myrrh is referred to 8 times throughout the Song. (Song. 1:13; 3:6; 4:6, 14; 5:1, 5, 13).
 - f. Some wealthy women in the ancient world went to bed with a bundle or large necklace of myrrh to provide fragrance through the night. Solomon gave her this extravagantly expensive gift.

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2. The Bride proclaimed that Jesus was like a bundle of myrrh that lay on her heart through the night.
 - a. The cross was King Jesus' extravagantly expensive gift to His Bride. Jesus' death was an "abundant offering."
 - b. It speaks of what He endured because of His love for us. It reveals how valuable we are to Him. Our value is seen in what Jesus endured for us. The fact that we exist is statement of our value.
 - c. The fact that the God of Genesis 1 became human and was crushed by the wrath of God makes the way for Him to have an eternal relationship with us.
 3. The myrrh lay all night on her heart. The night speaks of the nighttime of her temptation and / or trials as well as carrying the idea of consistency. It rests on her heart all the time.
 4. We will forever marvel at the Lamb slain for our sins (Rev. 5:8 – 12). When we really see who He is and what He did, for all of eternity our hearts will be awed and overwhelmed with gratitude. For endless ages, we will see Jesus as a "bundle of myrrh" that will lay upon our hearts.
 5. We are to carry it in our heart all through the day and night. We are to continually remember His love as we meditate on the cross. (Song. 1:4d)
 - a. The most obedient and worshipful saints think the most about the cross. It is their constant meditation and confession.
 - b. We will and must never grow weary of meditating about it. If it becomes boring to us, it is only because we have not understood it.
 6. We must understand more than what Jesus did for us on the cross (i.e. redemption, atonement, gift of righteousness, etc.) but also why He did it – He endured because of His love for us and because we are valuable to Him. (Heb. 12: 2)
 7. The Cross is more than an act of redemption; it is also a statement of how valuable we are to Him. Three fundamental and foundational truths of the Cross:
 - a. Who He is – the Lamb that was slain.
 - b. What He did – He paid the ultimate price.
 - c. Why He did what He did – because we are valuable and He wants us to be His Bride
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F. THREE-FOLD RESPONSE OF THE BRIDE AT THE KING'S TABLE (Song. 1:12b – 14)

1. First Response – The Bride's spontaneous worship and adoration of Jesus. (Song. 1:12b)
 - a. Spikenard speaks of her spontaneous worship. Spikenard is literally a "spike of nard". Nard was an eastern plant from India used to make expensive perfumes.
 - b. While she is sitting at the King's table feeding on the truths of the cross her spontaneous worship and adoration ascends to God as fragrance. The revelation of the King's provision at His table produces a response of perfume that ascends before God from her spirit.
 - c. Her fragrance or perfume ascends to God and man when she freely receives all that Jesus provides. The Lord enjoys the fragrance that emanates from our spirit when we are focused on the Lord's provision. What He feeds her produces a perfume that ascends from her spirit to God.
 - d. What kind of fragrance is coming forth from your spirit to God? What does God see when He looks at you? Does He smell the fragrance of rest and gratitude in the cross, or the stench of religious striving and legalism?
 - i. The revelation of the cross causes great gratitude. Prayer effortlessly comes forth out of our spirit in this context.
 - ii. This "worship fragrance" sends forth its fragrance to God. When we feel embraced, His fragrance spontaneously rises up to God instead of fear.
 - e. Many of God's people are overcome with condemnation and accusation. They feel no security in the presence of God. Therefore, they cannot enter into worship. They can sing songs, but they can not open their heart, because they are afraid they are going to be judged by God. They are always guarded in the presence of God.
 - f. In Luke 7, the prostitute ran into the house of Simon the Pharisee. She broke the alabaster vial of perfume upon Jesus' feet.
 - i. The natural perfume that filled the room was a mere token of the spiritual perfume that Jesus saw in her devotion.
 - ii. The perfume that filled that room, in the natural, was a picture of the perfume that God receives from us when we worship Him. She understands the abundance of Jesus' suffering on the cross.
2. Second Response – She understands the abundance of Jesus' suffering on the cross. (Song. 1:13)
 - a. Myrrh is a sweet perfume, which speaks of the sweetness that comes out of death.

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- b. Myrrh is an expensive embalming fluid that often speaks of suffering and death. It was also a very expensive and strong perfume used by wealthy people. The common person could not afford it.
 - c. Jesus was buried with myrrh. When Mary went to see the tomb, she brought more myrrh and spices to put upon His body.
 - d. It was uncommon for a woman to have a bundle of expensive myrrh as a chain around her neck. What an extravagantly expensive gift from Solomon to this young Bride.
 - e. A bundle of myrrh speaks of Jesus' death as an "abundant death" that was extravagantly expensive to God.
 - f. When she said, "You are a bundle of myrrh" she is saying, "I understand the abundance of your suffering, I understand a little bit of what You went through for me."
 - g. This myrrh lies all night next to her heart in Song. 1:13b speaks of her consistent meditation upon the cross. The costly death of Jesus lies all night on her heart.
 - h. She ponders on the revelation of the Lord's death until it becomes a part of her. This speaks of meditation on the provision of His atonement, and on the life of grace.
 - i. It is forever a marvel to her that God would become a man and die for her sins. This is what the table is about. God feeds us at His communion table on the work of the cross.
 - j. Through the night she meditates on it. The night speaks of the time of darkness in her weakness, and it speaks of her consistency throughout all the ages. "The night" carries the idea of consistency.
 - k. She never grows weary of meditating upon the Cross. If it becomes boring to us, it is only because we have not understood it. (Gal. 6:14)
3. Third Response – The Bride's declaration and discovery of the beauty and delight of Jesus. (Song. 1:14a)
- a. Jesus was to her a cluster of beautiful and fragrant henna flowers in full bloom. Henna is a shrub or a small tree with fragrant flowers.
 - i. Jesus is as a cluster of henna flowers to those with a revelation of His heart.
 - ii. He is not the burdensome and boring God, as religion falsely proclaims.
 - b. Jesus' commandments are not burdensome and His yoke is easy as we understand Him in truth. (1 John 5:3; Matt. 11:30)
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- c. Jesus' personality is as a "cluster" of blooms. He is more than one flower but a cluster. (Song. 5:16)
 - i. This emphasizes the diversity and abundance of the beauty He possesses.
 - ii. The vineyards of En Gedi were well known for their abundant fragrance. Jesus has fragrance that is beyond all others.
- d. We must tell the whole earth the truth of Jesus, who is as a "cluster of henna blooms." They will repent more easily if they understand the truth.
- e. We must preach about the beautiful God who is filled with kindness. He is a fragrant and sweet God who intoxicates us with Good News. (Rom. 2:4)

G. THREE-FOLD REVELATION OF THE BRIDE'S BEAUTY TO JESUS (Song. 1:15)

1. In Song. 1:15, Jesus declares the three-fold revelation of the Bride's beauty to Him.:
 - a. His affection for her
 - b. His opinion about her
 - c. His affirmation towards her
2. First and Second-fold Revelation – Revelation of God's love for her and her beauty to God. (Song 1:15a, b)
 - a. In this passage, we see two foundational truths in the bridal paradigm:
 - i. Her beauty to Him in the grace of God, "You are beautiful", and the revelation of His affection for her as the one He calls, "My love".
 - ii. He is saying to her, "You look good and I like you!"
 - iii. This foundational truth equips us to receive more truth about our beauty to God.
 - b. We are beautiful to God even in our weakness, for four reasons:
 - i. Our loveliness comes from receiving the gift of righteousness. (2 Cor. 5:17 – 21)
 - ii. At the new birth, the Spirit put a "Yes" in our spirit to God. Each movement of our heart to God is His work in us - a willing spirit. (Ps. 51:12; Matt. 26:41).
 - iii. Our beauty is related to God's emotional make up. The tender affections and passions in God's heart determine how He feels towards us. Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder. God views things very differently than man does (1 Sam. 16:7; Isa. 55:7 – 9)
 - iv. God sees us through the lens of our eternal destiny as the Bride of Christ.

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- c. Jesus is laying an important and a necessary foundation in her life – the truth of our beauty to God and the depth of his love for us (even when we are weak).
 - d. As long as we feel dirty or shamed we will draw back. Jesus now adds to her three-fold experience in Song. 1:12 – 14. This is very necessary groundwork before she can accept far more difficult truths.
 - e. This truth is applauded in a quick yet superficial way. However, it is not grasped easily in the heart. We have a natural resistance to accepting that truth even though we like the idea of it.
 - f. It is a difficult truth to establish in the private prayer life. We must not be content until God's people can say in their private prayer with a spirit of liberty that, "I am so beautiful to Jesus, I am His true love."
 - g. He emphasizes it because she is spiritually young and she needs this desperately in her life. Jesus affirms her five times of her beauty in the first chapter of Song alone. (Song. 1:8a, 9b, 10, 12 – 14, 15)
 - h. When we feel loved and beautiful in the grace of a beautiful God, then our heart is exhilarated.
 - i. We will spiritually grow the fastest and deepest as we confidently confess, "Because of Jesus, I am beautiful to God, even in my weakness."
 - ii. The Bride taught the virgins to remember His love. (Song. 1:4)
 - i. The Bride's spiritual journey begins with her two-fold confession of faith. (Song. 1:5)
 - i. This is the "paradox of grace" because as she discovers her sin, she also realizes that she is lovely to God. Without revelation, we will see our darkness only and as a consequence feel dirty and ashamed.
 - ii. As long as we feel ashamed we will continue to do shameful things. A person that feels dirty will do dirty things. An immature believer that feels beautiful and loved by Jesus will run to Him, not away from Him.
 - j. The more we see God's heart for ourselves, the more we see His ravished heart for others.
3. Third-Fold Revelation – affirmation of her single-minded devotion and undivided heart for Jesus. (Song. 1:15c)
- a. He is prophetically speaking over her. He is seeing beyond where she is now but her potential. He is affirming of her weak attempt to be single-minded.
 - b. In the Scripture, a dove is a symbol depicting the Holy Spirit. There are several implications to this:
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- i. Single-minded: a dove has no peripheral vision. It only sees straight ahead. It is not distracted by what is happening at its right or left. To have dove's eyes is to have an unwavering eye (i.e. single-minded). (Matt. 6:22)
- ii. Loyalty or Undivided Heart: a dove will mate once in their life. If their mate dies, they never mate again. This speaks symbolically of loyalty. (Note: it is NOT disloyal for one to marry if their spouse dies).
- c. The Holy Spirit is the Ultimate One with "dove's eyes." He has a single purpose to the glory of Jesus. It is impossible for the Holy Spirit to be anything but perfectly faithful.
- d. Perspective: We want the Spirit's perspective of Jesus and of our life - we to see Jesus as henna blooms - fragrant, beautiful and single-minded in our obedience and in our faith. By God's grace, we will become confident by refusing all condemnation.
- e. Her "dove's eyes" speak of her ability to see redemptive truths. They speak of her eyes of faith and vision. Her revelation in Song. 1:12 – 17 is all about her believing in redemptive truths.

H. THE BRIDE'S THREE-FOLD RESPONSE TO JESUS' AFFECTION AND AFFIRMATION (Song. 1:16 – 17)

1. Her revelation of Jesus' beauty and her spiritual pleasures in Jesus. (Song. 1:16 a, b)
 - a. His loveliness penetrates her spirit. He is becoming more and more beautiful to her, the more that she sees Him. He is pleasant to the very depths of her heart. She is fascinated with Him as she beholds His beauty.
 - b. When Jesus appears handsome and pleasant to the soul of a believer, then full obedience seems so reasonable. When we have revelation of His beauty, then we begin to see our beauty in Him.
 - c. With such revelation upon our hearts, we give up more easily, things that once were distractions for us. No longer do we count them as great sacrifices to release, but rather we feel joy as we yield ourselves more fully to Him.
 - d. These are two vital revelations that will empower our heart to living abundantly for Jesus – no longer a price to pay but a prize to pursue; no longer a cost but a higher cause.
2. She sees Jesus as her abundant rest in Jesus. (Song. 1:16c)
 - a. The bed speaks of rest and security with no fear of judgment or rejection from Jesus. She says, "I'm resting in security on the green bed of the Lord."

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- b. The New American Standard translates it as, "Our luxuriant couch." She is seated with Him in heavenly places on the Lord's bed or the couch. (Eph. 2:6)
 - c. It is a green bed or a "luxuriant" couch (NAS). This speaks of abundance.
 - d. The couch of the Lord is plush, green and filled with life. It is a rest in God that is flourishing and prospering instead of being parched and barren like a desert. She rests in the love of God, because of the abundance of His love.
 - e. It is "our bed". She is on His couch or upon His bed and it is now their bed. "Our couch" speaks of being joined together as co-heirs. (Rom. 8:17)
 - f. "Our" speaks of being totally joined in God's grace as a co-heir. g. The couch of the Lord speaks of our rest and confidence in the grace of God in two ways:
 - i. The rest of forgiveness:
We experience this with the assurance that we are forgiven, as a free gift in Jesus. We rest in receiving forgiveness because of the Cross. (2 Cor. 5:17)
 - ii. The rest of intimacy:
We experience this as we pursue intimacy with God. There is no rest until we conclude that the highest purpose of our life is intimacy with God. Our intimacy with God includes the wisdom of obeying Jesus' leadership.
 - iii. The rest from striving. (Matt. 11:29 – 30; Heb. 4:9 – 11)
3. She declares her confidence in abiding in His love and intimate fellowship. (Song. 1:17)
- a. The beams and the rafters provide the structure for their house. They are made of hard and strong wood. Cedar and fir trees were both used in the building of the temple. Both are hard, strong and fragrant wood.
 - i. Throughout the temple's symbolism, wood is a picture of humanity.
 - ii. The house of the Lord is built securely with strong and hard wood. In other words, it is not going to rot and decay and break down under pressure. It is safe and long lasting in its beauty and fragrance.
 - b. Jesus became a Man and provided a safe and permanent house for His Bride.
 - i. Her dwelling with the Lord is strong, permanent and durable. There is no house more permanent than one of cedar and fir.
 - ii. Jesus' house is the most expensive and beautiful. His house is the most permanent and safe.
 - iii. She sees the riches of the cross and the security of being seated with Him in His house forever. God is building an enduring house.
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- c. "Our house" speaks of their most intimate dwelling together forever.
 - i. We can have confidence in our intimate relationship with Jesus. There will be no rejection, no condemnation and no fear. (Rom. 8:1)
 - ii. He will never leave nor forsake us. (Heb. 13:5)
 - iii. The whole corporate Church of Jesus has this stunning privilege to look forward into eternity where we will have an eternal dwelling place. (1 Peter 3:16)

IHOP - ONE THING MINISTRIES

Declaration of the Bride's Identity and Life Purpose

(Song. 2:1-7)

A. REVIEW

1. In Song. 1:5 – 6, the Bride went through a spiritual crisis. In the midst of the crisis, she discovered a vital truth which gave her confidence in God even in her weakness.
2. She cried out to Jesus in Song. 1:7 and immediately, Jesus came as a tender-hearted Shepherd to lead and guide her.
3. In Song. 1:12 – 17, Jesus expressed Himself with the heart of the Affectionate Father to establish her in her Bridal Identity through the work on the Cross and the revelation of the beauty of who she is.

B. OVERVIEW OF Song. 2:1 – 7

1. The main theme is of Song. 2:1 – 7 is the declaration of the Bride's identity and life purpose.
 - a. It defines who she is.
 - b. It defines what is the purpose of her life.
 - c. It reveals to us what God wants from us.
2. It is vital to have clarity and revelation from Song. 2:1 – 7 as it will radically change our view of:
 - a. Who we are
 - b. What is our life purpose
 - c. What is success
 - d. How then shall we live
3. Simple Outline of Song. 2:1 – 7:
 - a. The Bride's declaration of who she is. (Song. 2:1)
 - b. Jesus affirmation of who she is to Him. (Song. 2:2)
 - c. Jesus is the true source of refreshment, rest and satisfaction. (Song. 2:3)

- d. The leadership of Jesus in our life. (Song. 2:4 – 5)
- e. The divine embrace and the divine charge of God. (Song. 2:6 – 7)

C. THE BRIDE'S IDENTITY AS JESUS' BEAUTIFUL INHERITANCE (Song. 2:1)

1. The Shulamite woman is making her second confession in the Song of Songs. She discovers who she is to Jesus and she declares her primary identity in Christ.
2. In poetic language, the Bride declares her primary life purpose and identity as being Jesus' inheritance.
 - a. The rose and the lily are the same people identified as the Bride in Song. 2:2.
 - b. The King sees her as a lily among the thorns, which like the valley speaks of sin.
 - c. Thorns came forth as the result of the curse of Adam's sin. (Gen. 3:17 – 18; Heb. 6:8)
3. Her first confession is in Song. 1:5, "I'm dark, but lovely". She saw Jesus' beauty and then saw how Jesus gave His beauty to her.
4. She now makes her second confession, "I am the rose of Sharon, I am the lily of the valley."
 - a. She sees herself as resting on their flourishing couch in a beautiful house that is eternally permanent and made in strength.
 - b. She discovers a deeper dimension of who she is in Jesus.
5. Her first confession in Song. 1:5 empowers her heart to come to God in confidence. Her second confession in Song. 2:1 sets the course of her life identity and pursuit.
6. "I am the rose of Sharon" (Song. 2:1a)
 - a. This is her highest identity as the Bride of Christ. This revelation can only be discerned by first having a good foundation in understanding the redemptive riches in Christ. (Song. 1:12 – 17)
 - b. This confession is more than the fact that she is lovely and desired by God. It goes even higher. She is now the inheritance that the Father has promised His Son.
 - c. It is one thing to deeply enjoy someone, but it is another thing when this person is your eternal inheritance. She comes to the understanding that she is the only inheritance that the Father has promised His Son.

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- d. Being an inheritance is much higher than being loved or being enjoyed. For God loves sinners and all human beings. God enjoys His creation. But all believers are the eternal inheritance that Jesus wants. (Ps. 2:8; John 17:24; Heb. 12:2)
 - i. The foundational promise of the Father is to give Jesus an inheritance. (Matt. 21:33 – 40)
 - ii. The foundational mission of the Father is to prepare an equally-yoked Bride for His Son. (Matt. 22:1 – 13)
 - iii. The affection of human hearts is the most precious possession to God. Jesus died to redeem and possess human affection. For the chief end of man is that we are created and redeemed for is to love Jesus with all our heart.
 - e. She knows that the Father has promised Jesus a great prize. She knows that this prize is a bride pictured as a rose. She says, "I am the inheritance that God has promised His Son".
 - f. There is only one rose that Jesus Christ longs for. She sees that she is the rose that intoxicates and captures the heart of Christ Jesus. She sees herself as more than loved by God.
 - g. Sharon is a place where roses are cultivated for the king of Israel, not to sell or trade but simply for the king's pleasure. The roses are desired by the king for its beauty and fragrance.
 - h. The Father has cultivated this rose for His Dear Son. This rose is a bride that desires to fully love Jesus Christ. This is the prize that He enjoys more than anything. This rose is the fullness of everything that Jesus desires outside of the Trinity.
7. "I am the lily of the valleys" (Song. 2:1b)
- a. This speaks of the pure Bride of Christ that Jesus desired. Lily speaks of purity. There is only one lily in God's purpose.
 - b. She is the lily of the valley. The valleys speak of the low and dark places in this fallen world.
 - c. The meaning of this verse is from out of this fallen world, God has redeemed us and made us His eternal Bride.
 - i. We are saved from being His enemy to become His friend. (Rom. 5:10)
 - ii. We are saved from being a beggar to become a prince. (1 Sam. 2:8)
 - iii. We are saved from being ashes to become beauty. (Isa. 61:3)
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- d. Being the Bride of Christ speaks of three things:
 - i. We are highly esteemed. (Song. 7:10)
 - ii. We are the co-heirs with Christ. (Rom. 8:17)
 - iii. We will be ruling and reigning with Him forever. (Rev. 5:10; 20:4)
 8. This confession redefines her whole life. This will redefine our life. It will redefine what success is. It will redefine who we are as a person.
 - a. Our identity is determined by the way we define value or measure success.
 - i. “Who am I? How do I become successful?” The issue of our function (i.e. ministry) is important but secondary to this.
 - ii. Our primary identity (i.e. value and success) is found in who we are in our intimacy with God which consists of being loved by God and in being a lover of God.
 - iii. I confess, “I am loved by God and I am a lover of God / others therefore, I am successful.”
 - iv. We find our primary value in being desired by God and in loving Him instead of seeking our primary value in how much we accomplish or the impact we make.
 - v. We are most successful because we are desired by God and we love Him. We no longer need to fear being a failure.
 - b. Our primary identity is not what we do with our hands but what we pursue with our hearts.
 - i. Seeing that we are His rose and lily breaks a sense of purposelessness, failure and inferiority.
 - ii. We must measure our success in the context to how much we grow in our intimacy with God through loving and obeying Him.
 - c. We must agree with God’s definition of success.
 - i. Many agree with lies about what success is and thus, feel like a failure and live aimlessly.
 - ii. They focus mostly on externals – i.e. what they do and possess, instead of internals – who they are in their hearts.
 - iii. They view their life in context to their struggle and lack of impact.
 - iv. Jesus corrected those who put their ministry before loving God. (Rev. 2:3 – 5)
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- d. Paul taught the truths of Song. 2:1 in teaching that we are betrothed (i.e. engaged) to Jesus and live in devotion to Him. Our ultimate destiny in this age is to walk out a lifestyle as His inheritance. (2 Cor. 11:2 – 3)

D. JESUS AFFIRMS HER CONFESSION AND HER DECLARATION AS THE BRIDE (Song. 2:2)

1. Thorns speak of sin, because in Genesis the thorns came forth because of sin.
 - a. Genesis 3:18 speaks of thorns in the garden. Adam sinned and the thorns came in the garden.
 - b. Hebrews 6:8 also speaks of sin as thorns and thistles as the result of sin.
2. She is like a lily speaks of saints among the world of sin. Jesus is affirming her decision to set her heart for wholehearted love and full obedience to Jesus.
3. "So is my love among the daughters" (Song. 2:2b)
 - a. In our basic design, God built us in a way that God desires us. He crowned the human race with glory and honour. We are the queen that has been crowned in the court of God with glory and honour. (Heb. 2:7)
 - b. He built us in a way that only we draw the fullest love of God and the deepest love of God into full manifestation. He wouldn't die for angels; He would only die for us. There is something in the way He built us that draws the deepest love of God into full manifestation. (Song. 2:3 a-b)

E. THE BRIDE'S REVELATION: JESUS ALONE CAN SATISFY HER HEART (Song. 2:3a – b)

1. The Bride declares that Jesus alone is the apple tree who refreshes and fully satisfy our heart. (Song. 2:3a)
2. The apple tree speaks of that which refreshes and satisfies our heart. There is only One who truly and fully refreshes and satisfy the human spirit at the highest level. (Song. 2:5)
 - a. When we receive the revelation of Jesus as an apple tree or as the primary source that satisfies our heart, we will seek Him with all our heart. This is a foundational truth in marriage, business and ministry.
 - b. Jesus is more than the Savior who forgives or the healer and provider. He is the apple tree that satisfies. In vain, some transfer the primary source of their joy to their ministry, money and human relationships.
 - c. Jesus has to be our primary source of refreshing and satisfaction!
3. Jesus is like an apple tree among all the great men of the earth. The trees of the woods speak symbolically of the great men of the earth who tower over others as lofty trees. (Dan. 4:10 – 14; Isa. 2:12 – 13)

F. THE NECESSITY AND IMPORTANCE OF FINDING REST AND ENJOYMENT IN JESUS (Song. 2:3c – d)

1. Jesus declared the wisdom and necessity of Mary's life as she sat at His feet.
 - a. Mary is described three times in Scripture. Each time she is sitting at Jesus' feet. (Luke 10:39; John 11:32; 12:3)
 - b. Jesus forever settled the debate about the importance of sitting at His feet by calling it the "one thing needed" and choosing the "good" way to live (Luke 10:42). She took seriously the call to live with extravagant devotion.
 - c. We must choose this part. No one can choose it for us. That good part will not be taken away from Mary. Her decisions had eternal implications in being remembered by Jesus forever. (Luke 10:39 – 42)
 2. Like Mary of Bethany who sat at Jesus' feet, we must sit before Jesus and experience His refreshing shade that protects us from the scorching heat of this fallen age.
 - a. One of the greatest pleasures available to the human spirit comes as we feed on His Word and feel His presence.
 - b. The Word brings delight and is sweet to all who will continually feast on Jesus in spirit and truth. (Song. 2:3b)
 3. She asked, "Where will You feed your flock?" in Song. 1:7.
 - a. She had been feasting at the King's table on God's love as seen in Song. 1:12 – 17. The cross is the only tree that can shade us from the scorching heat of our sin.
 - b. We only enjoy the shade of God's Word by resting in the shade of Jesus' cross. We cannot rest in our achievements by relating to God based on our maturity.
 4. We must have a vision to be regularly exhilarated by the Word by pray-reading and meditating it.
 - a. Our inheritance is to experience the sweetness of the Word of God. This is for all believers, not just a few!
 - b. There is a sweetness that is within reach of every believer. We will never experience the delight and refreshing of Jesus as the apple tree without sitting long hours in the shade of the apple tree by feeding on His Word by the help of the Holy Spirit.
 5. We put our cold heart before the bonfire of God's presence by seeking Him in the Word. We can feed on the Word even in the presence of our enemies – sin, disappointment, difficulty, etc. (Ps. 23:5)
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6. We must enjoy our relationship with God if we are to mature consistently.
 - a. Enjoying God is essential to our consistent growth and the pursuit of God. (John 3:29; 1 Peter 1:8; 1 John 1:1 – 4)
 - b. We can persevere through great difficulties if we find delight in His presence. A lover will always outwork a worker.
 - c. When a worker becomes a lover, their paradigm about the work changes greatly. No one can seek God diligently for decades without enjoying Him, enjoying His Word, enjoying prayer, etc.
7. “His fruit was sweet to my taste.” (Song. 2:3d)
 - a. This is her introductory experience of spiritual pleasure in Jesus – the pleasure of loving God. His fruit is the result of relating to Jesus and receiving His redemption. It is the result of partaking of what He did.
 - b. There is no greater pleasure available to the human spirit, than when we feel enjoyed by God and when we are empowered to enjoy God in return. For God created man to long and desire for pleasure.
 - c. There are so many pleasures that God makes available to the human frame. There are mental, emotional, physical pleasures, but spiritual pleasure is the most profound pleasure. He built us in that way that the delight of being embraced by Him is the great delight of all the ages. (Ps. 16:11)

G. THE BRIDE’S RECOGNITION AND DECLARATION OF JESUS’ LOVING LEADERSHIP OVER HER LIFE (Song. 2:4)

1. In the ancient world, an army would march in battalions under a specific flag or banner. Each unit had their own banner that was meant to clearly identify them.
2. The “banner” or “flag” speaks of who we are (i.e. Identity) and where we are going (i.e. Direction) in our life.
3. “The banner over us” speaks of Jesus’ good and loving leadership – wise, loving and powerful, that leads us to grow in love and in our identity as His inheritance, His Bride. (Ps. 23:1 – 3; 2 Cor. 2:14; Heb. 12:1 – 2)
4. Jesus’ goal in His leadership over us is to lead us in a way that reveals His love to us as well as imparting it in us. He is determined that we grow in love, meekness and revelation.
 - a. God’s plan and first priority for our life is much bigger than our comfort or our function in ministry. There is great confusion in many because they think His banner over their life is comfort in this age.

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- b. Jesus wants us to be strengthened in the revelation that we are His inheritance with our primary identity in being a lover of God. This occurs as He feeds us on His Word related to the “Wedding Table”.
 - c. He may “bring to us to the table” by giving us a dream or a vision that excites our heart about His love. He may give us the joy of a new friendship that ministers God’s life to our heart.
5. Jesus manifests His banner of leadership over us in various ways.
- a. His banner over us is His lovingkindness and mercy. When we fail, the banner over our life is confidence in His mercy, not the fear of being rejected by God. We confess, “His banner over me is love even when I fail.”
 - b. His banner over us speaks of His ability to overrule the negative circumstances in our life by causing everything to turn out for our good. The banner over us is His goodness in not being neglected by God. (Rom. 8:28)
 - c. The banner over us is to be exhilarated in God’s love instead of being deceived with the false comfort of sin.
6. He brings us to the table using both positive and negative ways because He is jealous to remove everything that hinders love in us.
- a. The positive way is through following His leadership voluntarily to the banqueting house by feeding on and obeying His Word.
 - b. The negative way is seen when we resist His leadership as He seeks to take us to the banqueting house. Thus, He is forced to discipline us by exposing our sin, taking things from us and shutting doors that frustrate us.
7. We are called to feast at God’s banqueting table.
- a. The fulfillment of this ultimately occurs at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. (Rev.19:7)
 - b. Jesus wants us to enjoy tokens of that “Wedding Table” in this age by the power of the Word and the Spirit. This is translated by some as the “house of wine” because it refers to the celebration of God’s love.
8. Jesus has a good and specific plan for each believer. It is to bring us to His banqueting house or to where we celebrate His love.
- a. His primary goal in His leadership over our life is to bring us to the banqueting house to celebrate His love for us and our love for Him. We may not know the details as to where Jesus is leading our ministries.
 - b. Make no mistake about it; He is first leading us so that we feed at the “Wedding Table” or on truths about our identity as the Bride of Christ.
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H. THE LOVESICK BRIDE CRIES OUT FOR GREATER INTIMACY WITH JESUS (Song. 2:5)

1. The Bride's experiences at the "Wedding Table" awaken a greater desire in her to go deeper in God. They cause her to be lovesick as she cries out to God to be sustained and refreshed by giving her more of His presence and the Word. (Song. 2:5)
 - a. As the apples speak of the refreshing of the Word Jesus (Song. 2:3), so the raisins speak of the ministry of the Spirit since they are dried grapes.
 - b. Grapes symbolically point to the wine of the Spirit. In other words, she cries, "Sustain me with more of the Spirit and refresh me with more of Jesus."
- .2. We are called to be lovesick for God. This cause us to have a deep and even gnawing feeling of love and longing for more of Jesus.
3. When we touch this, we can never go back to "business as usual" in our walk with God. She is ruined. There are two aspects of spiritual lovesickness:
 - a. Feelings of love that are very strong. We love to feel love for God.
 - b. Spiritual hunger pains that come because of her life vision to walk in all that God has for the human heart in this age.
 - i. God does not immediately satisfy this in us. Thus, we have a painful even agonizing hunger.
 - ii. Lovesickness will not be satisfied with anything less than perseverance in seeking His love. These desperate hunger pains are proof that we have been touched by God. (Matt. 5:4)

I. DIVINE ACTIVITY OF GOD: THE TWO-FOLD DIVINE EMBRACE (Song. 2:6)

1. The Bride understands God's two-fold activity in her life, the right and left hand of God.
 2. The left hand of God speaks of the activity of God that we cannot see.
 - a. It is under the head; therefore, it is out of view. The Lord does many things for us that we do not see.
 - b. He withholds and releases many things to bless, provide and protect us. He spares us from troubles that we are not ever aware of in this age. For example, we have been delivered from accidents we did not discern.
 3. The right hand of God speaks of the visible or discernable activity of God.
 - a. The idea is that Solomon stood in front of the Bride to embrace her. She can see and feel it.
 - b. This speaks of the "sweet" manifest presence of God that can be felt and discerned. At times, we feel our heart tenderized by the working of God's right hand.
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J. THE HOLY SPIRIT GUARDS US IN STRATEGIC SPIRITUAL SEASONS (Song. 2:7)

1. The Holy Spirit speaks here. He has ordained strategic seasons in each person's spiritual life.
 - a. There are seasons, where He desires to establish our heart in new and deep revelations of His heart.
 - b. The Spirit's agenda for the Bride in this season was to awaken lovesickness in her as she went deep in the Word as she fed on apples and grapes at the banqueting house. (Song. 2:3-5)
 - c. Many do not see the necessity of dedicating seasons of their life to go deep in God and His Word. John was told to eat the scroll or to understand God's Word in a deep way. (Rev. 10:9 – 11)
2. The daughters of Jerusalem represent believers who lack discernment of the various operations of the Spirit and the different seasons in God.
3. The Spirit solemnly charges other believers not to disrupt or disturb the devoted ones with the Bride's heart in this season by their opinions and judgments.
 - a. We can trust Jesus to disturb us when the seasons change as seen clearly in Song 2:8.
 - b. The Spirit tells those who were insensitive to the ways of the Spirit, to not disturb the Bride in this particular season of sitting at the table to be sustained and refreshed by the Word and the Spirit. Many only have one counsel; that is to seek God less and increase in ministry activity.
4. Solomon charged them by the gazelles or the does of the field. (Song. 2:7)
 - a. "By the gazelles or the does" speaks of the importance of gentleness and sensitivity in relating to the young Bride in this season.
 - b. A gazelle or doe has a sensitive nature and can be easily startled. Many are easily distracted from the Word. We must have sensitivity in relating to others in different seasons.
5. In the phrase, "Until it pleases", the Hebrew can be translated as it, he or she. The NAS accurately translates the phrase as "Don't awaken love until she pleases" instead of "until it pleases."
 - a. If the Hebrew was translated "He" it would refer to the Lord being stirred to action by the daughters of Jerusalem. The Lord has no need for this nor does He need to be protected by the gentleness pictured by the gazelles. It is the Bride that must be protected from distraction.

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- b. Three times Jesus speaks this phrase, “Don’t arouse or awaken my love until it pleases.” (Song. 2:7; 3:5; 8:4). In Song. 8:4, He uses the same phrase “don’t disturb her”. He embraces her like the other two times. However, in this third reference, He omits the phrase “by the gazelles of the field” because she is no longer immature and easily tossed to and fro. (Eph. 4:14).

IHOP – ONE THING MINISTRIES

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Challenging The Comfort Zone

(Song. 2:8–17)

A. INTRODUCTION

1. In Song. 2:8 – 17, Jesus is challenging the Shulamite woman to come out of her comfort zone.
2. This season is not so much about the call of Jesus for her to serve but He is confronting with the issue of her heart which prevents her from wholeheartedness love and total obedience.
3. The purpose of confronting her is to prepare her for a deeper partnership with Him. This is especially relevant for the End-Time Church. The Lord is preparing the Church to partner with Him for the greatest and unprecedented glory at the End-of-the-Age.
4. The Shulamite woman is sincere in her devotion for Jesus. She is not rebellious though she is weak and immature. We need to recognize that Jesus still enjoys us even in our weakness and immaturity.
5. However, we must not stay weak and immature because Jesus is looking for an equally-yoked and mature Bride who fully love and obey Him, who will partner with Him to rule and reign in this present Age and in Eternity.

B. REVIEW OF Song. 2:1 – 7

1. The Bride has just understood that her spiritual identity and life purpose is to be Jesus' inheritance that the Father promised Him. She declares that she is the "rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley".
2. Jesus wants more than mandatory obedience. He longs a Bride who voluntarily chooses to love Him with adoring obedience. This is the pearl of great price that He is after. (Matt. 13:45 – 46)
3. The affections of the human heart are the most precious possession to God. There is nothing that He wants more. Jesus died to redeem and thus possess human affections.
4. She acknowledges the Banner of Jesus over her life. It speaks of the loving leadership of Jesus over us which reveals His love for us and produces love in us for Him. The ultimate goal is to produce a "lovesick heart" for Jesus.
5. Jesus has a specific plan or purpose for each believer.
 - a. It is to bring each of us to the place of feasting at God's banqueting table.

- b. In other words, His plan is to celebrate His love for us and ours for Him. Jesus' primary goal in His leadership over our lives (i.e. His banner over us) is to lead us in a way that reveals and imparts His love to us. We are first called to remember His love. (Song. 1:2, 4)
6. She is lovesick, thus, Jesus' leadership in her life was effective. She cries out for more of Jesus. (Song. 2:5)
7. The Spirit solemnly charged others to not disturb her as she sat at the wedding table under the apple tree. There are strategic seasons where God has different dealings in our life. Therefore, we must know the specific time and season of God for our life and move in accordance to His purpose and dealing for that specific time and season.

C. OVERVIEW OF Song. 2:8 – 17

1. Song. 2:1 – 7 ends with the “do not disturb” charge by Jesus. Jesus is now disturbing her as the season in her life suddenly changes in Song. 2:8 – 17.
2. Key Lesson 1: We must always live in the “now” of God for our life and we must always be sensitive and aware of the leadership of God in different seasons of our walk with the Lord.
3. Song. 2:8 – 17 is not about Jesus calling her to work with Him in ministry. He is confronting and dealing with issues in her life that will deter her from wholehearted love and total obedience. In Song 2:8, she is being confronted with her second spiritual crisis which was fear.
4. He is awakening her now. We do not know how much time has elapsed between Song. 2:7 and Song. 2:8. He did not want anyone else to disturb her in Song. 2:7. But in Song. 2:8, He is awakening her and “disturbing” her comfort zone.
5. This is the third revelation of Jesus in Song of Songs. Jesus reveals Himself to her as the Sovereign King over the nations.
 - a. She knew Jesus as the Counseling Shepherd in Song. 1:7 – 11 and the Affectionate Father in Song. 1:12, sitting at the table feeding her grapes and apples with love.
 - b. Now she sees an entirely different aspect of His personality as she sees Him as one who can easily leap over all mountains of obstacles.
6. Jesus came as the Conquering King to challenge her to go to the “mountains” and “hills” – the two challenges of her life.
 - a. Mountain speaks of obstacles – both human and demonic.
 - b. Hill speaks of compromise and secret sin in our life.

7. Jesus is confronting fear and compromise in her life that is deterring her from wholehearted love and obedience.
8. The real issue in Song. 2:8 – 17 is whether we believe that Jesus' leadership is good. In other words, is it safe to obey Jesus a hundred percent, even when it is costly, uncertain and painful? Would we go all the way with Him? Will we get out of the boat with Jesus?
9. The entire Song of Songs is about Jesus preparing a Bride who is wholehearted in love, radical in obedience, trusting Him relentlessly and living for Him with reckless abandonment.
10. In Song. 1:5 – 7, she faced her first spiritual crisis, which was sin as a veiled woman with the unkempt vineyard. In Song. 2:8, she confronted her second spiritual crisis which was fear and compromise.
11. Key to Lesson 2: How we overcome our spiritual crisis depends on how we respond to the Lord. Do we justify our struggles? Or are we being honest with our struggles and turn to God for help.

D. JESUS REVEALS HIMSELF TO HER AS THE SOVEREIGN KING (Song. 2:8 – 9a)

1. The young Bride receives a new revelation of Jesus as the sovereign King.
 - a. She sees Him as the “Lord of all the nations” who effortlessly conquers all the difficult mountains or high places.
 - b. She sees Jesus as a gazelle or a young stag that easily leaps in victory on the mountains.
 - c. A gazelle or young stag / deer has the ability to easily and quickly ascend a mountain with boundless energy.
2. It is vital for us to know different aspect of who Jesus is in different season of our life because it empowers our heart.
 - a. The revelation Jesus as the tender-hearted Shepherd helps us to cultivate confidence in His leadership. (Song. 1:7 – 11)
 - b. The revelation of Jesus with the heart of an affectionate Father establishes our identity as sons of God and Bride of Christ. (Song. 1:12)
 - c. The revelation of Jesus as the conquering King enables us to overcome “mountains” and “hills” in our life. (Song. 2:8 – 9a)
3. King Jesus triumphed over all demonic powers and principalities. He has overcome all obstacles – both human and demonic. (Eph. 1:22)
 - a. We command the “mountains of adversity” to move. The hills being smaller than mountains speak of the smaller difficulties that we face. (Mark 11:23)

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- b. Zerubbabel was to speak grace to the mountains of adversity that stood before him. (Zech. 4:7)
 4. Jesus is seen as the “Lord of the nations and the Lord of the harvest” who effortlessly conquers and overcomes every obstacle, opposition or personal difficult.
 - a. Mountains speak of human or demonic obstacles and opposition that hinder her full faith and obedience.
 - b. Hills speak of personal difficulties in our lives. They are much smaller than the mountains of oppression in the nations.
 5. She sees Him as a gazelle or a young stag leaping and skipping on mountains. Jesus is pictured in His effortless victory over all His enemies and all their authority structures, whether on the earth or in the heavens. He is seated far above all power, thrones, dominions and names. He has authority over all nations. (Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:13)
 6. Jesus is revealed as leaping over these enemies with ease in His victorious resurrected life. (Song. 2:8c – 9a)
 - a. A gazelle is an animal that is fast and especially swift in their sudden energetic movements. A gazelle can run easily in the high places. The gazelle is the picture of effortless ascending up the mountain.
 - b. This is a new revelation of Jesus as a triumphant leaping gazelle with boundless energy and agility to overcome obstacles. This gazelle is fast and swift, with tremendous movement leaping from place to place.
 - c. It is no challenge for Him to leap over all mountains (enemies, obstacles, and demonic dominions).
 - d. The heavenly Stag speaks of fearlessly conquering all opposition.
 7. “The voice of my Beloved...”
 - a. Jesus awakens our heart to time and season with His loving voice. He is not just our conquering King but He is a King who loves us deeply.
 - b. Jesus speaks tenderly to us in love when He calls us out of the comfort zone to join Him on the dangerous mountains of risk.
 8. She is weak and about to compromise, yet continues to relate to Jesus as her Beloved. She recognizes the voice of her Beloved or the One that she loves.
 - a. Each time the Bride speaks to Jesus she calls Him “my Beloved”. When she speaks about Jesus to others she refers to Him as the One she loves.
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- b. Each time Jesus speaks to the Bride in the Song, He calls her, “My love”, referencing His affection for her, or calls her “fair one”, referencing her beauty.
- c. The name “My love” is used 22 times in the Song. The name “Beloved” is used 22 times in the Song.

E. “WALL” OF SELF-PROTECTION AND ISOLATION (Song. 2:9b, c, d)

1. Jesus is pictured as standing in Song. 2:9b – He is ready for action.
 - a. The Lord is normally pictured sitting in the Scripture. He is especially pictured as sitting in heaven, as sitting in a place of rest and dominion but here He is standing.
 - b. Earlier she was sitting at the table with Him in great delight. The point is that He is now ready for action. He stands. In other words, the Great Commission is being introduced. He is commissioned to conquer the nations. (Matt. 28:19)
 - c. When Stephen died the Lord stood up. The Lord stood to receive the first martyr. He was taking action. He poured out a great revival. (Acts 7:55 – 56)
 - d. When the Lord is pictured as standing, very powerful things are about to happen.
 - e. Jesus stands to knock on the door of the Church in Revelation 3:20. This is an prophetic statement for the End-Time Church where He wants a new level of ownership and partnership.
2. Jesus is seen as standing behind a wall. She thinks that He is behind a confining wall but He is out in the vast open world conquering mountains and hills as a fearless Stag. She is the one that is behind a confining wall.
 - a. She is sitting in security behind a wall. It is a wall of self-protection that shuts out the world with its problems and the needs of others. It is a wall that keeps her from the risk of walking in faith.
 - b. He is standing on the outside for the first time since she was awakened to fervency.
 - c. She sees it as a wall of their making. It is not her wall; it is their wall.
 - d. She has been properly led to the table, to the shade tree, that brought her so much enjoyment in Song. 1:12 – 2:7.
 - e. The Lord had indeed commissioned her to stay there until He awakened her. It is a wall that they built together. Initially, He put her in isolation. He built windows in the wall. He put her behind that wall.

3. He was looking and gazing at her, intending to draw her forth from her private world of self-concern. It was the gaze enticing her to come forth. Jesus gazes upon her with eyes of fiery love. He wanted her to catch His vision for the nations.
4. He built the wall with strategic openings so He could deeply touch her.
 - a. The “windows and lattice” speak of openings in the strategic wall that God builds around each of us. In other words, the wall is His strategic personalized plan to train us in bridal partnership.
 - b. His Divine plan focuses on the best way to reach her heart in the deepest way. In other words, the wall speaks of the ways where she, in a holy way, is vulnerable to Jesus touching her.
 - c. The Lord created windows in His plan to transform our heart. He is wooing her in love. He knows how to really touch her in a way that will bring her out.

F. CALLED OUT OF THE COMFORT ZONE TO DEEP PARTNERSHIP WITH JESUS (Song. 2:10)

1. Jesus is ready for action and deep partnership with the maiden.
 - a. He calls her to arise from her comfort and security to come away with Him to conquer the mountains of this fallen world.
 - b. Jesus commissioned His Bride to work with Him as He brings the nations to obedience. (Matt. 28:19)
2. He speaks to her in love. He calls her His fair (or beautiful) one. He regularly calls her, “My love and my beautiful one”. He uses endearing language to motivate her. He communicates, “You are so dear to me. You mean so much to me. I want to rule and reign with you at my side.”
3. Jesus knew what was in her heart. He saw that she wanted to obey Him. Jesus knows that in time her immature love will bud into maturity. He sees the fervent love in immaturity and calls her beautiful while she is in the process of growing in attainment.
4. Jesus calls her to arise in order to come with Him on the mountains. In this He challenges the comfort zone in her life.
 - a. She was still sitting at Jesus' table under the shade of the tree (Song. 2:3) and lying on her bed (Song. 1:16).
 - b. However, Jesus is ready for action. He wants her off the bed, out from behind the wall, out from under the shade tree. It is time for war. She wants to stay in the bed to be fed with apples.

5. Jesus is challenging two aspects of her fear in keeping her from leaving the comfort zone:
 - a. The risk of walking by faith (2 Cor. 4:18; 5:7)
 - b. The struggles of spiritual warfare (Song. 4:7 – 8; 1 Peter 5:8)
6. The question is: is it safe to go with Jesus out of the comfort zone? Will we miss out if we obey Him a hundred percent? In the flesh, it seems safer to be in the boat without Jesus instead of being on the water with Him. This is one of the most practical foundational truths that all of us must live out.
7. She must rise if she is to experience mature partnership with Jesus.
 - a. We can still go to heaven with “comfort zone Christianity”, but we will not be of deep partnership with Him.
 - b. There are seven verbs used in Song. 2:8 – 10 to describe the process Jesus uses to awaken us to mature partnership. They include Jesus coming, leaping, skipping, standing, looking, gazing and speaking.

G. THE PROPHETIC SIGNS OF FRUITFULNESS (Song. 2:11 – 13)

1. Jesus prophetically encourages her by revealing that it is the time for fruitfulness. The Lord is equipping her to overcome fear so that she will be able to rise up to follow Him.
2. She is still immature in her understanding that He is a “safe God”. Therefore, He is appealing to His faithful leadership in the past and pointing to the prophetic signs of the times.
3. Jesus reminds her of His faithfulness to her in the past – “For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.” (Song. 2:11)
 - a. He tells her that the winter is past. He encourages her by recalling how He has been faithful to her in past winter seasons. He reminds her that He helped her in the cold bitter winter. He is saying, “I was faithful to you in the past bitter winter. Those trials are past, and here we are.
 - b. The winter speaks of trials as the north winds do. The winter season is dark, cold and difficult.
 - c. He is saying, “I helped you in your past trials. Why do you think I’ll forget you when we go up the mountain together? Why are you so afraid? Why are you hiding behind that wall? The winter is past. I took you through it.”
 - d. He is saying, “If we were together in the past difficulties, we will be together in the future ones.” One reason the Lord takes us through difficult seasons is to give us our own personal history in the faithfulness of God.

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4. He is reminding her of His past interventions and past faithfulness to her in the early parts of her journey. He wants her to develop a personal history in the faithfulness of God.
 - a. Rain speaks of the seasons of difficulty and inconvenience.
 - b. He is saying, "I helped you in past trials during the bitter cold winter rains. Why do you think I will forget you when we ascend the mountains?"
 - c. The Lord is forcing us to develop a private history in His faithfulness. Someone else's faith cannot make us stable in a time of crisis.
 - d. What makes us stable is our own personal history in God's faithfulness. He calls her to arise and face the difficulties.
 5. Jesus also points to the future as He highlights the prophetic signs of a soon coming harvest. We are encouraged by seeing the early stages of the Harvest. They guarantee that the full harvest is coming soon. Seeing this gives us urgency to be prepared. We do not have many years to waste.
 6. Jesus encouraged the apostles by pointing out that the harvest was ready. Peter had recently given up his fishing business. Within three years, the Jerusalem revival was followed by the revivals in the Book of Acts. It was essential that they learnt to fully trust and obey Jesus. (John 4:35)
 7. Jesus points to the signs of the harvest.
 - a. Flowers appear on the vine to signify that the harvest of grapes will soon follow. It is clear that the "flowers of revival" are budding across the nations. We are seeing the signs of unprecedented harvest and the global outpouring of the Spirit.
 - b. The voice of the turtledove is heard in Israel at the harvest time. We are witnessing the rise of the prophetic voices proclaiming the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - c. The fig tree puts forth the green figs just before the mature figs. We are seeing the return of Israel back to her land.
 - d. The fragrance of the young tender grapes indicates the harvest. We are seeing the awakening of the Church with passion for Jesus.
 - e. The time of singing associated with the global worship and prayer movement. The greatest revival in history is around the corner. The singing has begun as houses of prayer are raising up worldwide and days of worship (i.e. Global Day of Prayer, The Call, etc.) gathering multitudes to stadiums to sing.
 8. Jesus speaks tenderly to the maiden by calling her "My love and My fair one". Jesus knows that she will refuse Him but she is still as beautiful to Him as when her vineyard was not kept. (Song. 1:7 – 8)
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9. We are much more motivated to obey Him when we feel loved and beautiful in His eyes. He is not speaking in a harsh judgmental tone. (Song. 2:13)

H. EMBRACED BY THE LORD EVEN IN HER WEAKNESS (Song. 2:14)

1. The Lord reveals His tender affection for us even as we struggle through our fears. Jesus affirms her sincerity by calling her, "My dove."
 - a. A dove speaks of purity and loyalty. The Holy Spirit is pictured as a pure dove.
 - b. Jesus knew that it was in her heart to obey Him. Jesus knows that she will compromise in Song. 2:17, yet He calls her "My dove." He didn't call her a deceitful snake.
2. Jesus gives her the five vital keys in overcoming her fear and compromise.
 - a. To lean on the work of the cross. (Rom. 8:28 – 32; 1 Cor. 10:4; Matt. 16:18)
 - i. The cleft of the rock speaks of the finished work of the cross. We are to stand with confidence before God in our weakness as we present ourselves to God and trust in Jesus' death and resurrection.
 - ii. Jesus was the spiritual Rock in Moses' day and is the rock on which the Church is built. (1 Cor. 10:4; Matt. 16:18)
 - iii. God hid Moses in the cleft of the rock (i.e. the open space in the mountain) to protect him from seeing God's face and being struck dead by the glory of God. (Exd. 33:20 – 22)
 - iv. This hiding in the cleft of the rock was a type of salvation through the cross. The cleft of the rock speaks of the "wounds" in Jesus' side that He received on the cross. We hide from the judgment of God in the cleft of the rock or in the atoning death of Jesus.
 - b. To overcome by the power of resurrection. (Eph. 1:17 – 23)
 - i. The "secret places of the cliff" speaks of the mystery of Jesus' resurrection.
 - ii. It is the ultimate secret place in which a Man ascended to God. The cliff ascends upward as the stairway up to heaven as Jacob's ladder. (Gen. 28:12 – 17)
 - iii. "The secret place of the cliff" is translated as "the secret place of the stairs" (KJV) or "the secret place of the steep pathway" (NAS).
 - c. "Let me see your face" – A place where we wait and behold the Lord. (Ps. 27:1 – 4; Isa. 40:30 – 31)
 - d. "Let me hear your voice" – A place of worship and prayer.
 - i. Jesus wants to see our face and hear our voice in worship and prayer as we cry for help in our weakness. (Song. 2:14)

- ii. We tell Jesus that we love Him without fearing that we are hypocrites in the process.
 - iii. Some think that when they struggle with sin that their voice is repulsive to God and their face is ugly to Him.
 - iv. God wants us to run to Him in confidence, instead of from Him in condemnation.
 - v. In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus told Peter to pray in the time of temptation. Jesus prophesied that Peter would deny Jesus three times. This was due to Peter's fear and weakness in the flesh. (Matt. 26:34, 41)
 - vi. Jesus saw Peter's willing spirit despite knowing that Peter would stumble that night. Jesus in essence was saying, "Pray to Me Peter. I want to hear your voice. I want to help you."
- e. "...for your voice is sweet and your face is lovely!" – Confidence in God's love and delight for us even with unsettled issues and struggles in our heart.
- i. The Lord enjoys a responsive heart. He enjoys us even when we are immature. She is still under the tree and behind the wall when He calls her fair or beautiful.
 - ii. Jesus knows our heart and sees our sincere desire to obey. He knows that our immature love will mature in time as hers does. (Song. 4:7)

I. PRAYING FOR DELIVERANCE FROM COMPROMISE (Song. 2:15)

1. The young Bride responds to Jesus' exhortation to see her face and hear her voice as she prays for deliverance. She cries out for Jesus' help to catch the little foxes of compromise in her life.
 - a. Foxes are cunning animals that will destroy a vineyard under cover of the night. They are not bold strong lions that attack during the day. They are small, fast and crafty and are hard to catch.
 - b. The "little foxes" in the vineyard of our heart speak of our small compromises that include fear, sinful thoughts, attitudes, words and the small yet continual misuse of time and money. This is not referring to defiance to the Word but her fear "to arise". (Song. 2:13)
2. Our vine refers to our fellowship with God. The tender grapes speak of her immaturity in life. She is keeping her vineyard in contrast to Song. 1:6., but the foxes kept destroying her fruitfulness.
3. The young Bride longs to go deep in God. She cried out that the Lord would sustain and refresh her because she was lovesick in Song. 2:5. It is the little areas that hold

us back from walking in the Spirit. She sees the seriousness of small areas that prevent her from going deep in God.

4. We want more in God rather than just avoiding scandalous sin. We want our vineyard to be full of mature fruit.
 - a. The issues of unwholesome speech, unclean thoughts and attitudes that resist servanthood and humility are the little foxes that destroy our intimacy with the Lord.
 - b. Jesus is calling her out of the comfort zone, but the little foxes are destroying her vineyard.
5. She prayed, "Catch us the foxes".
 - a. In other words, we cannot catch them by ourselves but we cry for God's help.
 - b. She acknowledges the presence of the little foxes (i.e. her compromise) in her life and then offers up continual prayer for help. The Lord is so willing to help us.

J. SHE EXPRESSES HER SINCERE LOVE FOR JESUS (Song. 2:16)

1. She states her spiritual identity. She knows who she is as a lover of God.
 - a. When we struggle we do not cease to be a genuine lover of God nor do we cease to be loved by God.
 - b. Our face does not cease to be beautiful to God and our voice in worship does not become offensive to Him.
2. She sees Jesus as her Beloved or the One she loves. She declares, "I am His."
 - a. Jesus' ownership over her heart will eventually be seen in her life. Her heart is His and it belongs to Him. Her love for God is expressed in the midst of her stumbling.
 - b. She does not feel cast aside by the Lord because of her struggle. She is not a hopeless hypocrite. Her confidence is steadfast. She cries, "I know You are mine and that I am Yours. I am not drawing back." She is sincere but not mature yet.
3. She asks Jesus to feed her several times (Song. 1:7, 12; 2:4 – 5). Now, Jesus wants to feed her in a costly place among the lilies or in the place of her obedience and purity.
 - a. Lilies speak of purity. (Song. 2:1 – 2; 5:3, 13; 6:2 – 3)
 - b. She knows that her life purpose is to live in the purity of the lily in every area of her life and to catch all the little foxes. (Song. 2:1 – 2)
4. In Song. 2:1, "I am the lily of the valley," the lily is in the singular as she discovers her personal identity in the Lord. However, here "the lilies" are in the plural as they speak of the corporate people of God who love Jesus like she does. (1 Cor. 15:33 – 34)

K. HER PAINFUL COMPROMISE (Song. 2:17)

1. She now gives her answer to Jesus' command to arise to join Him on the mountains in Song. 2:13. She refuses to rise up. Instead, she tells Him to, "Turn to leap on the mountains as a gazelle without her." She refuses to obey Him because of fear due to her immaturity - not rebellion.
2. With deep sadness she acknowledges that Jesus must go and be like the gazelle of Song. 2:8. At the end of Song of Songs, she calls out for Jesus again to be like a gazelle or a young stag. (Song. 8:14)
3. She acknowledges the dark shadows in her heart. These are areas of her life that are not fully in the light. The daybreak comes in the morning when new light is present. It is the time when the dark shadows or the gray areas in her life are gone.
4. She says to turn and go until the light of day breaks so as to provide her new light in a new day.
 - a. In Song. 4:6 she eventually obeys and arises to go with Jesus to the mountain.
 - b. In this verse, Jesus answers her prayer by catching this "fox of fear" in her life.
 - c. We are created to live in the high places with Jesus in the extravagant devotion of bridal partnership.
5. She understands that her compromise will lead to fruit in her vineyard being destroyed or in separation in her intimacy with God. Jesus turns and goes for a season.
6. Jesus honors our voluntary decision to draw back. Our relationship with Jesus is based on voluntary love.
7. The word Bether in the Hebrew means "separation."
 - a. Some Bible translations use the word "separation" instead of Bether. The mountains are the obstacles that bring separation.
 - b. She acknowledges that there will be a separation as Jesus goes to "the mountains of separation."
 - c. In Song. 3:1, He separates from her until she repents and cries out in obedience. (Song. 3:2)
8. She knows that her weakness does not mean that her love for Jesus is false. She continues to call Him "my Beloved Jesus".

L. FOUR KEY STATEMENTS OF PROGRESSION

1. There are four times in Song of Songs where you are going to see a phrase repeated. The Lord is causing a progression of maturity to take place in her life and it is important to look over these verses in order to become familiar with it.
2. The Song of Songs describes her progression from being self-centered to being God-centered in four key statements.
 - a. Four times through the book she changes and redefines her experience. She starts from being only self-conscious and ends up with a mature God-centeredness.
 - b. We can follow her maturity throughout Song of Songs through these four statements which are in strategic places. They are statements of the progression of her maturity.
 - c. Notice the transition from a self-centered to a God-centered focus in the four inheritance statements. (Song. 1:14; 2:16; 6:3; 7:10)
 - i. In the beginning stages, her own enjoyment of Jesus is her only focus. She talks about what He is to her without much awareness of what she is to Him.
 - ii. In Song. 2:16 and 6:3 and then finally Song. 7:10, she uses this same language but changes the order to express her concern about what she is to Jesus. Jesus is her inheritance.
3. “My beloved is to me ...” (Song. 1:13-14) shows that her initial focus is only on her spiritual pleasure. This is acceptable to Jesus as a beginning place in the grace of God. Her only focus is that she is loved and has an inheritance in Him. She has little regard at this stage for His inheritance in her. (Song. 1:13 – 14)
4. In her second focus – “My beloved is mine, and I am His” - she is saying, "He is mine, He belongs to me. However, I now realize that I also belong to Him." (Song. 2:16)
 - a. She now adds a new dimension of His ownership of her life. She now sees the necessity of loving Him because she is His inheritance.
 - b. However, it is only her secondary concern at this stage of maturity.
5. In her third focus – “I am my beloved’s, and my beloved is mine” - she is saying the same words as in Song. 2:16, however, she changes the order. She says, “I belong to Him and I continue to acknowledge that He is still mine. He belongs to me. My beloved is mine.” (Song. 6:3)
 - a. The third progression says the same two truths but the order changes. She says, “It is His agenda first and my agenda second.”
 - b. She reverses the priority of her concern. His inheritance in her is now first in her heart. Her inheritance in Him is vital, yet secondary.

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6. In her fourth and final focus – “I am my beloved’s, and His desire is toward me” - she is saying, “I belong to Him and what He desires is all I focus on. The fact that His desire is for me makes me want to make sure that I am a hundred percent His. He owns me entirely. His concerns are what I care about most.” (Song. 7:10)

IHOP – ONE THING MINISTRIES

The Divine Discipline of Jesus

(Song. 3:1–5)

A. INTRODUCTION

1. This is a season where the young Bride received the loving discipline of Jesus as He withdrew His manifest presence from her for a season.
2. A vital session for every believer in learning the divine discipline of God in our life. The session helps us to understand the heart of God when He disciplines us and also shows us the reason why He disciplines us.
3. God does and will discipline us. God disciplines us because He loves us.

B. REVIEW

1. Song. 2:8 – 17 set the context for the discipline of God for the Shulamite woman.
2. Jesus came as the Sovereign and Conquering King to the Shulamite woman and He was calling her to arise and go to the mountains and hills.
3. The invitation was primarily to challenge her out of her comfort zone, to confront her of fears and compromises, and for her to acquire a new measure of faith and obedience.
4. Jesus is inviting and preparing her to a new and deep level of partnership. This is an answer to her prayer in Song. 1:5 when she asked to be drawn away so as to run with Him.
 - a. Song. 1:5 – 2:7 is a season where He is drawing her away to cultivate intimacy and to establish her Bridal Identity.
 - b. Song. 2:8 – 17 is a season where He was calling her to arise and go with Him.
5. It is vital to know the season and timing of God in our own lives so that we can live in the “now” of the Lord. The past place of obedience may be the present place of disobedience.
6. The Shulamite woman did not obey His call to arise. She refused to obey because of her fear and immaturity, and not because of defiance or a rebellious spirit. She was sincere in love but immature.
7. Song. 2:8 – 17 concludes with the Bride asking Jesus to turn and go without her.

C. OVERVIEW OF Song. 3:1 – 5

1. Jesus' response to the young Bride's refusal to obey is to lovingly discipline her by causing His manifest presence to be lifted off from her heart.
 - a. He is NOT angry at her.
 - b. He is jealous for her to share His values as a mature Bride that she might walk in fullness of His plan for her and her partnership with Him.
2. It is vital for us to understand the heart and the purpose of God when He disciplines us.
 - a. Divine discipline is NOT divine rejection. Divine discipline is about God removing everything that hinders wholehearted love. (Heb. 12:10)
 - b. Father loves us too much to let us come up short of being the glorious and mature Bride of Christ.
 - i. He disciplined her for her spiritual well-being because He has great zeal for our greatness. (Jer. 29:10 – 14)
 - ii. The Lord wants to pry our fingers off the things that hold us in bondage.
3. The cost of obedience is high. However, the cost of disobedience is higher. To neglect in obeying the Holy Spirit's leadership is costly.

D. NINE PRINCIPLES OF DIVINE DISCIPLINES OF GOD

1. God enjoys and likes us even in our weakness. (Song. 1:5)
 - a. This is a key message and vital truth that will give us confidence in approaching God.
 - b. God knows our heart and can distinguish between weakness and immaturity from rebellion. Our failure in our attempt to pursue does not make us hypocrites.
2. God's enjoyment for us does not mean that He approves or agrees with every area of our life. God can enjoy us even in our weakness but that does not mean that He approves of our every behavior, attitude, action or speech.
3. Divine discipline of God is the result of His displeasure with a specific area of our life.
 - a. God often deals with us in a particular area of our sin one at a time. It is a process.
 - b. It is vital for us to respond to God in that specific area that God is highlighting. We must repent and change when the Holy Spirit convicts in a particular area.
 - c. God usually deals with one or two areas of our life at a time because He is gracious and patient.

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4. Divine discipline is NOT divine rejection.
 - a. God's displeasure over an area of our life is not the same as His displeasure with a person. We must differentiate between the person and the issue.
 - b. God can be displeased with a certain aspect of our behaviour, but He does not despise us as a person.
 - c. Some mistake divine correction for divine rejection, the former is proof of His love. God hates the sin yet delights in the one He disciplines (Heb. 12:6; Prov. 3:12)
 5. Divine Discipline is the result of His divine affection for us. (Prov. 3:12; Heb. 12:3 – 4; Rev. 3:19, 21)
 - a. God disciplines us because He loves and cares for us. To be disciplined means God cares and has not given up on us.
 - b. It is a terrible thing to “get away with” sin for the long term because that means God is giving that person over to their sin. God's discipline is proof that He has not given up on us. (Rom. 1:24 – 28; 1 Cor. 11:32)
 - c. We should be “fearful” when God does not discipline us when we live in a prolonged season of sin. (Rom. 1:24 – 28; 1 Cor. 11:32)
 - d. We should rejoice when God disciplines us. (Heb. 12:7 – 10)
 6. Divine discipline is when God corrects a particular area of our life that He disapproves of so that He might remove all things that hinders wholehearted love. (Jer. 29:10 – 14)
 7. When we neglect to honestly and thoroughly confront sin in our heart we are not loved less by God but we do suffer loss in several ways.
 - a. Our ability to experience the joy of our salvation.
 - b. Receiving the spirit of revelation.
 - c. Intimate and godly fellowship with God.
 - d. Receiving eternal rewards.
 8. God has tender patience for a season with believers who do not repent and He gives us time to repent. (Rev. 2:21 – 22)
 - a. This does not mean He is accepting our sinful lifestyle and we must not confuse His patience with His approval.
 - b. We must be quick to repent and to deal with our sin. (Eph. 4:26; Matt. 5:23 – 24; Heb. 12:15)
 9. God patiently suffers long in His love as He disciplines us to repentance. (Rom. 2:4).
 - a. We must not despise His goodness.
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- b. We must not confuse His patience with His approval.
- c. His goodness should motivate us to repentance.

E. JESUS WITHDRAWS HIS MANIFEST PRESENCE FROM THE SHULAMITE WOMAN (Song. 3:1 – 2)

1. The maiden sought God but did not find Him. This was a new experience for her. All through Song. 1 – 2 when she sought Him she found Him in great sweetness. (Song. 3:1 – 2)
2. Jesus is withholding His manifest presence from her to let her know He is displeased with a certain aspect of her life. He withdraws to get her attention.
3. Song. 3:1 – 5 is NOT about Jesus forsaking the Bride. There is a difference between Jesus withholding His presence and Him forsaking us.
 - a. God will never leave us nor forsake us. (Heb. 13:5)
 - b. God will never allow a “sin” or “pressure” so great that we cannot bear it. (1 Cor. 10:13)
 - c. God will never withdraw His leadership over our life. (2 Cor. 2:14; Phil. 1:6)
4. Song. 3:1 – 5 is not about Jesus forsaking the Bride in terms of leading or helping her but about Jesus withholding His manifest presence for the purpose of disciplining her.
5. Three purposes of the Lord in lifting His presence from the hearts of His beloved:
 - a. To alert us to the seriousness of our compromise - compromise that refuses to more deeply embrace the Holy Spirit’s leadership.
 - b. To humble us so as to cause us to be aware of our need for Him.
 - c. To awaken deep hunger in us for Jesus.
6. “By night on my bed I sought the one I love; I sought him, but I did not find him.” (Song. 3:1)
 - a. This was a new experience for her to seek Him without finding Him. She was disobedient to God in refusing to rise up to function in the Body in the way that the Lord told her. (Song. 2:10 – 13)
 - b. This is a new season of her life. In the past season Jesus was sitting with her, but now He is standing (Song. 2:9).
 - i. Jesus is now in “the city and on the street” but she is still seeking Him on her “bed”. (Song. 3:2)

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- ii. In the last season Jesus was with her on “our bed” (Song. 1:16). The season has changed. She is seeking out of His will. This is disobedience.
 - iii. Key lesson: It is important to seek the Lord but we need to seek Him in His will.
 - c. She stays behind the wall of isolation and continues to pray on her bed, under the shade tree, eating grapes and raisin cakes instead of leaving the comfort zone. (Song. 2:8,17)
 - d. Jesus refuses to come to her until she obeys because He loves her too much to leave her in a position of disobedience.
 - e. The Shulamite woman disobeyed Jesus due to fear and immaturity. But she sincerely loves Jesus.
 - f. Four times she mentioned Him as the One she loves from Song. 3:1 – 5.
 - i. “... I sought the one I love” (verse 1)
 - ii. “... I sought the one I love” (verse 2)
 - iii. “... have you seen the One I love” (verse 3)
 - iv. “I found the one I love” (verse 4)
 - g. More than confessing of her love for Jesus, she fervently and earnestly seeks Him.
 - i. “I sought the one I love...” (verse 1a)
 - ii. “I sought him but did not find him...” (verse 1b)
 - iii. “I will seek the one I love.” (verse 2a)
 - iv. “I sought Him but did not find Him...” (verse 2b)
 - h. Key Lesson: We must be fervent and earnest in seeking God. For the measure and degree of knowing God is determined by the measure and degree of our hunger. (Matt. 5:6)
7. This is the night season of her spiritual life. There are four different “nights” in our spiritual life in which we must seek the Lord.
- a. The night hours: we sometimes seek God in the night hours because of our godly desperation to know Him through the inconvenience of these hours.

How do we respond: Reach for it beyond our normal routine. (Phil. 4:12 – 14)

- b. The night of pain: in difficult circumstances, such as when David was on the run from Saul and Joseph was imprisoned in the dungeon. Despite these pressing circumstances, they did not give up by concluding God's promises were false.

How do we respond: Do not quit but press in to God. (Ps. 18:4 – 6)

- c. The night of temptation: in times of failure and darkness we must continue to seek God.

How do we respond: Run to God instead of running away from God. (Ps. 51; Luke 15)

- d. The dark night of the soul: in the Middle Ages some spoke of the dark night of the soul, this indicating God's presence was temporarily withdrawn in times of obedience. (Song. 5:6)

How do we respond: Continue to seek God in the routine. (Song. 5:2 – 8)

8. Five benefits of divine withholding of His presence:
- He withholds His presence to drive us into an extravagant seeking of His face. The lack of God's presence in our life is not always a statement of His disapproval or displeasure. The seasons of withholding have profitable results in our resolution to know the Lord intimately.
 - We are led to a deeper searching of our hearts for hidden faults. Such honest searching of our own hearts helps us to find unperceived issues that might hinder the Presence of God in our lives.
 - He speaks through "a different language" – the "language of silence". This is a very powerful communication to us.
 - The withholding of His Presence forces us to walk by faith, instead of by feeling. This strengthens our ability to see the unseen. These seasons test the consistency of our love and the maturity of our faith.
 - Jesus combines the intensity of blessing and withholding of blessing to create the right response in our heart. These seasons produce greater humility, by making us see our own weakness and dependence upon God. If we had unbroken feelings of God's presence while yet in a body of sin, we might stumble in spiritual pride and self-righteousness.
9. "By night on my bed I sought the one I love..." (Song. 3:1)
- She was sincere in her love toward Him just as she just proclaimed. Her love is still set on Him, even in her spiritual difficulty.
 - She is not a hopeless hypocrite because she is compromising in her fear. She is still a lover of God.

- c. Some people assume that they are hopeless hypocrites each time they encounter their weak flesh.
 - d. She is still a lover of God. She still can say with truth “He is the one I love.” It is very important that we understand that we can still call Him “the one I love” before every area of our life is spiritually mature.
 - e. She fervently seeks Him. There is no desire so powerful as the longing of a sincere soul for more of Christ Jesus. This desire will lead us to holy urgency after we have tasted the sweetness of His presence in times past.
10. “By night on my bed I sought the one I love, I sought him but did not find him.” (Song. 3:1)
- a. Jesus chastises her by withdrawing His presence. He holds out until we come to Him in obedience. He wants her to discover that the only safe place in the entire world is in rising up in partnership with Him.
 - b. Spiritual disciplines are no substitute for obedience. Her spiritual disciplines did not solve her problem. She continues to seek God through the familiar spiritual disciplines of prayer and meditation on the Word as she did in the past. Now she does not feel His presence because He requires a new measure of obedience. Prayer and fasting is no substitute for obedience. (Song. 2:3 – 5)
 - c. The familiar spiritual disciplines in which we found God in one season do not automatically work in the next season if God is requiring a specific response of obedience.
 - d. When we struggle to experience the Lord’s presence using the disciplines of former days, then we should consider if the Lord wants a specific response from us.
 - e. Key Lesson: A new season requires a new measure of faith and obedience with a new standard of holiness that will bring forth a new level of His presence and power. (Ps. 24:1 – 4)

F. THE YOUNG BRIDE ADDS OBEDIENCE TO HER PRAYERS (Song. 3:2 – 3)

1. The maiden now arises as she was commanded to do in Song. 2:10.
 - a. Jesus withholds His presence to cause us to diligently seek His face and to draw us out of fear, unbelief and compromise.
 - b. He holds out until we rise up and come to Him in new areas of obedience. The only safe place is in rising up in partnership with Him in faith and obedience.
2. The pain of losing His presence motivates her to rise up from her bed and leave her comfort zone.

- a. Jesus hides His face because He knows He can produce earnestness in our hearts by hiding His face. Jesus knows that she cannot live without His presence.
 - b. Our soul becomes desperate for more of God as we remember the former seasons of sweetness.
 - c. She adds obedience to her prayer. She understands that prayer alone will not solve her problem. It requires active obedience.
3. She arises to go about the city, among the streets and squares where the people interact. This is the place of risk, conflict, danger and increased spiritual warfare outside of the comfortable bed and safety of the wall. (Song. 1:16; 2:9)
 4. Jacob wrestled with God through the night. (Gen. 32:24 – 30)
 - a. Jacob refused to give up until he touched God. He is a picture of prayer that wrestles with God until the breakthrough comes.
 - b. Hosea described Jacob as seeking God earnestly with tears and supplication. (Hosea 12:2 – 6)
 5. Key Lesson: The only way to keep ground in our faith is to take new ground. When we cease to take new ground, we will even lose our current ground. We either move forward or backward in our faith.

G. THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE BRIDE IN SEEKING JESUS (Song. 3:2)

1. “In the streets and in the squares, I will seek the one I love. I sought him, but I did not find him.” (Song. 3:2)
 - a. She did not immediately find Jesus but she did not quit. She continues to seek Jesus regardless of the immediate result. This is the kind of tenacity that God rewards.
 - b. She seeks Him after obedience. The despair of the maiden wandering through the desolate streets at night is pictured here.
 - c. Key Lesson: We must persevere in seeking Jesus in our night seasons. Do not quit as breakthroughs are sometimes just around the corner.

“When a train goes through a tunnel and it gets dark you do not throw away the ticket and jump off the train. You sit and trust the engineer!” Corrie Ten Boom
2. The young Bride is motivated by love – “...in the streets and in the squares, I will seek the one I love. I sought him, but I did not find him.” (Song. 3:2)
 - a. She genuinely loves Jesus. She carries her reward in her heart. Her reward is the gift to feel love from God and then to feel love back to Him. The pleasure of our labor is in the gift of feeling God’s love. That is the greatest pleasure in this life.

- b. There are other legitimate pleasures, but this is the reward of painful labor. She needs Him much more when she is in the streets.

H. THE YOUNG BRIDE SEEKS JESUS NEAR THE SHEPHERD'S TENT (Song. 3:2c – 3)

1. The watchmen speak of the elders of the church or spiritual authority or spiritual leaders. (Ezek. 3:17; Isa. 62:6)
 - a. The watchmen were responsible to oversee the affairs of the city, and to “watch” the city, so it is not attacked by their enemies.
 - b. The watchmen in the city can be prophets or intercessors, but in this context the watchmen were the spiritual leaders of the city, the elders of the city.
 - c. These are the shepherds of 1:8d. God entrusts the safety of the city (church) to them. They also “watch over” the souls of the believers (Heb. 13:17).
 - d. She is finally obeying the exhortation in Song. 1:8 to properly relate to the leaders in the body, instead of retreating in isolation. She is recognizing spiritual authority in the Body.
2. The young Bride requests help from the shepherds. (Song. 3:2c – 3)
 - a. She humbles herself to them and asks their help. Her humility in recognizing her need of help from others.
 - b. Fellowship with godly people, who are experienced in the grace of God, is valuable to all. Believers who are newly fervent need the help of more experienced watchmen who have victoriously fought the enemies that will also try to destroy them.
 - c. She will need their help as she will encounter such common enemies of isolation, legalism, over-reaction, lack of balance, loss of perspective, impatience, bitterness, defensiveness, unperceived pride, etc.

I. JESUS' PRESENCE RETURNS IN RESPONSE TO HER OBEDIENCE (Song. 3:4)

1. She found Jesus only as she rose up to seek Him in obedience. The Lord is bound by His own affection to respond to our earnestness. He will not long refuse us. He wants us to prevail!
2. Principle of spiritual hunger: If there is something in the Word that we can't live without, we will receive it in due time. However, if we can live without it, then we will go without it. If you want something in God's will so much that you can't live without it, you'll have it in due time.

3. We do not have to live spiritually bored lives, or in sin and unbelief. We can walk in the anointing to carefully obey Jesus in every area of our life even before the mountains. (Ezek. 36:26)
4. She has a new resolution to hold on to Jesus with a determination that stems from her painful season of spiritual struggle. Thereafter, she “never let go of Him” throughout the remainder of Song of Songs.
5. Times of spiritual turmoil sometimes birth “holy violence” in us to hold on to Jesus and to never again allow compromise to be tolerated in our lives. She has an unquenchable resolution to do the will of God now. (Matt. 11:12)
6. The maiden’s resolve to obey extended to even the most difficult places. (Song. 3:4)
 - a. She is an anointed ambassador of Jesus. She actually brings Jesus to places that He will not go without her obedience as the vehicle of the Father’s choice. At the end of Song of Songs, she brings Jesus to all people. (Song. 8:2)
 - b. The mother is a picture of the church. Those who do God's will, are Jesus’ mother and brother (Matt. 12:46 – 50). Mother Israel gave birth to the redeemed (Rev. 12:5, 17).
 - c. Often the most difficult places to bring Jesus are among familiar family relationships. Home represents the most difficult place to some because it is so familiar.
 - d. A prophet has no honour in his own home. Bringing Jesus to her home is a significant manifestation of obedience to His command to arise.
 - e. Home also represents the place of smallness. We do not need to get on a plane before we do ministry. We can minister to the small numbers of people in our home and neighbourhood.
7. Key Lesson: God wants us to obey Him radically. He wants us to have a fierce determination for Him and for His will. (Matt. 11:12)

J. THE HOLY SPIRIT GUARDS US IN STRATEGIC SPIRITUAL SEASONS (Song. 3:5)

1. The Holy Spirit’s charge is to not pressure the Bride to move on until she is prepared.
 - a. The Lord has every one of us on a course that is tailor made just for who we are, and where we are going.
 - b. Jesus is telling other believers not to disrupt her. He does not want her disrupted from this particular season by unsanctified mercy and false comfort that undermines the Lord’s discipline.
 - c. Jesus protects her from disturbance in this unique season in her life like in Song. 2:7.

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- d. Spiritually dull people, sometimes foolishly counsel the fervent, yet immature, into legalism or compromise in the name of grace. Jesus wants no premature stirring in the “name of love” that distracts her from His work of discipline.
 - e. Do not disturb her out of the will of God. We must recognize the underlying principle that there are various seasons in God’s dealings with us.
2. This a call to recognize the grace of God in the young Bride life – “I charge you...do not stir up nor awaken love until it pleases.” (Song. 3:5a)
 - a. The Hebrew can be translated as it, he or she. The NAS translates the phrase as “until she pleases”, instead of “until it pleases”.
 - b. In Song. 3:5, the Holy Spirit is talking to the daughters of Jerusalem about not disturbing the maiden.
 - c. If the Hebrew word was translated “he”, then it would refer to the Lord being awakened or stirred to action by the daughters of Jerusalem. The Lord has no need to be awakened by the daughters of Jerusalem. The Lord has no need to be protected from religious treatment by the gentleness as pictured by the gazelles or does of the field.
 - d. He is telling the daughters of Jerusalem in the Church, “Don’t get in my way right now. I’m dealing with the Bride in a very specific way. Don’t get in between Me and her.” The Holy Spirit is about to disturb her in a very surprising way.
 3. Three times the Holy Spirit speaks this phrase, “Don’t arouse or awaken my love until it pleases.” (Song. 2:7; 3:5; 8:4)
 4. The Holy Spirit appeals to the need for gentleness and discernment. (Song. 3:5c, d)
 - a. This expression denotes how carefully and gracefully Jesus wants them to relate to His young Bride. A gazelle or doe is easily stirred and startled.
 - b. When the Lord afflicts His people, we easily get off course, and get into false comfort. And the Lord says, “By the gazelles and the does,” He is appealing to these animals that are so easily taken off course. He says, “You need to be gentle when I have them in a very special season.”
 - c. This speaks of the importance of gentleness and extra sensitivity in relating to people in the different seasons of God’s dealings. This is in contrast to religious opinions that will be detrimental to the maiden’s spiritual growth.
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5. The Holy Spirit speaks to the Body of Christ concerning the young Bride – “I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem” (Song. 3:5b)
 - a. These represent immature believers who lack discernment in the Spirit.
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- b. These believers do not understand the various operations of the Spirit, nor the different seasons in God.
 - c. It is as if the Lord is saying, “I have her right where I want her. Now, leave her alone.”
 - d. This is the same protection that Jesus gave the young Bride in Song. 2:7. There are seasons that God has us in. The charge is given specifically to the spiritually dull members of the church who do not possess the fervency of the Bride.
 - e. The daughters of Jerusalem were not experienced in holy passion, and thus were not equipped to help the young Bride in a skilful way.
6. The solemn charge of God to cooperate with the Divine season – “I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem” (Song. 3:5)
 - a. He is solemnly telling other believers not to disrupt her right now. God has her in a strategic season.
 - b. The Lord does not want her being comforted by religious opinions.

Jesus as a Safe Savior

(Song. 3:6–11)

A. INTRODUCTION

1. This is the fourth revelation of Jesus in the Song. Jesus is revealed to the Bride as a "Safe Savior". She gains revelation of Jesus' safe leadership as He leads her out of the wilderness of this fallen world.
2. The Shulamite woman received the revelation of safe and trustworthy leadership of Jesus.
 - a. He has the best and the perfect plan for us. (Jer. 29: 11)
 - b. He is willing and He is able to lead us. (2 Cor. 2:14)
 - c. The only safe place for us is to be with Jesus and to trust in His leadership. (Prov. 3: 5 – 6)
3. This is a vital revelation for all believers because many do not go all the way with Jesus and for Jesus simply due to fear in our heart. Fear often is the result of the lack of confidence and trust in God.
4. The ultimate question for all believers: "Is it safer to be in the boat without Jesus or out of the boat with Jesus?" Our safest place is not in our comfort zone but where God is leading us to and where He wants us to be.
5. Two of the most important questions to for all believers:
 - a. "Who are You, Lord?" (Acts 9:5)
 - b. "Lord, what do you want me to do?" (Acts 9:6)
6. Jesus as Safe Savior is an essential revelation in preparing the Shulamite woman in going all the way with Jesus and for Jesus.
 - a. In this passage, she teaches the daughters of Jerusalem her new discoveries of the safe leadership of Christ.
 - b. Jesus' incarnation and death prove that He has our good in mind and He is one hundred percent committed to us.

7. The Holy Spirit asks a rhetorical question and He gives a two-fold answer. She communicates this two-fold answer to the daughters of Jerusalem.
 - a. The first answer is seen in Song. 3:7 – 8. The Holy Spirit uses military language to reveal how safe the people of God are under Jesus' leadership.
 - b. Her second answer is seen in Song. 3:9 – 10. Here the Holy Spirit uses the language of a royal procession to again reveal how safe the people of God are under Jesus' leadership.
8. She exhorts the daughters to press into Jesus in light of His glorious redemption and excellent leadership in Song. 3:11.
9. Jesus is being revealed to her as a "Safe Savior". The only safe place for our hearts is in the context of one hundred percent obedience. She reveals the fruit of her discovery in this section to the daughters of Jerusalem. She sees Jesus as the "Safe Savior" that ensures her safety on her journey through the wilderness.
10. This passage gives a significant revelation that prepares her for the great turning place in her commitment in Song. 4:6 – 16.
 - a. She believes that her heart will be safe so she is no longer afraid of leaving the comfort zone.
 - b. She knows that obedience will bring life and not death.
11. The depth of commitment she manifests in Song of Songs chapter 4 to 8 flows out of this new insight into the Lord's safe leadership. There is no turning back for her in this journey from this point of her journey.
12. Song. 3:6 – 11 is the most symbolic passage in the entire Song of Songs.
 - a. It can only be understood if we interpret it by the Word of God.
 - b. It is primarily written in the language of love and only the lovesick will fully understand and appreciate.
 - c. Because only true lovers of God will pursue for the true meaning and only the hungry will refuse to be denied

B. REVIEW OF Song. 2:8 – 3:5

1. The Shulamite woman received a new revelation of Jesus as the "Conquering and Sovereign King" or "Lord of all" who has conquered the mountains of obstacles. Jesus is like a gazelle that leaps victoriously over all these obstacles. (Song. 2:8)
2. Jesus called her out of the comfort zone to a new place in the Spirit to experience more of Him. (Song. 2:10)

3. The Shulamite woman did not obey the call to rise up. Rather, she tells Jesus to turn and go to the mountains without her. She did this out of her fear and spiritual immaturity, but not rebellion. (Song. 2:17)
4. Key Lesson: We must always live in the “now” of God. Yesterday’s measure of obedience is not sufficient for today if we want to grow in the Lord. We must respond to God’s “standard” of faith and obedience in each season.
5. God’s manifest presence is withdrawn from the Shulamite woman. She sought God but did not find Him. This was a new experience for her. (Song. 3:1 – 2)
6. Jesus’ response to our disobedience is to lovingly discipline us by lifting the sense of His manifest presence from our heart. He is not angry but jealously wants a deeper partnership.
7. The Father loves us too much to allow us to come short of the fullness of what Jesus wants. He does this for our spiritual well-being.
 - a. The Lord pries our fingers off the things that hold us in bondage. The cost of obedience is high. However, the cost of disobedience is higher.
 - b. The Lord lifts the sense of His presence from our hearts to alert us to the seriousness of compromise that refuses to more deeply embrace the Holy Spirit’s leadership. We should deepen our resolve never to allow anything to get in the way of our relationship with the Holy Spirit.
8. She responded to His discipline by getting out of her comfort zone and she found Jesus in Song. 3:4.

C. OVERVIEW OF Song. 3:6 – 11

1. This is the fourth revelation of Jesus in the Song. Jesus is revealed to the Bride as a “Safe Savior”.
 - a. She gains revelation of Jesus’ safe leadership as He leads us out of the wilderness of this fallen world.
 - b. This does not mean that we will not have difficulties. It means that we are in a place where our heart will mature in obedient, grateful, trusting love for God.
 - c. She received this revelation when she “held on” to Him. (Song. 3:4).
2. The only safe place for our hearts is in the revelation of Jesus as the Bridegroom King who enables us to walk in a hundred-fold obedience and faith in facing the mountains. This will be an essential revelation during the Great Tribulation.

3. The Holy Spirit asks a question in Song. 3:6 then provides a two-part answer along with an exhortation.
 - a. He uses military language to reveal how safe we are under Jesus' leadership. (Song. 3:7 – 8)
 - b. He uses a royal wedding procession to reveal His safe leadership. (Song. 3:9 – 10)
4. The pinnacle of our salvation is in knowing Jesus as our Bridegroom King. (Song. 3:11)
5. The devil lies to us about Jesus not being a safe leader. This foundational revelation prepares the Bride for the fearless and deep commitment that she walks in throughout Song. 4 – 8.

D. THE HOLY SPIRIT ASKS A RHETORICAL QUESTION (Song. 3:6)

1. Song. 3:6 is presented with a rhetorical question that is asked by the Holy Spirit that comes with a two-fold answer in Song. 3:7 – 10 assuring us of His protection and safe leadership and concludes with an exhortation that calls us to develop confidence in Jesus' leadership.
2. On three occasions, a question is asked using the same language "who is this?" (Song. 3:6; 6:10; 8:5). It is clear that the Holy Spirit is the one asking the question on two occasions in Song. 6:10 and Song. 8:5. Therefore, it is clear that it is also the Holy Spirit speaking here.
3. The Holy Spirit asks a question that points to the entrance of Jesus the King (verse 9) into the Eternal City after His crucifixion, resurrection and ascension.
 - a. It is a question that provokes awe and wonder, not perplexity. This question points to the majesty and wonder of the ascending Christ.
 - b. This language describes Jesus in context of the Old Testament sacrificial system.
4. In Song. 3:6, the Holy Spirit is asking a question about "who is Jesus". This is the most fundamental and foundational question for every believer.
5. Twice the Holy Spirit asks the question in Song of Songs (Song. 3:6 and Song. 8:5). When the Holy Spirit asks a question, He is not looking for an answer, but the intention is to provoke us to pay attention and to direct us to look for the "right" answer.
6. "Who is this coming out of the wilderness" statement emphasizes three truths to encourage the Bride:
 - a. The necessity of the wilderness in God's plan for the Bridegroom and the Bride.
 - i. The wilderness can speak of several things:
 - The wilderness speaks of life in this fallen world.

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- The wilderness speaks of difficult times of intense testing.
 - The wilderness speaks of a time of failure and sin.
 - The wilderness speaks of a season of spiritual warfare against Satan.
- ii. The wilderness is the place of encounter with God.
 - iii. The wilderness is the place of preparation of God.
 - iv. The wilderness is the place of refining by God.
- b. Jesus' victory over the wilderness – A victorious Savior that made His entrance after His crucifixion, His resurrection and His ascension
- i. Jesus ascended back to the Father in total victory in the resurrection, re-entering the celestial glory of the eternal city.
 - ii. The host of heaven witnessed Jesus coming up out of the wilderness of this fallen world after the resurrection as He took His position at the throne of glory at the Father's right hand.
 - iii. He has overcome – At the cross, He paid for our sins. At the resurrection, He overcame death. At the ascension, He was given all glory and authority.
 - iv. Because He has overcome the wilderness we can trust in His safe leadership.
- c. Jesus understands our fears and struggles – His victory over this fallen world makes Him a sympathetic high priest who understands our temptations. (Heb. 4:15)
- i. He feels our pain because He had to come up out of the wilderness.
 - ii. He does not stand at a distance, commanding us to come up to Him. He experienced human life in this fallen wilderness. He knows what we are going through in our quest to come out of the wilderness victoriously.
 - iii. This uniquely qualifies Him to bring us to a place of safety because He understands the perilous journey. Indeed, He has travelled through the wilderness too.
 - iv. He came up out of the wilderness in victory. Therefore, we do not have to fear. He is revealing Himself to her as the One that she does not need to be afraid to obey. We are yoked to the One who conquered the wilderness.

E. FOUR-FOLD DESCRIPTION OF JESUS (Song. 3:6)

1. Now the Holy Spirit gives a four-fold description of Jesus so as to give us confidence in His safe leadership and to assure us that we are safe and secure in Him! He is not a negligent leader and He is committed to us.
2. "Who is this coming out of the wilderness pillars of smoke..."
 - a. Jesus is pictured as being likened to pillars of smoke.
 - b. Smoke speaks of the glory and wonder of God. (Exodus 19:18; 2 Chron. 7:2; Isa. 4:5; 6:1 – 4; Joel 2:28 – 30; Rev. 8:4; 15:8)
 - i. Smoke is a manifestation of God's holy presence. Smoke is associated with the fire of the Holy Spirit.
 - ii. This smoke speaks of the holy fire that burns within Him. The fire of God filled Jesus, and the smoke of His zeal ascended upward as a sweet savor to God. Smoke rose from the sacrifices that revealed the love of God.
 - iii. He is filled with the pillars of smoke. He is the sacrifice made to God. The smoke of His sacrifice is like the smoke of the sacrifice of the sacrificial system under the priesthood. This is another way of referring to Jesus in His glory as our sacrifice.
 - iv. He is ascending in the resurrection like a pillar of smoke. He is clothed in the smoke of the glory of God. He ascended out of the wilderness wrapped in heavenly garments that manifested the wonder of God's glory.
 - c. The One who leads us is the ascended Christ who has fully overcome and is victorious. He is fully of glory and authority. He is seated at the right hand of God – far above all. (Eph. 1: 20 – 21)
3. He is "...perfumed with myrrh..."
 - a. Myrrh speaks of Jesus' sufferings. It is the fragrance of His glorious death.
 - b. Myrrh was a costly fragrant burial spice. It had a double meaning:
 - i. It meant death
 - ii. It also meant sweet aroma.
 - c. It was death that worked unto sweet aroma. He has accomplished the finished work of the cross. He is perfumed with myrrh as He ascends back to God the Father's throne.
 - d. "Myrrh" is a spice used to bury the dead. He is perfumed in myrrh. This speaks of the fragrance of Jesus' suffering and His finished work on the cross. When He cried, "It is finished!" the perfume of the myrrh of God drenched Him.

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- e. If He suffered for us, how much more will He protect us? Jesus is a sympathetic High Priest. He fully understands and He fully cares for us. (Heb. 4:15: Rom. 8:31 – 37)
 4. He is “perfumed with frankincense...”
Frankincense speaks of Jesus’ fragrant intercession. As the High Priest went into the Holy of Holies with a censer of frankincense (i.e. incense), so Jesus entered the Holy of Holies in heaven with His censer filled with intercession. (Heb. 7:25)
 5. He is the One “with all the merchant’s fragrant powders...”
 - a. This speaks of Jesus’ commitment to the Bride.
 - b. In the parable of the merchant in Matthew 13:44 – 45, Jesus spoke of the merchant as the one that sold everything to obtain the treasured inheritance. The merchant found a pearl and then sold everything for this pearl. Jesus is this merchant who saw the pearl and sold all to have it. The pearl is His Bride, which cost Him everything to purchase. He paid the whole price, including His death upon the cross.
 6. Jesus did all to secure our safety. He is doing everything to bring us into safety. He is not negligent and He is not overlooking anything.
 - a. Jesus’ incarnation and death prove He has our good in mind. If He suffered for her, how much more will He protect her in this season.
 - b. He is a sympathetic High Priest. He knows how to get us through the wilderness. As believers, we are protected by His work on the cross (i.e. myrrh), and His continued intercession (i.e. frankincense), during our journey in the wilderness.
 - c. The point is that He is safe because He is the merchant who gave up everything to redeem us.
 - d. Conclusion: We have no need to be afraid to follow Him because:
 - i. He is perfumed in myrrh – the finished work of the cross.
 - ii. He is perfumed in frankincense – He is committed to intercede for us.
 - iii. He is perfumed in the merchants’ fragrant powders – He has total resolution and commitment to us.

F. THE HOLY SPIRIT’S MINISTRY OF PROTECTION (Song. 3:7 – 8)

1. We see the extravagant protection and security that we have in God’s grace as described in military terms in Song. 3:7 – 8.
2. King Solomon is a type or “model” of King Jesus in the Song. Solomon’s couch or palanquin, was a chariot used in his royal wedding processions. (Song. 3:9)
 - a. It was carried on the shoulders of the royal guard. Solomon’s couch is the place where his bride sat near him in security through the wilderness journey.

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- b. Solomon's couch came through the wilderness to Shunem (i.e. the bride's city) to take her to his Jerusalem palace.
 - c. The town's people saw a cloud of dust as the royal procession approached. They had never seen such a procession with valiant soldiers armed with swords and battle equipment.
 3. Solomon's couch speaks of the "gospel couch" or the wedding chariot.
 - a. It has been prepared for us because Jesus came up victoriously out of the wilderness of this fallen world.
 - b. Jesus rests on His couch after His final triumph over all His enemies. (Ps. 110:1 – 3; Eph. 1:20 – 22)
 4. In this couch we are seated with Christ in heavenly places and will be enthroned (Rev. 3:21; Eph. 2:6)
 5. The "gospel couch" provides all that we need for our hearts to be safe in our journey through the wilderness. The gospel chariot escorts us as a Bride sitting next to the King as we travel through the wilderness of this age. The chariot provides the protection and safety against sin and Satan.
 6. Solomon had sixty valiant men surrounding his couch to defend his bride from the enemy through the wilderness.
 - a. In a spiritual sense, it points to spiritual warfare.
 - b. Only a king could afford the abundant security of sixty highly skilled soldiers who were experts in war.
 7. The guard around the couch speaks of the Spirit's keeping and protective ministry. This is depicted in military imagery.
 - a. Solomon's guard depicts the Holy Spirit's extravagant protection. These valiant warriors depict God's extravagant protection.
 - b. Solomon continues to use "tabernacle language." There were sixty pillars of support in Moses' tabernacle.
 8. The soldiers were "men of Israel" (i.e. native born) in contrast to being mercenaries or foreign soldiers who would flee from danger because they only served for money. The men of Israel had loyal and courageous hearts in defending the king's chariot.
 9. The bride is not afraid of the enemy's ambushes as she sits in this couch because she is surrounded by valiant expert soldiers. The enemy seeks to ambush us. Jesus watches over us as depicted by the sixty valiant men surrounding us. The Spirit surrounds us in our journey.

10. These soldiers all “hold swords” or are skilled in the use of a sword. They are “experts in war.” (Song. 3:8)
 - a. In other words, they are not novices but are seasoned warriors.
 - b. Their sword was girded on their thigh to be drawn at a moment’s notice in contrast to a soldier who takes his sword off while sleeping. These were diligent vigilant soldiers who were ready for action because of the fear of the night which. This speaks of the power of darkness and the attacks of the enemy. (Eph. 6:12)
11. The Holy Spirit is an Expert in war knowing every scheme of Satan. (Eph. 6:10 – 12)
 - a. He uses many agencies in the grace of God. For example, He may give us a prophetic dream, open or shut a door, stir someone to intercede for us, send an angel, release the gifts of the Spirit through us, give us revelation of the Word to reveal the Father’s affection or Jesus’ cross to lead us to safety.
 - b. His protection over us is passionate, skillful, and diligent.
12. He is able to keep us from quitting or backsliding. There is no sin too difficult for Him, if we give our hearts to God and stay within the simple boundaries of scriptural principles. (1 Cor. 10:13; Jude 24)

G. JESUS’ LOVING SALVATION PROVIDES US GREAT SAFETY (Song. 3:9 – 10)

1. Our safety is described in the language of a royal wedding procession in Song. 3:9 – 10)
 - a. The gospel couch (verse 7) is now described as a palanquin. King Jesus provides an eternal palanquin for us.
 - b. Solomon made a portable chair enclosed with curtains that was carried by royal attendants.
 - c. Solomon specifically “made himself” a chariot to carry his queen. He designed it. Jesus Himself made the palanquin that we rest in. He had to become man to save us. He did not just stay in heaven.
2. The gospel couch is made from the wood of Lebanon.
 - a. The wood in the tabernacle was covered with gold. The wood spoke of humanity and the gold referred to deity.
 - b. The cedars of Lebanon were used in building Solomon's temple which housed God’s glory. The wood of Lebanon was the most beautiful, fragrant, expensive and strongest wood in Israel.
 - c. The gospel was made of the strongest and costliest flesh that ever walked the earth. Jesus came in perfect humanity.

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3. The gospel couch was made of silver and gold.
 - a. Silver speaks of redemption and gold speaks of divine character.
 - b. The pillars of silver were railings around the royal seat. The support system to the couch was made of gold.
 - c. The word “support” in the Hebrew is the word “the railing.” Its support is of gold because our protection is built on God’s infinite wisdom and great power.
 - d. The Bride is never afraid of falling out of this glorious chair.
 4. The gospel seat is purple which speaks of royalty and God’s authority. The gospel releases the authority of Jesus into our lives as the enemy seeks to harass us.
 5. The interior tapestry of this palanquin (i.e. the gospel) is woven by God’s love for us.
 - a. The interior is paved with God’s passionate love for the daughters of Jerusalem - a depiction of weak people.
 - b. The interior of the Gospel or its inner workings are decorated by God’s love. He is gentle in His dealings.
 6. The gospel was motivated by God’s eternal love for us. It was “paved with love.”
 - a. The inner lining of the gospel chariot is paved with God’s love. This speaks of Jesus’ affection for us.
 - b. We feel the love of God for Jesus and for one another. God’s plans are only carried out through His love for the saints. “His banner over me is love” is her confession.
 - c. All that Jesus does is paved in love. This revelation causes us to grow in love in both feeling loved and having the power to love Him back. We are most safe when God’s affections are understood.
 7. The KJV accurately translates, “FOR the daughters of Jerusalem” instead of the NKJ which wrongly translates it “BY” the daughters.
 - a. The gospel is paved with love “for” the daughters of Jerusalem, not “by” them.
 - b. It is the love of Jesus for the daughters, not the love of the daughters for Jesus that is in view.
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H. THE HOLY SPIRIT EXHORTS THE WHOLE CHURCH TO UNDERSTAND AND ATTAIN THE BRIDAL PARADIGM (Song. 3:11)

1. The entire passage ends with a climatic call by the Holy Spirit to see or gaze on Jesus as the Bridegroom King. (Heb. 12:2; Phil. 3:8; Isa. 33:17)
 - a. We are to meditate on Jesus as the King crowned with all authority on His wedding day.
 - b. When we see Jesus with His crown, we are not afraid of the mountains. (Song. 2:8 – 13)
2. The Holy Spirit encourages the younger believers to behold Jesus. It is an exhortation to the whole Church.
 - a. “O daughter of Zion” (Song. 3:11a) – The daughters of Jerusalem are referred to as the daughters of Zion.
 - b. The Holy Spirit speaks prophetically according to who they will become.
3. This is a call by Holy Spirit to see “who Jesus is” and to understand His heart.
 - a. Who Jesus is
 - i. Jesus as the sovereign King with all authority.
 - ii. Jesus as our Bridegroom-King who is fully committed to us, fully loving us and deeply desire us! (Matt. 22:1 – 2)
 - iii. We have to see Jesus in the context of the Wedding Day.
 - b. Understand what He desires and what He wants
 - i. Revelation 19:15 speaks of Jesus having many crowns. But there is a crown that He wants more than all other crowns. He wants the crown of the voluntary love of His Bride – the Wedding crown in Song. 3:11.
 - ii. All the crowns of Jesus are given to Him by the Father except the crown of love. Only the redeemed can crown Jesus with the Wedding crown.
 - iii. The crown of love is what Jesus most desired and what He is waiting for. There will be a day when the Church from throughout all history will crown Him with this Wedding crown.
4. The Holy Spirit is urging the whole Church to rise up and to see this truth – only we can crown Jesus with the crown of love both now and in Eternity. For this reality defines our greatness and dignity.

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5. "With which His mother crowned Him"
 - a. "His mother" speaks of the Church. The seed of the woman is Jesus who is the foundation of the Church. Those who do God's will are His mother and brother. (Matt. 12:46 – 50)
 - b. The Church is the agency He uses for our spiritual birth is a member of the Body of Christ. God is our father and the Church is spoken of as our mother. We are born through the Church by the Spirit because it is through the Body of Christ that we come to the saving knowledge of Jesus.
 6. "Mother crowned Him"
 - a. The Church crowns Jesus as King when they respond to His Kingship in a personal way. His Kingship is manifested over a billion souls when those billion souls submit to Him voluntarily in love. Because the boundaries He has put on His own redemption is that He will not bring us forth violating our own free will.
 - b. There is a crown that He wants more than all other crowns. He wants the crown of the voluntary love of His Bride. He has many crowns, but this is the one crown we crown Him with.
 - c. He will be crowned "on His wedding day" describes a day when the Church from throughout all history will crown Him as the King.
 7. "The day of the gladness of His heart"
 - a. How does Jesus feel about the coming wedding? He is glad about it. This is not a political wedding to create a political alliance with another nation. (Isa. 62:5)
 - b. If there is any confusion about how Jesus feels about that day it is called the day of the gladness of His heart.
 - c. In Revelation 19:6, all of heaven is rejoicing with great joy because it is the day of His wedding, the day of gladness in the heart of God.
 - d. The Lord Jesus is presented as receiving us with the gladness of a Bridegroom.
 - e. It will also be the day of the gladness of our hearts, as we love our eternal Bridegroom throughout the Eternal Ages. There is a day that will make your heart fully glad. When we crown Him King of Kings by making Him the Leader of all that is on our hearts.
 8. "Go forth...and see King Solomon with the crown"
 - a. The Church is exhorted to fix her eyes on Jesus, the triumphant one as the Bridegroom. As we looked upon the Lord, we will receive a new revelation of His safety and His splendor.
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- b. There is nothing that will motivate us more to challenge others on to obedience than by facing our sin and our fears by seeing the crown, seeing the palanquin, seeing His victory in the wilderness, and when our hearts are encouraged.
 - c. When we face the shame of our sin and the power of our fears, and we conquer them to whatever degree, through the revelation of the triumphant Jesus, it gives us power to call others to it.
9. "See King Solomon with the crown".
- a. Keep our gaze on Jesus (2 Cor. 3:18; Heb. 12:2). The revelation of Jesus will motivate us to walk in full obedience (Phil. 3:8).
 - b. The Church is exhorted to fix their eyes on the triumphant King Jesus as the heavenly Bridegroom.

I. CONCLUSION

- 1. How safe is safe when God offered His own Son to die on the cross?
- 2. How safe is safe when Jesus came voluntarily out of wilderness?
- 3. How safe is safe when Jesus understands, intercedes for us and He is committed to us?
- 4. How safe is safe when the Holy Spirit provides us with extravagant protection?
- 5. How safe is safe when Jesus as Bridegroom has made and will carry us with His palanquin?

IHOP - ONE THING MINISTRIES

The Cherishing Heart of Jesus

(Song. 4:1–8)

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Song. 4:1 – 8 gives us a glimpse into how the Holy Spirit will make ready the Bride who will love Jesus wholeheartedly.
2. It is the primary strategy of the Holy Spirit in restoring the First Commandment to the first place in the Church.
3. Jesus is revealed as our Bridegroom-King with a cherishing heart in Song. 4:1 – 8. This is the primary strategy of God in preparing the Bride:
 - a. Nourishing the Church with His Word
 - b. Cherishing with His Love
4. Ephesians 5:26 – 29 gives us a revelation of how the Lord would make His people to be ready as His Bride
 - a. This is the strategy of the Holy Spirit in preparing the End-Time Church.
 - b. It is a prophecy about the End-Times Church and the fullness of what we will become.
5. The primary strategy of God to transform weak believers to wholehearted lovers of Jesus is through the cherishing heart of Jesus.
 - a. How He feels towards us – Jesus cherishes us by releasing His love and affection towards us.
 - b. How He defines us – Jesus does not define us by our struggles but the longing and the cry of our heart because it is the “seeds of virtue” that He sees. Victory, virtue and character are achieved long after our longing and cry of our heart.
 - c. How He esteems us – Jesus esteems us by choosing and inviting us as His Bride in deep partnership with Him.
 - d. How He sees us – Jesus sees us as His beloved.
6. There are three vital questions that we need to know in our pursuit of God:
 - a. Who are You, Lord?
 - b. What do You want me to do?
 - c. What do You say about me?

B. REVIEW OF Song. 2:8 – 3:11

1. Jesus called the Bride out of the comfort zone to the mountain tops to experience more of Him. However, she does not obey due to fear and she tells Jesus to turn and go to the mountains without her. (Song. 2:8 – 10, 17)
2. She experiences God's loving discipline as He removes His manifest presence. She sought Him but did not find Him. The Lord is not angry but jealously wants a deeper partnership. (Heb. 12:6; Song. 3:1)
3. In Song. 3:6 – 11, the Bride gained the revelation of Jesus' safe leadership as the Bridegroom King who could enable her to walk in one hundred-fold obedience in facing the mountains. She sees Jesus as the King who desires her love.
4. We can crown Jesus with our love as the King of our heart. The "wedding crown" of love makes Him glad. He desires that crown the most. (Song. 3:11)
5. Song. 3 ends with the Shulamite woman's exhortation to the Church to have a vision of Jesus as our Bridegroom-King who is glad over His wedding day.
 - a. Jesus is glad because He is going to marry us.
 - b. Jesus is glad because He is receiving the Wedding Crown that He most desires among the many crowns that He will receive.
6. The reality of Song. 3:11 defines the purpose of our lives.
 - a. Dignity – Because we are the only one who can give Jesus the Wedding Crown.
 - b. Glory – We are the ones chosen to crown Him with the Wedding Crown.

C. OVERVIEW OF Songs 4:1 – 8

1. Throughout Song. 1:5 to 3:11, the young Bride primarily sees Jesus as her inheritance. For Jesus is a means to an end of her life.
2. As a result His discipline in Song. 3:1 – 11, she begins to have a realization that she is Jesus' inheritance.
3. Song. 4:1 – 8 reveals us the fifth revelation of Jesus – our Bridegroom-God with a cherished heart so as to equip and empower the young Bride to love Jesus wholeheartedly and to obey Him totally.
4. There are four primary character-traits in us that God is looking for. (2 Chron. 16:9)
 - a. Wholehearted love (Matt. 22:37 – 38)
 - b. Radical obedience (John 14:21)
 - c. Relentless trust (Prov. 3:5 – 6)
 - d. Reckless abandonment (Phil. 3:7 – 10)

5. The entire Song of Songs is a journey and process of God to produce these four character traits in us.
6. After a season of divine discipline, she said “yes” to one hundred percent obedience, total commitment, and willingness to go all the way with Him and Jesus calls the Bride fair or beautiful while she was yet maturing in her obedience and faith. Jesus called her His Bride for the first time in the entire Song of Songs.
7. In Song. 4:1 – 5, Jesus prophetically affirms eight "budding virtues" in the young Bride's life. Jesus equips us in our weakness by affirmations that overpower Satan's accusations against us. (Rev. 12:10)
8. This passage outlines eight character traits that God wants to come forth in His Bride. The symbolism used here is developed throughout the Scripture.
 - a. Dove's eyes: eyes of single-minded devotion and revelation
 - b. Hair like goats: dedication to God.
 - c. Teeth like shorn sheep: chewing the meat of the Word
 - d. Lips like scarlet: speech that is redemptive
 - e. Kisses of the mouth: intimacy with God
 - f. Veiled temples (i.e. cheeks / countenance): emotions impacted by the grace of God
 - g. Neck like David's tower: setting our will to obey God
 - h. Breasts like fawns: the power to edify and nurture others

D. THE BEAUTY OF THE BRIDE IN HER IMMATUREITY (Song. 4:1a, b)

1. Jesus reveals Himself as the Bridegroom with a cherishing heart to equip and empower the young Bride into wholehearted love and one hundred percent obedience.
2. It reveals the two-fold strategy of the Holy Spirit in maturing the Bride.
 - a. He is affirming the Bride's beauty even in her weakness and immaturity. (Song. 1:1a, b)
 - b. He is prophetically calling forth the budding virtues in her life. (Song. 4:1c – 5)
3. “Behold, you are fair, My love! Behold, you are fair!” (Song. 4:1a, b)
 - a. Jesus declares that she is beautiful to Him. He emphasized the importance of this declaration by proclaiming it twice to the young Bride. Jesus declares His affection, love and cherishing heart for her.

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- b. This is the foundational revelation for the young Bride to become mature. When we know that we are beautiful to God even in our weakness, it gives us confidence to run to God instead of running away from Him.
 - c. She is still immature and weak. She has just come out of the season of discipline. She has only said “yes”.
 - d. But the revelation of our beauty in the sight of God even in our immaturity is foundational for us to grow in maturity and intimacy with God.
 - e. This is the most foundational theme in the entire Song of Songs – knowing that we are beautiful in God’s sight. It is mentioned thirteen times in the Song of Songs.
 - f. The Lord calls sincere believers, the disciples whom God loves. (John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20)
 - g. The devil calls us hopeless hypocrites. The enemy wears down many with accusation and condemnation. He wants us to feel like hopeless hypocrites so that we give up. He wants us to confuse immaturity with rebellion so that we give up.
 - h. Many spend excessive emotional energy fighting the fires of condemnation and worthlessness. The baggage of condemnation and rejection takes a lot of energy to manage. This prevents us from effectively walking with the Lord because we are preoccupied with failure and shame.
 - i. Many focus on measuring their attainment of maturity instead of being focused on setting the intentions of their heart to obey and believe. When we measure our attainment of maturity, we become vulnerable to two spiritual problems:
 - i. If we measure up good, we can feel proud and thus, criticize others who fail.
 - ii. If we fail, then we feel condemned and thus, feel like quitting.
 - j. Our primary focus is to be on God’s emotions and in setting the intention of our heart to fully love Him. He will effect mature victory in us in His time. (Phil. 2:13)
 - k. Cherishing is the way a man changes his wife or children. All of God’s discipline occurs as He cherishes us. Parents often do not rightly interpret the budding virtues in their children. They see failure instead of the budding seeds of dedication and greatness.
4. There are four reasons why we are beautiful and lovely to God in the midst of our spiritual immaturity.
- a. The gift of righteousness through the finished work of the Cross. She saw her loveliness is from possessing the gift of righteousness. (2 Cor. 5:21)
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- b. He has given us a willing spirit at the new birth. The work of the Holy Spirit to produce a "Yes!" in our spirit, appears as beautiful to God. A willing spirit is the "yes" in our spirit to God, before we have ever changed anything outwardly.
 - c. The nature of God's personality – The passions and pleasures of God's heart determines how God feels toward us. Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder. It is because of the heart of the Beholder, that we are beautiful to God. Our beauty is related to God's emotional make up.
 - d. Her destiny before God as His Son' future bride – The absolute certainty of finality of our destiny as an adorned, embraced and enthroned Bride with Jesus is a substantial reality of our beauty.
5. The revelation of His affection of the young Bride in her weakness – "My love"
 - a. There is nothing more vital to our future maturity, security, encouragement, and comfort, than the revelation of God's affection.
 - b. The dividing issue between people who grow rapidly in the spirit and those who do not is the knowledge of God's affection in times of weakness.
 - c. It is with this knowledge that we run to Him, instead of running from Him.
 6. "Behold, you are fair"
 - a. The word fair is translated in most Bible translations, as beautiful. This affirmation has been repeated many times throughout Song of Songs. (Song. 1:8,15,16; 2:10,13,14; 4:1,7,10; 6:4,10; 7:1)
 - b. He breaks the silence after her discipline proclaiming, "you are beautiful, My love!" This is one of the most dramatic proclamations of God to the human spirit.
 - c. God declares that the Church, even in weakness, is beautiful in His sight. Jesus' beauty is reflected in His Church. This is difficult for many to receive.
 7. Jesus emphasizes the importance of this revelation of beauty – "Behold" (Song. 4:1)
 - a. He is speaking to her for the first time since the season of discipline in Song. 3:1 – 5. He uses the word "behold" twice in this context to emphasize His feelings for her after discipline.
 - b. It is important to Jesus that we understand His heart. The Holy Spirit blasts the Divine trumpet before us, "Behold! You are beautiful and you are His love".
 - c. What a fantastic way to break the discipline. We need to have our hearts tenderized by this.
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E. PROPHETIC DESCRIPTION OF THE MATURE BRIDE (Song. 4:1c – 5)

1. Jesus affirms eight "budding virtues" in her life. (Song. 4:1c – 5)
 - a. Each characteristic starts out only in seed form. They need to be called forth with affirmation.
 - b. Jesus equips us against Satan's accusations by affirming the seeds of our love and obedience that He sees in our heart.
2. Jesus speaks blessing on eight different aspects of her life.
 - a. He gives us a new name so that we might grow up into it. Every phrase is God's poetic divine romance that aims at the heart in a specific way. (Isa. 62:4 – 5)
 - b. These eight virtues are reflections of the Lord's beauty imparted to us and they make Jesus glad as we love Him in these ways. These eight virtues will also make our heart glad. (Song. 3:11)
3. The King spoke to her in agricultural language that she is familiar with since she tended goats and kept vineyards. Each symbol is interpreted by the Scripture.
4. The King tells her to go to the mountain. Up to this point, she only said yes to arise to go to the city not the mountain. (Song. 3:2)
5. The Bride does not fully walk it out until Song. 5 – 8. She has only said yes. But the Lord values the yes, knowing that she will mature in due time.
6. Three things work together to cause us to come to one hundred percent commitment to obey:
 - a. She receives divine discipline. (Song. 3:1 – 2)
 - b. She receives fresh revelation of Jesus. (Song. 3:6 – 11)
 - c. She receives fresh revelation of herself in Jesus' eyes. (Song. 4:1 – 5)

F. EIGHT BUDDING VIRTUES OF THE BRIDE (Song. 4:1c – 5)

1. Eyes: spiritual understanding and revelation (Song. 4:1)
 - a. Eyes speak of spiritual insight.
 - i. Paul spoke of the eyes of our understanding. (Eph. 1:18)
 - ii. Seeing was Paul's first priority because seeing is the doorway to growing spiritually. (Phil 3:8-10; 2 Cor. 3:18)
 - iii. Obedience flows out of perceiving. When we see differently then we feel differently.
 - b. Dove's eyes speak of purity and loyalty.
 - i. The Holy Spirit is pictured as a dove.

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- ii. A dove never mates again when their partner dies. They are known for their loyalty.
 - iii. Doves cannot focus on two things; they have no peripheral vision. This speaks of singleness of mind.
 - iv. Instead of being dedicated and secure in God's love one moment then compromising or feeling condemned the next, she was single-minded. Her eyes are fixed upon Him, not on lusts, failure or success.
- c. She has humility in her revelation.
- i. She "hides" behind her veil or holds back some aspects of what God tells. Her secret life in God or her life behind her veil is private.
 - ii. Abundant revelation tempted Paul to become proud. Paul taught that knowledge often led to pride. (2 Cor. 12:7 – 9; 1 Cor. 8:1)
2. Hair: dedication to Jesus (Song 4:1)
- a. The Bride's hair spoke of her dedication to God.
 - i. The hair of the Nazirite was an outward sign of their consecration or dedication. Anyone who took a Nazirite vow was not permitted to cut their hair. Samson cut his hair and thus broke his vow of dedication and lost his power. (Num. 6)
 - ii. Hair also speaks of the beauty of submission to God. Paul spoke of a woman's hair as showing forth her glory and dedication to God's authority (1 Cor. 11:5, 6, 15; Song. 4:1)
 - b. The maiden has a majestic and stately walk as represented by a flock of goats. (Prov. 30:29 – 31)
 - c. We walk out our dedication with stateliness or as coming from godly wisdom with dignity. It is common for our dedication to be tainted with fleshly zeal that draws attention to self.
 - d. Her stately hair or dedication is the result of being well fed on the Scripture.
 - i. The goats on Mount Gilead were abundantly fed. It was a fertile area with bountiful places where goats were known to eat in abundance.
 - ii. She was well fed on the love of God and the Word of God.
3. Teeth: her life in the Word (Song. 4:2)
- a. Teeth speak of the ability to chew meat and thus to receive nourishment.
 - i. Infants have no teeth to chew meat. Babies in Christ cannot receive the meat of the Word. (1 Cor. 3:1 – 2; Heb. 5:12 – 14)
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- ii. This virtue refers to her ability to receive the meat of God's Word. This four-part description of her teeth is from an agricultural perspective. Her teeth are strong, abundant and effective.
 - b. The wool of an unshaven sheep grows unevenly or unbalanced. Uneven wool speaks of fleshly zeal.
 - i. The priests of Zadok had to wear linen garments and were forbidden to wear wool because it made them sweat. (Ezek. 44:15 – 18)
 - ii. Our fleshly zeal must be under control of the Holy Spirit.
 - c. To come up from the washing speaks of being cleansed from the dirt. As we eat the Word of God our teeth are like sheep that came up from the washing. The Word washes us. (Eph. 5:26)
 - d. Diligence in the Word results in an abundant impact on others.
 - i. Her teeth were like a flock of shorn sheep. Every one of these teeth bore twins and none was barren. Her ministry impact was fruitful without spiritual barrenness.
 - ii. To bear twins speaks of abundant fruitfulness. By meditating on the Word, we can keep our lives as clean as sheep that just emerged from the washing.
 - iii. This cleanliness of teeth speaks of her commitment to meditate on God's Word (1 Tim. 4:6 – 16). Song 4:1-3 and Song. 6:5 – 7 describe her eyes, hair, teeth and temple.
 - 4. Lips: godly and anointed speech (Song. 4:3)
 - a. Her lips speak of her speech
 - i. Her words being like scarlet speak of words that bring redemption to others. The scarlet strand pictures God's redemption by the blood of Jesus.
 - ii. When the spies came to Jericho, Rahab placed the scarlet ribbon in her window to receive redemption. (Josh. 2:21)
 - iii. Moses took the blood of calves, dipped scarlet wool into the blood and sprinkled it on the people. (Heb. 9:19)
 - b. The scarlet strand must impact our lips as we speak in an edifying way (Col. 4:6). Wholesome speech is an indication of the grace of God on our lives (Eph. 4:29; Jas. 2:3).
 - 5. Mouth: her intimacy with God (Song. 4:3)
 - a. In Song. 1:2, the mouth was introduced in the Song in the context of the kisses of His mouth. This refers to intimacy with God.
 - i. Our communion with Jesus is lovely to Him. In Song of Songs, the lips speak of speech while the mouth speaks of intimacy.
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- ii. The king is not being repetitive or redundant in this affirmation to the maiden.
 - b. When we give our love to Jesus, it often seems weak. However, God declares that it is lovely to Him, even in our immaturity. The Lord delights in the communion He has with us.
6. Temple: her emotional make-up (Song. 4:3)
- a. The temples (cheeks or countenance) reveal one's emotions.
 - i. The Hebrew word translated as temples can be translated as countenance or cheeks. Several translations use the cheeks instead of temples.
 - ii. Our emotions are expressed by our countenance or cheeks. We can see anger, joy, gladness, and sadness on the cheeks or countenance. They are the windows into one's emotions.
 - b. Her godly emotions were like a piece of sweet pomegranate. They were sweet to God. The pomegranate was a common fruit in Israel that was very sweet. They were represented on the gown of the high priest or on the ephod.
 - c. When pomegranates are broken they are red.
 - i. Red speaks of her modesty – her propensity for blushing in the presence of shameful things. A prostitute does not blush when acting immodestly. A red countenance speaks of one sensitive to shameful things.
 - ii. Behind her veil speaks of her hidden life in God as being modest. It is genuine and not a show. There is a hidden life of modesty and tenderness.
7. Neck: her resolute will (Song. 4:4)
- a. In Scripture, the neck often speaks of the will that can be stiff necked (i.e. resistant) or submissive. When one put his foot on the neck of a conquered enemy, it symbolizes their submission.
 - i. The Bride's will is like the heart of David who set his heart steadfastly before God. This is in contrast to being double-minded. (Ps. 57:7)
 - ii. David's towers were strong and high to make them effective in defending the city of Jerusalem. Her choices were strong like the tower of David.
 - b. An armoury stores weapons for war. (Neh. 3:19, 25)
 - i. A resolute will to obey God is like a storehouse of weapons against Satan's kingdom.
 - ii. A buckler is a small, round shield often worn on the arm. A thousand shields speak of abundant protection against the enemy.
 - iii. Her will is like the shields of one thousand skilled warriors which were proven in battle. They provide protection from the enemy. This refers to the shield of faith which is used to protect us. (Eph. 6:16)
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- c. Our unwavering resolution to obey Jesus is an essential aspect in our spiritual victory. There is no substitute for exercising our will to say yes to God. The Lord will not violate His own boundary lines of redemption by forcing us to say yes to Him.
8. Breasts: ability to nurture others (Song. 4:5)
- a. Breasts speak of nurturing others as a mother nourishes her babies.
 - i. Fawns are youthful animals. Her breasts are like two fawns which are twins. This speaks of a double portion, or a double ability to nurture others in giving them the milk of the Word.
 - ii. Breasts like fawns speak of the milk of a young mother that does not run dry. This is in contrast to an aging woman.
 - b. The maiden's ministry is likened to fawns which feed among the lilies. This speaks of purity. Jesus promised to make her an ornament of silver or to be equipped in ministry as per Song. 1:10.

G. HER COMMITMENT IS FOUNDATIONAL FOR SPIRITUAL MATURITY (Song. 4:6)

1. The life of total commitment is foundational for all. This is one of the great verses of the entire book. This is the turning point of the life of the Shulamite woman when she said "yes" to wholeheartedness and to one hundred percent obedience. There is no turning back now.
2. She responds to these affirmations of her beauty by embracing the Cross or committing to go to the mountain of myrrh. The mountain refers to obstacles that hinder her obedience. (Song. 2:8 – 9)
3. Myrrh is a burial spice that speaks of the death of Jesus and the Cross. It is not just a burial spice to our flesh but it is also a fragrance to our spirit.
4. There are two parts to the message of the cross.
 - a. The first part of the message of the cross is what He did for us.
 - b. The second part of the message of the cross is denying ourselves as we take up our cross to follow Him. (Luke 9:26)
 - c. It is the mountain of myrrh, not a small amount. It is very costly in the flesh for her to radically obey God. But she is willing to pay the price.
5. Frankincense or incense throughout Scripture speaks of prayer or intercession. (Ps.141:2; Rev. 5:8)
 - a. We ascend the hill of frankincense to receive strength to ascend the mountain of myrrh.

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- b. The mountain of myrrh is too difficult to ascend without living on the hill of frankincense. Our prayer life empowers our heart to embrace the cross in self denial.
 - c. We can only embrace the mountain of self denial to the measure that we go up the hill of prayer.
 - d. The hill of frankincense is smaller than the mountain of myrrh. A small amount of prayer is sufficient to prepare us for a higher mountain. The impact of our prayer exceeds our efforts on the mountains.
 - e. Short prayers go a long way. We get more than we deserve from our prayer life.
6. She understands her need to identify more deeply with His death and to go all the way – "I will go" (Song. 4:6)
- a. She commits to go to the mountain of myrrh. She is prepared to leave the comfort zone, to embrace the sufferings of Christ.
 - b. This speaks of her full resolution to embrace everything that the Lord puts before her in order to walk in full partnership with Him. There is nothing that will keep her from one hundred percent obedience.
7. "My way" (Song. 4:6) – God's way of training each one of us is unique. Do not imitate another person's specific journey because God will bring you along a unique tailor-made path.
- a. Burn out comes from going to the mountain of myrrh on another person's word, on another person's yoke. There is our own way to the mountain of myrrh.
 - b. The phrase "my way" is vital. God calls each person on his or her own tailor-made journey. You cannot go the way your friend goes. It is very important that you go your unique way to the mountain of myrrh, not the way another person went.
8. She commits to continue until all compromise is gone – "Until the day breaks and the shadows flee away" (Song. 4:6a)
- a. Shadows speak of the grey areas of weakness or compromise. These shadows or little foxes were still present in her life. (Song. 2:15)
 - b. She is committed to continue on the mountain of myrrh until all the shadows (i.e. areas of weakness) are exposed and dealt with.
 - c. "Day" speaks of a time of victory by living in greater light with no shadows.
 - d. "Until the day breaks" – The morning light brings a new day, or a new season of victory after struggling through the night. It speaks of both the day of eternity when we will live in the full presence of God and it speaks of a time of victory where we live in greater light on the earth.
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H. JESUS' FRESH WORD OF AFFIRMATION (Song. 4:7)

1. Jesus releases a fresh word of affirmation – "You are all fair, My love" (Song 4:7a)
 - a. He calls her "beautiful or fair" thirteen times throughout the Song.
 - b. "All fair" is translated "altogether beautiful" in the NASV. He had called her "beautiful or fair" eight times up to this point in the Song.
 - c. He adds the word "all" there for the first time after He hears her resolution from Song. 4:6.
2. He now sums up her life – "And there is no spot in you." (Song. 4:7b)
 - a. We are not to conclude that she has no sin. She has not yet embraced the ultimate two-fold test of Song. 5:2 – 8. He sees her willingness to embrace the Cross.
 - b. The Lord is defining her in terms of her willing spirit, not in terms of her weak flesh. She is not yet fully mature yet Jesus esteems her desire to walk in all the light she has and she is lovely to Jesus

I. THE REVELATION OF THE BRIDE (Song. 4:8a)

1. "My spouse" – For the first time, He calls her, "My Bride".
 - a. In the Song, the Lord usually couples the twin titles "My sister, My spouse", however, notice on this occasion He does not add His usual title 'My sister'.
 - b. She is no longer just the immature maiden. She is now beginning to function as a Bride. It is not an accident that this is the very first time in the entire Song that he calls her my bride.
2. For the next four chapters, we see the development of the mature Bride.
 - a. A mature Bride is the great inheritance of Jesus – an eternal companion that is an affection-filled Bride that will be equally yoked to Him in love.
 - b. This Bride is going to have the same intensity of love for Jesus that Jesus has for her.
3. The cross is not an end in itself. It provides Jesus with His eternal Bride. It provides the Father, His eternal family.
4. The great Wedding Day described in Revelation 19 is the guiding principle for everything that God the Father has done in creation.
5. The dominant cry and the defining confession of the Body of Christ in the final hour will be a Bridal cry.

J. THE CALL TO SPIRITUAL WARFARE (Song. 4:8)

1. Jesus invites her to come with Him from the mountains of Lebanon of spiritual warfare to follow Him wherever He was to go. He calls her to follow Him to Gethsemane in Song. 5:2 – 7
2. She now obeys the original challenge given to go to the mountain in Song. 2:10 – 13. Solomon called his bride to his house in the forests in the mountain range of Lebanon in northern Israel. Lebanon is filled with fragrant flowers. (Song. 4:11; Hos. 14:6)
3. Lebanon is both a geographical area and a mountain range. Senir and Hermon are two different mountain peaks within the mountain range of Lebanon.
 - a. Mount Hermon is on the east side of the Jordan River. It was also called Mount Senir by the Amorites. (Deut. 3:8 – 9)
 - b. Mount Amana is not mentioned anywhere in the Bible, but is believed to be next to Mount Senir and Hermon which are both a part of the Hermon mountain range. (Deut 3:9; 4:48; 1 Chron. 5:23)
4. She is to look from the “top of Amana, Senir and Hermon” or from His point of view – heavenly perspective. If we see difficulties from only a natural point of view, then we lose heart. We must look from His point of view to prevail in spiritual warfare.
5. After Israel conquered the Ammonites on the east side of the Jordan River, they climbed to the top of these eastern mountains to see the Promised Land on the west side of the Jordan River. Israel had to defeat two Amorite kings (i.e. Og and Sihon) before they could climb this mountain (Deut. 3:1 – 11) She is a warring Bride engaged in spiritual warfare and seated in heavenly places.
6. There are lions and leopards on the mountaintops. She must war against lions and leopards, which are animals that devour humans. Satan is a roaring lion who seeks to devour us. (1 Pet. 5:8) This speaks of spiritual warfare. (Eph. 6:10 – 12)
7. The "mountains of prey" had wild animals that stalked the people of Israel. (Ps. 76:4) Habakkuk wrote of plundering the beasts on the mountains of Lebanon that made Israel afraid. (Hab. 2:17)

IHOP - ONE THING MINISTRIES

The Ravished Heart of the Bridegroom

(Song. 4:9 – 5:1)

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Song of Songs 4 is one of the most important chapters in the entire book where Jesus reveals Himself as the Bridegroom with two aspects of His heart towards us:
 - a. Jesus as the Bridegroom God with a Cherishing Heart. (Song. 4:1 – 8)
 - b. Jesus as the Bridegroom God with a Ravished Heart. (Song. 4:9 – 16)
2. This is one of the most dynamic presentations of Jesus as our Bridegroom. (Hosea 2:16; Isa. 54:5; Matt. 22:1 – 2; Eph. 5: 25, 32)
 - a. How Jesus sees us as a Bridegroom. (Song. 4:1 – 8)
 - b. How Jesus feels towards us as a Bridegroom. (Song. 4:9 – 16)
3. There are two foundational truths that equip and empower the End-Time Church to arise as the Bride:
 - a. We are beautiful in the sight of God. (Song. 4:1; Isa. 62:4 – 5)
 - b. God is filled with passionate desire and deep longing for us. (Song. 4:9, Deut. 4:24)
4. The rise of the Bride is the outflow of the Church knowing the cherishing and ravished heart of our Bridegroom-God. We will never have more passion for Jesus until we encounter His deep passion for us. (1 John 4:19; Rev. 19:7; 22:17)

B. REVIEW OF Song. 4:1 – 8

1. After a season of divine discipline, Jesus surprised the Bride by calling her fair or beautiful. She had begun the process of maturing in her obedience and faith. He validated her desires to obey Him before they were manifest in her character.
2. In Song. 4:1 – 5, Jesus called her beautiful and He affirmed eight "budding virtues" in the young Bride's life. They were identified by God as desires in her heart before they are formed in her character. He spoke prophetically in calling forth these eight budding virtues in her life.
3. Our obedience begins when we set our hearts to obey, not only just after we gain victory in an area of our behaviour. After we have set our hearts to obey God, we declare war on areas that we struggle in.

4. For God defines us not by our struggles but the intention of our heart, our longing and the cry of our heart.
5. Thus, we can confidently receive His affectionate mercy and feel His pleasure in each step of the growth process. We are not content with only setting our hearts to obey, we want full victory.
6. We are beautiful to God even in our weaknesses. Immediately after the young Bride's season of discipline in Song. 3:1 – 2, the Lord declares that she is beautiful to Him.
7. The revelation that a sincere believer is beautiful to God even in their weakness is foundational to growing in God's grace. We are changed by this revelation. (Song. 4:1)
8. Song. 4:6 she said "yes" to fearless and wholehearted commitment. The Bride responds to Jesus' affirmations by setting her heart to obey His call to come with Him to the mountains in Song. 2:8 – 13. She now embraces the cross by going up to the mountain of myrrh. She makes a firm decision to leave the comfort zone to go up the mountain by saying "I will go!"
9. She had only said yes, but she had not yet gone up the mountain. She does not go up the mountain until she faces the two-fold test in Song. 5:2 – 8. He sees her willingness to embrace the Cross. The Lord defines her in terms of her willing spirit, not in terms of her weak flesh or her immaturity.
10. Jesus pours out extravagant affirmation by calling her all together beautiful. (Song. 4:7)
11. In Song. 4:8, Jesus called her His Bride for the first time in the entire Song of Songs. She is stepping into her identity as His Bride as a result of saying "yes" to Jesus in Song. 4:6.
12. Song. 4:8 reveals three truths concerning the Bridal Theology:
 - a. Our Bridal Identity – who we are in Christ
 - b. Invitation to Bridal Partnership – what God desires from us
 - c. Bridal Intercession – how do we partner with God
13. The Bride joins the King in spiritual warfare as He calls her His spouse for the first time in Song of Songs. With her new commitment to go to the mountain, she now carries her heart as a loyal Bride.
14. For the next four chapters in the Song, we see her developing mature love for the Lord. (Song. 4:8)

15. In Song. 4:9 – 10, Jesus reveals His desire for His Bride and then affirms her godly life and fruitful ministry. This is referred to as a flourishing garden in Song. 4:11 – 15. She prays for His full intervention in Song. 4:16.

C. THE RAVISHED HEART OF GOD (Song. 4:9)

1. This is the highest point in the entire Song of Songs. It introduces the Bridegroom-God with a ravished heart for His people!
2. Song. 4:9 is one of the greatest statements in the Bible – “Weak love of a man moves the heart of the almighty God!”
3. Song. 4:9 summarizes the entire Song of Songs – “A passionate God who is filled with deep longing and desire for us!”
4. The "ravished heart of God" romances her in this strategic season in her journey. This is an essential revelation that equips her for one hundred-fold obedience and prepares the young Bride for the heart-rending two-fold test of Song. 5.
5. A working definition of the ravished heart of God.
 - a. Webster's 9th New Collegiate Dictionary – Ravish means “to overcome with emotions of joy or delight by someone who is unusually attractive, pleasing or striking.”
 - b. Webster's 2nd and 3rd Editions – Ravish means “To transport with joy or delight. Causing great joy or delight; entrancing, ecstasy.”
 - c. Webster's New World Thesaurus – Ravish synonyms: “Delight, enchant, captivate, attract, enthrall, mesmerize, magnetize, hypnotize, charm, and fascinate.”
 - d. A summary of the Hebrew definition and its English equivalent of the word "ravished" is to overwhelm with emotions of delight because of one who is unusually beautiful, attractive, pleasing, or striking.
6. Jesus' heart is filled with extravagant passion for His people. It is fantastic and unbelievable that God is filled with emotion.
7. God describes His own heart as overcome with emotions of delight with people He finds unusually attractive. He feels these emotions even toward immature believers.
8. Most people find it difficult to grasp this truth of the passionate grace of God. The Holy Spirit will reveal this divine romance. (Rom. 5:5)

9. God's ravished heart is central to the End-Time Church.
 - a. The knowledge of His emotional makeup is vital to a strong foundation in grace. The glory of the Gospel flourishes with the understanding of the extravagant passions in God's personality.
 - b. It is not enough to know what He has done for us on the cross nor is it enough to know what He will do in the coming revival or even eternity. The Holy Spirit wants us to know how He feels, and what He desires deep within His heart.
 - c. This gives us insight into why He does the things He does. When we know how He feels, then we better understand the cross, the coming revival, and our eternal glory in heaven.
 - d. The Holy Spirit will reveal God's extravagant passions to us in a fresh way, in the generation that the Lord returns.
10. Song of Songs focuses on these divine passions and reveals them to us. The understanding of these passions becomes a source of grace for our personal growth in holy passion. It is very worthwhile to diligently studying the passions in God's personality.

D. THE CHRISTIAN PARADIGM OF GOD

1. The Christian paradigm of God is founded on the revelation of God's deep emotions of love. The revelation of God as a tender Father and a passionate Bridegroom was a new idea in religious history.
2. In Jewish tradition, what was most emphasized about God was that He was holy in the sense of being totally separate from sin.
 - a. They did not think of a holy God as sharing the human experience. They thought of God as incapable of sharing it simply because He is God.
 - b. In other words, they saw God as being "above" of sharing the human dilemma by the very definition of being God.
3. The Greek philosophers saw God as emotionally distant from humans.
 - a. The most prominent Greek thinkers were the Stoics. They saw the main attribute of God as being apathetic, by which they meant God's inability to feel anything.
 - i. They reasoned that if God felt something, then He might be influenced or even controlled by what He felt. They argued that those who felt sorrow or joy were vulnerable to being hurt and thus were able to be manipulated by those they had feelings for.
 - ii. They believed that anyone who affected God's emotions would be greater than God - for that moment at least.

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- b. The Epicureans – a school of Greek philosophy – believed that the gods lived detached from humans in eternal bliss. They lived in the intermediate world and thus, were not aware of events occurring on earth. They were therefore, totally detached from human affairs as they lived in great happiness.
 4. The Jews understood God as a holy God separated from humans; the Stoics, a god without feeling; the Epicureans, a detached god. Into this context of religious thought came the totally new idea of the Christian God who deliberately subjected Himself to human emotion, pain and weakness.
 5. Jesus came as the One who embraced human experience and was therefore, sympathetic. (Heb. 4:15; 5:8)
 - a. It was inconceivable to the religious mindset of the first century that a holy God would have capacity for tenderness, sympathy and affection, who even wrapped Himself in the garments of humanity and then experienced God's wrath on a cross. It is difficult to realize how radical this Christian paradigm of God was at that time.
 - b. The capacity to deeply love is unique to the human spirit. It distinguishes us from even the most exalted angels.
 - c. Nothing in Scripture describes angels as having the capacity for affection. They have joy, but are never described as having affection.
 - d. This capacity for affection brings us to unimaginable heights in God's glory, but it can also be dangerous by bringing us to agonizing depths of perversion if we resist God's grace.

E. JESUS' REVELATION OF HIS LOVE FOR US

1. God loves us in the same way that God loves God: The measure of the Father's love for Jesus is the measure of Jesus' love for us. This is the ultimate statement of our worth. It gives every believer the right to view themselves as "God's favourite." (John 15:9)
2. This is called "affection-based obedience"
 - a. This is the strongest type of obedience because it flows from experiencing Jesus' affection. It is the most consistent obedience because a lovesick person will endure anything for love.
 - b. It is stronger than "duty-based obedience" (i.e. obedience when we do not feel God's presence) or "fear-based obedience" (i.e. motivated by fear of negative consequences).
3. The gospel flourishes most when we understand the extravagant passions in God's personality. It is essential to know what He has done for us on the cross and what He will do for us in the coming revival or even eternity. But we also need to know how He feels, or why He does what He does.

4. Experiencing of God's affections causes us to love Him more than our own lives. (Rev. 12:11)
5. Paul reflected on his sacrifices for God and testified that what he gave up was rubbish when compared to the glory of knowing Jesus. There is no sacrifice too great for those in love with Him. (Phil. 3:7 – 11)
6. The most pertinent question here is: "Why is God's heart ravished for us?"
 - a. His personality is filled with loving desire. He evaluates our lives with such kindness because of the type of the personality that He possesses.
 - b. Because of who Jesus is, how He feels and how He processes life, He sees loveliness in us.

F. REVELATION OF THE PASSIONATE AFFECTION JESUS FOR HIS BRIDE (Song. 4:9 – 10c)

1. Jesus reveals how lovely she is to Him. (Song 4:9a)
 - a. This is a statement of His personality. His personality is the basis of how He defines beauty and loveliness. He evaluates our lives with such kindness because of His ravished heart.
 - b. Another one, not as kind as Jesus, would not see the loveliness in us. We will be beautiful forever. Our beauty will never fade.
2. Jesus is ravished by her heart of devotion, love and obedience, not her ministry accomplishments. He says, "You, not your ministry, not the building, not the money you gave, not your track record of accomplishments. YOU have ravished my heart!"
3. She has only said, "I will go to the mountain." She hasn't gone yet. In Song. 4 she makes the commitment to go. Then in Song. 5 she actually goes to the mountain. The Lord was ravished over her intention to go to the mountains.
4. Two key significant titles that Jesus gave us. (Song. 4:9b, c)
 - a. "My spouse" is usually translated as My Bride. The Bride speaks of the affectionate partnership.
 - i. The first time she is called a sister or bride is in Song. 4:8. Jesus calls us by a new name, His Bride.
 - ii. Being named His Bride speaks of His affectionate partnership for us.
 - iii. His heart is captured only for His Bride. Holy emotion has "violently" taken hold of His heart. It leads Him to plan things according to our very best interest.

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- b. "My sister" speaks of Jesus' human nature. To call us His sister means that we are in the same family.
 - i. He could not call us "My sister" before the incarnation. He was not our brother, until He took upon Himself the form of a Man.
 - ii. He relates in the brother-sister relationship because He partook of humanity. (Heb. 2:11 – 17)
 - iii. Jesus endured indescribable humiliation to partake of human nature in the incarnation. This was necessary that He may be like His brethren in all things.
 - iv. For us to be His sister, He must impart to us a new nature that results in such exaltation for the redeemed. He had to descend so far down, and we must ascend so high to meet Him as His sister with the same nature.
 - v. He was not ashamed to fully identify with us and to endorse us before the Father. We cannot fully understand how significant this is because we do not fully know the position He stepped down from.
 5. Her two-fold identity as His sister and Bride is emphasized seven times in Song of Songs. (Song. 4:8, 9, 10, 11, 12; 5:1, 2).
 6. "With one look of your eyes" – Jesus' heart moves with each look of devotion that we give Him. The very movement of our heart to love Him touches Him.
 - a. The NAS Bible says, "...with one glance of your eyes, you have ravished My heart." He counts every move of our heart towards Him.
 - b. We struggle to understand this because we do not count every move of somebody's heart towards us. Every glance of our devotion touches Him.
 - c. Jesus cannot resist one look from the eye of even a downcast believer who is sincere to obey Him. This is His response to the redeemed who were once the foolish, weak, base, and despised people of the world. (1 Cor. 1:26 – 29)
 - d. No one loves like God loves! He is ravished over the foolish, weak, base, despised people of the world. Nobody picks a bride from those ranks, but God, because He looks at life so differently than how man does.
 - e. Question: If one glance moves His heart, what will a fixed gaze do to Him?
 7. "With one link of your necklace" – Every movement of our heart towards Him ravishes him.
 - a. Her neck speaks of her submitted will, which refers to her sincere desire to submit to His authority. The neck speaks of the exercise of her will throughout the book. The necklace around the neck spoke of the will.
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- b. "With one link" speaks of each individual response of sincerity is one link of this golden chain as described in Song. 1:10. It is not the whole necklace, but merely one link. Every link of her dedication moves His heart.
 - c. He remembers every movement of our heart towards Him. His heart is ravished by even one link, each new area of dedication.
 - d. Jesus is so easily conquered by those who sincerely love Him. Weak people capture His heart when they come to Him with a willing spirit.
 - e. Even the most immature heart that possesses sincerity to obey Him impacts Him, because He knows this sincerity will eventually grow and dominate the heart of His Bride-to-be. He does not separate who she will be in full glory, from who she is in her present weakness.
 - f. God will not overlook even one act of obedience. He remembers seemingly insignificant acts of devotion; even a cup of cold water that is given to another! God remembers every single decision we make. (Matt. 10:42; Heb. 6:12)
8. "How fair is your love" – Jesus considers our love as beautiful. Our obedience based in love beautifies us and brings great delight to Jesus. (1 Peter 3:3 – 4)
 - a. He desires our love even more than our work. (Rev. 2:4)
 - b. He desires love more than sacrifice. (Hos. 6:7; 1 Cor. 13:3)
 9. "My sister, My spouse" (Song. 10b) – He is reinforcing His two-fold relationship with her.
 - a. Jesus wants to reinforce this double revelation; therefore, He repeats this seven times. (Song. 4:8a, 9b, 10b, 11a, 12b; 5:1b, 2d)
 - b. He repeats this for emphasis, for it is important that she see the double revelation of being His sister and His spouse. These two titles are very significant regarding her identity as a person.
 10. "How much better than wine is your love" – Jesus turns around her earlier statement when she cried out "For Your love is better than wine" in Song. 1:2.
 - a. The wine metaphor speaks of that which exhilarates the heart. Wine in the context of a marriage speaks of the drink of celebration.
 - b. Scripture points to the "good wine" of God's blessing and the "bad wine" of sin. Experiencing God's love is better than all the other privileges and the best experiences we can have in this age.
 - c. Jesus is saying, "Our love is more beautiful to Him than the splendour of His creation." He values our love more than everything under His authority.
 - d. Jesus' heart is filled with delight over her new decision for obedience in Song. 4:6.
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F. JESUS' PLEASURE OVER HER CHARACTER – HER THOUGHTS, WORDS AND DEEDS (Song. 4:10 – 11)

1. "The scent of your perfumes" – refers to her thought life or her mind being filled with God's Word. (Josh. 1:8 – 9)
 - a. As the invisible fragrance of perfume expressed the inner quality of a plant, so our thoughts are the scent of our inner life.
 - b. Our intentions to obey God and our meditation on the Word arise as fragrance to God. (2 Cor. 2:14 – 15)
 - c. One of the expressions of love for God is our thought life. (Ps. 19:14)
2. "Than all spices" – rare spices were used as expensive gifts.
 - a. The queen of Sheba gave spices to King Solomon in 2 Kings 10:2. The wise men brought spices to Jesus because they believed He was a King in Matt. 2:11.
 - b. Spices were used in the priestly sacrifices and offerings. (Exd. 30:23 – 24)
3. "Your lips drip as the honeycomb" – speaks of her words as being sweet like honey when spoken to God in worship and prayer (Song. 2:14) and when blessing others by feeding and sustaining them.
 - a. Her redemptive lips or words were described as being like a strand of scarlet in Song. 4:3.
 - b. Honey delights the heart and is sweet to the taste. The production of honey requires much time and hard work from bees.
4. "O My spouse" – Jesus notices every word of love to Him that is spoken from His Bride.
5. "Honey and milk are under your tongue" – two foods that described the prosperity of the Promised Land and that are used to feed babes. (1 Peter 2:1)
 - a. The recurring theme of speaking for the edification of others is prominent in Scripture. (Eph. 4:29; Col. 4:6)
 - b. The phrase "under his tongue" refers to the private thoughts.
 - i. The mouth which is full of deceit has trouble "under its tongue" or in a person's heart. (Ps.10:7)
 - ii. The Bride has truth "under her tongue" and in her heart as she speaks expressing agreement with what she really thinks. What she thinks and speaks are in unity and thus, sincere.
4. "The fragrance of your garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon" – refers to the Bride's deeds as being fragrant before God. Garments speak of the Bride's acts of obedience in Rev. 19:7 – 8.
 - a. Jesus warns us to "keep our garments" lest we end up with the shame of a life without service for God. (Rev. 16:15)

- b. Jesus counselled the Laodicean church to buy from Him "white garments" so they would be clothed and the shame of their nakedness would not be exposed (Rev.3:18).
- c. Mount Lebanon was known for its fragrant cedar trees and flowers. This is in contrast to a life of spending our time and money mostly on ourselves. Paul spoke of receiving financial service from the Philippian church as a sweet smelling aroma well pleasing to God. (Phil. 4:18)

G. THE BRIDE'S EXTRAVAGANT DEVOTION TO JESUS (Song. 4:12)

1. Song 4:12 speaks of how she carries and guards her heart before God. Garden speaks of as our heart and our inner-being before God.
2. "A garden enclosed" – was a private garden and not open to the public. It was enclosed with a fence to keep animals from polluting it.
 - a. The purpose of a king's garden was to provide pleasure and rest, in contrast to most gardens which were used for growing food. It was costly and required much work from many servants to cultivate.
 - b. The Church is God's garden. God has cultivated this garden at great personal cost. It is the garden of His delight. It is not a crop; it is a garden. (1 Cor. 3:6 – 9; Song 6:2, 3; 2:16)
 - c. The garden of the Lord speaks of His corporate church and the individual believers who are spread throughout the world but remain separate from the world. He feeds the individual believers in the midst of His church or garden.
 - d. To live as an "enclosed garden" or "sealed spring or fountain" means to shut ourselves off from the defilement of sin and compromise. In keeping our hearts from compromise, we become a place of pleasure for our King.
 - i. A water supply without a covering was considered defiled. (Num. 19:15)
 - ii. She is living before the Audience of one and her heart is a place of rest for Jesus. (Isa. 66:1 – 2)
3. "Enclosed garden" – She is enclosed in two ways:
 - a. She is enclosed in the sense of keeping herself enclosed. This speaks of her spirit of watchfulness. She guards her heart from the spirit of the world instead of being open to all the defilement of the world. (Acts 20:28)
 - b. She is an enclosed garden in the sense that the Lord is protecting her. She is also a private place of special pleasure for the King.
 - c. There is nothing more powerful that God could speak over a person to affirm their dedication than to call them "an enclosed garden." He says, "You are a

place of refreshment for me and you have a locked heart. You are not giving it to the spirit of the world.”

4. “A spring and fountain sealed up” – speaks of an undefiled water supply and not polluted by animals. In Israel, springs of water were rare and thus, provided a valuable water source to help a garden grow abundantly. When we live as springs sealed up, it is rare and precious to God.
 - a. “A spring”: The water supply was abundant to water this “holy garden.” In a warm country like Israel, springs of water were rare and precious. They provided an extra water source to make a garden grow abundantly.
 - b. In Isaiah 58:11, He promised to make His Church as a “well-watered garden” whose springs would not fail if she would pursue a life of full obedience with Him.
 - c. Enclosed, sealed and seal is the same idea, it means protected from defilement. It is the heart that is kept from defilement.
 - d. The “springs” and the “fountain” talk of different ways that our hearts are impacted and influenced by the Holy Spirit.
 - e. Springs were rare and valuable, so they were sealed or protected, so that they would not be polluted by the beasts. This speaks of her not wanting to be polluted by the spirit of the world.
 - f. Job made a covenant with his eyes to not gaze upon anything unholy. In doing this, he carried his heart as “an enclosed garden.” (Job 31:1)
 - g. “A fountain sealed” speaks of our poured-out and sanctified emotion before God. (Prov. 5:15)

H. A DESCRIPTION OF THE YOUNG BRIDE'S FRUITFULNESS (Song. 4:13 – 14)

1. She is described as an orchard filled with pleasant fruits, fragrant plants, many trees and chief spices. This speaks of her abundant fruitful life and ministry.
2. Fruit refers both to godliness which is to have a vibrant heart in God (Rom. 6:22; 7:4 – 5; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 5:9; Heb. 12:11; 13:15; Jas. 3:18) and to our ministry to others. (John 4:36; Rom. 1:13; 15:28; Phil. 1:22; Col. 1:5 – 6)
 - a. Pomegranates (Song. 4:13a) and pleasant fruits (Song. 4:13b) are sweet and speak of having a pleasant impact on others.
 - b. Fragrant henna with spikenard (Song. 4:13c) speaks of the precious and costly work of the Spirit in our life.
 - c. Spikenard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon (Song. 4:14a, b) speak of the diverse graces seen in her ministry.

- d. The trees of frankincense (Song. 4:14c) speak of a ministry of prayer.
- e. Myrrh and aloes (Song. 4:14d) speak of the cross and death to self.
- f. The chief spices (Song. 4:14e) speak of grace imparted to others through her ministry. (2 Cor. 2:14 – 16)

I. A THREE-FOLD DESCRIPTION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT'S MINISTRY IN THE BRIDE'S LIFE (Song. 4:15)

1. The Bride is described as having three sources of water which refer to the different ways in which we experience the Spirit in our lives.
 - a. A believer is described as a tree planted by water. A hardened heart is pictured as being dry. Jesus promised that we would be as a well of living water. (Ps. 1:3; Isa. 1:30; John 4:14; 7:38)
 - b. The fountain is the indwelling Spirit. The well speaks of our history in God. The streams are like the Holy Spirit coming upon us from the high places.
2. A fountain is a hidden source of water that is below the surface.
 - a. This speaks of an inward source of supply or the indwelling Christ. (Col. 1:27)
 - b. The gardens here are mentioned in the plural, in contrast to the singular enclosed garden mentioned in Song. 4:12. The gardens here refer to the anointing of God that brings blessing to others.
3. A well speaks of the capacity to store water, and to draw on when needed.
 - a. Welled water is water that is stored up that provides a supply in dry times. This refers to our personal history in God that we draw on from our past experiences.
 - b. This speaks of a past-stored up source of supply.
4. Streams speak of an outward flow of water.
 - a. A stream is above the ground and a spring is below the ground. Streams speak of an energetic flow of water.
 - b. These streams flow from the mountains or high places of Lebanon, thus, they speak of the Holy Spirit (water supply) coming from on high. This speaks of an outward source of supply. (Acts 8:18)

J. HER CRY FOR GOD TO PERFECT HER FAITH (Song. 4:16)

1. She now has enough confidence in God's goodness to offer a two-fold prayer.
 - a. She prays for both the north winds of adversity and the south winds of blessing.
 - b. She knew that both played a strategic role in her becoming a fragrant garden for God's pleasure.

2. "Awake, O north wind" – this speaks of the bitter cold wind of testing and difficulty. This prayer is answered in Song. 5:3 – 7 as she goes through what is called "the ultimate two-fold test".
3. "Come, O south wind" – her second prayer is that Jesus send the refreshing winds of blessing to mature her.
4. Only God has the wisdom to know the right combination of the north and the south winds that are necessary in each season of our life. Only God knows our makeup and destiny.
5. "Blow upon my garden" – she wants the garden of her heart and ministry to be deeply affected. Deep pockets of our unperceived pride, ambition, and anger, etc. are uncovered to us as we work under difficult circumstances.
6. "That its spices may flow out" – she desires to be filled with God's fragrant presence, character and godliness. In other words, she wants to grow in love and obedience.
7. "Let my Beloved come to His garden" – is the transition from her garden to His garden.
 - a. She desires to be totally God's! She wants an anointing of consecration. She sees her life and ministry as "His" garden instead of hers.
 - b. Jesus has an inheritance in the church (Eph. 1:18).
8. This is the turning point in Song of Songs. For the first four chapters it was her inheritance, from now on it is His. Let my Beloved eat its pleasant fruits – that Jesus might enjoy what the Spirit has worked in her.

K. JESUS ENJOYS HIS INHERITANCE WHICH IS A BRIDE (Song. 5:1)

1. The Bride now lives under Jesus' full ownership. Nine times He says "My" depicting His ownership of her life and ministry: "My garden", "My sister", "My spouse", "My myrrh", "My spice", "My honeycomb", "My honey", "My wine", "My milk".
2. "I have come to My garden" – Jesus answers her prayer from Song. 4:16 where she asked Him to come and eat. Jesus comes to take full possession of her life as His inheritance in the two-fold relationship of sister and spouse.
3. "I have gathered My myrrh with My spices" – Jesus gathers what the Spirit has worked through the church. The myrrh speaks of the time in which we follow Jesus by embracing the cross. The spice refers to the impartation of grace in her life.
4. "I have eaten My honeycomb with My honey" – Jesus is feasting on the fruit of a mature church. She asked Him in Song. 4:16 to come and eat. Jesus enjoys what the Spirit has released in the Church. Honey speaks of delightful food that Jesus may feast on from her life.

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5. "I have drunk My wine with My milk" – Jesus celebrates the love that the Bride has for Him. Wine is for celebration and milk is for strength. Jesus celebrates her love and is delighted by it.
 6. "Eat, O friends! Drink, yes, drink deeply, O beloved ones!" – Jesus wants the Church to enjoy the fruitfulness of mature believers.
 - a. These beloved friends are other believers. Paul wrote of death working in him so that life would flow to others. He embraced the difficulties so that God's spices - the grace imparted in his life - would bless God and others. (2 Cor. 4:10 – 12)
 - b. She is as a living sacrifice that the Lord Himself feasts on and feeds to the Church. We can strengthen and nourish others with this grace. (Rom. 12:1)
 7. Summary of Jesus' five activities in Song. 5:1 – He gathers myrrh, eats honeycomb, drinks, and then He offers her as a feast for others to partake of.
 - a. He comes into His garden (5:1a) or draws near to her.
 - b. He gathers His myrrh with spice (5:1b) or uses what the Spirit has worked in her.
 - c. He eats His honeycomb with honey (5:1c) or feasts on the fruit of her maturity.
 - d. He drinks His wine with milk (5:1d) or celebrates her maturity and is delighted by it.
 - e. He invites His friends to eat (5:1e) or wants the Church to enjoy the fruitfulness of mature believers.

The Two-Fold Test of the Bride

(Song. 5:2–8)

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Song. 5:2 – 8 is a vital chapter in preparing the young Bride to become mature and equally-yoked with Jesus even though it is a dramatic, heart-wrenching but necessary journey for the Shulamite woman.
2. In Song. 4:16, the young Bride prayed for both the north winds of adversity and the south winds of blessing to come to the garden of her heart that the spices of grace might flow in her life.
 - a. This is the time when the garden of her heart becomes His garden. She sees her life as "His" garden instead of hers. Jesus has an inheritance in His people. (Eph. 1:18)
 - b. This is a grand high prayer that is necessary for all who seek to be fully matured in Christ. It is the very prayer that Jesus said to the Father in the Garden of Gethsemane. (Matt. 26:39, 42)
 - i. A prayer for a new level of consecration and devotion
 - ii. A prayer for our life to become Jesus' inheritance
 - iii. A prayer of total surrender to Jesus
3. This is the turning point in Song of Songs and the focus of the journey of the young Bride dramatically shifts in Song. 5:1.
 - a. The first four chapters of the book focus on the Bride's inheritance in Jesus. The second four chapters emphasize Jesus' inheritance in the Bride. The reality that she belongs to Him preoccupies her heart now.
 - b. Our spiritual foundation includes both emphasis. What grips her heart is the fact she belongs to Jesus. She begins to view her life through the lens of the pleasure she brings Him. Her pleasure is enhanced in living for His pleasure. Her greatest pleasure is found in doing all the will of God.

B. OVERVIEW OF Song. 5:2 – 8

1. Jesus answered her prayer in Song. 4:16. Jesus reveals Himself as one who suffered alone in the garden of Gethsemane. This is the seventh revelation of Jesus in Song of Songs where He came as the Suffering Servant.

2. He calls her to join Him in the fellowship of His sufferings. (Phil. 3:10)
 - a. This is not an invitation to suffering for suffering's sake but suffering as a result of close fellowship with Jesus, deeper connection to Him and encountering His heart which comes with a cost.
 - b. This is an invitation of knowing Jesus in a new dimension of Who He is, how He feels and what He wants.
 - c. There is a tendency to focus on the sufferings instead of emphasizing on the reward of intimate fellowship with Jesus. The "reward" is not the sufferings but the "reward" is deep fellowship with Jesus. (John 3:29)
 - d. It is a privilege to be invited into the fellowship of His sufferings. Jesus is inviting her to a new and deeper dimension of intimacy and partnership with Him.
3. Overview of Song. 5:2 – 8:
 - a. She responds in instant obedience. (Song. 5:2 – 5)
 - b. Jesus firstly tests her faith by withdrawing His manifest presence from her heart. (Song 5:6).
 - c. Then Jesus tests her faith by allowing the spiritual authorities in the Church to wound her unjustly. This results in her place of function and fellowship in the Church being temporarily taken from her. (Song. 5:7)
 - d. She responds in love and humility. (Song. 5:8)

C. JESUS CALLS HER TO THE FELLOWSHIP OF SUFFERING (Song. 5:2)

1. Jesus reveals Himself as One who suffered in Gethsemane – the Suffering Servant. This is the seventh revelation of Jesus in the Song. He calls us to join Him in the fellowship of His sufferings. (Phil. 3:10)
 - a. His head is covered with dew, which speaks of being outside all night. He comes with His head drenched with the dew of the night.
 - b. His locks speak of His hair. His hair is covered with the drops of the night, which speak of the dewdrops that fall on those who stay outside throughout the night.
 - c. Jesus experienced another type of "drops in the night," He sweat "drops of blood" due to His anticipation of the cross. (Luke 22:44)
 - d. How does one get dew on their hair? By staying outside all night as Jesus did in Gethsemane.

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2. Jesus calls her to open her heart to new depths in the Holy Spirit – "Open for Me...My love...My perfect one" (Song. 5:2d, e)
 - a. He is now taking full possession of her heart for Himself as He declared in Song. 5:1.
 - b. Jesus knocks on the door of her heart in answer to her prayer for the north winds in Song. 4:16. The knock refers to God's initiative and desire to bring us forward in new dimensions of the Spirit.
 - c. Opening the door speaks of entering a new measure of communion with God. (Rev. 3:20)

 2. Song. 5:2a gives us a powerful insight into a three-fold aspect of a mature Bride. – "I sleep, but my heart is awake; it is the voice of my beloved!"
 - a. "I sleep..." – One who has full confidence in the Lord and is at rest in faith in all circumstances.
 - i. She is sleeping in the sense of being completely at peace, because she believes that Jesus is a safe God.
 - ii. Jesus knew the "rest of faith" as He slept in the midst of the storm. (Matt. 8:23 – 27)
 - iii. Similarly, David was able to sleep in the midst of being pursued by his enemies. (Ps. 3:3 – 6)
 - vi. She has confidence that includes bearing the negative dimensions of the cost of bearing the cross in her life.
 - b. "but my heart is awake..." – One who is fully awakened, alert and sensitive to spiritual things.
 - i. We are called to have full understanding of the times and the seasons. (1 Chron. 12:32; Rom. 13:11, 1 Thess. 5:6, Eph. 5:14, Col. 1:9)
 - ii. It is a blessing to be awake, without a need to be awakened from spiritual dullness. She is not dull but sensitive to what God is saying and doing.
 - c. "It is the voice of my beloved..." – One who hears the voice of God. (John 10:27)

 3. The divine initiative of God – "He knocks, saying" (Song. 5:2c)
 - a. He knocks on the door of her heart in answer to her prayer for the north winds. (Song. 4:16)
 - b. The knock refers to the initiative God takes to bring us forward in new dimensions of the Spirit. He knocks when He desires to bring us through a new door in the Spirit.
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- c. The knock of Rev. 3:20 – 21 is to bring us to the communion table. He knocked that we would come to feast at His table. This is also His knock to send the bitter north wind.
 - d. He knocks and we open the door which speaks of entering a new door or a new sphere in God.
 - e. God's knock sometimes may be gentle and quiet, yet on other occasions it is forceful and loud.
 - f. However in the final analysis, God's knock is a demonstration of His care and desire to bring us forward the Spirit. His knock sometimes brings us into hardship but it is a still a good knock. It ultimately brings us into deeper communion in the Holy Spirit.
4. The divine motivation – "Open for Me..." (Song. 5:2d)
- a. The message is "Open for Me." The greatest motivation He can use to sway us is to make known to us that it is "for Him." He is taking her for Himself as in Song. 5:1.
 - b. Jesus is calling her to open her heart For Him – not for blessing, favour, anointing, position of influence, etc.
 - c. It is an open door to new depth and new dimension in intimacy and partnership with Jesus.
5. The divine affirmation – Jesus empowers her to open to Him by calling her four names that describe different facets of her intimate relationship with Him and that gives her confidence in His love. (Song. 5:2a)
- a. My sister – signifies His identification with her humanity. He endured indescribable suffering to be like His brethren in all things. (Heb. 2:11 – 17)
 - b. My love – reminds her of His tender love for her.
 - i. "Grace motivation" is to be motivated by love and gratitude instead of fear and judgment.
 - ii. "Affection-based obedience" is the strongest type of obedience because it flows from experiencing Jesus' affection. It is the most consistent obedience because a lovesick person will endure anything for love.
 - c. My dove – speaks of her singleness of mind and loyalty.
 - i. The Spirit is pictured as a dove. A dove never mates again when their partner dies. They are known for their loyalty.
 - ii. Dove's eyes are not focused on two separate things. They have no peripheral vision. This speaks of singleness of mind without compromise. Her eyes are fixed on Him.
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- d. My perfect one – her intentions are to perfectly obey God. Perfect refers to being mature. She has mature obedience. Before this test (Song. 5:2) and after it (Song. 6:9), Jesus refers to her as His perfect one because she refuses all compromise.

D. THE BRIDE RESPONDS TO JESUS IN FULL OBEDIENCE (Song. 5:3 – 5)

1. The young Bride responded in immediate and full obedience to Jesus. There is no hesitation, no hiding, no turning back and no compromise.
2. *"I have taken off my robe; how can I put it on again?"* (Song. 5:3a)
 - a. This is not a statement of compromise but a response in love and obedience.
 - b. She took off her defiled garments and put on His garments of righteousness. She refuses to wear her garments or to live in compromise. She declares, "How can I put on my robe again".
 - c. The NIV translates it making it sound like she is compromising by refusing to get out of bed. Some commentators also think she is compromising here. However, the context is clear that she is in the place of maturity and obedience.
3. *"I have washed my feet, how can I defile them?"* (Song. 5:2b)
 - a. Jesus told Peter that he was clean, except that he needed his feet to be cleansed. This spoke of his need for daily spiritual cleansing. (John 13:6 – 14)
 - b. This is her acknowledgement that Jesus has cleansed her from all defilement and therefore, her refusal to be defiled again through any compromise.
4. God's grace is released on her heart – *"My Beloved put His hand by the latch of the door"* (Song. 5:4a)
 - a. "His hand" refers to the grace of God. This refers to a release of grace upon her by the hand of God. The hand of God on the Antioch Church spoke of His great grace. (Acts. 11:21 – 23)
 - b. "The latch of the door" speaks of the door of her heart. The hand of God is upon the lock of her heart.
5. God's hand of grace causes her heart to yearn with desire and love for Him – *"My heart yearned for Him"* (Song. 5:4b)
 - a. It takes God's help for us to love God.
 - b. Ps. 110: 3 teaches us that God's power in manifestation produces the desire for obedience in God's people.

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6. She instantly responds to open the door to Him – "I arose to open for my Beloved" (Song. 5:5)
 - a. "I arose" depicts her full obedience. She didn't stay in bed. Her response is exactly the opposite of compromise.
 - b. She is obeying Jesus' request in Song. 5:2 to open for Him. She has said yes to the north winds. She has said yes to Jesus of Gethsemane. She opens her heart to Him.
 - c. God's hand of grace causes a yearning of desire and love. She is not refusing Jesus but rather, she is yearning for Him. The hand of God's on her heart. She rises up immediately. She is not in a place of compromise.
 - d. She loves Him but she doesn't want to be defiled again.
 7. God's grace empowers her heart to embrace sacrifice – "And my hands dripped with myrrh, my fingers with liquid myrrh, on the handles of the lock." (Song. 5:5d)
 - a. "Myrrh" speaks of death as a fragrant burial spice. It speaks of death to self. She had said yes to the mountain of myrrh (Song. 4:6), to the north winds (Song. 4:16), and now she says yes to the Jesus of Gethsemane.
 - b. Myrrh is dripping all over her. She is drenched in dripping myrrh. She is drenched in a commitment to a lifestyle of death to selfishness (i.e. the cross).
 - c. Liquid myrrh flows abundantly like liquid as the grace to embrace the cross. There is no such thing as liquid myrrh, but it was flowing abundantly like liquid. In other words, it takes a lot of the power and the grace of God upon her. In other words, she fully embraces the sufferings of Jesus."
 - d. "My hands dripped with myrrh" – Her hands spoke of her works of ministry. Everything that she had achieved was touched with dripping myrrh.
 - e. "My fingers with liquid myrrh" speak of the activity of working faith that embraces the cross in love.

E. FIRST TEST: JESUS WITHDRAWS HIS PRESENCE FROM HER (Song. 5:6)

1. The Lord hides Himself from the Bride on two occasions in the Song. 3:1 – 2 and 5:6.
 - a. He withdraws His presence when she walks in full obedience in Song. 5:6 – 7. This season is different from the discipline she received in Song. 3:1 – 2 because of her disobedience.
 - b. In Song. 5, Jesus calls her "My perfect one" (verse 2) because of her obedience to open her heart to Him as her heart yearns (verse 4) and leaps (verse 5) because she is lovesick (verse 8).

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- c. Her greatest desire is to experience God's presence. (Song 1:2 – 4; 2:3 – 6)
 - d. Feeling loved by God and feeling love for God is the most powerful pleasure we can experience. (Gen. 15:1)
2. Jesus promised to never leave or forsake us in Heb. 13:5.
 - a. However, He sometimes withdraws the discernable feelings of His manifest presence to test us and to bring our love to maturity as she had prayed in Song. 4:16.
 - b. This is not because of sin, nor is it an attack of the devil. God sometimes hides His face from the obedient to draw out the yearning of their heart for Him in a greater way.
 3. Some Catholic contemplatives in the Middle Ages spoke of "the dark night of the soul". This refers to the seasons of divine testing for those walking in obedience to God.
 - a. This is not a Biblical term but a term referring to times of when they could not sense His presence.
 - b. This phrase was originated by St. John of the Cross in the 16th century. Most Protestants do not have any theology for this.
 4. Job was a righteous man when he was afflicted. God had a unique task for him. He wanted to reveal Himself to Job in a most intimate way. Thereafter he established an intimate relationship with God. (Job 1:8; Job 42:5)
 - a. God had a desire to bring the most righteous man in the earth, Job, into a deep intimacy beyond anyone of his peers. So the Lord allowed the testing of his faith. There is a place in God's economy where He hides Himself when you are obedient.
 - b. God sometimes hides His face from the righteous soul to draw out the yearning of their heart. Sometimes He hides His face to reveal what's in the deep parts of one's spirit or to reveal the motive of obedience.
 5. She seeks Him even more fervently by calling out to Him. However, she cannot find Him.
 - a. This season of divine silence is part of His training to cause our love for Him to mature.
 - b. In this time of testing, our confession of faith must remain constant: "His banner over me is love". (Song. 2:4)
 6. Jesus suddenly withdraws His manifest Presence – *"I opened for my Beloved, but my Beloved had turned away and was gone. My heart leaped up...I sought Him, but I could not find Him"* (Song. 5:6)
 - a. "My Beloved" – The greatest desire of her life in the early stages of love was to feel the presence of God. This was a very surprising experience for her. She
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didn't anticipate this. In Song. 2:3 – 6, she only wanted to experience the presence of God. But now, He hides His face from her. She knows that Jesus' inheritance is a mature Bride. Now, she deeply wants to love Him as a Bride in mature obedience.

- b. *"My Beloved had turned away and was gone"* – This is a sovereign act of God; He is withdrawing His manifest presence to test her. He will never leave us, but the discernible feeling of His presence leaves us. We love to feel the passion of God in our soul to feel passion for Him and passion from Him. Feeling loved by God and feeling love for God is the most powerful passion and pleasure available to the human makeup, but it is now gone. This is not a chastisement for sin as in Song. 3:1 – 2, nor an attack of the devil. Rather, it is a God-ordained test because of her desire for full maturity as prayed in Song. 4:16.
 - c. The Lord is seeking to bring her deeper in intimacy with Him and in greater maturity. Can she be fervent to obey Him without feeling His Presence? Is she seeking God primarily for her spiritual pleasure, or will she obey God for His sake alone? Can she be faithful to obey regardless of how difficult the circumstances are?
 - d. He is saying, "Will you only obey Me if you feel My Presence?" That is the bottom line for many believers. They will only obey Him if the feeling of God is on their heart and circumstances are right.
 - e. The Lord is looking for a people who stand in obedience regardless what is happening in their lives. This is the primary issue of being His inheritance.
7. She fervently seeks the Lord even without a spiritual breakthrough – *"...my Beloved had turned away and was gone. My heart leaped up.... I sought Him, but I could not find Him; I called Him, but He gave me no answer."* (Song. 5:6)
- a. *"I sought Him...I called Him"* – This test could not be cut short by more urgent seeking. She doubled her prayer life. Prayer and fasting wasn't going to remove this difficulty because it was not initiated by the devil but by God. It was not caused by sin. Seeking didn't solve the problem as in Song. 2 when she arose and sought the Lord and the presence came back. But here, she arose and sought the Lord, and no presence came. This is because He wants to bring her, like Job, into a deeper place of equal-yoked intimacy. Her pain is becoming evident as she continues to seek Him and call on Him yet to no avail.
 - b. *"But I could not find Him...but He gave no answer"* – The "silence of God" is part of His training to cause our hearts to mature. We must refuse the devil's accusations against God's love in such seasons. Our confession of faith must remain constant, "His banner over me is love" (Song. 2:4). In other words, all of God's dealings with me are to eventually reveal His love for me and to impart His love to me in a deeper way.

F. SECOND TEST: THE BRIDE IS PERSECUTED AND REJECTED (Song. 5:7)

1. She encounters spiritual authorities in the Body of Christ – “The watchmen who went about the city found me...the keepers of the walls took my veil away from me.” (Song. 5:7)
 - a. The watchmen speak of spiritual authority in the Church. They were the governmental ministries of the Body of Christ. There are two types of watchmen (or leaders) in the Body:
 - i. There are the helpful, “David-type” watchmen of Song. 3:3 who help her find deeper intimacy with God.
 - ii. But there are also the carnal jealous “Saul-type” watchmen who seek to strike and wound her.
 - b. “Found me” – They were seeking her out with a pre-determined agenda to strike her.
 - c. “Who went about the city” – They would leave no stone unturned in searching her out. They travelled throughout the entire city, which speaks of the whole corporate Church. They were seeking anything from anyone, anywhere throughout the whole Church to discredit her.
 - d. “The walls” – God’s city has walls, to reveal its boundaries and to protect its inhabitants.
 - e. “The keepers of the walls” – Leaders who have been given a divine mandate to keep its walls in order to protect its people. They opened and shut the gates in the wall determining who could come and go in the city. They also, stood on top of the wall to see who was approaching the city. This high position resulted in their prominence because everyone could see them on the wall. These keepers and the watchman are the same.
2. The spiritual authorities in the Body of Christ rise up against her – “The watchmen...they struck me, they wounded me” (Song. 5:7)
 - a. “They struck me” – She is rejected and unjustly persecuted by church authorities. She is significantly mistreated by the more prominent members of the Body of Christ, the keepers and the watchman who should have protected her, instead struck and abused her.
 - b. “They wounded me” – She is not only struck unjustly, but they struck so as to “wound” her. They wound her because there was genuine relationship before the attack. A stranger can strike by publishing false accusations, but only a friend can deeply wound.
 - i. Wounded in the house of friends is part of the divine pattern that Jesus submitted to. These wounds sometimes come as the unjust attacks from old friends who become enemies. (Ps. 55:12 – 21)

- ii. Note: Sometimes people are wounded by the “immature David's” who lack wisdom and tenderness in their relationship to the sheep. They sincerely love God and the church, yet still occasionally wound the flock accidentally because of their immaturity in leadership as a watchman.
3. The Bride’s spiritual covering is taken away – “The watchmen... struck me...the keepers of the walls took my veil away from me.” (Song. 5:7)
 - a. "My veil" - speaks of her spiritual covering. It is a sign of being rightly related to spiritual authority. (1 Cor. 11:10)
 - b. "Took...away from me" – speaks of her spiritual covering being taken away.
4. The Lord allows this because He wants to uncover the deep, unperceived weakness in our spirit, such as pride and being self-absorbed. He said, "Will you embrace Gethsemane? Will you serve for Me, and Me alone? I am not a means to an end. I am the end of your life. When everything is gone will you be Mine?"
5. The test is clear. This is the test of mistreatment by the Body of Christ. Will she be bitter against the Body?

G. HER RESPONSE OF HUMILITY AND LOVE (Song. 5:8)

1. Her humility is seen in her teachable spirit to the immature Daughters of Jerusalem. (Song. 5:8)
2. She is lovesick for Jesus instead of being offended by Him for allowing this two-fold test. (Matt. 11:6)
3. In Song. 1:4, the Bride’s two-fold life vision was to experience His presence and to run with Him in ministry. Many of her promises from God are based on this. Thus, all that now seems lost.
4. The issue is whether she will obey Jesus without feeling His presence and when circumstances are difficult.
 - a. Does she seek God primarily for her comfort or will she obey God for His sake? The Lord longs for a people who will obey Him regardless of what is happening in their lives.
 - b. This is the primary issue in being Jesus’ inheritance. He wants a Bride equally yoked in love.
5. The Bride's seven crises in the Song include:
 - a. The crisis of SIN (Song. 1:5 – 6)
 - b. The crisis of FEAR (Song. 2:8 – 9)
 - c. The crisis of DIVINE DISCIPLINE (Song. 3:1)
 - d. The crisis of TOTAL OBEDIENCE (Song. 4:6,16)
 - e. The crisis of DIVINE WITHDRAWAL OF GOD’S PRESENCE (Song. 5:6)

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- f. The crisis of REJECTION in the Church (Song. 5:7)
 - g. The crisis of PERSECUTION and DIVISION (Song. 6:13)
6. The purpose of the two-fold test
- a. Refining of our character (Matt. 3:2 – 3; Rom. 5:8; James 1:3 – 5)
 - b. Revealing of our heart
 - i. Will we still obey if it is difficult?
 - ii. Do we seek God primarily for blessing, comfort, our personal agenda, etc.?
 - iii. Is it really all about Jesus?
 - iv. Will we still love God even if we cost us everything?

IHOP – ONE THING MINISTRIES

IHOP - ONE THING MINISTRIES

The Bridal Response to the Two-Fold Test

(Song. 5:8 – 6:3)

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Song. 5:8 – 6:3 is the key passage in the book of Song of Songs after the key prayer of Song. 4:16.
 - a. The prayer in Song 4:16 is a grand high prayer in saying “yes” to the two-fold test in Song. 5:2 – 7.
 - b. The prayer in Song. 4:16 is a necessary doorway to the two-fold test that gives rise to her heart-response of lovesickness in showing that she is not offended, even in the midst of great difficulty.
2. The Shulamite woman’s response in Song. 5:8 even in the midst of trial, testing and difficulty is what we desire in our heart. How she carries her heart, what she desires and longs for is the pattern for the End Time Church in the midst of the Great Tribulation.
3. In Song. 4:16, the young Bride prayed for the “north wind of adversity” and “south wind of blessings” from God to do a deep work in her heart so as to produce mature love, faith and character.
 - a. It is a prayer that is asking God to do whatever it takes to produce wholehearted love – a “blank-check” prayer, a “not my will but Yours be done” prayer.
 - b. It is a prayer that requires us to have full confidence in the Lord, in His perfect plan, and that He is a good Leader and Shepherd, who loves us deeply.
4. In Song. 4:16, the Shulamite woman is allowing Jesus to take full ownership of her life. She surrenders her life totally. She is living for Jesus totally.
5. This is the turning point in her life in Song of Songs.
 - a. In the first four chapters, her focus is that Jesus is her inheritance and Jesus is the means to an end, where it is about herself and her needs.
 - b. After Song. 4:16, in the second four chapters, there is a radical paradigm shift where she recognizes that she is Jesus’ inheritance, that Jesus wants “something” from her, that she is God’s gift to Jesus.
6. Her prayer in Song. 4:16 gives rise to the two-fold test in Song. 5:2 – 7.
 - a. Jesus withdrew His presence, though not because of her disobedience.
 - b. She lost her role in ministry, she was being mistreated and misunderstood.

7. The two-fold test is a necessary part of our journey of faith into maturity, character and faith in Christ. The purpose of the two-fold test is to refine our character (Rom. 5:3 – 4), to purify our heart (Mal. 3:2 – 3), and to strengthen our resolve, to perfect and establish us (1 Peter 5:10).
8. It is a divine test that reveals the deepest motives and desires of our heart. Five questions that we have to ask in the midst of trial and difficulty:
 - a. Is it really all about Jesus?
 - b. Is it really all about loving Jesus?
 - c. Will we still seek God even when He withholds blessings, favor or things that we desire (even good things)?
 - d. Will we still love and trust Him even when we don't feel His presence? (Job 1:21; 2:9 – 10; 13:15)
 - e. Will we still serve God when we are hurt, disappointed by people and circumstances?
9. The common response for most in difficult circumstances is to become depressed, to complain or grumble. Instead, we should let trials, tests and difficulties re-align our hearts to God, to reveal our motives and desires, and let it be an opportunity to “flex the muscle of our faith” so as it strengthens our faith and character.
10. To become the mature Bride in Song. 8:8 – 14, it is a requirement for us we to go through the fiery trial of Song. 5:2 – 7. It is not an option and a required “doorway” in order to enter into a new depth of intimacy and a new dimension of partnership with Jesus. (Matt. 7:13 – 14)
11. For every great saint of God went through the fiery trial of God (e.g. Moses, Job, Joseph, Paul and even Jesus). It's called the fellowship of His suffering. (Phil. 3:10) It is a dimension of intimacy with Jesus and knowing His heart that we would understand unless we go through this fellowship of His suffering. (Matt. 20:20 – 23)
12. Song. 5:8 reveals the two-fold test that produces the “lovesick heart” in the Bride.
 - a. A lovesick heart is a heart of one who is it for love. We want Jesus more than anything. We want Him the “most”. We want Him “first”.
 - b. We want our hearts to connect with Him, and if we do not, we feel sick in the heart!
13. The Shulamite woman says, “I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my Beloved, tell Him I am lovesick!”
 - a. In the midst of great difficulties, she is not offended! Jesus is still her Beloved because she is in it for love and for Jesus! (Song. 5:8)

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- b. She still responded to Jesus in love and to the people of God in humility!
14. The response of the Bride in Song. 5:8 provokes the daughters of Jerusalem to ask two profound questions in Song. 5:9 and Song. 6:1.
 15. The first question was: “Why do you love Jesus so much?” (Song. 5:9)
 - a. In the midst of the Shulamite woman’s difficulties, she did not complain or grumble, instead she loved Jesus even more! Her passion, underlying devotion and love for Jesus provoked the daughters of Jerusalem.
 - b. People may be impressed by our talent, our giftedness, by our intellectual ability or even our wealth. But they are provoked, captivated and inspired by our passion and devotion!
 16. In Song. 5:10 – 16, the young Bride gives the most powerful and dynamic description of the Beauty of Jesus - the reason why she is lovesick for Jesus! This is the clearest description of the beauty of Jesus in Scripture. The “lovesickness” of our heart is the result of encountering this One as described in Song. 5:10 – 16.
 17. Song. 5:10 – 16 reveals the most extravagant human love response about Jesus in the Bible. Song. 6:2 – 5 reveals the most extravagant response of Jesus about the Bride.
 18. The description of who Jesus is in Song. 5:10 – 16 gives rise to the second question by the daughters of Jerusalem in Song. 6:1: “How can we know Him like you?” They are saying, “If this is who Jesus is, we want to know Him, we want what you have!”
 19. Three vital lessons that we can learn from the two-fold test of the Shulamite woman:
 - a. How we respond and carry our heart in difficult circumstances, can make us to be the burning and shining lamp.
 - b. We need to get hold of the reality of Song. 5:10 – 16.
 - c. We must seek to be the voice in preaching the unsearchable riches of Jesus. (Eph. 3:9)

B. FIRST QUESTION: WHAT IS IT ABOUT HIM THAT MAKES YOU LOVE HIM? (Song. 5:9)

1. The spiritually dull and immature daughters ask the Bride questions throughout Song of Songs.
 - a. They see that she is lovesick for Jesus in the midst of her difficulties instead of being filled with complaint and depression.
 - b. Her deep love for Jesus provokes them more than her wisdom or giftedness. We are made beautiful to others more by our love for Him than our wisdom or power. (1 Pet. 3:3 – 4)

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2. The daughters of Jerusalem ask the question, "What is your Beloved more than another Beloved o fairest among women? What is your Beloved more than another beloved, that you so charge us?"
 - a. They asked the same question twice. This double-emphasis basically expresses their earnest desire to know why, because they are deeply provoked by her unusual response, one that is not normal or natural.
 - b. Another example was Stephen when people began to stone him and his unusual response deeply provoked Saul. (Acts 7:54 – 60)
 3. The essence of this question is: "Why do you love Him so much?"
 - a. They are not asking "Who is Jesus" because they knew Jesus.
 - b. They basically asked: "How can you still love Him so deeply and be so extravagantly devoted even when He seemingly treated you so harshly?"
 4. This is not a casual but rather a sincere question because the Shulamite woman's response in her two-fold test deeply troubled them.
 - a. They were thinking, "What is it that you see in Jesus? What allows you to stay faithful and steady even in difficulty?" They had no comprehension of why the Shulamite woman did not retaliate or answer back in her troubles.
 - b. They said, "Tell us your secret. We follow Him, but not the way you do. He withheld His manifest presence from you. He allowed you to be kicked out of the church. Why are you still so tenaciously loyal? What do you know about Him that we don't know that has led you to joyfully give all for Him?" (Phil 3:7) These daughters of Jerusalem do not understand this kind of dedication.
 5. Passion for Jesus is the most powerful dimension of our life that impacts people. People are moved and touched most by a burning heart. People may be impressed with giftedness and talent, but they are provoked by passion.
 6. The daughters of Jerusalem asked, "What is your Beloved more than any other beloved?"
 - a. The daughters had "other beloveds" that were more important to them than Jesus. The other loves in the lives of believers include people, friends, ministry, money, leisure, pleasure, power, prominence, comfort, etc.
 - b. Many born again people love these things more than Jesus.
 7. The definition of spiritual maturity is when Jesus becomes the first love of our soul and the center of our life. The Holy Spirit is restoring the First Commandment to first place in the Body of Christ worldwide.
 - a. Why is the Shulamite woman more mature than daughters of Jerusalem? Because Jesus is her first love and the center of her life.
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- b. The mentioning of “Lord and Savior” is never separate in the Bible. However, “Lord” is mentioned four hundred times in the Word but “Savior” is mentioned only fifteen times.
 8. The daughters of Jerusalem called the Shulamite woman “O fairest among women” because they have deep respect for her.
 - a. Their respect for her is due to her passion, character, devotion and wholehearted love for Jesus, not so much her ministry or her giftedness.
 - b. Their respect for her is also due to her humility. She was not offended by the church, instead she sought help from less mature believers (i.e. the daughters of Jerusalem).
 - c. The Shulamite woman exhibits both depth and humility in her response in Song. 5:8. (1 Cor. 8:1; 2 Cor. 12:7)

. C. THE BRIDE'S ANSWER: THE MAJESTIC SPLENDOR OF JESUS

(Song. 5:10 – 16)

1. The Bride answers the question by proclaiming Jesus' beauty. The Spirit uses metaphors of the human body to convey ten attributes of God's personality. Each attribute has two descriptions.
2. Song. 5:10 – 16 is one of the most powerful revelations of Jesus in Scripture. She starts with a general statement of His beauty, develops ten attributes and then gives a summary statement.
 - a. His head – His sovereign leadership over all
 - b. His locks – His dedication to God and the Church
 - c. His eyes – His infinite knowledge, wisdom, understanding, discernment
 - d. His cheeks – His diverse emotional makeup
 - e. His lips – His Word
 - f. His hands – His divine activity
 - g. His body – His tender compassion
 - h. His legs – His walk and administration of His purposes
 - i. His countenance – His impartation to His people
 - j. His mouth – Intimacy with Him

- k. He is altogether lovely – His comprehensive beauty
 - l. He is my Beloved and my Friend
3. She is lovesick because she focuses on Jesus instead of being preoccupied with her two-fold test.
- a. She overcomes her self-focus by going deep in searching out Jesus' beauty.
 - b. Revelation of these attributes will bring stability to our heart when we go through the storms of life.

D. SECOND QUESTION: WHERE IS HE THAT WE MAY SEEK HIM WITH YOU? (Song. 6:1)

1. The conversation that began between the Bride and the daughters in Song. 5:8 is continuing.
 - a. Here the daughters see the Bride's intimacy with Jesus and conclude that she knows something about Jesus that they do not know.
 - b. Therefore, they ask a second question, "Where is your Beloved that we may seek Him like you do? We want to know Him like you do. We want what you have".
2. The Bride's answer in Song. 5:10 – 16, cause the daughters to change the question from "What is He?" to "Where can we find Him?"
 - a. After hearing her described Jesus, they were provoked and awakened. They are no longer content to serve Jesus at a distance. They ask the same question the Bride asked in Song. 1:7, "Where does Jesus feed His flock?"
 - b. They were indirectly asking the Shulamite woman: "We want to know Him like you do! We want what you know!" The word "where" indirectly means "How do we know Him?"
3. The daughters refer to Jesus as "your Beloved" because He is not yet their Beloved. They continue to see her as a godly person filled with God's Presence – "O fairest among women".
4. The daughters of Jerusalem want to seek Jesus with the Bride. The Bride's proclamation of Jesus' beauty stirs them to seek after Jesus with passion. They are now willing to let go of their "other beloveds". We all have "other beloveds" until we see Jesus' splendor. (Song. 6:1d)
5. The Bride's testing results in the lives of others being dramatically changed.
 - a. We never know who is watching us as we love Jesus in our difficulties.
 - b. The Holy Spirit is raising up lovesick messengers who know Jesus in a way that will change the expression of Christianity in the whole earth and prepare the Bride to be strong in love amid pressures of the End-Times. (Rev. 15:2 – 4)

E. THE BRIDE ANSWERS THE SECOND QUESTION (Song. 6:2)

1. She answers the question regarding how to find intimacy with Jesus – "My beloved has gone to His garden..." (Song. 6:2a – c)
 - a. Jesus is doing what He always does. He is feeding His people in the midst of His gardens. This is a fascinating and powerful answer to their second question. They will find Him in the garden.
 - b. There is the garden (i.e. singular) and the gardens (i.e. plural).
 - c. They will find Him in His garden which speaks of the worldwide universal Church (i.e. singular "garden") which is made up of the local churches (i.e. plural "gardens") which is filled with individual lilies.
 - i. It refers to the Church in contrast to the gardens (i.e. plural, 6:2), which speak of the various local churches in the Body of Christ.
 - ii. It refers to "the Church" as in contrast to the local expressions of the Church, the gardens all over the world.
 - d. They will find Him in His garden in essence is the same answer that Jesus gave the Bride in Song. 1:8. We see that the Bride gives the same answer that Jesus gave her. She asked Jesus, "Tell me, where do you feed Your flock?" In Song. 1:8, Jesus gave her a three-fold instruction as to where He feeds His flock.
 - i. Commitment to Body life (Song. 1:8c): refuse unsanctified isolation
 - ii. Commitment to servant ministry (Song. 1:8d): refuse unsanctified idleness
 - iii. Commitment to spiritual authority (Song. 1:8e): refuse unsanctified independence
2. "My beloved has gone to the beds of spices" speaks of manifestations of grace. Each ministry has a unique spice. Each "spice bed" in the garden has a rich fragrance of Christ. Jesus loves the whole Church.
 - a. "Spices" speak of different manifestations of grace on different people or ministries of the Body of Christ. Some streams or denominations, or networks of churches in the Body of Christ have one spice while others have another spice in the grace of God.
 - b. "The beds" speaks of the specific plots of ground (i.e. plural) within the one garden (i.e. singular) speak of the different parts of the one garden. The distinct areas where flowers and spices grow within the larger garden.
 - c. His whole Church is one garden. There is one Church in the earth but there are so many diverse beds of spices.
 - d. Nobody has the capacity to contain all that God has to give. There is no one little group of a million people that have the capacity to embody everything that the Godhead can give in fullness.

- e. The garden of God has many beds of spices, or many streams. The different streams within the larger body of Christ are like beds of spices.
- f. Jesus loves the whole Church but He manifests Himself differently to different parts of His Church at differing levels of intensity.

F. TWO-FOLD MINISTRY OF JESUS AND THE MATURITY OF THE BRIDE

(Song. 6:2d – 3)

1. "To feed His flock in the gardens." – Jesus' purpose in manifesting His presence is to feed and strengthen His flock.
 - a. His purpose is always to feed whether He is withholding His presence or releasing it. He is always feeding His Bride to cause her to become stronger. He is always bringing us forth from strength to strength if we will go with Him.
 - b. One way He feeds us is that He pours the sweetness of affirmation and intimacy on our hearts (Song. 1 – 2). Another way He feeds us is by His discipline where He takes His presence away from us because of sin (Song. 3). Another way He feeds us is by withholding His presence again because of obedience. (Song. 5)
 - c. "His flock" – Jesus feeds His flock in the same place that He feeds His own soul. Jesus is deeply committed to feeding His people in the midst of the corporate kingdom community.
 - d. "The gardens" - gardens (i.e. plural) are the same as the beds of spices and refer to the different ministries in the Body of Christ. Jesus is seen as walking among the candlesticks, which are the churches of God. (Rev. 1:13, 20)
2. "And to gather lilies" – The Lord gathers believers to Himself in passion and unbelievers to Himself in evangelism. He wants to gather the lilies to Himself.
 - a. "Lilies" speak of purity. Jesus feeds His flock on purity and not the food of the worldly lusts that defile our souls.
 - i. Lilies also speak of individual believers who live in innocent purity and trust.
 - ii. The Bride is called the lily. (Song. 2:1 – 2, 16; 5:3, 13; 6:2 – 3; Matt. 6:28 - 29; Hosea 14:5)
 - b. "To gather" – When Jesus gathers His lilies, it refers to the gathering together of the Body of Christ. He's always gathering those that are His to Himself. He's maturing the Bride so that she can gather more to Himself. (Matt. 9:38; 23:37; 24:31; John 11:52)
 - c. Jesus will also gather unbelievers who then become lilies. The urgency of Jesus to both gather unbelievers, and also to bring believers together is being emphasized in this passage.

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3. "I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine" – She is fully committed to Jesus' purpose and pleasure.
 - a. "I am my Beloved's" – Her first interest is that she belongs to Him and is under His leadership. She sees that she is His inheritance. This is her first preoccupation.
 - b. "My Beloved is mine" – Her second interest is that He belongs to her. Therefore, she receives His promises as her own. Her second interest is what she receives.
 - c. We never ever outgrow what He did for us, but in the early days of our lives in God we are so concerned about how He is going to bless us in our circumstances and in our spiritual lives.
 - d. The reality of the cross is always primary. We can never ever love God more than He loves us. She sees that He is her inheritance.
 - e. Notice that she has reversed the order from Song. 2:16. Jesus' inheritance is now the top priority of her life instead of the second priority as in Song. 2:16. Her benefits are now secondary instead of primary.
 - f. This is another proof that she was obedient in Song. 5:3 – 4 instead of disobedient. She was not in a place of compromise, but in a place of making the Lord the full delight of Her life.
 4. Notice the transition from a "self-centered" to a "God-centered" focus in the four inheritance statements (Song. 1:14; 2:16; 6:3; 7:10).
 - a. In the beginning stages, her own enjoyment of Jesus is her central focus. She talks about what He is to her without much awareness of what she is to Him. (Song. 1:14)
 - b. In Song. 2:16 and Song. 6:3 and then finally in Song. 7:10, she uses this same language but changes the order to express her concern about what she is to Jesus. Jesus is her inheritance. However, it is equally true that she is Jesus' inheritance.
 5. There are four transition or inheritance statements. Each of the transition statements has two points:
 - a. "My Beloved is to me" (Song. 1:13-14) – Her only focus is her inheritance in Him and how He can bless her. She is saying, "I have rights to enjoy Him." However, she does not yet acknowledge His rights to enjoy her. She has little regard at this stage for His inheritance in her.
 - b. "My beloved is mine and I am His." (Song. 2:16) – She is saying, "He is mine, He belongs to me. I have rights to Him. However, I now realize that I also belong to Him." She now adds a new dimension of His ownership of her life. She now sees the necessity of loving Him because she is His inheritance. However, it is her secondary concern at this stage of maturity.
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- c. "I am my Beloved's and He is mine." (Song. 6:3) - She is saying, "I belong to Him. He owns me, yet He still belongs to me and I still have rights to Him." She reverses the priority of her concern. His inheritance in her is now first in her heart. Here the order is reversed. Her inheritance in Him is vital, yet secondary. She cares first about His inheritance. This is a significant reversal from Song. 1 – 2.
- d. "I am My Beloved's and His desire is toward me." (Song. 7:10) – She is saying, "I belong to Him. He owns me entirely. His concerns are what I care most about." She is filled with the reality of her love toward Him and His total ownership of her. In Song. 7:10, she ends up with "I belong to Him and His desire is all I really care about and it happens to be me that He desires most. It is His desire that has captured me." So she moves from being double-concerned about herself to double-concerned about what's on His heart which happens to be His burning desire for her. This only propels her into deeper levels of abandonment that reveal even deeper levels of His love for her, and the journey of lovesickness continues.
6. This statement completes the answer to the question asked in Song. 6:1 – "He feeds His flock among the lilies." (Song. 6:3c)
- a. This is the same principle that she understood in Song. 2:16, but now she understands it with greater depth.
- b. "He feeds" – She expresses her confidence in Jesus here. She is communicating her confidence that He does feed His flock, even though she has just experienced a time of spiritual barrenness from Song. 5:7. She is fully confident the cycle of barrenness will change, and the Lord is faithful to feed His flock. He will not abandon her in the real sense.
- c. "His flock" – We belong to Him even before we belong to ourselves.
- d. "Lilies" speak of purity and faith. Jesus feeds His flock on purity. She re-emphasizes the necessity of a commitment to the purity of the lilies, in order to be able to benefit from His feeding and nurturing.
- e. "Among the lilies" – Lilies also speak of individual believers who live in innocence, purity and trust. Some of those desiring deep intimacy with Christ leave the Church to seek Him. Some of the mystics through Church history have sought to hide themselves in a cave to find deeper life with Christ. They wrongly neglect this principle of Jesus being present in the midst of His gardens.
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The Transcendent Beauty of Jesus

(Song. 5:10–16)

A. OVERVIEW OF Song. 5:10 – 16

1. The young Bride in the midst of the ultimate two-fold test (Song. 5:6 – 7) gives one of the most powerful descriptions of Jesus and one of the most outstanding expressions of worship in the Word of God.
2. This is the one time in Song of Songs where she pours herself out in worship to the King. It is a magnificent, poetic unveiling of the splendor of Christ Jesus.
3. Song. 5:10 – 16 gives us the most detailed information about the transcendent beauty of Jesus. It is the most powerful revelation and the most dynamic statement of the beauty of Jesus in the entire Scriptures.
4. There are three most important passages of the Scriptures that describe the beauty of Jesus:
 - a. Song. 5:10 – 16: The transcendent beauty of Jesus.
 - b. Revelation 1:5 – 18: The beauty of the Pre-Eminent Christ.
 - c. Revelation 19:11 – 16: The beauty of the coming Bridegroom, King and Judge.
5. Song. 5:10 – 16 is an outstanding statement of love for God. This is the most powerful revelation of the beauty of Jesus in the entire Bible.
6. It is vital and worthwhile for us to take sufficient time, energy and devotion to learn and study Song. 5:10 – 16. Three reasons:
 - a. It produces a “lovesick heart” for Jesus. (Song. 5:8)
The “lovesick heart” of the Shulamite woman was the result of her encounter with the beauty of Jesus.
 - b. It stabilizes our heart in the midst of “storms of life”, trial and testing, shaking and persecution. (Song. 5:1 – 7)
 - i. This passage of Scripture is meant to equip our souls to effectively worship God in times of testing. That is the principle of this session.
 - ii. Paul was able to consider all things as rubbish in the midst of persecution because he saw the beauty of Jesus.
 - iii. Job was not offended with God in the midst of great difficulties and testing because he has revelation of the beauty of God.

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- iv. The number one strategy of God in empowering the End-Times Church to overcome is the revelation of the beauty of Jesus.
 - c. This is a must-know passage for us to master while on our journey to growing into mature bridal affections for Jesus.
 7. This is not an easy passage of Scripture. It may seem a little awkward at first, but there is much insight to glean from each of these lines. This is written in poetic language so that there are always new depths of understanding of it.
 8. This is not a passage that we can be content to read without deep meditation. This is one we must go through over and over and search out.
 9. The Holy Spirit speaks in parables, as well as, poetically in order to give more to those who are hungry. Scripture interprets Scripture, so as to provide a guide for this parabolic language. (Matt. 13:13 – 15)
 10. God often speaks of deep things in the hidden language of parables in order to reveal more on the basis of hunger.
 - a. He taught parables for two reasons: to make truth easy and also to make truth difficult.
 - b. He taught that way to make things simple and to make them difficult, so that only the hungry heart of love could experience them.
 11. This is a love song; therefore, He speaks in the poetic language of love. This provides endless depths to enjoy. Poetry, in some ways, is far deeper than the normal mode of teaching because it can go deeper in understanding.
 12. Recommend studying books on the attributes of God:
 - a. "The Knowledge of the Holy" by A. W. Tozer
 - b. "Knowing God" by J. I. Packer
 - c. "The Nature of God" by A. W. Pink
 - d. "Pleasures of God" by John Piper
 - e. "The Existence and the Attributes of God" by Stephen Charnock
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B. REVIEW OF Song. 5:2 – 7

1. The Shulamite woman went through the ultimate two-fold test where Jesus withdrew His presence and she was being mistreated by spiritual authority. Instead of being offended with God, she responded with a deep love for Jesus.
2. Her response deeply provoked the daughters of Jerusalem which caused them to ask two questions:
 - a. What is your Beloved? (Song. 5:9)
 - b. Where is your Beloved? (Song. 6:1)
3. Song. 5:10 – 16 gives us the knowledge she possessed that equipped her to worship God.
 - a. Knowledge of these ten attributes stabilizes her in the midst of the storms of life. The knowledge of Jesus' beauty empowered her to be an extravagant worshipper under severe testing.
 - b. She is fully able to give an in-depth answer as to why He is her consuming love. She is fully capable of speaking from her heart with depth of insight.
4. It is normal for an immature believer to be easily offended. Many find it easy to be preoccupied with feeling that God mistreats them. She is focused on His majestic beauty instead of being preoccupied with her own pressures.
5. Three purposes are accomplished in this passage:
 - a. She answers the maiden's question in Song. 5:9 – Her answer helps to awaken the Church with passion for Jesus and strengthen the maturity of the Church.
 - b. She gives the answers that heal and strengthen her soul in the midst of pressure – our confession of who Jesus is will strengthen, revitalize and revive our heart.
 - c. She is moving the heart of God the whole time, even though she doesn't feel anything – "When we feel nothing, He feels so much!"

C. THE TRANSCENDENT BEAUTY OF JESUS in Song. 5:10 – 16

1. The Bride is describing Jesus, using the imagery of the temple with gold, precious stones, ivory and the cedars of Lebanon.
 - a. The Holy Spirit is portraying the majesty of Jesus Christ in the language of the temple. The Bride is describing Jesus, using the imagery of the temple and the imagery of the human body, etc.
 - b. These were symbols that people of her day would have been familiar with.
2. The Holy Spirit uses these metaphors in other parts of Scripture so that we can interpret them according to His intentions. The Holy Spirit is describing the beauty of Christ's personality, not His physical features.

3. She starts with a general statement of His beauty in Song. 5:10, which she thoroughly develops in Song. 5:11 – 15. Then she sums up His beauty again in a general way in Song. 5:16.
4. The ten attributes of His personality in Song. 5:11 – 15 illustrate the truth that He is chief among ten thousand. Each of the ten attributes has two descriptions.

D. GENERAL DESCRIPTION (Song. 5:10)

1. She maintains her adoration of His excellence throughout the recent season of testing. (Song. 5:10)
 - a. Jesus is her beloved. She is lovesick for Him. She maintains her love for Jesus throughout the season of testing and she is not offended by Him.
 - b. She is not saying “the Judge of my soul,” she is saying “my Beloved.” She maintains the position of a lover of God amid the most severe testing.
 - c. She starts right off by stating where her heart is- with her “Beloved”. There is no offense in her heart. She has this spiritual reality. She postures her soul in this way. She is not offended by or stumbling over Him. (Matt. 11:6)
2. Our relationship with God can become wounded in the sense that we become offended by God because we cannot see that He works everything together for our good.
 - a. God wants us to open our spirit to Him in the midst of trials without being guarded toward Him. If our trust in Him is wounded during a trial, then our relationship with God will become wounded.
 - b. She calls Him “my Beloved” which reveals that her relationship with Him is not wounded. It is not a small thing that she starts with, “my Beloved.” She already has the victory.
3. “He is white” or as the NIV translates it, “He is radiant.” NAS translates “He is dazzling”; other versions translate “He is brilliant”.
 - a. The Hebrew word “white” means radiant, dazzling, brilliant or “shining white”.
 - b. The idea is that Jesus is stunning and dazzling to her, being “brilliant in His loveliness” or “radiant in His splendor”, abounding with unapproachable light that dwells around His throne.
 - c. She is talking about the dazzling splendor of His person. She is emphasizing the “dazzling splendor” of God’s Person. The very colors, lights, fragrances, power, sounds, and music express the splendor that surrounds His Person.

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4. The Bride cries out that “He is ruddy”. Ruddy means a red complexion.
 - a. King David was ruddy in appearance. This spoke of his reddish hair and reddish complexion. When somebody is healthy on the inside, their cheeks are ruddy and their appearance is healthy. David’s ruddy complexion indicated that he possessed health on the inside.
 - b. The combination of everything inside Jesus’ personality is healthy. The combinations of Jesus’ attributes are in spiritual balance. She is saying, “All of His attributes are working together in harmony”. The combinations of all of Jesus’ attributes are in healthy balance.
 - c. Ruddy does not refer to one characteristic, but rather a combination of the ten attributes that form His ‘spiritual complexion.’
 - d. He is dazzling and He is ruddy. He possesses brilliant splendor and yet has complete balance and perfect health in His inward qualities. In the fullest sense of the word, He is the only whole person who ever walked the earth. He has perfect balance in every attribute.
 - i. The point emphasized is His perfectly balanced personality, making Him incomparable to all others. For example, Jesus has a perfect balance of mercy and judgment.
 - ii. He is not ruddy because of the perfect unity of all His parts. But He is balanced because of His absence of parts. He possesses each of His attributes 100%. He is 100% righteous and 100% merciful. It is the “absence of parts” that distinguishes Him.
 5. A secondary meaning of white and ruddy is that He is fully God and fully man.
 - a. The white speaks of His divine nature. He is fully God. The ruddy speaks of His blood or His human nature. As a human high priest, He offered His blood. He is fully man.
 - b. His glory is so unique because He combines both divine and human attributes. He is the Only One in heaven or on earth that has – at the same time – the fullness of humanity and the fullness of Deity. God the Father is not like that, neither are the angels, or any apostles.
 - c. His beauty springs forth from the balance of the two. He is both the lion and the lamb at the exact same time. He perfectly expresses all the elements of His personality without any contradiction. He serves in the meekness of a Lamb and He roars in the authority of a Lion.
 6. “Chief among ten thousand”
 - a. Chief – is translated “distinguished” in NKJV. He is the One that stands out among the masses.
 - i. He is the center of attention as the large banner in a marching army. He is incomparably superior to all people.
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- ii. He is so excellent He could be instantly distinguished when compared to all others in the created order. He is the One carrying the banner that you can instantly recognize in a crowd. It would take no discernment to figure out that He is the greatest of all.
- b. The phrase “ten thousand” means incomparable greatness.
 - i. The number ten thousand is not to be understood as literal. It means an extremely large number. Chief among ten thousand is a metaphor saying He is the greatest of all. He has no rival.
 - ii. The point is that nobody else could compare to Him. God has given Him pre-eminence above all things. (Col. 1:18)

D. HIS HEAD – HIS SOVEREIGN LEADERSHIP OVER ALL (Song. 5:11a)

1. The head is the most prominent part of the body. It sets the direction of the body. The head speaks of two different things – His Father and His personal sovereignty.
2. His Father – the head of Christ is God. (1 Cor. 11:3)
 - a. The head of Jesus is God the Father and His relationship with the Father.
 - b. The head speaks of the trinity. This also implies the relationship of the Trinity in perfect affection and unity.
3. Jesus’ sovereignty speaks of His headship over all creation. (Eph. 1:10 – 21)
4. “Gold” speaks of Divine nature or Deity. Gold is the material of the highest value and the highest quality gold is the most valuable of all building material.
 - a. It is more than gold; it is “finest gold.” It is a rare kind of gold. Only a very small percentage of gold was finest gold. Finest gold is a description of superlative quality.
 - b. His relationship to His head - God the Father - is of the finest quality imaginable.
 - c. Jesus’ leadership is valuable to His people. She said, “His leadership is so excellent, it is of the finest gold imaginable. It is perfect, divinely inspired wisdom.”
 - d. Finest gold speaks of the highest excellence without mixture. There is no impurity in His leadership.
5. She speaks her first confession in her trial that His perfect leadership is of the highest quality. She said, “He was not overlooking anything when He turned His face from me.”

E. HIS LOCKS – HIS DEDICATION TO GOD AND TO THE CHURCH (Song. 5:11b)

1. His hair speaks of His dedication to God and to His people.
 - a. NIV translates “His locks” as “His hair”. The hair speaks of the Nazarite vow of dedication. The Nazarite vow of consecration forbids the cutting of one’s hair.
 - b. NIV translates “wavy” hair as “bushy” hair. She understands that Jesus’ hair is thick and wavy. Bushy or wavy hair is thick.
 - i. A young man in the prime of life has thick and wavy hair, as contrasted to an old man whose hair has lost its vitality and fullness. Baldness is the opposite of wavy hair.
 - ii. She understands His dedication as “wavy” hair which is full of vigor. His dedication to God and the Church has vigor in it. God does not have bad moods. We never have to be concerned if it is a good time to approach God.
 - c. Ravens have black hair in contrast to the gray hair of old men. The black hair speaks of His youthful energetic zeal which is opposite of decay and lack of vigor.
 - i. Jesus’ dedication to us is eternally vigorous. He flourishes forever as in He is always in His prime. His youthfulness and vigilant dedication continues forever.
 - ii. Jesus’ hair is also described as white, which speaks of eternity, or of His eternal nature. (Rev. 1:12)
2. Jesus dedication never grows old. It is always wavy and vigorous.
 - a. God never grows emotionally weary. (Isa. 40:28). He never changes (Heb. 13:8). All other “beloveds” decay and eventually die. He never grows old. His Bride is secure because she has no fear that His dedication will grow old or will die.
 - b. His hair is eternally black. His dedication is fresh, as well as, vigorously beautiful. His dedication is vigilant, youthful, and continues to flourish through all eternity. He is forever in His prime. He is always at the highest place of His love, passion and dedication.
3. This is her second confession when His presence was lifted from her. She knows that He has not changed the way He feels about her. She would not accept the accusations that He was no longer dedicated to her in the way that He said He will always be.

F. HIS EYES – HIS OMNISCIENCE (Song. 5:12)

1. His eyes speak of His omniscience.
 - a. Eyes speak of the ability to see or discern. His eyes speak of His omniscience, which is His ability to know everything. Omniscience means perfect knowledge and perfect wisdom. He has total clarity and fullness of insight into every dark secret. Everything is totally clear and discernible to the Lord.

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- b. The all-seeing eye of God discerns both our negative and positive qualities. His eyes see the “yes” in our spirits when we fail, even more clearly than we do. God sees the cry in our hearts to obey Him. (Heb. 4:13; Prov. 5:21; 15:3; Rev. 2:18, 28)
 2. “His eyes are like doves” speaks of His singleness of vision.
 - a. He rejects everything displeasing to His Father. He gave her the same affirmation in Song 1:15 and Song 4:1.
 - b. He had the loyal eyes of a dove. His eyes were loyal to God the Father. His eyes were also loyal to His Bride.
 3. “His eyes are like doves by the rivers of waters” – This is speaking of the waters where the doves bathe themselves and become clean. They go to the water by the rivers and bathe themselves. Doves are clean after washing themselves by the rivers. His eyes view things through the cleanness of His heart.
 - a. Jesus eyes are not just all seeing, but they are pure and innocent like clean doves that have just bathed. He interprets knowledge through the cleanness of His heart.
 - b. A judge may know all the facts about a case. But if he has an unclean heart, he will misinterpret the information. The interpretation of what Jesus sees has no distortion.
 - c. Jesus’ eyes are clean, like a dove bathed by the waters of milk. His interpretation of what He sees is not like that of a wounded, dysfunctional and sinful judge. His ability to interpret His information is through the cleanness of His heart.
 - d. His vision is completely clean. He has doves’ eyes. He has pure and loving motives.
 4. His eyes are like doves by the rivers of waters washed with milk. Milk describes something pure, white and clean.
 - a. This speaks of the purity of His discernment.
 - b. Milk has the simplicity and innocence of childlikeness. He is not childish, but He has that ability to be infinitely complex while maintaining the simplicity and innocence of childlikeness.
 5. His eyes are “fitly set”. This metaphor refers to a jewel that is fitly set by the most skillful artist who is constructing a very expensive piece of jewelry.
 - a. Eyes fitly set means there is no deformity in them. His eyes are perfectly set. They are not set too deeply, nor do they protrude in an unlovely way.
 - b. There is no exaggeration. This speaks of beauty and order in His discernment instead of deformity with exaggeration. His eyes are perfectly set. There is no exaggeration, but rather, his eyes have perfect discernment.
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6. Our knowledge of His omniscience compels us to shun evil because it is vain to attempt to hide evil before the eyes of our omniscient King. God sees our every private act of righteousness. He sees when we endure trials without giving up. He not only sees the negative, but He sees the positive.
 - a. Paul teaches us that we can't fully see our own sincerity in the way God does. God will give us praise on the last day for things that we don't see about ourselves now. (1 Cor. 4:5)
 - b. He rewards every small act of obedience especially those hidden from the eyes of others. (Matt. 6:1 – 6, 16 – 18). He remembers and rewards all because He sees all (Heb. 6:10). Even small acts, such as giving someone a cup of cold water, do not go unnoticed by the Lord. (Matt. 10:42)

G. HIS CHEEKS – HIS DIVERSE EMOTIONAL MAKE-UP (Song 5:13a, b)

1. His cheeks speak of His emotional beauty.
 - a. His cheeks reflect the countenance of the face that in turn reveals His emotional makeup.
 - b. The cheeks are the windows to the emotions. The cheeks enable us to discern whether a person is joyful or sad.
2. Jesus' emotional life is like garden beds of beautiful fragrant spices.
 - a. As a garden filled with delightful fragrances, so is the condition of Jesus' emotional life. His affections are fragrant and refreshing to our soul as long as we can discern them.
 - b. We need to have a right image of God. We need to see the pleasures and passions of His heart for us. A bed of spices brings tremendous fragrance to those that are near.
3. The delights of God are as abundant and diverse as banks of sweet smelling herbs.
 - a. "Like banks of scented herbs" speaks of the extravagant fragrance in Jesus' affections.
 - b. His cheeks are not just like beds of spices; they are like banks or heaps of scented herbs. There is an extravagant amount of and diversity in all types of different scented herbs.
4. There are so many different types of emotions that are fragrant and pleasing to us. A lot of people think the only emotion God has is joy when they get saved, which is followed by anger and wrath. But His emotions are heaps of diverse and sweet fragrances to us.
 - a. Jesus' emotional makeup is filled with passion, delight and longing for us.

- b. Jesus also has passion for His Father, His creation, His holiness, His kingdom, His truth, His angels, etc.
- c. His inward emotional state is like a bed of spices. There is a diversity of passions, pleasures and delights.

H. HIS LIPS – HIS WORD (Song 5:13c, d)

1. His lips speak of the power of His speech or His Word. This can refer to either the logos, which denote the Scriptures, or to the prophetic word the Holy Spirit speaks.
 - a. This prophetic word can be spoken directly to us, or it can come through someone else.
 - b. His speech comes in the prophetic ministry as well as in the ultimate prophetic ministry, which is the written Word of God.
2. “His lips are like lilies” speak of the sweet and satisfying Word of God. Lilies speak of fragrance, innocence and purity. Jesus’ affirming words are tender and sweet like a lily.
3. They are “dripping liquid myrrh.” He knows how to speak tough love. There are no lilies in nature that literally drip myrrh.
 - a. “Myrrh” is a burial spice that speaks of suffering and embracing death to self. There is nobody who speaks with the kind of tenderness and kindness as Jesus. Yet, at the same time, He is at total war against that which hinders us growing in love. He speaks directly to areas that need correction.
 - b. “Dripping” refers to consistent, small quantities that eventually lead to abundance. For example, a beehive that drips honey eventually fills an entire jar with an abundance of honey.

I. HIS HANDS – HIS DIVINE ACTIVITY (Song 5:14a, b)

1. His hand refers to His activities and the way He accomplishes His work.
 - a. His hands or arms refer to the way He accomplishes His work. His hands are skillful in doing everything good with perfect power.
 - b. He is omnipotent, possessing the ability to accomplish anything He pleases, both in the natural creation and in the spiritual realm.
2. “His hands are rods of gold” speak of the divine character accomplishing His work.
 - a. Gold often speaks of divine character. All His works are accomplished by the strength of Godliness and purity.
 - b. The works of Jesus in our personal lives, throughout all history, in natural creation and spiritual creation, are skillful and filled with divine power, purity, and wisdom.

3. "Set with beryl" – Beryl is a jewel. A specific, designed activity is required when something is "set."
 - a. Being deliberately set by the hand of God is in contrast to arbitrary activities. All His works are skillfully set, like beautiful jewels set on gold. The work of the cross was done with infinite skill. (Eph. 2:7)
 - b. The works of Jesus in our lives and in all creation throughout all of history are skillful, precise, and filled with Divine power, purity and wisdom. (Romans 8:28)
4. She trusted in the invisible work of God. She said, "All of His actions are rods of gold set with beryl". That was the confession of her heart, "I will be more mature in love and humble, leaning on my Beloved in a greater way at the end of this dark trial".

J. HIS BODY – HIS TENDER COMPASSION (Song. 5:14c, d)

1. She is magnifying God's tender mercy towards weak, sinful people. This speaks of His tender compassion.
 - a. "His body" – KJV translates "His belly." The belly speaks of tender compassion.
 - b. The Hebrew word used here denotes the idea of yearning or compassion. (Isa. 63:15; Jer. 31:20; Song. 5:4)
2. Some of the greatest distinguishing features of Jesus are His feelings towards those who are weak, sinful and incompetent. He has such feelings of compassion.
3. Compassion is more than just His emotion in general. It is specifically the yearning of His heart towards weak people. God has extravagant compassion in His dealings with His people. (Ps. 103:10 – 14; Exodus 34:6)
4. "His body is carved ivory" – KJV translates "bright ivory". NIV translates "polished ivory".
 - a. Ivory is clean and white. Yet it is expensive because it is rare. Carved and polished ivory is even more unique.
 - b. His compassion and patience are described as rare and expensive, like ivory.
 - c. How remarkably true this is of the personality of God. Carved ivory is but a dim shadow of the uniqueness of God's compassion.
 - d. God's ways of mercy are as high above man's as the heavens are above the earth. There is no one on the earth that forgives weak people like God does. (Isa. 55:7 – 8)
5. "Inlaid with sapphires"
 - a. "Sapphires" – a stone in Aaron's breastplate and the foundation of the New Jerusalem. The way sapphires are used in God's design reveal the extent of their beauty and the precious quality of the stone. (Rev. 21:19)

- b. "Inlaid" – Mounting inlaid jewels, like sapphire stones, in ivory takes great skill, creativity and precision. He has great discernment in the administration of His compassion. (Phil. 1:9 – 10)
 - i. He possesses a skillful mercy that brings us purity and wisdom. This mercy is not an unsanctified mercy, but one that has godly fruit.
 - ii. Jesus' compassion is not arbitrary or random, but it is skillfully manifested like ivory inlaid with sapphires.
6. We need a new paradigm to understand this aspect of God's personality. It is so unique, that nothing on the earth can compare to it.

K. HIS LEGS – HIS WALK AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF HIS PURPOSES (Song. 5:15a, b)

1. God's plans are executed with strength, dignity and order.
 - a. "Legs" – this speaks of the way to walk forward in order to fulfill one's purposes. Ps. 147:10 says the LORD takes no pleasure in the legs of a man. Man's legs speak of his strength to fulfill his activities. (Ps. 103:7; Rom. 11:33; Eccl. 11:5)
 - b. "Are pillars of marble" – this denotes that God's ways are strong, lovely, permanent, orderly and durable. God's ways do not fail or vacillate, He does not waver. (Rev. 2:19)
 - i. "Pillars" speaks of great strength, dignity, orderliness as well as endurance under pressure.
 - ii. "Marble" is a strong, beautiful and permanent type of building material. It is a beautiful type of rock. His strong legs are like marble which cannot be manipulated or overpowered.
 - c. "Set on bases of fine gold" - Gold speaks of divine character. Fine gold is the purest and valuable because it has been refined by fire.
 - i. These pillars are set on bases of most fine gold. The ways and the activity of God are portrayed as being set on refined gold (i.e. divine character)
 - ii. The Lord's ways in the midst of His people is always refined, like pure gold. His ways are just and true. All the paths of the Lord are truth. (Rev. 15:3; Ps 25:10).
2. God's plans are executed with strength, dignity and order. They have endurance. They do not fail under pressure.

L. “HIS COUNTENANCE” – HIS IMPARTATION TO HIS PEOPLE (Song. 5:15c, d)

1. “His countenance” – speaks of the impartation of God to His people.
 - a. David prayed, “Lord, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us” in Ps. 4:6. This prayer is for a “discernible impartation” of God’s light to shine upon His people.
 - b. This is a prayer that God would intervene with the impartation of discernible manifestations of Himself to His people. When the light of God shines on the human heart, God is imparting things into the heart.
2. God the Father wants to impart the graces of godliness. He has an infinite power to impart to us godly traits like wisdom, purity and passion. In particular, He wants to impart to us His affection for Jesus.
3. “Lebanon” speaks of being pleasing and strong. Lebanon is a symbol of that which is glorious, stately, and honorable. (Song. 4:8, 11, 15)
4. “Excellent as the cedars” – Cedars are tall, strong trees with an excellent fragrance. The pleasure and power which comes from the countenance of God is as strong and excellent as the cedars of Lebanon.
5. When God shines His countenance upon your heart, He is imparting His manifest Presence. There is nothing more satisfying and pleasurable to the human makeup as the release of God’s countenance into one’s soul.

M. “His mouth – Intimacy with Jesus (Song. 5:16)

1. “Mouth” denotes the communication of intimacy. Here, the description of His mouth does not refer to His words or His speech as signified by His lips in Song. 5:13.
 - a. His mouth speaks of intimate communication because she longed for the kisses of the mouth. At the very beginning of the book, the mouth was defined as related to the kisses of intimacy.
 - b. Lips are related to speech and communication of words. In her description of Jesus, she was not being redundant.
2. “His mouth is most sweet” – He wants to enlarge our capacity to receive more of God. This is the tenth and final attribute that she is extolling here. This is a statement of her desire for intimacy with Him, being greater than everything else.
 - a. “His mouth” – speaks of intimate communication with Him as in “the kisses of the mouth”. The mouth is the vehicle of kissing as expressed in the Song. 1:2.
 - b. “Is most sweet” – the manifest union of our hearts with Christ is the sweetest, most pleasing experience to the human makeup. Nothing delights her soul more than spiritual intimacy with Him. It is literally the “most sweet” experience that we can have.

3. She is ending it with this crescendo of saying “Intimacy with God is the most sweet thing I can know”. That is how she ends her description of His attributes. There’s nothing that delights her soul more than intimacy with Him.
4. She was remembering former times of intimacy because at this hour the discernible presence of God had lifted from her. She was speaking of her remembrance of it. Even the remembrance of it held her steady. It became her confession.

N. HE IS ALTOGETHER LOVELY – HIS COMPREHENSIVE BEAUTY (Song. 5:16b, c, d, e)

1. She has given ten attributes of His beauty and now she offers her final summary statement. All of His attributes flow together in perfect unity, constituting the loveliest person imaginable.
2. “Yes, He is altogether lovely”
 - a. This is who Jesus is in reality. The Jesus depicted by the religious world is so different than the Jesus depicted by the Bride. It is impossible to comprehend His matchless beauty.
 - b. We desire to see all of Jesus’ different faces – He is affectionate, silent, awesome, terrifying, humorous, playful, happy, grinning, aggressive, aloof, parabolic, etc.
3. “This is my Beloved” – She magnifies Christ after the question, “What is your beloved?” in Song. 5:9. With overflowing gladness she presented Him as the glorious answer to their questions. In essence, she says, “This is the One that you asked about and I have described Him to you. You can now see why I am not offended by Him in times of difficulty”.
4. “And this is my Friend” – He is not only infinitely magnificent as the sovereign God but He descends to embrace us as friends as in John 15:14. Blessed is the person whose friend is the Lord.
5. “Oh” – She is speaking of Him with great passion, urgency and feeling.
6. “Daughters of Jerusalem”
 - a. The daughters asked her a question in Song. 5:9 and she has completed her answer from 5:10 – 16. This is the answer she gives to the daughters of Jerusalem.
 - b. She does not point out the carnality of the daughters of Jerusalem, but rather she focuses on how beautiful Jesus is in order to awaken them. There is no condemnation.
 - c. She gives this beautiful exposé of the loveliness of Christ Jesus. This is her strategy to awaken the daughters.

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7. This is one of the most magnificent descriptions of Jesus in the Word of God. It is a mini-manual of worship. These are statements of faith to counter the enemy when He says, "Just curse God and die." We can use such statements of faith when we're wavering and thinking of getting substitute stimuli that is out of the will of God. We live by the Word of God, not by other things.

IHOP - ONE THING MINISTRIES

IHOP - ONE THING MINISTRIES

Jesus' Praise For and Affirmation of the Bride

(Song. 6:4–10)

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Song. 6:4 – 10 is another high point of the book.
 - a. Song. 5: 10 – 16 gives us the highest revelation of the transcendent beauty of Jesus in the entire Bible – the most extravagant expression of love for Jesus by a man.
 - b. Song. 6:4 – 10 gives us the highest revelation of the beauty of the Bride of Christ in the entire Bible – the most extravagant expression of love for the Bride by Jesus.
2. Revelation 22:17 gives us a general prophetic picture of the Bride in the generation that Jesus returns and Song. 6:4 – 10 gives us a powerful and detailed description of what a mature and wholehearted End-Time Church looks like.
3. There is a powerful parallel between the ultimate two-fold test that the Shulamite woman went through in Song. 5:2 – 8 and the tribulation that the mature End-Time Church will have to overcome. The requirement for overcoming trials and tribulation is one of the major criteria and preparation process to become mature in Christ. (Mal. 3:1 – 5; Rom. 5:3 – 4; 1 Peter 5:10)
4. Song. 6: 4 – 10 reveals four aspects of a triumphant and victorious Bride of Christ.
 - a. Triumph over sin in our life (Song. 1:5 – 7)
 - b. Triumph over fear and compromise (Song. 2:17)
 - c. Triumph over Satan (Song. 4:6 – 8)
 - d. Triumph over the heart of God (Song. 6: 5)

B. REVIEW

1. The Bride prayed for both the north winds of adversity and the south winds of blessing to come into the garden of her heart so that the spices of grace or God's presence might flow from within her to others. (Song. 4:16).
2. This is the turning point in Song of Songs. It has two main sections.
 - a. Song. 1 – 4 is focused on receiving our inheritance in God.

- b. Song. 5 – 8 is focused on God receiving His inheritance in us.
- c. The answer to the prayer for the north winds comes in Song. 5:3 – 7.
3. Jesus calls the Bride to intimacy by coming to her as the “Jesus of Gethsemane” and asking her to open her heart “for Him” to experience new depths of intimacy with Him. (Song. 5:2)
4. She responds in obedience in Song. 5:3 – 5. She says “yes” to the fellowship of His suffering. This is followed by a two-fold test.
 - a. Jesus tests her by withdrawing His presence from her in Song. 5:6.
 - b. He allows the spiritual authorities to mistreat her in Song. 5:7.
5. The Bride responds to God in love in Song. 5:8. She is not offended with God.
6. The daughters of Jerusalem were provoked then ask her two questions:
 - a. “Why do you love Him so much?” in Song. 5:9.
 - b. The Bride answers by proclaiming ten facets of Jesus’ beauty in Song. 5:10 – 16.
 - c. After hearing her answer they ask her the second, “How can we know Him like you?” in Song. 6:1.

C. OVERVIEW OF Song. 6:4 – 10

1. In Song. 6:4 – 10, Jesus suddenly breaks the silence with the Bride that began in Song. 5:6.
 - a. He is deeply moved and overcome by the Bride’s devotion for Him even in the midst of difficulty.
 - b. He praises her beauty and reveals what He was feeling about her during her time of testing.
 - c. He describes her beauty using three metaphors (verse 4) and His passion for her (verse 5), in terms as extravagant as her declarations about Him in Song. 5:10 – 16.
2. Jesus describes the Bride’s maturity in Song. 6:5c – 7 and her pre-eminence in His royal court with angelic attendants including seraphim, cherubim and angels without number in Song. 6:8 – 9.
3. The Holy Spirit describes the Bride’s glory. (Song. 6:10)
4. Simple outline of Song. 6:4 – 10:
 - a. (Song. 6:4): Jesus praises her beauty and reveals His feeling towards her – the revelation of true beauty in the sight of God.

- b. (Song. 5a, b): The mystery of the ravished heart of God – the revelation of true greatness in the sight of God
- c. (Song. 5c – 7): Jesus affirms the Bride's spiritual maturity – the revelation of true maturity in the sight of God
- d. (Song. 8 – 9): The pre-eminence of the Bride of Christ – the revelation of our unique honor before Jesus as the Bride of Christ

D. JESUS DESCRIBES THE BRIDE'S BEAUTY (Song. 6:4)

1. Jesus breaks His silence to praise her beauty using three metaphors, after she proclaimed, "I am lovesick because He is dazzling and altogether beautiful" in Song. 5:8 – 16.
2. Jesus breaks His silence to reassure her of His great love for her in a season of testing – "O My love..."
 - a. His first utterance to her communicates His affection. This phrase expresses how He feels about her and who she is to Him.
 - b. The Bride is praised for her beauty which is found in her love for Jesus. Jesus describes her beauty more fully in Song. 7:6 – 9.
 - c. In Song of Songs, He affirms the Bride's beauty nine times. The affirmation of the Bride's beauty is much emphasized in Song of Songs because it is one of the longing of human heart to feel beautiful. (Song. 1:15; 2:10, 13; 4:1; 4:7; 6:4; 7:7)
 - d. Saint Augustine said that "the only praise to be desired and the only praise that is true, is praise that comes from God".
 - e. The affirmation of our beauty from Jesus will impact our heart, enhance our confidence and transform our emotion.
3. Jesus affirms that the result of her beauty is the two-fold work of the Holy Spirit.
 - a. Her beauty is the end-result of divine testing with her obedient responses. All through the difficult season, He was perfecting or adorning her heart with beauty. (Rom. 8:18, 28; 1 Peter 5:10)
 - b. Her beauty is the fruit of the revelation of His affection. The knowledge of how Jesus loved her made her beautiful. She is also made radiant and beautiful by her love for Jesus. (Isa. 62:4; Eph. 5:27 – 29)
4. Jesus declares that the Bride is as beautiful as the city of Tirzah – "as beauty as Tizah..."
 - a. It was one of the most attractive cities in the ancient world. Tirzah means "beautiful".

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- b. Before Israel captured the land of Israel under Joshua, it was a capital city of the Canaanites. Thus, some commentators present this Canaanite city as symbolic of the unbelieving Gentile nations. (Josh. 12:24; 1 Kings 15:33; 16:61)
 - c. Soon after Solomon's death, a civil war divided the nation of Israel (931 BC). Jeroboam, the king of the Northern Kingdom chose Tirzah as his capital city (1 Kings 14:17; 15:21; 16:6) because it was the most beautiful city in the north. It was in the territory of the tribe of Manasseh.
 - c. This beautiful city famous while under the leadership of unbelievers speaks of the Bride as being beautiful in the midst of unbelievers. He is telling her that she will be effective in winning unbelievers.
 - i. Her beauty would not only be seen by God, it would be beautiful enough to win the cynics and those that were blinded and darkened of heart.
 - ii. It also speaks symbolically of the Bride is beautiful even in the eyes of man, both believers and unbelievers. (Matt. 5:13 – 16; John 5:35)
5. Jesus declares that the Bride is "as lovely as Jerusalem":
- a. Jerusalem was the spiritual capital of Israel. It was the city chosen by God for the building of Solomon's Temple. Jerusalem was the only place on earth continually blessed with the manifest presence of God – the Shekinah glory in the Holy of Holies.
 - b. God ordained this city as His worship center for the whole world. Jerusalem's beauty speaks of the beauty of holiness found in worshipping God. (Isa. 2:1 – 4; Zech. 14:16 – 19)
6. The two strongest and most beautiful cities in Palestine were Tirzah and Jerusalem. Some commentators present Tirzah, being the former capital of the Canaanites, as symbolic here of the unbelieving Gentile nations and Jerusalem, being the capital of the Hebrew nation, as symbolic here of believing Jews.
- a. In other words, God has made the Church beautiful to both believers and unbelievers in order to win both groups to wholeheartedness in Jesus.
 - b. Tirzah, a beautiful royal city of the Canaanites (i.e. Gentiles) speaks of the Bride being beautiful to unbelievers, whereas Jerusalem a beautiful royal city of the Israel speaks of the Bride being beautiful to believers.
 - c. Jesus said "O my love, you are as beautiful as Tirzah". "Even the heathen will see you and call you beautiful. You are as lovely as Jerusalem, the people that worship and love God will see your beauty." Her beauty reaches both groups.
 - d. He is also highlighting the fact that she is "as a great city" which speaks of the corporate Church, as in Song. 3:2. Jesus compares His people to a city of light set on a hill. (Matt. 5:13)
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7. The beauty of her spiritual victory – "O My love, you are...awesome as an army with banners!"
- a. An army with banner speaks of a victorious army. When an army returned victorious from war, it marched down the streets with banners. The victorious army would go first with their banners. They led the defeated king in chains behind them in a great military procession. Then the prisoners followed their captive king in chains as they marched down the street. A defeated army lost its banners. Therefore, they never came home to march in a parade with banners.
 - b. She came through the two-fold test as a victorious army with banners. She didn't give in to the devil by accusing God. She did not lose her life in God when everything went wrong circumstantially. But she said, "I love Him!" He responds, "You are like a victorious army. You endured the most difficult test possible and you came forth in spiritual victory." She is especially likened to a victorious army because she gained victory over her own soul.
 - c. In a time of testing, the Holy Spirit poured loyal love into her heart for Jesus. He is declaring, "You are to Me as a victorious army. You have conquered the sinful passions of your own heart by the Spirit. You have struggled and defeated the enemies of your soul."
 - i. In the very beginning (Song. 2:4), she said, "His banner over me is love," and now she's marching in victory with the banner of the love of God. This strengthens her through her testing. Knowing the truth of this banner makes her a victorious army.
 - ii. An army with banners spoke of divine order. An army marched in rank under its flag (i.e. banner). This signified that they were in proper military order and under authority. In other words, she is in divine order and under His authority. Therefore, she is able to defeat the powers of darkness. She could fight the lions and leopards in Song. 4:8 because she's under divine order and authority. The spiritual valor of the mature church is powerful enough to defeat the powers of darkness.
 - d. She is compared to an awesome army as love matures in her heart. To have love in her heart in a time of testing is awesome to God. He declared, "You are as awesome to Me. You have not drawn back. You have given your heart to Me when I tested you in the Garden of Gethsemane." This affirmation is repeated in Song. 6:10.

E. JESUS DESCRIBES HIS PASSION FOR HER (Song. 6:5)

1. The Bride's awesome loveliness to Jesus is in context to her response of love and worship in Song. 5:10 – 16 in the midst of severe testing in Song. 5:6 – 7. Jesus is overcome with the irresistible love of His Bride. He describes her beauty and then He describes His passion for her.

2. This is one of the most dramatic passages in the whole Bible. The Holy Spirit uses Solomon's words of love for the young Bride to reveal Jesus' passion for His people.
3. This is the highest theme on the agenda of the Holy Spirit. This is one of the great statements in the Word of God – God is overwhelmed and overcome by weak people that are submitted to the Holy Spirit.
4. It speaks of the Bride's irresistible love overwhelming the heart of God. The Lord reveals how attractive she is to Him.
5. By her eyes we understand her love for Him during testing. Her eyes were fixed on Jesus during the Song. 5:6 – 7 testing. (Heb. 12:2)
6. Such fixed eyes prevail over His heart. Her single minded "dove's eyes" of devotion are irresistibly beautiful to Him. Though she didn't feel anything yet He felt so much!
7. "Turn your eyes away, for they have overcome Me!" – Jesus was not asking for her to literally look away, but was speaking in the extravagant language of romantic poetry.
 - a. This is a Divine romance. He was speaking in love language. It was a statement depicting the hold she had upon His heart.
 - b. Jesus could not withstand her gazing affection any more than one man could stand against an entire army. He says, "Your eyes have totally overcome me." This is what God says to people on the earth who feel nothing and yet they stay true to Him.
 - c. She's serving Him for Him, not just for earthly circumstances to get better. This kind of devotion conquers His heart. She was focused on being His inheritance, no longer complaining because her inheritance was disappointing her. The love of fallen broken people overcomes Him.
 - d. Her irresistible love overwhelms the heart of God. In this Age, we will never fully understand the powerful impact that we have on the heart of Jesus. This is the ravished heart of God in full manifestation. (Song. 4:9)
 - e. The heart of a dedicated, fully obedient believer prevails and triumphs over the heart of God. The people that triumph over their own hearts to not deny the Lord in the time of testing also triumph over the Lord's heart.
 - f. The joy set before Him is the heart of love of a believer. That's the joy that was set before Him and strengthened Him to endure the cross. (Heb. 12:2 – 3)
 - g. We do not easily understand the heart of Jesus being ravished. He is totally overcome by weak, broken people who love Him. Our love for Him in the midst of the testing is more precious to Him than we understand.

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- h. The Syrophenician woman had no idea that He was marveling at her when He seemingly was refusing her. (Matt. 15)
8. What overwhelms and overcomes the heart of God?
- a. Jesus is overcome by the eyes of devotion of a person. (Heb. 12:1 – 2; Rev. 6:12 – 17)
 - b. Jesus is overcome by the heart of an obedient and wholehearted lover of Jesus. (Song. 5:2 – 6:3)
9. True greatness is defined in this reality: our ability to move the heart of God even in our weakness, not the success of our ministry, career, etc.

F. JESUS DESCRIBES THE BRIDE'S SPIRITUAL MATURITY (Song. 6:5c – 7)

1. Jesus describes her maturity by highlighting three aspects of her character signified by her hair, teeth and temples.
- a. They refer to her dedication (i.e. hair), life in the Word (i.e. teeth) and godly emotions (i.e. temples). These are same qualities that He prophesied of when they were only budding virtues in Song. 4:1 – 3.
 - b. Now these virtues had become mature in her life. Song. 4:1 – 2 describes her eyes, hair, teeth and temple as does. (Song. 6:5 – 6) Song. 4:2 adds the word "shorn".
 - c. These are three basic character-traits that measure our spiritual maturity in Christ. Spiritual maturity is primarily measured by our stability and consistency especially in these three aspects. (Eph. 4:12 – 14)
2. These are same descriptions that He gave her early in her spiritual journey in Song. 4:1 – 3.
- a. He speaks these first in the form of prophecy in Song. 4:1 – 3, then He speaks of her actual experience in Song. 6:5c – 7.
 - b. He was as aware of her qualities when they were in seed form in Song. 4:1 – 3. He spoke this to her in Song. 4 when in budding form. However, now they have come to maturity.
 - c. They were as real to Him before she matured, as they are now in her actual maturity. He sees the end from the beginning. He's affirming her maturity.
 - d. His affirmations in Song. 6:5 – 7 is nearly the same affirmation as Song. 4:1 – 3.
 - e. He repeats these affirmations, using nearly the same words to prove that the test of Song. 5:6 – 7 was necessary and fruitful. He causes everything to work together for good. (Rom. 8:28)

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3. The Bride's hair speaks of her dedication to God. (Song. 6:5)
 - a. The hair of the Nazirites was an outward sign of their consecration or dedication. (Num. 6)
 - b. Her stately hair or dedication is the result of being well fed. Mount Gilead was a bountiful place in which the goats were abundantly fed. Her dedication is the result of being well fed on the Word of God. Song. 4:1 adds the word "Mount" in referring to Gilead.
 - c. Goats walk in a stately order. The Bride's dedication is like a flock of goats in the sense that it is manifestation of godly order and wisdom in contrast to fleshly zeal. (Prov. 30:29 – 31)
 4. Teeth speak of the ability to chew solid food thus, to receive the meat of the Word. (Song. 6:6, Heb. 5:12 - 14).
 - a. Infants have no teeth and thus can only receive nourishment through milk. (Heb. 5:12 – 14; 1 Cor. 3:1 – 3)
 - b. We receive the meat of the Word and maintain cleanliness or healthy teeth by long and loving meditation on God's Word. In this way, we keep as clean as the sheep that come up from when the shepherd washes the mud off. (Eph. 5:26 – 27; John 13:10; 17:17)
 - c. Her ministry fruitfulness comes from her life in the Word. To bear twins speaks of a double portion of fruitfulness. She is compared to the sheep in which none are barren. A diligent life in the Word guarantees fruitfulness. (1 Tim. 4:6 – 16)
 - d. The sheep in this passage are both clean and fruitful due to their life in the Word. (John 15:7 – 8)
 5. The Bride's temples being like pomegranates speak of her godly emotions. (Song. 6:7)
 - a. The temples (or cheeks) reveal one's emotions. The Hebrew word translated as temples can also be translated as cheeks.
 - b. Our emotions are expressed by our cheeks. We can see anger, joy, gladness, and sadness on the cheeks. They are the windows into one's emotions.
 - c. The pomegranate is a very sweet fruit. Her emotions are godly and sweet to God.
 - d. When pomegranates are broken they exude a red color.
 - i. Red speaks of her modesty, her propensity for blushing in the presence of shameful things.
 - ii. Prostitutes do not blush with immodesty. A red countenance speaks of one sensitive to shameful things – red from blushing.
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6. Behind her veil speaks of her hidden life in God. Her emotions of love for God and her modesty are genuine when no one is watching. It is not just a show before people as in Song. 4:3. She is truly living before the audience of One!

G. THE ROYAL COURTS OF THE HEAVENLY BRIDEGROOM (Song. 6:8)

1. "There are sixty queens and eighty concubines, and virgins without number" – Jesus is comparing the angelic host to the attendants of a king's court. He is describing the pre-eminence of His Bride.
2. Jesus uses a three-fold metaphor to compare the Bride to the angelic host in heaven. His Bride has more honor and excellence than the heavenly hosts who are symbolized as queens, concubines and virgins.
 - a. The context of this passage is to illustrate how Jesus has been overcome by the beauty of His Bride. Then, He proclaims that the Bride is preeminent in honor compared to the glorious hosts in His court where He is continuing to address her beauty as He declares her preeminence and her maturity.
 - b. Solomon describes the attendants of his earthly royal court to King Jesus' heavenly court. The Holy Spirit is comparing the attendants of a king's court to the angelic host.
 - c. Jesus' court includes a host of glorious attendants, symbolized as queens, concubines and virgins. They speak of the various degrees of glory and honor in the court of God.
 - d. Jesus is surrounded by a host of glorious and noble creatures who are filled with divine splendor. He declares to the Bride "You far-surpass all of them".
 - e. Jesus is talking about the attendants of His royal court in Heaven. A natural king's court includes various categories. In the different ranks of angels (Col. 1:16) are different ranks of royal servants of God around the throne of God and thus around His Bride.
 - f. There are various types of heavenly beings. In other words, there are many types of attendants with different ranks of glory in His Presence. The Bible clearly describes the angelic hosts as inferior in glory to His Bride.
 - i. In 1 Cor. 6:2 – 3, Paul says the saints will judge angels in the Age-to-come.
 - ii. In Heb.1:14, angels are described as serving the saints.
 - iii. Throughout the book of Revelation the angels are seen as servants of Jesus and his Bride.

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- g. Jesus would only die for His Bride, not for these other glorious beings. He would not take upon Himself the form of an angel to redeem the fallen angels. (Heb. 2:16)
 3. The numbers "sixty, eighty and then a larger group that is 'without number'" represents different degrees of glory in the royal court of God.
 - a. The numbers sixty and eighty are not to give specific numbers, but rather to convey that there are different ranks in His court.
 - b. There are sixty queens – A queen is the most dignified woman in a King's court. This speaks of those with an exceptionally high position of honor and prestige. Some of the heavenly host are as "queens."
 - c. There are so many different categories of heavenly beings. The heavenly beings are servants to the royal court where the King and His Bride are the focus.
 4. The various types of heavenly beings correspond with the queens, concubines, and virgins.
 - a. In other words, the queens are the highest rank and there are only sixty of them. The concubines are the next highest rank, there are eighty.
 - b. But all the attendants of the King's court, there are a lot more of them. Those of higher rank are fewer in number.
 5. This truth is set forth using the metaphor of a king's court without in any way suggesting an actual corresponding group in Heaven. This is not meant to be an attempt to categorize all the heavenly beings into only three groups, but rather to emphasize that from the least to the greatest all in heaven are joyfully serving and esteeming the Bride that the Father elected for His Son's eternal inheritance.
 6. Ancient kings had large harems comprised of women of various ranks in the royal courts. The book of Esther speaks of many women in the king's court, being prepared for the king. The queen was one of many in the royal courts but was distinguished among all others. (Esther 2:12 – 17)
 7. Solomon had seven hundred wives by the end of his reign (1 Kings 11:3). However, at the time when Song of Songs was written, Solomon probably only had sixty wives.
 8. His wives were all legally considered as queens in his court. These queens experienced the greater things in the king's court but not the full intimacy and authority of His favorite Bride, the Shulamite.
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H. THE BRIDE'S ETERNAL PRE-EMINENCE IN GOD'S HEAVENLY COURT (Song. 6:9)

1. The Shulamite is referred to as His dove and His perfect one. Being His dove speaks of her singleness of heart. It describes how she walks in the Spirit as God's dove walking in Bridal identity.
2. "My dove, My perfect one, is the only one, the only one of her mother" – this speaks the Bride's unique honor before Jesus.
 - a. "My dove" speaks of her purity and innocence with singleness of heart.
 - b. "My perfect one" – King James and Amplified versions say, "My undefiled one."
 - i. Perfect means mature. That is God's ultimate design, that the Church would be filled with the maturity that belongs to the fullness of Christ. (Eph. 4:13)
 - ii. His Church will eventually become perfected in love. His church will be glorious and radiant without any spot or wrinkle. (Eph. 5:26 – 27)
 - iii. She is perfect or mature because she has gone through the testing. She has been assaulted by the powers of darkness. He calls her, "my mature one".
 - c. "The only one" means she is the "unrivaled one". Of all the glorious hosts in the royal courts in the eternal city, only one is the Bride. There is no second plan for Jesus' inheritance.
 - i. His Bride is the only one; she is unrivaled. She has no competition.
 - ii. His Bride is His only magnificent obsession outside the Trinity. He is totally satisfied with her alone.
 - iii. He only has one that has completely touched His heart and conquered Him. The Bride is the only one. She is the chief among ten thousand in His heart as He is in her heart. He wants no other.
 - iv. She is the only one that He would die for. She is the focus of the Father's eternal purpose to give Jesus as an inheritance. She is the only one that will crown Jesus in the heavenly court.
 - d. Of all the attendants around the throne of God there are none in the category she is in. She is unique, completely set apart, which is the essence of the definition of holiness.
3. "My dove...is the only one, the only one of her mother, the favorite of the one who bore her" speaks of the Bride's unique honor in redemptive history.
 - a. The mother is a picture of the Church through history. God is our Father and the Church is our mother.
 - i. Paul spoke allegorically of the New Jerusalem as "the mother of us all". (Gal. 4:26)

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- ii. The redeemed from history are represented as a "mother" that gave birth to Jesus (i.e. man-child) and as well as the believers that come after her. (Rev. 12:5, 17)
 - iii. God is the author of our natural and spiritual birth. The agency He uses for our natural birth is our natural mother. The agency He uses for our spiritual birth is the witness of the Church, our spiritual mother.
 - iv. Those who do God's will, are His mother (Matt. 12:46 – 50). The Lord uses the Church to win the lost that they may become a part of His Church. The mother crowns Jesus with her love on His wedding day in Song. 3:11.
- b. The favorite work of the Church is that of bringing others into a saving relationship with Jesus.
 - i. Of all the works that mother (the Church) does, our favorite work is that of bringing others into a saving relationship with Jesus. Evangelizing others to become the Bride is the favorite privilege of the Church.
 - ii. To bring others into a saving relationship that results in them becoming a part of the Bride.
 - c. All of Church history will see and honor God for the work He does in the End-of-the-Age. The Bride is defined as the Church becoming mature in love for God and people.
 - i. This has never happened throughout Church history. Even the Church in the Book of Acts was not fully mature though it had moments of glory in several cities.
 - ii. Before the Lord returns, the worldwide Church will be mature, spotless and blameless. (Eph. 5:26 – 27)
 - iii. The End-Time Church that survives the Great Tribulation has a unique honor in history because it will be the only generation to walk blameless before Jesus returns.
4. "The daughters saw her" – all immature believers (i.e. daughters of Jerusalem) will see God working to mature the Church.
 5. "And called her blessed" – this is the same grace operating in the daughters as they blessed the Bride calling her the fairest among women (Song. 6:1). All immature believers (daughters) will bless the mature Church. Spiritual maturity will be esteemed and not dismissed as legalism or fanaticism.
 6. The Bride is by definition made up of those who walk in mature love. Living like the heavenly Bride while on earth is to walk in mature in love.
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7. The interesting thing to note is that the Bride is the favorite of the one who bore her, in other words, the favorite of her mother which speaks of the redeemed through history. The worldwide End-Time mature Bride is unique in history and is the favorite of the one who bore her.
8. The Church from history is our mother. The favorite work of the historical Church is the great End-Time harvest of souls and its full maturity. (Rev. 14:14 – 16; Eph. 5:27)
9. The End-Time Church will enter into the measure of the stature of maturity that belongs to the fullness of Christ. (Eph. 4:13)
 - a. God will finish what He began and the gates of hell will not prevail in the Church. The Church throughout all history did not walk in maturity. It lived much more like the daughters of Jerusalem. (Matt. 16:18; Phil. 1:6)
 - b. The Church through history from heaven's point of view will see the End-Time Church and will call her blessed.
10. The honor of the Bride in her maturity is seen in the phrase the daughters saw her and called her blessed. (Song. 6:9)
 - a. The daughters speak of the immature believers throughout history. They will call her blessed as they did in Song. 6:1.
 - b. The redeemed through history will praise God for the End-Time Church as it prevails in love while still on the earth.
11. The queens and the concubines will praise the End-Time Church. They speak of the heavenly host rejoicing with gladness as the Bride comes into her honored position. God has brought to pass a people that are mature on the earth.

I. THE HOLY SPIRIT DESCRIBES THE BRIDE'S FOUR-FOLD CROWN OF GLORY (Song. 6:10)

1. The Bride is described as possessing a four-fold glory as co-heir with Jesus of the Eternal City. The Spirit here uses four metaphors to show the Bride's beauty by comparing her to heavenly objects in the way Jesus compared her to earthly cities (i.e. Jerusalem and Tirzah) in Song. 6:4.
2. The Spirit asks a rhetorical question, "Who is she?"
 - a. Jesus has just declared the Bride's preeminent place in His court. The Spirit is now affirming her place of pre-eminence.
 - b. The Spirit speaks three times in the Song asking the same question, "Who is this...?" (Song. 3:6, 6:10; 8:5).
3. The Bride's ministry in the culture is as one "who looks forth or shines forth as the morning".

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- a. After the long night, the sunlight of the morning shines forth with hope on the horizon. The Church in this age functions as salt (i.e. flavor, preservation) and light (i.e. direction, life) in Matt. 5:13 – 16.
 - b. This emphasizes the impact that God's people will have on individuals and society – political, military, economic, educational, family, media, arts, technology, social institutions, etc.
4. The Bride's ministry in this age is as one "who shines forth as beautiful as the moon".
 - a. The mature Church is as beautiful as the moon. The moon was established by God to provide light in the night time. (Gen. 1:14 – 19)
 - b. It does not have its own light but receives the reflected light of the sun. The mature Church is a source of God's light in a dark and fallen world.
 5. The Church in this age is to shine like the moon in the darkness as we work in evangelism and the transformation of our culture. This age is in a time of darkness. In comparison, the Millennial Kingdom is a time of light globally. (Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:15)
 6. The Bride's ministry in the Age-to-come is as one "who shines forth as bright as the sun". Her full glory stems from the brilliant light of Jesus' glory. The Church will reflect the glory of Jesus' light in the New Jerusalem. Jesus is the "sun" in the Eternal City. (Rev. 21:23)
 - a. The Church will reflect God's light in the New Jerusalem as co-heir of the Eternal City. (Rev. 21:11; Dan. 12:3)
 - b. The Church rules with Jesus and reflects God's light in time and eternity. (Rev. 21:23 – 24; 1:16; Isa. 60:1 – 3, 19 – 20; 24:23; 59:19; 62:1; Ezek. 43:2; Ps. 50:2; Mal. 4:2; 2 Cor. 4:6; John 8:12; 1 John 1:5; Matt. 5:14 – 16; Phil. 2:15; Dan. 12:3; 1 Cor. 15:41 – 42; Song 6:10)
 7. The Bride's government is as one "who is as awesome as a powerful army with banners". (Song. 6:10)
 - a. The Bride will rule in the governmental administration of Jesus' Kingdom forever. (Dan. 7:27; Rev. 3:21)
 - b. In Song. 6:4, Jesus emphasizes the victory over her heart in earthly difficulties. Here, the Spirit emphasizes her victory over all powers.
 8. Summary: The Bride's four-fold glory is seen in three progressive stages in the glory of God.
 - a. She experiences the dawning of God's light to bring salt and light to the culture. (Matt. 5:13 – 16)
 - b. She shines forth as a beautiful moon in warfare and evangelism in this age.
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- c. She shines forth as the sun in the Age-to-come.
 - d. In all this, she rules as God's weapon in His government forever.
9. The seven-fold comparison of the triumphant Bride who walks in the Holy Spirit:
- a. She is compared to Tirzah, speaking of her beauty to unbelievers.
 - b. She is compared to Jerusalem, speaking of her beauty to believers.
 - c. She is compared to an earthly army, speaking of her triumph over her own heart.
 - d. She is compared to the dawn, speaking of persevering in God's order on earth in this age.
 - e. She is like the moon, speaking of her triumph in evangelism and transformation.
 - f. She is like the sun, speaking of her triumph in glory as a co-heir of the Eternal City.
 - g. She is like God's army, speaking of her governmental administration over all things.
- IHOP - ONE THING MINISTRIES

IHOP - ONE THING MINISTRIES

Vindication of the Bride

(Song. 6:11 – 7:9)

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Song of Songs is a vital book in preparing and equipping us to walk in mature bridal love and partnership. It is the great love song of all ages – both now and in eternity.
2. It gives us the revelation of who we are, how God feels towards us and what is His plan for us.
3. Song. 5 – 8 is the high point of the entire book with many peaks.
 - a. Song. 5 gives us the most extravagant revelation of Jesus Christ in the Bible.
 - b. Song. 6 gives us the most extravagant revelation of the Bride in the Bible.
 - c. Song. 7 gives us the revelation of mature Bridal Partnership.
 - d. Song. 8 gives us the revelation of the five-fold glory of the Bride.
4. The primary theme of Song of Songs is the progression of holy passion and growing into intimacy with God and maturity.
5. This book lays out the clearest “roadmap” in how the Lord will prepare, equip and empower us to walk in mature bridal love and partnership. It reveals how we can walk out the fullness of the First and Second Commandments. (Matt. 22:37 – 40)
 - a. The empowerment by Jesus for the Shulamite woman to walk out the First Commandment. (Song. 1:1 – 6:10)
 - b. The Bride’s commitment to walk out the Second Commandment and the Great Commission. (Song. 6:11 – 8:14)

B. REVIEW OF Song. 6:4 – 10

1. Song. 6:4 – 10 are vital seven verses that will empower and propel us in stepping out to partner and serve Jesus. Without the revelation of Song. 6:4 – 10, we will never serve the Lord Jesus Christ in a long and sustained season with a pure motive, a big heart and a kingdom mindset.
2. Song. 6:4 – 10 gives us a revelation of our place in His heart and in His plan, both now and in eternity. It is a powerful insight into our value, our worth, and our future. For in Christ, we are already successful. Until we encounter and know the realities of Song. 6:4 – 10, we will always get stuck in serving for our own “good”, “goal” and “agenda”. (John 3:28 – 30; 2 Cor. 4:16 – 18; Phil. 1:12 – 18)

3. This vital revelation will empower our heart and set us free to serve in a new level with gratitude, abandonment and a pure heart and motive. We will have a sincere and genuine love for others – both mature or immature, and both in a successful or struggling ministry. (1 Tim. 1:5)
4. In Song. 6:4 – 10, Jesus breaks the silence with the Bride that began in Song. 5:6. He praises her beauty and reveals what He was feeling about her during her time of testing.
5. He describes her beauty using three metaphors. He also describes the impact the Bride has on His heart. (Song. 6:4 – 5)
6. When an army in the ancient world returned victorious from battle, they displayed their banners in a military parade. A defeated army will lose their banners.
 - a. She had defeated her greatest enemies – those which were found in her heart. She finished her time of testing as a victorious army with banners because she did not give in to sin and unbelief. She gained the victory over her own heart.
 - b. When we feel nothing, His heart feels so much when we gaze on Him with eyes of devotion. The shadows of her compromise and fear are gone. She had conquered them by grace. (Song. 2:17; 4:6)
7. Jesus describes the Bride's maturity in Song. 6:5c – 7 and her pre-eminence in His royal court. She has an angelic host with her, including seraphim, cherubim and angels without number, in Song. 6:8 – 9.
8. The Spirit describes her four-fold glory as co-heir with Jesus of the Eternal City. (Song. 6:10)
 - a. The Bride's ministry in this age is as one who looks forth or shines forth as the morning.
 - b. The Bride's ministry in this age is as one who shines forth as beautiful as the moon in the darkness as we work in evangelism and the transformation of our culture. (Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:15)
 - c. The Bride's ministry in the Age-to-come is as one who shines forth as bright as the sun will occur because we will reflect Jesus' light in the New Jerusalem. (Rev. 21:11)
 - d. The Bride's government is one who is as awesome as a powerful army with banners.

C. OVERVIEW OF Song. 6:11 – 7:9a

1. As the Bride walks in the revelation of Song. 6:4 – 10, she is overcome by love for the whole Church. She commits to serve the weak and immature ones in God's garden. (Song. 6:11 – 12)

2. A primary theme of Song of Songs is that Jesus is equipping His Bride to walk in mature partnership with Him.
3. After this season of service, the Bride is persecuted. She receives two different responses from the Church.
 - a. She is supported from part of the Church. (Song. 6:13a)
 - b. Another part of the Church gives her a sarcastic response. (Song. 6:13b)
4. The Bride is vindicated by the daughters who express respect for ten areas of her life in Song 7:1 – 5. Then the Bride is vindicated by Jesus who endorses her as His partner by releasing His grace on her in a great measure in Song. 7:6 – 9a.
5. There are five different themes in this passage:
 - a. Song. 6:11 – the Bride’s commitment to serve the whole body of Christ.
 - b. Song. 6:12 – the Bride is overcome with love for the whole body of Christ.
 - c. Song. 6:13 – the two-fold response from the Church.
 - d. Song. 7:1 – 5 – Vindication by the sincere and discerning believers.
 - e. Song. 7:6 – 9 – Vindication by Jesus and His commission for her.

D. THE BRIDE’S COMMITMENT TO SERVE THE WHOLE CHURCH (Song. 6:11)

1. “I went down to the GARDEN OF NUTS...”
 - a. The “garden of nuts” refers to the whole Church of Jesus Christ – the local Church, various kinds of ministry, mission agencies, etc.
 - b. More than just “nuts”, it refers to it as the “walnut grove”. It gives a picture of the four different roles of the Church.
 - i. Walnut trees have dense shade; thus they provide refuge from the summer heat. They also have economic value as they produce food. This speaks of the ministry of refreshing and rest. (Matt. 11:28 – 30)
 - ii. Oil is also produced from walnuts that was used to making soap, which speaks of the ministry of cleansing and reconciliation. (2 Cor. 5:17 – 21)
 - iii. Its leaves were used in as medicine to aid in physical healing. This speaks of the ministry of healing.
 - iv. The life in a walnut seed is on the inside. However, the seed must die and be broken before it can provide food, oil or healing for others. This speaks of the dying of self. (John 12:24 – 26; 2 Cor. 1:8 – 11; Col. 1:24)
 - c. The garden of God is mentioned nine times in Song of Songs. This speaks of Jesus’ garden.

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- i. The first three references are to her garden. (Song. 4:12, 15, 16)
 - ii. The last six references are to His garden. (Song. 4:16; 5:1; 6:2, 11; 7:12; 8:13)
2. "I WENT DOWN to the garden of nuts..."
- a. She goes down to the garden in determination to serve the purpose of God.
 - b. In Song. 6:2 – 3, she was explaining how Jesus could be found in the midst of this same garden that had beds of spices. She was telling the daughters that He could be found feeding His people in the midst of the garden. Then Jesus suddenly interrupted the conversation to affirm her in Song. 6:4 – 10.
 - c. Now she goes down to this garden to join Him as a bridal partner. She wants to be where He is.
 - d. She goes to the garden that includes a walnut grove. She desires to serve the various ministries within the Church and ministries that the Lord has called and set in place.
 - e. She recognized that this is His garden and she is the caretaker and steward of it. (Matt. 24:45 – 51)
3. "I went down to the garden of nuts... TO SEE the verdure of the valley... TO SEE whether the vine had budded and the pomegranates had bloomed."
- a. This speaks of her desire to be informed about God's work in other places and also her care and concern about other ministries besides her own.
 - b. She goes down "to see the verdure of the valley". Webster defines verdure as the fresh vibrant greenness of flourishing vegetation. This speaks of the flourishing and mature work of God in other places.
 - c. "The vine had budded..." speaks of a struggling and immature Church or ministry. The vine speaks of the Church and the budding vine speaks of a Church that is still growing and yet to be matured and fruitful.
 - d. We need to be committed, to love and to care for both types of ministries – both successful and struggling ministries.
 - i. We are not to be intimidated nor threatened nor envy "flourishing" ministries, but rejoice and celebrate with their success.
 - ii. We are not to be dismayed nor despised nor be critical of "immature" ministries, but we should help, encourage and embrace the budding or struggling ministries.
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- e. The blossoming pomegranates speak of individual believers. She goes down to invest into the budding vine that had not yet matured instead of being impatient with them. (Song. 6:11)
- f. The Bride sees the budding virtues in others as the Lord saw her virtues in seed form. Her enthusiasm for them comes from His enthusiasm for her while she was immature. (Song. 4:1 – 5)

E. MATURE LOVE FOR GOD'S WHOLE CHURCH OVERCOMES HER (Song. 6:12)

1. While she is down in the valley working with the budding vineyard, suddenly her soul becomes like the chariots of her noble people.
 - a. This depicts the zeal she feels for others. The Bride's soul moved like a chariot.
 - b. In the ancient world, a chariot was the fastest and easiest way to travel with luggage over a long distance. The best chariots belonged to nobles or members of royal families.
 - c. KJV translates "noble people," as "Ammi-Nadib" which is the name of a prince.
2. "My soul had made me" (my desire set me among, NIV) – Her soul was made like a king's chariot that moved swiftly. In other words, she suddenly found a strong desire to serve God's people.
 - a. As she went down to see how the work of God was progressing, she was suddenly overcome with desire to help others. She is "beside herself" or is compelled by love. (2 Cor. 5:11, 14)
 - b. Instead of being put off by the immaturity, pride, wrong applications of the Word and lack of discernment, of these "budding vines," she is surprised by the tender compassion that she feels.
 - c. Her heart moves forward in this burden without any resistance like a swiftly moving chariot. She is surprised by this new movement of her heart.
 - d. Before she was even aware, she had new desires and burdens with a great enthusiasm to help others. This is the work of the Spirit.
3. God loves the whole Church, not just the part we are involved in. He wants us to have ownership of the whole Church, and not merely the small part under our authority.
4. Zeal for the whole Church is foundational to unity in the End-Time Church. (John 17:21)
5. The Lord is raising up shepherds who care about His larger purposes and train people to love the whole Church. She is filled with love for the Body - like Joseph was for his brothers - without any sense of bitterness over the way she was mistreated. (Gen. 50:15 – 21)

6. The Bride follows through on this burden by walking it out with diligence. (Song. 7:12)

F. THE TWO RESPONSES OF THE CHURCH TOWARDS THE BRIDE (Song. 6:13)

1. The first response to the Bride is one of respect and admiration.
 - a. The daughters of Jerusalem wanted to seek the Lord with the Bride in Song. 6:1. Here, they urgently express this desire to learn from her by crying out to her four times “to return.”
 - b. They wanted her to return from her labors in the garden within the valley seen in Song. 6:11 – 12.
 - c. The Ephesian elders wept because Paul left them to go to other parts of the Lord's vineyard. (Acts 20:37 – 38)
2. The Bride is called the Shulamite because she grew up in the Israelite city of Shunem.
 - a. This is the only place in Song of Songs in which the Bride is called the Shulamite. Solomon and Shunem come from the same root word that means peace.
 - b. Jesus and His Bride have the same name.
3. The second response is one of sarcasm from the jealous watchmen - those who had recently struck and wounded her in Song. 5:7.
 - a. They sarcastically challenge the daughters' respect for the Bride who they had recently censored by saying, “What do you see in the Shulamite?” or “Why do you want her to return?”
 - b. This undermines their desire to look to the Bride for spiritual input.
4. The dance of two camps speaks of the conflict between the daughters and the watchmen over the Bride.
 - a. The KJV translates this as “the dance of the two armies,” NAS as the “dance of the two companies,” and the NIV translates it as “the camp of Mahanaim.”
 - b. Mahanaim in Hebrew may be translated as “two camps, two armies,” or as the name of the city. Since Mahanaim is the city in which Jacob and Esau had a great conflict, either translation brings us to the same conclusion. (Song. 6:13)
 - c. Mahanaim is famous for the conflict between Jacob and Esau. In Gen. 32, Esau pursued Jacob with the intent of killing him because Jacob had stolen his birthright.
 - d. At Mahanaim, Jacob divided his people into two camps so Esau could only destroy one if he caught them. Jacob saw angels at Mahanaim that intervened to help him in this great conflict. (Gen. 32:1 – 2)

5. The dance is an interaction between two camps (or companies) in the Body of Christ. This is a dance of spiritual warfare that also involves two realms in the spirit (i.e. angelic and demonic).
6. There are always two extreme positions in the Body of Christ. Those who pursue Jesus with great fervency and those who do not. The issue of wholeheartedness is the core issue of many divisions.
7. Jesus brought division between the sincere and the insincere, not between the mature and the immature. The Lord will unify the Church after He purges her of compromise. (Matt. 10:34 – 35)
8. Saul's attacks on David are representative of the two opposing camps. Paul's ministry brought division as he confronted disobedience to God and turned the world upside down. (Acts 17:6)

G. THE BRIDE IS VINDICATED BY DISCERNING BELIEVERS (Song. 7:1 – 5)

1. This passage answers the sarcastic question, "Who is the Shulamite?"
 - a. The Bride is vindicated first by sincere believers. (Song. 7:1 – 5)
 - b. Next the Lord Himself vindicates her and promises to release a greater measure of the Spirit upon her. (Song. 7:6 – 9)
 - c. The Holy Spirit always raises up sincere believers to vindicate those who radically pursue the Lord as His Bride.
2. These sincere ones discern many of the same affirmations that Jesus gave the Bride in Song. 4:1 – 5. They speak of ten virtues in the Bride, just as she spoke of ten virtues of Jesus in Song. 5:10 – 16.
3. It is good to compare the daughters' ten affirmations of the Bride in Song. 7:1 – 5 with the eight that Jesus gave to her in Song. 4:1 – 5. There are four main differences.
 - a. In Song. 4:1 – 5, Jesus began by describing her head. Six of the eight affirmations given were about her head. Jesus then described the rest of her.
 - b. In Song. 7:1 – 5, however, the daughters started by describing her feet as they worked upwards to the head. Four of the affirmations are related to her head.
 - c. The qualities in Song. 7 relate to her ministry. In Song. 4, the focus is on her character.
4. We also see what the Lord delights in when He sees these ten characteristics and what He wants when bringing us to maturity. They are practical definitions of holiness and fruitfulness.

5. Headings given in many Biblical translations describe "the Beloved" as speaking. But it is clear, from the context, that the daughters of Jerusalem are speaking in Song. 7:1 – 5 and that Jesus is speaking in Song. 7:6.
 - a. The daughters call the Bride the "Prince's daughter" in Song. 7:1, whereas Jesus calls the Bride "My love" or "My spouse" each time throughout Song of Songs.
 - b. In Song. 7:5, Jesus is referred to as "a King" instead of Him speaking in the first person to the Bride.
 - c. In Song. 7:8, Jesus speaks in the first person saying, "I will," indicating a change of speakers in Song. 7:6 – 9 from Song. 7:1 – 5.
6. The daughters take a stand for the Bride declaring that "she is beautiful" and by calling her the prince's daughter which points to her royal character or character befitting of royalty. We all have a royal bloodline through our new birth. (Song. 7:1)
7. The Bride's feet in sandals speak of evangelism. Her success in evangelism is a sign of her beauty. (Song. 7:1)
 - a. Our feet are to be shod by the preparation of the Gospel. How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news. The places our feet tread speaks of our inheritance. (Eph. 6:15; Isa. 52:7; Josh.1:3)
 - b. Shoes speak of prosperity and honor. The poor in the ancient world often did not have shoes. Bare feet speak symbolically of shame, poverty, and humiliation. (Luke 15:22)
8. The Bride's thighs or legs speak of the strength behind her walk in God. (Song. 7:1)
 - a. Jesus' legs are like pillars of marble in Song. 5:15. The curves of her thighs speak of the muscular definition in her legs giving her strength.
 - b. This athletic feature was developed through much discipline. Thus, her strong walk is costly and esteemed as rare like the jewels worked on by a skillful workman.
9. The navel speaks of the nourishment a child receives in their mother's womb. This refers to our formative years in the Lord as the time in which our inner life in God is developed. (Song. 7:2)
 - a. A rounded goblet speaks of a healthy navel. This is opposite of being malnourished. A goblet which lacks no beverage speaks of receiving a full range of nourishment.
 - b. She is healthy with a balanced diet with all the necessary nutrients for a strong life. This speaks of a good spiritual foundation in her life.
10. The daughters see the Bride as being prepared for the coming harvest. (Song. 7:2)
 - a. A heap of wheat speaks of an abundance, which only occurs during the harvest. She is pictured as pregnant (i.e. large waist) with an abundant harvest.

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- b. She is pregnant with the harvest wheat that is set about with lilies. The harvest that comes forth from her will be established in purity and holiness.
11. Breasts speak of the ability to nurture others. (Song. 7:3)
- a. Babes are nurtured through milk from the breast. She is ready to nurture the harvest that she gives birth to.
- b. Her breasts are like youthful fawns (i.e. young deer less than one-year-old) in contrast to being elderly and without the ability to nurture with milk.
- c. The twins of a gazelle speak of a double portion in her ability to nurture. This is in contrast to the little sister (i.e. immature believer) who is not prepared to nurture others in Song. 8:8.
12. In Scripture, the neck speaks of the will that can be stiff-necked – resistant – or submissive. The rebellious neck speaks of pride (Isa. 3:16). The Bride's will is like an ivory tower which is rare and costly. Her resolute choices are as costly as an ivory tower which provides her protection. (Song. 7:4)
13. In Song. 7:4, eyes speak of her ability to receive revelation. She has keen spiritual insight. (Song. 1:15; 4:2, 9; 6:5)
- a. In Song. 4:1, Jesus compared her eyes to dove' eyes speaking of her purity and loyalty. Here, her eyes are like the pools in Heshbon. These pools were not muddy but clean and easy to see through.
- b. To see clearly is our first priority because seeing is the doorway to growing spiritually. When we see differently we will feel differently. (Phil. 3:8 – 10)
- c. The gate of Bath Rabbim was a resort area with clean water in the once royal city of Heshbon. (Num. 21:25 – 26)
14. The nose speaks of discernment. (Song. 7:4)
- a. A tower provides protection. Her nose is like a protective tower that looked toward Damascus the capital of Syria (i.e. Israel's greatest enemy). Lebanon was on the north side of Judah facing Syria.
- b. She had discernment of her fiercest enemies.
15. The Bride's thought life is powerful like the beautiful mountain tops of Carmel. Her thought life is filled with royal thoughts or crowned like Mount Carmel in Isa. 35:2. Our thoughts are significant in spiritual warfare, in particular thoughts related to our image of God. (Song. 7:5)
16. In Scripture, hair spoke of one's dedication to God. (Song. 7:5)
- a. The hair of the Nazirite was an outward sign of their dedication to God. A Nazirite did not cut their hair. (Num. 6)
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- b. Her hair is like purple which speaks of royalty. Her dedication is like the resolution of a king (NAS says "The King").
- 17. The Bride's dedication holds the heart of God. (Song. 7:5)
 - a. His love is so powerful that it binds Him to weak people who love Him. It is His glory to be captivated by love for His people.
 - b. His unique ability is to love those so much lower than Him. His heart is "held by the tresses". He possesses all authority, but gives His heart without any reservation to His Bride.
- 18. God's love binds Him to His people. For example, five intercessors captured His heart: Daniel, Noah, Job, Moses and Samuel. (Ezek. 14:14; Jer.15:1; Ex. 32:7 – 14)

H. THE BRIDE IS VINDICATED BY JESUS (Song. 7:6 – 9a)

- 1. Jesus vindicates His Bride in Song. 7:6. The watchmen asked, "Who is the Shulamite that anyone should pay attention to her?"
- 2. Jesus' heart is truly held captive by the Bride in Song. 7:6 as He says, "How beautiful and pleasant you are, O love, with your delights!". Jesus sees His people as beautiful and pleasant. His fruit is sweet and pleasant to her in Song. 1:16 and Song. 2:3. Now, her fruit is pleasant to Him.
- 3. "O love" expresses the passion in God's heart for her.
 - a. God loves us to the measure He loves Jesus. It is beyond human comprehension. (John 15:9; 17:23; Eph. 3:18)
 - b. Our love is greater than wine to Him. There is nothing more delightful to Jesus than the love of His people. (Song. 4:10)
 - c. Our voice is sweet and our face lovely to Him even in our weakness and struggle. (Song. 2:14)
- 4. Jesus affirms the stature of the Bride's spiritual maturity as proclaimed by the daughters in Song. 7:1 – 5. (Song. 7:7)
 - a. A palm tree is a sign of victory, conquest and maturity. (Rev. 7:4; Jer. 10:5)
 - b. A palm tree thrives even in a drought because its roots go down deep, finding water far below the surface. Thus, it grows exceptionally high and straight. Strong winds cannot break a palm tree.
- 5. Her breasts or ability to nurture, are like the clusters of a palm tree that nourishes many. (Song. 7:7)

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6. Jesus promises to “take hold” of His people or to release a great manifestation of His presence through them. (Song. 7:8)
 - a. In John 14:32, Jesus said that He is the vine and we are the branches that He releases His power through.
 - b. Jesus promises to "go up" to the palm tree to take hold of His servants. (Song. 7:8; John 15:5)
 7. As the Lord “lays hold” of His people, He commissions her in three significant ways. (Song. 7:8 – 9a)
 - a. His first commission is to nurture others in the power of the Spirit. Her breasts are to nurture people with the dimension of the Holy Spirit’s activity operating in her in a new measure. (Song. 7:8c)
 - b. His second commission is to let the fragrance of her breath refresh people like apples. Her breath speaks of her inner life. Apples speak of refreshing in Song. 2:3. It is to refresh others in the Spirit. (Song. 7:8d)
 - c. His third commission is that to impart intimacy with God to others like offering the best of wine. The mouth throughout Song of Songs speaks of the kisses of the mouth (Song. 1:2, 4:3, 5:16). Our intimacy with Jesus is the best thing that the Spirit works in us for Jesus. (Song. 7:9a)
 8. We are to give Him the best we have in our relationship with Him. We must not neglect our intimacy with Him for any reason.
 9. Jesus said that the roof of her mouth was the best wine of the Holy Spirit. (Song. 7:9a)
 - a. The roof of the mouth refers to the palate of the mouth or the taste of her mouth. The Hebrew word is roof or palate. It is simply that which comes from her mouth.
 - b. It is to be the best wine or that which brings the greatest joy to Jesus. (Song. 4:10)
 - c. The wine speaks of the influences of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18). The best wine to God is the wine of our intimacy. It is the most pleasurable thing to God outside of their fellowship within the Godhead.
 - d. The wine of all the works of His Kingdom, the best work of the Holy Spirit or the wine that Jesus enjoys most is when the Church walks in mature love. (John 17:26; Matt. 22:37)
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IHOP - ONE THING MINISTRIES

The Bride's Mature Partnership With Jesus

(Song. 7:9b – 8:4)

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Song. 7:9b – 8:4 describes the Bride's mature partnership with Jesus.
 - a. In Song. 6:11 – 12, the Bride committed herself to minister to those who were spiritually immature. Jesus equipping His Bride to walk in partnership with Him is a primary theme of the Song of Songs.
 - b. In Song. 7:8 – 9a, Jesus commissioned her in a three-fold ministry:
 - i. To nurture and disciple others.
 - ii. To refresh others by releasing the presence of the Spirit.
 - iii. To teach and empower others into intimacy with Jesus.
2. The Bride immediately says "yes" to the three-fold commissioning from Song. 7:8 – 9a. We see her enthusiasm for this as she says, "The wine goes down smoothly for my Beloved". She is embracing the Great Commission and is committed to the discipling of nations. (Matt. 28:19 – 20)
3. A mature believer is one who partner with Jesus in fulfilling the Great Commission that flows out of intimacy with Jesus.
4. There are three general categories of believers:
 - a. One who has an active involvement in ministry without an intimate relationship with God.
 - b. One who is Intimate with God but has no involvement in ministry.
 - c. One who has ministry involvement that flows out of intimate relationship with God.
5. The Shulamite woman finally becomes fully mature as a Bride in Song. 7:9b – 8:4, where she is wholehearted in love for Jesus and partnering with Him in doing the Great Commission. Jesus answered her two-fold prayer in Song. 1:4 where she asked for intimacy and partnership with Jesus.

6. Song. 7:9b – 8:4 gives us a powerful prophetic pattern and describes the four-fold aspect of mature Bridal partnership:
 - a. Bridal partnership expressed through obedience and love for Jesus (Song. 7:9b – 10)
 - b. Bridal partnership expressed through intercession (Song. 7:11 – 13)
 - c. Bridal partnership expressed through boldness, wisdom and humility (Song. 8:1 – 2)
 - d. Bridal partnership expressed through unbroken union with God (Song. 8:3 – 4)
7. These are four principles that empower us to serve in a long and sustained season yet not suffering burnout in ministry. Four primary causes of burnout in ministry:
 - a. Seeking our identity and defining our success from ministry
 - b. Serving from the place of prayerlessness
 - c. Fearing men, having jealousy and pride
 - d. Serving in a prolonged season without waiting on God

B. BRIDAL PARTNERSHIP EXPRESSED IN MATURE OBEDIENCE AND LOVE (Song. 7:9b – 10)

1. The thought flow changes significantly in the middle of Song. 7:9. In response to the affirmation that the Bride receives from Jesus in Song. 7:6 – 9a, she enthusiastically proclaims her agreement with the three things that Jesus commissioned her to do in Song. 7:8 – 9a.
 - a. The Lord speaks in the first line of verse 9 and the Bride speaks in the final two lines of verse 9.
 - b. The language of the Bride is clear in each reference throughout the Song of Songs. She addresses Jesus as "my Beloved".
 - c. Jesus never refers to the Bride with this title. Rather, He refers to her as "My love", "My beautiful one", or "My fair one".
2. She is receiving the leadership and guidance of the Holy Spirit – "THE WINE goes down smoothly for my Beloved," (Song. 7:9b)
 - a. This wine speaks of the influences, leadership and promptings of the Holy Spirit. (Eph. 5:18)
 - b. It is vital for us to be led by the Spirit in our walk and ministry with the LORD. (John 5:19 – 20; 14:26; 16:23; Gal. 5:18; Zech. 4:6)

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3. She commits herself to instant and full obedience to the Holy Spirit – "The wine GOES DOWN SMOOTHLY for my Beloved," (Song. 7:9b)
 - a. She easily receives this wine of the Spirit and assimilates it without any resistance.
 - b. There is no hindrance in her to the wine of the Holy Spirit's promptings, leadings, and influences. She does not choke on this wine, but rather, she fully receives God's wine without resistance.
 - c. The mature Bride does not want the Lord to have to wrestle with her to obey Him in any area of life. This speaks of instant and full obedience in each area of her life. She does not choke on the mandates of the Lord.
 - d. In Song. 2:8 – 10, the Lord called her to the mountains. She choked on that wine or that mandate of the Holy Spirit. She choked on that word from the Holy Spirit. But here she is not choking on God's Word. It goes down very smoothly, having no resistance at all.
 - e. This is just a poetic way of talking about full unity with the Holy Spirit with no resistance. In the poetic language of love, when she says "the wine goes down smoothly", she is referring to her full agreement with the Holy Spirit.
 4. She relates obediently to the Holy Spirit out of love for Jesus – "The wine goes down smoothly FOR MY BELOVED," (Song. 7:9b)
 - a. She is obedient to the Holy Spirit because of her love for Jesus. She has determined to live a lifestyle that does not quench the Holy Spirit because of love.
 - b. The reason she accepts the Holy Spirit's leadership so wholeheartedly is because of her love for Jesus. She knows the Holy Spirit comes to help her give her heart more fully to Jesus.
 - c. She approaches the divine promise in John 14:12 to release a great measure of power to do the "greater works than these". We can apply the promise of God's power to walking in the First Commandment and not just in the areas of healing and power evangelism.
 5. The Holy Spirit is using her as a voice to awaken others who are sleeping spiritually – "The wine goes down smoothly for my Beloved, moving gently the lips of sleepers." (Song. 7:9b)
 - a. The wine of the Holy Spirit in her experience is able to awaken others who are spiritual sleepers. The Lord uses her to awaken people who are sleeping spiritually. In other words, she brings others to a life of worship and passion for Jesus.
 - b. The Holy Spirit gently awakens the sleepers. The sleepers in Ephesians 5 were carnal believers at Ephesus who were dull of spirit. The apostle Paul cries out, "awake O sleeper!" calling believers who are asleep spiritually. (Eph. 5:14 – 18)
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- c. The Spirit will minister through her to those who are asleep as she obeys Him in her own life. (Song. 7:9)
- d. The proof that the Spirit has awakened the sleepers is when their speech comes under His leadership. He will move the sleepers so that they speak in purity and righteousness.
- e. The Spirit gently woos us to speak on His behalf with subtle impressions. He calls us to voluntary love, therefore, He will gently move us without violating our free will.

C. THE BRIDE'S TWO-FOLD SPIRITUAL IDENTITY IN THE LOVE OF GOD (Song. 7:10)

1. The Bride's obedience in Song. 7:9 is rooted in this two-fold spiritual identity.
 - a. Her Spiritual Identity 1: She sees herself as one that Jesus desires – “His desire is towards me.”
 - i. The most prominent theme in Song of Songs is the revelation of God's desire for us. She has deep insight into Jesus' affection and enjoyment of her. This revelation will powerfully change us. This is her primary motivation for obedience and diligence. (Song. 4:9; 6:4 – 5; 7:6 – 10)
 - ii. Insight into God's desire gives us strength to refuse to live by the opinions of others. This gives us emotional security. We speak the Word to the enemy, saying, “It is written: ‘His desire is towards me, regardless of others rejecting me’”.
 - b. Her Spiritual Identity 2: She sees herself as belonging totally to Jesus as His beloved – “I am my Beloved's,”
 - i. She sees herself as a lover of God in saying, "I am my Beloved's" or "I belong to Jesus, I'm under His leadership, I want to please Him, His desires are what I care most about."
 - ii. She has revelation of Jesus' total ownership of her. She exists for Him without other considerations. She serves God without concern for what happens to her. (1 Cor. 6:20; Rev. 14:4)
 - iii. Her focus is now entirely on Him, without self-interest. The question of what He desires is the most relevant issue in her life. This is what she values most.
 - c. Note that she is her Beloved's because His desire is for her. Understanding His desire comes first. (1 John 4:19)
2. We are defined most by the fact that we are desired by God and that we desire and love Him. We confess our identity, “I'm a lover of God. That is who I am. That is what I do.”

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3. We live a life of sacrificial obedience because He already desires us and not so much to gain His love. The wine goes down smoothly because Jesus desires her and she belongs to Him. (Song. 7:9 – 10)

 4. Song. 7:10 is a statement of maturity. She has become mature and she has moved from being self-centered to being God-centered. Notice the transition from a "self-centered" to a "God-centered" focus through the four inheritance statements (Song. 1:14; 2:16; 6:3; 7:10):
 - a. "My Beloved is to me..." (Song. 1:13 – 14)
 - i. She is saying, "I have rights to enjoy Him". However, she does not yet acknowledge His rights to enjoy her.

 - ii. Her only focus is that she is loved and has an inheritance in Him. She has little regard at this stage for His inheritance in her.

 - b. "My beloved is mine and I am His..." (Song. 2:16)
 - i. She is saying, "He is mine, He belongs to me. I have rights to Him. However, I now realize that I also belong to Him."

 - ii. She now adds a new dimension of His ownership of her life. She now sees the necessity of loving Him because she is His inheritance. However, it is her secondary concern at this stage of maturity.

 - c. "I am my Beloved's and He is mine..." (Song. 6:3)
 - i. She is saying, "I belong to Him. He owns me, yet He still belongs to me and I still have rights to Him."

 - ii. She reverses the priority of her concern. His inheritance in her is now first in her heart. Here the order is reversed. Her inheritance in Him is vital yet secondary. She cares first about His inheritance.

 - iii. This is a significant reversal from Song. 1 – 2. Her understanding is still two-dimensional.

 - d. "I am My Beloved's and His desire is toward me." (Song. 7:10)
 - i. She is saying, "I belong to Him. He owns me entirely. His concerns and desires are what I care most about."

 - ii. She is filled with the reality of her love toward Him and His total ownership of her. The Father's love for Jesus is continually being imparted to her (John 17:26; Rom. 5:5). She unconditionally serves God with little concern for what happens to her. Her focus is now entirely on Him, without any self-interest.

 - iii. There is another significant application of this truth of "His desire." She is committed to whatever He desires. His concerns and desires are what she cares most about. The question of what He desires becomes the most
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relevant issue in her life. What is it that He most desires? This is what she will value and honor most.

- iv. She finally discovers that what He most desires, is "her." Therefore, she must love and value herself for His sake – "she" is the focus of His desires. This significantly effects how she defines and feels about herself.

D. Jesus has great desire for His people (Song. 7:10)

1. Our greatest glory is that we can move God's heart. His heart is deeply moved by our steady love for Him. The movements of our heart are so important to God that they are recorded in His books. (Ps. 56:8)
2. Do you know the way you move Him?
 - a. He is overcome by weak people who truly love Him. Our responsive love for Him is more precious to Him than we understand.
 - b. The Bride did not know the impact her love was having on Jesus' heart because she did not feel His presence in the time of testing. Jesus reveals how He feels about our faithful love when we are in times of testing. (Song. 6:5)
3. Jesus' love for us is so powerful that it binds Him to weak people who love Him.
 - a. It is His glory and not His weakness to be captivated by love for His people. His ability to love those so much lower than Him is unique.
 - b. Jesus' heart is truly held captive by the Bride. (Song. 7:5)
4. God loves us to the measure He loves Jesus. This is beyond our comprehension. (John 15:9; 17:23; Eph. 3:18)
5. There is nothing more delightful to Jesus than the love of His people. Our voice is sweet and our face is lovely to Him even in our weakness and struggle. (Song. 2:14)
6. We need to regularly pray and ask God to release this revelation to us and pour out His love into our heart. (2 Thess. 3:5; Rom. 5:5)

E. THE MATURE BRIDAL PARTNERSHIP (Song. 7:11 – 12)

1. Song. 7:11 – 12 gives us five truths that reveal the mature Bridal partnership.
 - a. The Bride desires to disciple the nations with the One who desires her. She wants to be involved in bringing others under the Lordship of Jesus. In the overflow of the Divine affirmation from Song. 6 – 7, she is equipped to pour herself out in service as a co-worker together with the Lord.
 - b. In this passage, she is focusing on "running" in servant ministry that is the second half of her original theme prayer in Song. 1:4. She wants to run now.

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- c. She is interceding that He might come with her to the fields and villages. She is now interceding that they might run together in anointed ministry to the fields and villages.
 - d. In this passage she is running with Him. She is yoked with Him to bring others under the influences of the Holy Spirit.
2. “Come, my beloved...” – Our partnership with Jesus is expressed in our intercession to see more of His power released.
- a. In Song. 7:8, Jesus promised to release the Spirit into her life. She intercedes according to this promise.
 - b. Here, we see the Bride following through on her commitment to go forth into ministry. (Song. 6:11)
 - c. Earlier she went down to the garden to partner with Jesus in bringing up the immature ones under His blessing and leadership. Now, she intercedes that He would come with her in the sense of releasing His presence through her labors.
 - d. The cry, "Come" is the same intercessory prayer seen at the End-of-the-Age when the Spirit and the Bride both cry, "come" to the Lord. (Rev. 22:17)
 - e. She values the place of intercession for the release of His Spirit before she actually goes to the field and the villages.
 - f. She is remembering His prophetic promise, "I will come to the palm tree and take hold of its branches," in Song. 7:8 which spoke of His promise to release His Presence with power to her. She's interceding according to the prophetic promise.
 - g. Prayer has to be the core and centrality of all we do in ministry. (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4; 5; 14; Acts 6: 1 – 13; Acts 13:1 – 3)
3. “LET US go forth...LET US lodge...LET US set up early...LET US see...” – This speaks of her desire for mature Bridal Partnership with Jesus. She wants to work with Him instead of work for Him.
- a. She changed her language in Song. 6:11 from “I went down” to “let us go”. She uses "let us" four times in Song. 7:11 – 12 indicating that they work together.
 - b. Four times, she is asking Jesus to go with her. This is the same prayer as Moses in Exodus 22:12 – 17.
4. Four-fold commitment to the Bridal partnership. (Song. 7:11 – 12d)
- a. The Bride's commitment to the Great Commission – “Let us GO FORTH TO THE FIELD...”
 - i. Her desire to go to the harvest field. These are the field of labor which refer to the harvest. (John 4:35)
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- ii. The harvest field is singular whereas the villages are plural. The harvest is one although the Lord assigns each of us to specific places.
 - b. The Bride's willingness to serve for a "prolonged" session in the remote places – "Come, my Beloved...LET US LODGE in the villages."
 - i. She embraced the challenge to leave the comfort zone instead of staying at home in her own bed.
 - ii. She will lodge in a place that is not her normal dwelling. In other words, she says "yes" to the will of God. She will settle down in her spirit and stay until God releases her to go whether it is a week, month, year or a lifetime. She commits to stay until His business is finished.
 - iii. The villages speak of the small, out-of-the-way areas where Jesus has an inheritance and desires to build His Church. She sees God's value for unknown people and places, not just for the big cities.
 - c. The Bride's eagerness to embrace inconvenience and diligence in her labor – "LET US GET UP EARLY to the vineyards."
 - i. To get up early speaks of inconvenience, urgency and diligence in serving the Lord. She expresses her eagerness to embrace inconvenience and diligence in her labor.
 - ii. She goes to the vineyards early before she expends all of her resources on other things. To go late in the day would denote her service in the vineyard as secondary on her priority list.
 - d. The Bride's concern for the immature church believers – "LET US SEE if the vine has budded, whether the grape blossoms are open. And the pomegranates are in bloom."
 - i. Jesus used the prophetic exhortation of the budding vine to motivate her to leave the comfort zone. She is believing God to see the vine bud as Jesus prophetically promised her in order to motivate her to get off her bed. (Song. 2:11 – 13)
 - ii. "To see" the budding vine of the immature part of the Church is to recognize the value and needs associated with it.
 - iii. She takes time to get acquainted with the needs of others. She wants to see if God's purposes are maturing in other places.
 - iv. The budding vines, the grape blossoms and the blooming pomegranates speak of different people and ministries that need to grow into maturity. (Song. 4:12, 13; 6:11)
 - The budding vine speaks of an immature part of the Body of Christ. It is more difficult to labor where there is prevailing spiritual immaturity.
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- The pomegranates represent individual believers (Song. 4:13). There are many levels of growth among different individuals and she paid specific attention to each individual. She wanted to cultivate the purpose of God in individual persons.
5. Three-fold focus of our prayers:
- a. "Come, my beloved...to the field" – The fulfillment of the Great Commission.
 - b. "Come, my beloved...to the villages" – Strengthening of small, developing and struggling ministries.
 - c. "Come, my beloved...to the vineyards" – Maturity and strengthening of the Church and individual believers

F. THERE I WILL GIVE YOU MY LOVE (Song. 7:12)

1. The Bride experiences undistracted intimacy with Jesus in the midst of ministry.
 - a. "There" is the place of selfless labor, facing the risks of faith, disappointment and mistreatment.
 - b. She embraces two things – being drawn along in intimacy and running together in ministry. She learns to love Him while serving others instead of losing her intimacy in the rigors of ministry. (Song. 1:4)
 - c. She runs effectively with Jesus in the fields and villages that He might receive His inheritance from them.
2. Some of God's servants lose their intimacy because of the burden of labor in ministry. There are many ways that we can lose our intimacy in the midst of labor.
 - a. She is still a lover of God in the midst of the pressures of the immature Body of Christ. She will give Him her love not just in isolation, but also in the midst of labors, warfare, sacrifice, persecution and conflicts.
 - b. God is raising up a church that will maintain spiritually intimacy in the place of difficulty, persecution and disappointment. The mature Bride will not diminish her passionate love for Him.
 - c. In other words, He wanted her to bring together intimacy and servanthood without losing either. The Lord's plan is to have a Bride who works with Him, in the midst of extravagantly loving Him.
 - d. It is one thing to give Jesus our love in private with no distractions. It is a different thing to give Him our love in the midst of battle when we are hard-pressed on every side.

3. How our first love can be diminished:
 - a. By getting our identity from our ministry function. This causes us to be unable to receive correction without defensiveness. Do not yield to discouragement that comes with criticism. All leaders experience criticism, which sometimes distracts them from intimacy.
 - b. We must avoid pride traps in serving with a “Messiah” complex. In other words, if we do not do it nobody will, and then we imagine that the purpose of God will fall apart. This leads to us overworking. We must be free to release responsibility to others.
 - c. We must overcome fear and jealousy as we promote the labor of others. Some overwork themselves because they do not want anybody else to have the affection of their people. They lose their intimacy by overworking because of fear and jealousy.
 - d. We must avoid the perils of the perfectionist letting the work be done without the anxiety of making mistakes.

G. THE BRIDE WANTS JESUS TO ENJOY THE FRUIT OF HER LABOR

(Song. 7:12 – 13)

1. The fragrance of the mandrake flows as they labor in love together in the harvest.
 - a. The mandrake fruit has a purple flower with a beautiful fragrance. Mandrakes symbolize intimacy with God.
 - b. Barren women in ancient times used to use the mandrake fruit to enhance their chances of bearing children. It became known as a fruit associated with love and fertility. This is derived from story of Rachel, who while struggling with barrenness, was told by her sister Leah to use mandrakes. The unspoken idea was that she might gain a higher chance of fertility. (Gen. 30:1, 14 – 16)
 - c. This is the only time outside of the Song that the mandrake is mentioned in Scripture. Even to this day the mandrake fruit in Jewish traditions is known as a fruit associated with love.
2. The impact of her ministry results in pleasant fruit. There is joy in knowing that the fruit of her ministry is pleasant to Jesus. Having fruit at my gates speaks of it being before me. (Song. 4:16)
3. The Spirit anoints us to bear all manner of pleasant fruit, both new and old. Jesus spoke of drawing out of our treasury that which is old and new. This includes the proven truths from her past along with her former victories and experiences, as well as the new and fresh ones. (Matt. 13:52)

4. The Spirit gives us treasures from our life of loving obedience and faith that are laid up in heaven.
 - a. We lay them up to give to Jesus. She laid up pleasant fruits for Jesus her Beloved. (Matt. 6:20)
 - b. We will cast our treasure at His feet when we stand before Him. This stored-up treasure will be our crown on the last day. (Rev. 4:10)
 - c. Our life goal is to accumulate riches to offer at Jesus' feet on the last day. Our toil and sacrifice is motivated by love for Him. This is what compels us to go to the fields of service.

H. PARTNERSHIP EXPRESSED IN HER HUMILITY IN PUBLIC MINISTRY (Song. 8:1 – 2)

1. The mother throughout Song of Songs is a picture of the Church through history.
 - a. God is our father and the Church is spoken of as our mother.
 - b. The redeemed from history are represented as a "mother" that gave birth to Jesus (i.e. Man-child) and the believers that come after her. (Rev. 12:5, 17)
2. She longs to boldly show her loyalty and affection to Jesus in public. She prays, "O, that You, Jesus, were like my brother."
 - a. It was improper to express public affection to members of the opposite sex that were not in one's immediate family. She wishes that she could publicly relate to Jesus with the liberty that she had with a brother.
 - b. A woman at that time in history could be more "familiar in public" with her brother than her fiancé.
3. Like the apostles, she wants continual boldness in her life as expressed in the apostolic prayers. Boldness is more than a personality trait – it is also an operative work of the Spirit. (Acts 4:29; Eph. 6:19)
4. A brother who nursed at her mother's breasts speaks of a full brother instead of a half-brother.
 - a. Children from the same mother are meant to serve as a contrast to children from one father but different mothers.
 - b. In ancient times, men had several wives. Therefore, many siblings had the same father but a different mother. They often were rivals, just like Absalom was with Amnon. (2 Sam. 13)
5. The Bride prays that if she should find Jesus outside in a public place that she would be able to kiss Him without being despised. To kiss Jesus in public without being despised speaks of expressing the fullness of her heart to Him in public without being misunderstood and despised.

6. She recognizes the necessity to be restrained in public in certain aspects of her private life with Jesus. There are certain expressions of our life in God that are meant to be kept private. There are intimate expressions of prayer and worship that are not best suited for public settings. (1 Cor. 14:12, 19 – 20, 23)
7. She will be despised or labelled as “out of her mind” if she has an inappropriate boldness in public. It causes hindrances to the gospel. We don't express everything God gives us in every setting. We walk in love when we restrain our liberty on some occasions because of those who do not understand. (Rom. 14:14 – 15:2; 1 Cor. 14:6 – 33)

I. BRIDAL PARTNERSHIP IS EXPRESSED IN ANOINTED MINISTRY (Song. 8:2)

1. Jesus gives the Bride the dignity of leading and bringing Him into places that honor Him. She prays to be able to bring Jesus to places through anointed ministry. She longs to “bring Him” without seeking to establish her own name and ministry.
2. She prays, "I would lead You".
 - a. Jesus allows us to make some of the decisions in His kingdom. He blesses some of what we decide in the outworking of His purposes.
 - b. This reveals the dignity He has given us as co-heirs with Him. A mature believer only desires to lead Jesus in a way that honors Him. (Rom. 8:17)
3. She desires to bring Jesus to her mother's house or to those who had instructed her.
 - a. This speaks of those she has been in a long-term relationship with. It is to the very people that initially taught her the things of God.
 - b. It is sometimes more difficult to minister to those to whom we are in familiar relationships. A prophet is often not received in his hometown. (Matt. 13:57)
 - c. It is easiest to hold back when we are with familiar relationships. She is willing to minister the truths of Jesus in the context of the people who knew her when she was just starting to walk with God.
4. She desires to bring the deep things of God to her mother's house or to those in the church.
5. Why does she want to stir up her old friends in the deep things of God?
 - a. She has gratitude toward those who taught her in her beginning days. She does not forget her roots in a time of blessing.
 - b. She honors the people that first trained her by seeking to serve them. She wants to return blessing to those who helped her.

- c. We must honor the heritage the Lord in his sovereignty gave us. We must not be critical of those we started with because they don't always grow into the deeper things of God.
6. The Bride longs to give her best to Him by praying, "I would cause You to drink of spiced wine, of the juices of my pomegranate". One would mix wine with spices when hosting an honored guest because it a much more pleasant drink. (Song. 5:1)
 - a. It was much more expensive but it was appropriate when seeking to honor a guest with their best. She longs to give her best to Jesus regardless of how much it costs her.
 - b. In saying, "I would cause You to drink" she promises to attend to His every desire as she serves Him as her honored guest.
 - c. The juice of my pomegranate speaks of the sweet things of grace that she experiences in her inner life. The foundation of her ministry is what she experiences in the secret place with God.

J. PARTNERSHIP EXPRESSED IN UNBROKEN UNION WITH JESUS (Song. 8:3 – 4)

1. Jesus answers her prayer to be close to her (Song. 8:1) and fulfils His promise to lay hold of her (Song. 7:8).
2. The left hand of God speaks of the activity of God that we cannot see with our natural eyes.
 - a. It is the hand that is under her head therefore, it is out of view. The Lord does many things for us that we do not see.
 - b. He withholds and releases many things to bless, provide and protect us. He spares us from troubles that we are not even aware of in this age.
3. The right hand of God speaks of the visible or discernable activity of God.
 - a. The idea is that Solomon stood in front of the Bride to embrace her. She can see and feel it. This speaks of the "sweet" manifest presence of God that can be felt and discerned.
 - b. At times, we feel our heart tenderized by the working of God's right hand. A physical embrace is easy to discern thus it speaks of the manifest activity of God.
 - c. The Lord allows Himself to be found by her as He manifests His embrace to her. The embrace of God tenderizes her heart.
4. The Holy Spirit guards us in strategic spiritual seasons. (Song. 8:4)
 - a. The Spirit speaks here. He has ordained strategic seasons in each person's spiritual life. There are seasons, where He desires to establish our heart in new and deep revelations of His heart.

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- b. The Spirit's agenda for the Bride in this season was to impart boldness and humility in her. (Song. 8:1 – 2)
 5. The daughters of Jerusalem represent believers who lack discernment of the various operations of the Spirit and the different seasons in God.
 6. The Spirit charges other believers to not disrupt or disturb the devoted ones with the Bride's heart in this season by their opinions and judgments.
 7. In the phrase, "Until it pleases", the Hebrew can be translated as it, he or she.
 - a. The NAS accurately translates the phrase as "Don't awaken love until she pleases" instead of "until it pleases."
 - b. If the Hebrew was translated "He" it would refer to the Lord being stirred to action by the daughters of Jerusalem. The Lord has no need for this nor does He need to be protected by the gentleness pictured by the gazelles.
 - c. It is the Bride that must be protected from distraction.
 8. Three times Jesus speaks this phrase, "Don't arouse or awaken my love until it pleases." (Song. 2:7; 3:5; 8:4). In Song. 2:7, He uses the same phrase "don't disturb her" but adds the phrase "by the gazelles of the field" because she was immature and lacked stability, being so easily tossed to and fro. (Eph. 4:14)
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The Bridal Seal of Mature Love

(Song. 8:5-7)

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Song. 8:5 – 7 is the pinnacle of the entire Song of Songs where the Shulamite woman came forth as one who “love and learn” upon the Beloved.
2. This is the entire goal and end-purpose of Song of Songs: The Holy Spirit is preparing a Bride who has a loving and leaning heart for Jesus.
3. Song. 8:5 is the ultimate aim in our pursuit of God – one who loves and leans and even “limps”. Why the need to “limp”? Because no one can fully love and fully lean until we “limp”.
 - a. “Limping” is about walking and embracing apostolic weakness. It’s voluntary and yet there is no other option to fully love God. (2 Cor. 12:7 – 9)
 - b. The entire journey in Song of Songs is to cause the Shulamite woman to “limp”.
4. The Bride’s journey begins with a cry for the kisses of God’s Word in Song. 1:2 and ends with a seal of Jesus on her heart in Song. 8:6 – an impartation of God’s fire.
5. This is one of the glorious promise and invitation of God in the Bible. It is an empowerment and anointing of our heart to love Jesus in a consistent and sustained way.
6. It is the greatest accomplishment of all human endeavors. The highest magnitude of any supernatural power available for any human being is to love Jesus with our all, to obey Jesus until the end, and to love and lean on Him.
7. Song. 8:5 – 7 gives us a powerful prophetic picture of the End-Time Church – the Bride of Christ. It is also the principle of how God is going to prepare and empower the End-Time Church to arise as the Bride, who is wholehearted in love and mature in obedience.
8. Song. 8:5 – 7 is the highest point of the Gospel story: the arising of a Bride who is wholehearted in love (i.e. loving heart) and fully mature (i.e. leaning heart). The mission of the Father is to bring forth an eternal companion for Jesus – A Bride who is equally-yoked with Jesus in love, in maturity, and in partnership. (Rev. 19:7)

B. OUTLINE OF Song. 8:5 – 7

1. The Holy Spirit is preparing a Bride who has a loving and leaning heart. This is one of the key truths of Song of Songs, and the main purpose of her journey in the book, which culminates in these three verses. She comes forth leaning and loving at the end of this age.
2. The Holy Spirit's prophetic declaration of the victorious and overcoming Bride. (Song. 8:5a, b)
 - a. A powerful prophetic picture of the coming forth of a victorious and an overcoming End-Time Church. (Rev. 15:2; 22:17)
 - b. The Divine Hope – this is who I will be.
3. Jesus' declaration of His work of grace in preparing the Bride. (Song. 8:5c, d, e)
 - a. He is committed in preparing us to be His Bride. (Eph. 5:27 – 32)
 - b. The Divine Grace – this is my confidence. (Phil. 1:6)
4. Jesus' invitation to His Bride in asking for the Bridal seal of fire. (Song. 8:6a, b)
 - a. The highest gift of God to mankind is the ability to love Him with abandonment.
 - b. The Divine Invitation – one can ask for us.
5. The anointing and empowerment of God's fire to love and to overcome. (Song. 8:6)
 - a. The anointing to love God is the greatest gift that the Holy Spirit imparts to a believer. (John 17:26)
 - b. The Divine Source – not by our sheer discipline or by our strength. (Zech. 4:6)

C. THE PROPHETIC DECLARATION OF THE COMING FORTH OF THE BRIDE (Song. 8:5a, b)

1. "WHO IS THIS coming up from the wilderness..."
 - a. The Holy Spirit is giving a powerful prophetic declaration of the coming forth of a glorious, victorious and overcoming Bride!
 - b. The Holy Spirit is proclaiming the inevitable: the coming forth of a Bride who is fully mature and wholehearted in love. (Rev. 19:7 – 8)
 - c. Four-fold anticipation:
 - i. The Father is waiting – this is His ultimate mission. (Rev. 19:7)
 - ii. Jesus is waiting – this is the primary reason that He is returning for. (John 17:24)

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- iii. The Holy Spirit is working – this is His number one agenda. (John 16: 13)
 - iv. All creation is waiting – this is the blessed hope of the earth. (Romans 8:19)
2. “Who is this COMING UP from the wilderness...”
- a. The Lord sees her coming up in victory through the wilderness. She comes up. She is not descending, rather she is ascending. She did not quit in the wilderness.
 - b. “Coming up” speaks of her victory in the midst of testing, temptations and difficulties that purified her.
 - c. “Coming up” also speaks of her ascending at the Second Coming or in the resurrection from this fallen world to enter the eternal city.
 - d. In Song. 3:6 the Holy Spirit asked this same question, “Who is this coming out from the wilderness?”
 - i. He was describing the Lord Jesus coming up after the cross and in the resurrection from the wilderness of this fallen world as He ascended to the right hand of the Father.
 - ii. The “coming out” of Jesus provided us the grace for victory. (Rom 5: 17)
3. “Who is this coming up FROM THE WILDERNESS...”
- a. The wilderness, in a personal sense, speaks of our testing, temptations and difficulties in this life as God trains us in righteousness. (Song. 4:16; Rom. 5:1 – 5)
 - b. The wilderness, in a general sense, speaks of the fallen world that is filled with sinful human beings who under the influence of Satan – the temptations, lusts and the lulls of the fallen world. (1 John 2:15 – 16)
 - c. The wilderness, in a spiritual sense, speaks of the attack of Satan. (Eph. 6:10 – 13; 1 Peter 5:8 – 9)
 - d. The wilderness also speaks of overcoming the Great Tribulation at the End-of-the-Age. (Rev. 2 – 3; 14:12)
4. “...LEANING upon her Beloved?”
- a. The entire Song of Songs is a journey where God is preparing a Bride that will fully love and fully lean on Jesus. It is a powerful prophetic picture of the End-Time Church who is wholehearted in love and fully mature.
 - b. The Holy Spirit is preparing a Bride with a loving and a leaning heart. This is one of the key truths of Song of Songs.
 - i. She has an experience like Jacob. She has wrestled and is now limping. She is leaning, limping, and loving.
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- ii. The Lord's strategy is to produce in her an attitude of total dependency on Him. (Jer. 9:23; 1 Cor. 1:31)
 - iii. The Lord promises His Son a Bride with a leaning heart of loyal love who does not stray in seasons of prosperity or adversity.
- c. What is a loving heart? It is one who seeks to live out the First and the Great Commandment. (Matt. 22:37 – 38; 2 Chron. 16:9; Deut. 6:4)
- d. What is the leaning heart?
- i. One who is fully dependent on God (John 21:18)
 - ii. One who fully trusts God (Prov. 3:5 – 6; Ps. 31:14)
 - iii. One who has full confidence in God (Ps. 2:12; 27:14; 31:5; Phil. 3:3)
- e. The history of God's people reveals that we do not often lean and love in the midst of blessing. Eventually, we stand in our own strength, becoming our own source. We often use the blessing of God to further our own ends. (Deut. 8:10 – 11, 18 – 19)
- i. The heart of fallen man is not prone to lean. Our hearts are prone to self-assertion and a spirit of independence. All through history when God prospers a people, they often end up not leaning or loving Him at the end of the journey.
 - ii. A fact of redemptive history is that many who started out anointed, ended up snared in sin and pride. The kings of Israel did not lean upon the Lord in the seasons of blessing. They ended up drunk with power. This is what distinguished king David, who ended well.
 - iii. In the history of revivals, the anointed person starts off crying out for God's blessing and holiness. Then when the blessing of God rested on them, they eventually become intoxicated with their importance. The most common problem in past revivals is that the main leaders became carnal when they prosper. Often such leaders lose their sense of dependency.
- f. The Lord wants to anoint His people in a way that leads them to lean and love even in times of blessing. That is why God often want us to "limp"
- i. Classic examples of those who "limp":
 - Moses – who came out "limping" after forty years in the wilderness.
 - Jacob – who came out "limping" after wrestling with God in Penuel. (Genesis 32:22 – 32)
 - Peter – who came out "limping" after his denial of Jesus.
 - Paul – who had a thorn in the flesh. (2 Cor. 12:7 – 12)
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- ii. Even the Shulamite woman experienced “seven crises” in her journey that caused her to “limp”
 - g. She has a deep revelation of her inadequacies and weaknesses. The Holy Spirit has revealed these to her in a way that has created a dependency in her heart.
 - i. In the wilderness season of testing, the Lord revealed her pride to her. He revealed to her the weakness of her flesh. Walking in the knowledge of our weakness is a great sign of maturity.
 - ii. She comes up with an understanding of who she is in the flesh, as well as, who she is in the Holy Spirit. Her first confession in Song. 1:5 was “I am dark, but lovely.” She has come to mature understanding in both issues. She holds them in proper balance.
 - h. Five ways that we lean upon Jesus.
 - i. For salvation – we put trust in His work on the cross, not in our own deeds.
 - ii. For attaining victory – leaning involves looking to our present relationship with the Holy Spirit as our source of power. We must not put trust in our discipline nor our religious rules. Neither do we look to past victories or past defeats.
 - iii. For wholeness – we must lay down the self-protecting behavior that “shields” our heart from risks and conflicts. We depend upon Him with genuine vulnerability. He is working in our lives to bring us to a discovery of our own inadequacies.
 - iv. For direction – in God’s plan, the ordering of our steps takes divine intervention to help circumstances line up correctly. We must understand that we do not have the wisdom or power to arrange our own lives. It takes a sovereign King who has all knowledge of the future and power over all circumstances. (Prov. 3:5 – 6)
 - v. For provision - the Lord arranges circumstances in a way that He alone is seen as our source of supply. We must have the confidence to take a nap in the boat in the midst of a storm, because we have confidence in the provision of God.
 - 5. “...leaning upon HER BELOVED.” – the Bride is motivated and empowered by love and gratitude.
 - a. Jesus is the “lover of her soul,” her Beloved. The ascending Bride so loves Him. She calls Him Beloved as she leans on Him. She comes up victorious in love.
 - b. Divine love revealed and imparted is the only way that we will not quit in the wilderness.
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- c. When we are tempted to quit, the big obstacle in our path is that we really love God. Her gratitude and love for Jesus is the motivation behind her diligent life of obedience, not the religious motivation of shame, fear and guilt.

D. VOLUNTARY APOSTOLIC WEAKNESS

1. Jesus wants a Bride who voluntarily remains in weakness as she feels the power of the Holy Spirit on her. This is how Jesus walked while on the earth.
 - a. She voluntarily chooses to submit her strengths or resources to the Holy Spirit in weakness rather than use them to establish her in strength in natural things.
 - b. Voluntary weakness – to consciously submit to a place of weakness out of conviction before God. For example, the fasted lifestyle is voluntarily submitting to weakness. We can refuse this type of weakness because of self will, pride etc.
 - c. Mandatory weakness – trials and pressures that come upon us that we do not choose. Rather, we typically use of our resources to be delivered from this type of weakness.
2. She sees her strengths as that which can hinder her in her deep life in the Holy Spirit unless they are consciously submitted to Him.
 - a. This speaks of apostolic weakness that Paul embraced. This is a voluntary weakness, which is a rare yet essential dynamic of spiritual maturity. (2 Cor. 12:7 – 9)
 - b. She voluntarily embraces weakness in the way she uses her spiritual influence with people who desire to receive from her.
 - i. She refuses to take advantage of those who will do anything for her.
 - ii. She refuses to direct people using her spiritual authority.
3. She voluntarily embraces weakness in the way she uses her spiritual influence with people who resist and oppose her.
 - a. She does not use her position of power and influence to battle her enemies.
 - b. She does not use anger and strife to pay back those who oppose her.
4. She voluntarily embraces weakness in the way she operates in her ministry.
 - a. She refuses to manipulate in the context of ministry – hype, pretense, etc.
 - b. She refuses fleshly exhibition in her ministry style – showmanship and theatrics.
 - c. She is modest in her ministry style.

5. She voluntarily embraces weakness in the way she spends her money.
 - a. She continues in her conviction to minister to the poor even as abundant finances are available as a result of the anointing on her life.
 - b. She continues in the fasted lifestyle in the midst of economic prosperity on her ministry.

E. JESUS REMINDS HER OF HER PAST JOURNEY (Song 8:5c, d, e)

1. It is the Lord who awakens us and then we respond in obedience. Jesus is reminding her of her beginnings in the refreshment of God's grace. When she had no thoughts of God, God awakened her heart by refreshing her with His kindness. He is bringing her back to her beginning. (Song. 8:5c)
 - a. "Under the apple tree" — the apple tree is the place of refreshment. The refreshment of the apple tree is where she received a life-changing revelation of His love. (Song. 2:3)
 - b. "I awakened you" – the Lord in his sovereignty is responsible for initiating all the spiritual progress in the Body of Christ. He reminds her that He awakened her at the very beginning when she was initially born-again under the apple tree.
2. God is the author of our natural and spiritual birth. (Song. 8:5d, e)
 - a. "Your mother" – the Church is the mother from Song. 3:11. The agency He uses for our natural birth is a woman, i.e. our mother. The agency He uses for our spiritual birth is a member of the Body of Christ, i.e. the Church. She speaks of the impact that her mother, or the Church, had upon her in the plan of God.
 - b. "Brought you forth" – the Church ministered to her effectively, bringing her into the refreshing love of God's grace. She led Jesus into the house of her mother. (Song. 8:2)
 - c. "She who bore you" – Jesus reminds her of her spiritual lineage. We owe much to the Church through history that labored to bring us forth. He wants us grateful to our spiritual roots, instead of despising them. He also wants us to acknowledge the whole Church that has contributed to our progress today and not just those who believe just like us.
 - d. "There" – It is under the apple tree, where she received the revelation of the affections of God.

F. JESUS IS OUR BRIDAL SEAL (Song. 8:6a, b)

1. "Set Me..." – in Song. 8:6a, Jesus is inviting her to set Him as a seal on her heart.
 - a. Jesus is the bridal seal. Jesus is extending an invitation to her to take Him as the seal on her heart.

- b. Her journey started with a longing for His kisses in Song. 1:2 and ends with a seal of love upon her heart.
 - c. It starts with a longing and it ends with an impartation of divine love upon her heart.
2. In the ancient world, a royal seal authenticated royal documents such as title deeds and military strategies.
 - a. A title deed was a royal document sent from one king to another. This wax seal covered the entire document. The king used his signet ring to seal the document.
 - b. It was like a personal signature because a king's seal was different from that of another, so that the king receiving the document could know that it came from, say Caesar.
 - c. This wax seal spoke of the king's ownership, protection and authority. It distinguished a king from another king much like a signature does today.
 3. The king's army fully protected the king's seal. A king's seal was sacred.
 - a. It spoke of his word or his guarantee, and was backed up by all the power and might of that king.
 - b. The Divine guarantee is behind His seal. The seal speaks of a king's guarantee. God is putting a seal on the heart of His people. He protects and guarantees what is in the seal.

G. THE DIVINE SOURCE OF THE BRIDAL SEAL (Song. 8:6e, f)

1. "Its flames are flames of fire" – It is a seal of fire that He puts on the hearts of His people. The seal is none other than the power of Jesus released by the Holy Spirit called the Fire of God.
 - a. This seal can be referred to as "sealing love". It takes God to love God. God seals our heart with the seal of Divine love. It is the Father's love empowering sinful human hearts. It is God loving Jesus through us.
 - b. The flame of fire has power over all sinful flames. It is a powerful flame that can dominate even the most powerful perversions when we yield to it consistently. The source of fiery love is divine.
 - c. Jesus prayed in John 17:26, "Father, the love that You have for Me would be in them." The Father will keep His promise to put His love into people of God for the Lord Jesus.
2. "A most vehement flame" – This is the very fire of God. (Song. 8:6f)
 - a. The phrase, "the most vehement flame" is often translated as "the very flame of God" (NAS). The construction of the Hebrew phrase "vehement flame" ends with the letters "El," which speaks of God.

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- b. Whether it is translated as “a most vehement flame” or as “the very flame of God,” it means the same, because God’s flame is the most vehement flame.
 - c. The main truth is to understand that it is God’s very fire burning in the human soul. It is a supernatural flame.
 3. This fire of love manifests itself by tenderizing our hearts so that we feel some of what He feels.
 - a. Our hearts are by nature hard, dull and insensitive to the things that God feels. There is nothing more precious and pleasant to us than to be empowered to feel what He feels.
 - b. It takes God’s help for us to be able to feel God. The Holy Spirit pours the love of God into the heart. (Rom. 5:5)
 4. NAS translates the phrase “flames” as “flashes.” God’s fire flashes in the human heart. It speaks of the progressive sealing of our heart.
 - a. A flash of fire comes powerfully, suddenly, and then soon wanes until the next flash. God’s fire often comes to us in this way.
 - b. There are times when He tenderizes us suddenly as a flash of fire. Then sometimes as suddenly as it comes, it seems to leave. Our heart waits with great anticipation for the next visit of His flashing tenderizing fire.
 5. Fire penetrates and purifies its object. This speaks of the impartation of divine love into the hearts of believers by the Holy Spirit. This fire does not consume us; it only consumes the dross.
 6. People often think of God’s fire first in terms of judgment. God’s fire is first an expression of His passionate emotion. It does destroy that which hinders love but His fire is first His love. The judgment aspect of God’s love is that which removes what hinders bridal love.

H. JESUS IS THE SEAL

1. This seal is our heavenly King’s seal. It is not the wax seal of an earthly king. It is a seal of fire by the Holy Spirit.
 - a. This seal operates as the person of the Holy Spirit releasing the power of Jesus Christ. The seal is none other than the person of Jesus released by the Holy Spirit.
 - b. It is the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit. This seal could be referred to as “sealing love” – it takes God to love God.

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2. "Set Me" – NIV translates the phrase "set Me" as "place Me." NAS translates it as "put Me."
 - a. David said, "I have set the Lord continually before me" in Ps. 16:8. Set or place the Lord on your heart by communing with Him.
 - b. Open your spirit to Him. Jesus is the sustaining seal that keeps us loyal. He releases the activity of the Spirit in us.
 - c. He is inviting us to an active "present-tense" partnership with the Holy Spirit. An important part of cooperating with the Holy Spirit is the posture of our soul that is reaching to Him for fellowship.
 3. There is no other seal besides Jesus. The Holy Spirit touches our hearts in the present.
 - a. He invites us to an active "present-tense" partnership with the Holy Spirit. When He says, "Set Me," He is asking us to come into partnership with the Holy Spirit, fellowship with the Holy Spirit, and intimacy with Jesus.
 - b. The important part of cooperating with the Holy Spirit is the posture of soul that is reaching out to Jesus for fellowship.
 - i. Make time to interact with Him. Prayer and fasting is not the seal but rather, the seal is Jesus touching our heart in the present.
 - ii. However, spiritual disciplines do increase our capacity to receive and to become tenderized. It is the power of God that changes us, not these disciplines.
 - iii. The power that actually tenderizes us is the power of God, not the spiritual disciplines. Spiritual disciplines make us more receptive to receive more of His love. However, they do not earn us the power to love God.
 - iv. These spiritual activities merely put us in a position to freely receive the tenderizing impact of the Holy Spirit in a greater way. Therefore, fasting and prayer do not earn us anything. They merely increase our capacity to receive more of Him.
 4. The seal speaks of the way that we carry our heart, or the way we identify and define our life. In other words, it is how we determine our spiritual identity.
 - a. Our past victories are not the seal. The seal is the fellowship with Jesus in the Holy Spirit.
 - b. There is no other seal besides Jesus. It is Jesus today that keeps our heart protected. The seal is not primarily our past experiences with Him. It is communing with Him in the present that causes the authority of God to protect us from the warfare that is at each side.
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I. JESUS' INVITATION TO THE TWO-FOLD BRIDAL SEAL (Song. 8:6a, b)

1. He first says, "Set Me as a seal upon your heart," then second He says, "Set Me as a seal upon your arm". Both of the two great commandments are spoken of here. The arm speaks of our work and the heart speaks of our affection.
2. The sealed heart speaks of her affections and emotions being impacted by the power of God.
 - a. The seal of love on the heart speaks of the first commandment – wholehearted love for God.
 - b. Jesus Himself wants to protect our heart from backsliding, sin, bitterness, fear, and slander.
3. The sealed arm speaks her labors in ministry being anointed by the power of God.
 - a. The seal of love upon the arm speaks of the second commandment – wholehearted love for people.
 - b. The seal upon the arm speaks of the ability to impart this passion for God to others through our labors. In our counselling, deliverance, evangelism or Bible studies, we want to lead people to become lovers of God.
 - c. The sealed arm also speaks of the sanctified acts of believers instead of the arm of the flesh.
 - i. This speaks of Holy Spirit-inspired activities. All of her activities are focused on doing the will of God, while refusing every ministry idea and opportunity that does not originate from the Holy Spirit.
 - ii. This speaks of the discernment and willingness to say no to "arm" activities that comes from the flesh.
4. The seal on the arm is more than imparting passion. He wants to protect us in our labors so that we don't burn out. It is so much more difficult to keep our passion fresh and alive in the midst of ministry.
5. The seal of love on our arm is also protection from compromise and defilement in our ministry. It is easy to become defiled in the midst of laboring. It is easy to become bitter when people lack gratitude after we serve them. Jesus desires that this holy passion protect her from compromise and defilement as she serves other people.

J. THE EMPOWERMENT OF GOD'S SEAL TO LOVE GOD WHOLEHEARTEDLY (Song. 8:6c, d)

1. Jesus describes the nature of the seal of love as being as strong as death. How strong is death? How comprehensive is death?
 - a. Death claims every living thing in the natural order of things. Nothing escapes it. He will manifest to us a love that is as comprehensive as death and the grave.

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- b. The nature of this imparted love is comprehensive, nothing created can overpower it. Death consumes everything; similarly, nothing will escape the grasp of the God's love that He will give to us.
 2. The seal of love that is like the grave is a seal that is all prevailing, all comprehensive, all powerful. In other words, no area in our life is outside the scope of the power of this redeeming and transforming Divine love.
 3. The seed of this divine love is planted in our heart at the new birth. It will grow as we cultivate it. There is an act of our will. There is an active cooperation with Him. There is no bitterness, sexual sin, covetousness or demon stronger than this comprehensive, all-encompassing love of God to those who will continue to say "Yes" to it.
 4. "Jealousy" – Jesus was consumed with this zeal for His Father in John 2:17. God is jealous for His Son and His people as described in Deut. 4:24.
 - a. God's jealousy is a pure manifestation of His love. It is a divine jealousy for godliness.
 - b. God's own jealousy will be imparted to us by the Holy Spirit. God's jealousy is as demanding, cruel and comprehensive as the grave. The jealousy of God will claim everything in our life if we expose ourselves to it.
 5. "As cruel as the grave" – NIV translates "cruel" as "unyielding." NAS translates it as "severe".
 - a. The grave is cruel or unyielding in that it demands the total submission of all. No one escapes it. Nothing escapes the severe grasp of the grave in the natural order of things. Similarly, nothing escapes the power of this holy severe love.
 - b. It is going to be a divine jealousy imparted by the power of the Holy Spirit to the human heart. Everything will come under its grasp, just like everything comes under the grasp of the grave.

K. GOD'S SEAL IS A FLAME OF DIVINE FIRE THAT CANNOT BE QUENCHED (Song. 8:7a, b)

1. Many waters of affliction cannot quench this kind of love, because it is a supernatural work of God in the heart for the Lord Jesus.
 - a. "Many waters" – waters speak of the obstacles and pressures of everyday life that hinder us from receiving this impartation of divine love and holy jealousy.
 - b. Water naturally puts fire out. But God's love is a supernatural fire. It cannot be put out by water.
 - c. There are many different types of waters in Scripture. These are negative waters that the enemy will use to try to quench Divine love in our soul.

2. There are many diverse waters to quench the fire of God in our hearts. It “cannot quench” the impartation of divine love when we yield to it in our spirit in a consistent way.
 - a. This passage does not only speak about the love of God to us. It is referring to the love of God imparted in us that we might become mature lovers of God.
 - b. The very flame of God Himself is to be the seal upon our heart. The source of love is God Himself. It has nothing to do with our personality or temperament. It has nothing to do with whether we have been abused or if we are addicted to pornography or drugs. It is stronger than any other “sinful flame” in our life.
3. Five types of quenching waters in our life:
 - a. Difficulties that tempt us to be offended with God because of their severity (Mark 4:17)
 - b. The cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches (Mark 4:19)
 - c. Accusation and condemnation from the enemy as we experience our own failure in sin
 - d. Temptations
 - e. Prosperity - The enemy uses prosperity and pleasure on one hand and then poverty and shame on the other, to quench the impartation of the love of God.
4. The violent floods of persecution cannot put out this Divine fire.
 - a. “The floods” of persecution - floods speak of great obstacles that create great crises.
 - b. A flood is not a positive thing. By the natural order of things, fire is extinguished by water. But not even a violent flooding river can put out this fire. Nothing can put out this supernatural fire.
 - c. The enemy will rage like a flood against the End-Time Church. This great persecution has already begun in various places around the world. This demonic rage against the Church will not drown out God’s love for Jesus in the heart of the Bride. (Rev. 12:7 – 17)

L. THE GREAT REWARD OF THE SEAL (Song. 8:7d, e, f)

1. As her journey ends, the Lord gives her a proverb concerning unquenchable love. This proverb speaks of a man who would sacrificially give everything to help one that he deeply loves.
 - a. Wealthy people buy gifts without looking at price tags. When a wealthy person walks into a store, they do not need to look at price tags. One sign of their wealth is that cost no longer matters.

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- b. Jesus is talking about love that has no price tags. A person in love does not recognize sacrifice.
 - c. The Bride is wealthy in love. She obeys without any regard to cost. Holy love has no limit to how much it will give.
 - d. The Holy Spirit is going to impart wealthy love, which does not care what the price tag is.
 2. “All the wealth of his house” – the house is more than the specific home one lives in. It speaks of his family inheritance and all that his family has accumulated over generations. It speaks of everything that we own in the past, the present, and the future.
 3. “It would be utterly despised” – the reward of the Bride of Christ is simply that she has received the power to wholeheartedly love Jesus.
 - a. Suddenly Solomon shares this proverb about love. The point is that the love itself is the reward.
 - b. She loves Him with all of her strength by the goodness of God. That is all that she ever wanted. Her reward is the love itself.
 - c. Paul gave up many things that gave him a tremendous future by worldly standards. He considered them as rubbish when compared to the Man Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3:7 – 10)
 - d. Such love despises any recognition of being heroic and noble for giving all. The very love itself is the reward. She would despise the idea of comparing her sacrifices for Him as equal to His great love for her. She has received from the Spirit the kind of love that is free from self-awareness and self-congratulation.
 4. Jesus taught new believers to count the cost before they make sacrifices.
 - a. Mature believers already know that they do not give up anything comparable to what they first received. They despise recognition for what others call “sacrifice.”
 - b. They want no recognition whatsoever because they did it in light of the indescribable beauty of Christ Jesus. It was for the Son of God who gave Himself.
 5. In the beginning of her journey, she prayed for what she desired most. She asked for the kisses of His mouth in Song. 1:2. All she really wanted was the power to love God fully. Over the journey, she received His kisses. Her heart became tenderized. This is her REWARD!
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The Bride's Final Intercession and Commission

(Song. 8:8–14)

A. REVIEW

1. Song of Songs is a powerful pattern of how we grow in our intimacy for God and passion for Jesus. It is also a divine journey in growing into maturity as a Bride of Christ.
 - a. This is a divine “road-map” which is inspired by the Holy Spirit.
 - b. This is a divine progression of maturity which cannot be improved upon by any human wisdom and means.
2. Song of Songs tells the story of how the young maiden grew until she became a Bride filled with the fire of God.
 - a. Now she reveals how she sees herself in God. She knows who she is.
 - b. We can only be alive like the Bride as we walk in her revelation, confidence and radical obedience.
3. Song of Songs gives us a powerful and prophetic insight of the kind of people that God is looking for. (2 Chron. 16:9; Isa. 66:2)
 - a. Wholehearted in love.
 - b. Radical in obedience.
 - c. Relentless in trusting God.
 - d. Living with a reckless abandonment for God.
4. In Song. 1:5, the Shulamite woman begins her journey as one who is sincere but immature – dark but lovely. In Song. 8:13, she ends the journey as one who is fully in love and fully mature in partnership.
5. In Song. 1:2, the Shulamite woman begins her journey with a cry for a “kiss” for intimacy. In Song. 8:14, she ends the journey with a cry for the return of Jesus.

B. OVERVIEW

1. Song. 8:8 – 14 is a powerful and dynamic passage of Scripture that reveals the true mark of a mature Bride at the End-of-the-Age.
2. Song. 8:8 – 14 is the result of her encounter of the fiery love of Jesus in Song. 8:6 – an outflow of a “sealed” and “romanced” heart.
 - a. As a result of encountering the living flame of love, she is “wealthy” in love and she has received the highest gift and reward for mankind on earth.
 - b. To be anointed with the power and the ability to feel God’s love and to love God is the greatest reward on this side of heaven. (Matt. 6:19 – 21)
3. Song. 8:8 – 14 gives us a powerful prophetic picture of the mature Bride of Christ at the End-of-the-Age. Song 8:5 declares the coming forth of the mature Bride. Song. 8:8 – 14 gives us the detailed description of the mature Bride.
4. Simple outline of Song. 8:8 – 14:
 - a. Song. 8 – 9: The Bride’s passion and intercession for the Church
 - b. Song. 8:10: The Bride’s revelation and knowledge of who she is
 - i. Her three-fold confidence is as a wall – selfless motives, as a tower – her supernatural abilities to nurture and as one with peace – emotional hindrances removed.
 - ii. She enjoys living before His eyes. Her identity allows her to enjoy a radiant confidence to walk in her place before God.
 - c. Song. 8:11: The Bride living for eternity and living with eternal perspective
 - d. Song. 8:12: The Bride’s determination to be faithful and to be fruitful to God’s call for her life
 - d. Song. 8:13: The final commission and exhortation of Jesus
 - e. Song. 8:14: The Bride’s longing and intercession for the return of Jesus

C. THE BRIDE’S PASSION AND INTERCESSION FOR THE CHURCH (Song. 8:8 – 9)

1. The Bride has a genuine love and concern for the well-being and maturity of the Church. She is saying, “It is not okay that the Church is not okay!”
2. In the overflow of having the seal of love renewed in her heart in Song 8:6 – 7, she is aware of the spiritual condition of others who have remained as babes in Christ. Thus she intercedes for them.

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3. "We have a LITTLE SISTER and she has no breasts." (Song. 8:8a, b, c)
 - a. "Sister" – the Bride remembers her as a "sister" instead of forgetting her in order to move on to "deeper things". She remembers the others that are a part of her family.
 - b. "Little sister" speaks of others, depicting spiritually immaturity. They have not yet been strengthened with the mature understanding of God. The Bride sees her for who she is and yet is not impatient with her.
 - i. The little sister speaks of those whose heart is still "little" in understanding.
 - ii. She is "little" in her faith. The little sisters are still babes in Christ that are only nurtured on the milk of the Word, and are still unable to receive meat.
 - iii. She is still spiritually unstable and easily moved by pressure. She has little faith and easily loses her courage when she is in a trial. She is easily filled with fear, and quickly gives up in the midst of trials.
 - iv. She lacks passion for Jesus and confidence before God in the midst of her weakness. She is little in her faith. She is easily condemned when faced with accusations about her failures.
 4. "We have a little sister and SHE HAS NO BREASTS." (8:8a, b, c)
 - a. The little sisters are undeveloped in spiritual love. Therefore, the Bride intercedes for them. She is keenly aware of the conditions of the other members of the Body of Christ.
 - b. The little sisters are not yet equipped as a spiritual mother to spiritually nurture and edify others with the milk of the Word. Her inability to reproduce and nurture speaks of her spiritual immaturity.
 - c. Immature believers can only receive the milk of the Word. They have no ability to release the milk of the Word to other people. (1 Cor. 3:1 – 2)
 - d. They lack mature burden for the condition of others. They lack the concern to help others. They are overwhelmed with their own problems. They are immature in character, discernment, wisdom and perseverance. (Heb. 5:13 – 14)
 5. Her comment is not out of critical or judgmental spirit, but it is out of genuine love and concern for the spiritual condition of the Church.
 6. "WHAT SHALL WE DO for our sister..." (Song 8d, e, f)
 - a. She understood that intimacy with Jesus is not just about her relationship with Jesus but also it's about partnership with Him – a concern for the burden of God and the well-being of the Church.
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- b. If we are His friends, we want to do what is in His heart. What concerns the heart of Jesus is what concerns our heart. She is totally and completely connected to the heart and burden of Jesus. (John 15:14)
 - c. She asks what she can do in partnership with Jesus to help bring her sister forward. Many believers miss out in partnering with Jesus, in taking responsibility for others in the grace of God.
 - d. The question on her heart is, “what shall we do for our sister? How can we help to bring her forth to greater blessing and maturity?” She is sensitive to her responsibility for young believers. (Song. 6:11; 7:11) This shows her strong sense of responsibility to feed the new believers as if they were her own. This is the heart of a spiritual father. (1 Thess. 2:11)
 - e. One sign of spiritual maturity is concern for the spiritual condition of others. “What shall we do for our sister?” - This question was deeply rooted in the Bride's heart.
7. “What shall WE DO for our sister in the day that she is spoken for?” (Song. 8:8d, e, f)
- a. The Bride does not use the singular, saying, “What will I do for my sister,” but rather, she uses the plural, “we”, indicating that she is in full and mature bridal partnership with Jesus.
 - b. Her original prayer in Song. 1:4, “Let us run together,” is also in the plural.
 - c. She is not working independently but she is in partnership with Jesus – not working for Jesus but it is working with Jesus.
8. “WHAT SHALL WE DO” also speaks of her prayer and intercession for the Church. There are two-fold aspects to this prayer and intercession.
- a. She is seeking the face of God in what to do. (Luke 6:12 – 13; John 5:19; Acts 13:1 – 2)
 - b. She is wrestling and interceding for the fullness of God's destiny to be released for the Church. (Jude 3)
9. “What shall we do for our sister IN THE DAY THAT SHE IS SPOKEN FOR?” (Song. 8:8d, e, f)
- a. The Bride knows that all will eventually stand before the Lord “in the day we are spoken for.” The day a woman is spoken for is a reference to her wedding day. The Bride recognizes that the young ones will eventually mature.
 - b. “In the day” – the day of God's visitation is the season in which He requires maturity from the little ones. The phrase, “in the day” is also used earlier to speak of the wedding day. (Song. 3:11)
 - i. This speaks of the engagement time, the preparation for the joys of marriage. That is what it means in the literal sense. The day when she receives the “kisses of God” in a deeper way is the spiritual sense.
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- ii. This is a reference to the time when she attains to the maturity of bridal partnership with Christ. This maturity begins as the daughters see themselves as chosen to be the Bride of Christ. (Song. 2:1)
 - iii. The day that she is spoken for speaks of the time when the young ones begin to connect with their spiritual identity and destiny as the Bride of Christ.
 - iv. There is a time in a believer's life when they are awakened to the destiny of who they ultimately are as the Bride of Christ. This is the day that they are spoken for, or the season in their life when they progressively connect with the truths of who they are.
 - v. We are called from eternity to be His Bride. There is a time when every believer connects with this reality. Some grasp this truth while still on earth, and others do not see it until they arrive in the Eternal City.
- c. She is interceding for the Church to be awakened and connected with her spiritual identity and destiny as the Bride of Jesus. (Eph. 1:17 – 19; 3:16 – 20; Col. 4:12)
10. The Bride presents her little sister's case before the Lord in intercession with two possibilities. (Song. 8:9)
- a. If the little sister is called to be a spiritual wall then the Bride and the Lord will build on her.
 - i. A wall brings defense to a city and establishes a line of demarcation.
 - ii. "Wall ministries" can function in a pastoral way to protect the people from the enemy.
 - iii. "Wall ministries" are God's voice or God's prophetic standard. They establish God's line of demarcation for holiness to go forth in the land.
 - iv. In Song. 8:10, the Bride speaks of herself as a wall ministry. This involves protecting others and being a prophetic standard bearer.
 - v. There are pressures associated with being on a wall. When the enemy shoots arrows, the wall stands in the path of the arrows meant for the young ones.
 - b. If the little sister is called to be a spiritual door then the Bride and the Lord will enclose her. (Col. 4:3)
 - i. A door is the point of entry for others.
 - ii. The "door ministries" open doors of grace and salvation for others as an intercessor, evangelist, teacher or apostle.
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- iii. Intercessors open doors of opportunity for others. Evangelists open the door for unbelievers to come into the Kingdom. Teachers open the door for believers to go deeper in God. Apostles open doors to regions for new initiatives in God.
11. There are two directions the little sister might respond, to be a wall or a door. The Lord and the Bride respond to the little sister's response, which is according to what God put into her heart. They will work to help her be effective according to her response to God's call in her life.
12. The Bride says to Jesus, "We will build her into a battlement of silver." (Song. 8:9)
- The battlement of a fortress was on the top of the tower where the archers shot through the indentations in the stone. They shot, then stood behind the stone battlements for protection. The battlements provided places for the watchmen to spot and shoot the enemy and thus, defend the city.
 - Battlements speak of the ministries that provide safety from the enemy.
 - Silver speaks of redemption. There was no such thing as a battlement of silver. They were usually made of stone.
 - Battlements of silver speak of bringing redemption to others.
13. If the grace on the little sister's life leads her to be an intercessor, evangelist, teacher, etc. then the Bride prays, "let us enclose her with boards of cedar."
- Boards or panels of cedar were expensive, reliable, strong and scented. In the Tabernacle, wood was symbolic of humanity. The stately cedars of Lebanon were the most fragrant, strong, expensive building material.
 - Jesus is the cedar of Lebanon. The gospel chariot was made out of the cedar of Lebanon or the humanity of Jesus. (Song. 3:9)
 - The boards of cedar speak of the fragrance of Christ, as the cedars of Lebanon are fragrant. Cedars from Lebanon were used in building Solomon's Temple for the dwelling place of the Lord's presence. (1 Kings 4:33; 5:6)
 - To be enclosed with the cedars of Lebanon is to be clothed with the character and presence of Jesus. We are to be clothed in Jesus who is the cedar sent from the Father. (Rom. 13:14)
14. The Bride prayed, "We will enclose her..." Jesus and the Bride will work together with the little sister until she is enclosed by God. She is praying that she will be clothed with the presence and character of Jesus. (2 Cor. 2:15)

D. THE BRIDE'S REVELATION AND KNOWLEDGE OF WHO SHE IS (Song. 8:10)

1. The fullness of the Bride's identity includes a three-fold revelation that leaves her with confidence. She has revelation of her true spiritual stature. This is a rare yet powerful reality in the Church.
2. It is vital for us to know who we are in Christ. When we know who we are, true confidence arises within that will set us free from shame and the fear of man.
3. "I am A WALL..."
 - a. This speaks of her maturity, her inner strength and her stability.
 - b. She sees herself as a wall that exists in this world to protect the young ones. In other words, she now understands her life purpose so differently than she did before. She no longer sees herself as a separate entity, living primarily for her own earthly happiness, but as a source of protection for others.
 - c. The apostle Paul saw himself in this light. Paul functioned as a wall when he stood up for and protected new believers. (1 Thess. 2:7 – 12; Gal. 2:11 – 14)
 - d. The Bride's confidence is supernatural, not the result of sinful pride. She speaks what the Lord thinks about her. She has supernatural confidence in her soul about her life and maturity because God is the One who spoke it to her.
 - e. This is the witness and testimony of her conscience. She is at the end of her journey and knows that she has lived this way before the people. What a glorious and radiant heart that can have that kind of knowing. It is this complete union of heart and motive with Christ Jesus that flows out of the seal of Song. 8:6 – 7.
4. "And my breasts like towers..."
 - a. This speaks of her ability to nurture, disciple and edify others.
 - b. Throughout Song of Songs, breasts speak of the ability to nurture the young.
 - i. Breasts like towers speak of a supernatural ability to care for others. Her ministry is so abundant; it is as a tower of milk referring to her ability to nurture.
 - ii. Three times she has been compared to a tower. (Song. 4:4; 7:4; 8:10)
 - c. She has confidence in her effectiveness in ministry. Jesus commissioned her to let her breasts be like clusters of the vine. She knows that she can skillfully use the Word to help others. (Song. 7:8)
 - i. This is not arrogance. Paul, John the Baptist, David, Samuel and Moses had this kind of confidence.

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- ii. Paul wrote concerning himself, one of the boldest statements in the New Testament, when he said, “imitate me just as I imitate Christ”. (1 Cor. 11:1; 2 Cor. 1:12, 15)
 - iii. Paul told the elders of Ephesus that he served the Lord with all humility and did not count his life dear to himself and is therefore, innocent of the blood of all men. (Acts 20:18 – 37)
 - iv. Enoch obtained a testimony he was pleasing to God before God took him. (Heb. 11:5)
 - v. John the Baptist said, “Jesus is even mightier than I...” (Luke 3:16)
 - vi. Moses wrote about himself as being very humble more than any man on earth. (Num. 12:3)
 - v. Samuel at the end of his ministry proclaimed that he walked before the people from his childhood to that day with great integrity and that he would teach the nation the good and the right way. (1 Sam. 12:1 – 5, 23)
 - d. This confidence comes only by revelation, not pride and this fills her with great thanksgiving. She has confidence about her ministry and maturity because God spoke it to her. She can say before God that she lives to serve His people throughout her life because that is what the Lord thinks. She has the witness in her heart that she is doing the will of God. (Heb. 11:5)
 - e. “Like towers” speaks of her fruitfulness and effectiveness in her ministry. It is so abundant that it is like a tower of milk
5. “I am a wall, and my breasts like towers, then I became in His eyes AS ONE WHO FOUND PEACE.”
- a. This speaks of her experience of supernatural peace by understanding who and why she is.
 - b. She has found peace. She is connected with her destiny. She understands who she is in the full sense of the word. This is more than the peace we have at salvation.
 - c. She connected with the truth of what this life is all about. This is a profound sense of peace filling her being. She has no striving and accusing thoughts. She is completely at peace with the way that God designed her and created her. She knows why she is on the earth.
 - d. She connects with the truth of why she has life on the earth. She can look at all the alluring lusts of this world and say no to them because this is not what she is about. She has settled the issues.
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6. "I am a wall, and my breasts like towers, THEN I BECAME IN HIS EYES as one who found peace."
 - a. This speaks of her life before God's eyes – she is living before the Audience of One.
 - b. She finds peace in Jesus' eyes, but not necessarily in the eyes of others.
7. The key in finding the peace in our heart is to live our lives and our call before the Audience of One
 - a. She enjoys living before His eyes. Her spiritual identity allows her to enjoy a radiant confidence to walk in her place before God.
 - b. This confidence makes a believer powerful emotionally as they do their work in God. Consider how much emotional energy is expended on condemnation, fear, self-doubt and uncertainty. The fiery seal of love on her heart has produced this confidence and purity of motive. (Song. 8:6)
 - c. Paul was criticized by many in the Church but yet he had this peace and confidence. How wonderful it is after fifty years of ministry to know that you served Jesus with all of your heart. (1 Cor. 4:3 – 5)
 - d. She came to peace with God's design for her life by knowing she lives to partner with Jesus. It is profound to understand our life and to have confidence that we accomplished God's will for our life.

E. THE BRIDE'S REVELATION OF ETERNITY THAT RESULTS IN HER UNDERSTANDING OF ACCOUNTABILITY BEFORE GOD (Song. 8:11)

1. She is now walking out her confession of Song. 8:10. This short parable speaks of the principle of accountability before God that every believer will give on the judgment day. (1 Cor. 3:11 – 15; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:12)
2. She has a profound understanding of her accountability before God. On judgment day, every believer will give to God a full account of his or her earthly life.
 - a. One of the results of living before the Audience of One is that we would understand the reality of the requirement for accountability – judgment before God (2 Cor. 5:9 – 11) and receiving the eternal reward (1 Cor. 3:11 – 15). Then we will always live with an eternal perspective (2 Cor. 4:7 – 18).
 - b. One of the most significant revelations for believers in order to become mature is have an understanding of eternity and the requirement for accountability.
 - c. The true measure of a mature Bride is one who is "lovesick" for Jesus – yearning for His return (Song. 5: 9) and "homesick" for eternity – longing for the coming of His Kingdom. (Heb. 11:15 – 16; 2 Cor. 5:1 – 3)

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3. "SOLOMON HAD A VINEYARD at Baal Hamon; He leased the vineyard to keepers."
 - a. King Solomon, throughout Song of Songs, is a picture of King Jesus.
 - b. Solomon's or Jesus' vineyard speaks of the people of God or the Church of Jesus worldwide. Israel was spoken of as God's vineyard.
 4. "Solomon had A VINEYARD AT BAAL HAMON; He leased the vineyard to keepers; everyone was to bring for its fruit a thousand pieces of silver."
 - a. The king had a vineyard "at Baal Hamon." There is no mention in Scripture or in Israel's history of this geographic place. Baal Hamon is also translated as "the populous one." The word literally means in Hebrew, "the father of a multitude." Some Bible versions translate the meaning without trying to translate it as a city.
 - b. King Jesus has a very large vineyard at Baal Hamon or throughout the all the nations. It speaks of the large worldwide vineyard or the Church of Jesus that reaches to the ends of the earth. It also speaks of a vast harvest before this Age is over. (Rev. 14:14 – 18)
 5. "Solomon had a vineyard at Baal Hamon; HE LEASED THE VINEYARD TO KEEPERS; everyone was to bring for its fruit a thousand pieces of silver."
 - a. "He leased the vineyard" – this speaks of the principle of the kingdom of God in this Age as being entrusted to the Church. This is an aspect of the dignity of the Church.
 - b. Jesus taught in Matthew 21:33 – 44 of how He "leased His vineyard" to His servants before He went away to a "far country". For the kingdom of God is the rightful property of Jesus and He entrusted it to the Church.
 - c. "To keepers" – those to whom the Lord has entrusted responsibility to cultivate His vineyard. He works together with these keepers. In other words, it speaks of each believer. (1 Cor. 3:9; Mark 16:20)
 - i. All of us have been given a certain stewardship before God. His vineyard has been leased to the people that He has entrusted a sphere of responsibility to.
 - ii. We don't need to wait for a pastor to define your calling to serve. Go out and begin to win your neighborhood and begin to invest your life in the people in the work place.
 6. "Solomon had a vineyard at Baal Hamon; He leased the vineyard to keepers; EVERYONE WAS TO BRING FOR ITS FRUIT a thousand pieces of silver."
 - a. She understands that she must give an account for the stewardship that God has given her.
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- b. "Everyone" – He expects everyone to bring fruit as they cultivate, through hard work, the portion of the vineyard that He has entrusted to them. (Luke 12:31 – 48)
 - i. Everyone with no exception was to bring forth a return for the vineyard that was leased out to them.
 - ii. Everyone has to give account of our stewardship before God – Our faithfulness (Matt. 25:14 – 30) and our fruitfulness (Luke 19:11 – 27).
 - 7. "Solomon had a vineyard at Baal Hamon; He leased the vineyard to keepers; everyone was to bring for its fruit A THOUSAND PIECES OF SILVER."
 - a. The Lord desires a full return of fruitfulness for that which He entrusts. He desires a full response that will result in full return.
 - b. The "thousand piece of silver" is an indication of a full response of the heart back to God. It is a complete number that speaks of fullness. In other words, full return.
 - i. It speaks of the full measure that God requires according to that which was entrusted. The idea is a life that has full fruitfulness, i.e., a thousand.
 - ii. This speaks of the fullness of what Jesus expects from every person. Jesus requires fruitfulness from His investment in our lives. He has a clear expectation on every person, which is signified by the number "a thousand."
 - iii. "Silver" speaks of redemption and purity. (Mal. 3:3)

F. THE BRIDE'S DETERMINATION TO FAITHFUL AND FRUITFUL TO GOD (Song. 8:12)

- 1. The Bride's own vineyard is before her. In other words, she was aware that she will give an account of the responsibility given to her by Jesus. This includes her personal life and ministry assignment. At the beginning of her journey her vineyard was not kept but now it is. (Song. 1:6)
- 2. The Bride is determined that she is able to give to Jesus all that He expects from her by declaring that He may have the thousand pieces of silver that He requires from her in Song. 8:11.
 - a. Enoch before he was taken, received the testimony that he was pleasing to God.
 - b. She had this same confidence to say to God, "I lived to protect and nurture Your people". (Song. 8:10)
- 3. More than understanding the requirement to give an account before Jesus in her personal life and in her ministry, she knows the specific call that God has for her life.

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4. "My own vineyard is before me. You, O SOLOMON, MAY HAVE A THOUSAND, and those who keep its fruit two hundred."
 - a. She is determined to be a hundred percent faithful and fruitful before God. She seeks to fulfil the principle in Song. 8:11 where Solomon expected a thousand pieces of silver from the keepers. (Acts 20:22 – 24; Phil. 1:20 – 25)
 - b. She is determined to give her full devotion and obedience to Jesus. This does not mean that we never make mistakes, or never stumble, or never do anything wrong. It means that when we have stumbled, we get up and run into the heart of God.
 - c. This is the glory of a mature life. The emotional dynamics that are released with this kind of assurance is fantastic. The dynamics of single-minded emotion without any draining negative self-consciousness.
 5. "My own vineyard is before me. You, O Solomon, may have a thousand, and THOSE WHO KEEP ITS FRUIT TWO HUNDRED."
 - a. She acknowledges that those who "keep its fruit" or her fellow workers will have a portion in her fruitfulness when they stand before God.
 - b. "And those who keep its fruit" – those who helped her on her journey to maturity and fruitfulness. She acknowledges that some reward will be given to them as well.
 - i. "Those that keep its fruit" speaks of those who have helped her on her journey to maturity and fruitfulness.
 - ii. She acknowledges that there are others. She didn't do it alone. It wasn't just her and the Lord. There were the others that were working alongside her. They were the comrades who God joined to her.
 - c. "Two hundred" – Those who helped will also have honor from her fruitfulness on the last day. (1 Thess. 2:19 – 20)
 - d. "My own vineyard" – speaks of the particular responsibility given to her by Jesus. This is the sphere for which she is accountable. This is a reference also to her personal life.
 - e. "Is before me" – she is aware that she will stand at the judgment seat of Christ to give a full account of all that had been entrusted to her. (1 Cor.3:11 – 15; 2 Cor. 5:10)
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G. JESUS' FINAL COMMISSION TO THE BRIDE (Song. 8:13)

1. Jesus gives one final commission to her. These are the last words that He speaks to her in three distinct phrases and three different exhortations.
2. The message of Jesus is simply to remind and teach her to keep an unbroken union with Him in the midst of ministry.
3. "YOU WHO DWELL IN THE GARDENS, the companions listen for your voice – let Me hear it!"
 - a. This speaks of her effectiveness and faithfulness in serving the Body of Christ.
 - b. "The gardens" – The gardens speak of the vineyard of Song. 8:11. Jesus speaks to His Bride who labors diligently in His gardens. The gardens (plural) are the many parts of His Church in which she dwells or labors.
 - c. He's saying, "You are connected, related, and involved in the garden of God." What the Lord is saying to her in this title is a fantastic affirmation. He is identifying her with someone who did not quit.
 - i. At the end of the journey she's still vibrantly related to the people of God.
 - ii. Unfortunately, the older the people get in the Lord, the more offenses that have accumulated in their heart and the more logical reasons they have for giving up on the people of God. Many people who are older in the faith, having walked with Jesus for forty, or fifty years have drawn back from the purpose of God.
 - iii. Here she is at the end, and she is still one whose dwelling in the midst of the gardens of God. She loves the people of God. She is not in isolation.
 - d. She's dwelling in the garden. That is a very powerful statement for someone that has walked with the Lord for many years.
 - i. We know the truth of life is that a vast majority are bitter, angry and cynical about the purpose of God, after forty, fifty years.
 - ii. When our hearts are tenderized instead of made bitter, the Lord calls us the ones who are dwelling in the garden even at the end of our race.
 - e. To dwell in the garden implies regular involvement in the Body with a whole heart of desire towards the various parts of the body of Christ.
 - i. The gardens are plural with all the different flavors and spices in the whole purpose of God worldwide.
 - ii. It is not just her little local place. She has a heart for the whole purpose of God. She loved the whole Church, not just the one part that she was familiar with.

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4. "The companions listen for your voice."
 - a. She has become an effective voice of God and the Church is yearning to hear and learn from her. (Isa. 40:3 – 5)
 - b. The Bride's continuing credibility and impact until the end is seen as Jesus affirms that the companions who she served still eagerly listen for her voice because there is a stature of maturity in her life that is obvious to them.
 - c. They see the authenticity and reality in God in her, and thus they still receive from her. As the daughters wanted to hear her voice in Song. 5:9; 6:1, 13, so others still listen for her voice.
 - d. "The companions" – the believers who receive her ministry. The Body of Christ has not written her off.
 - e. "Listen for your voice" – these believers eagerly desire the mature quality of ministry that comes from her. They listen for her voice because they take her ministry very seriously. This speaks of the credibility, stability, and maturity of her life.
 5. "Let me hear it!"
 - a. Jesus is reminding her not to neglect "intimacy" with Him in prayer, worship, waiting before God and seeking His face in the midst of ministry. (Luke 10:42)
 - b. Jesus one more time calls the Bride to fervent worship and intercession by telling her that He still wants to hear her voice. Her voice was sweet to Him in her immaturity in Song. 2:14. How much sweeter is her voice now that she walks in mature union with Him as His beloved partner.
 - c. The Lord wants to continually hear our voice in four ways.
 - i. In worship as He forever wants to hear us declare our love to Him.
 - In all of our labors, we must not neglect our devotion, love and worship unto the Lord.
 - The LORD wants the voice of our devotion to continue to ascend from our hearts without ceasing even in the midst of our anointed ministry to others.
 - We must not neglect the "one thing" when doing the "many things".
 - ii. In intercession as we join Jesus who makes intercession forever. (Heb. 7:25)
 - Another way to love Jesus is by lifting our voice in intercession. We must continue to lift our voice in intercession in the midst of her ministry to others.
 - Jesus wants to hear your voice in intercession. God wants to hear the voice of His Church in night and day intercession (Isa. 62:6 – 7). He wants to hear our intercession for revival day and night. He wants to
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hear your voice in partnership as you speak the gospel to unbelievers, and as you encourage the saints.

- iii. In teaching as we speak the Word to one another. (Matt. 28:19 – 20; Col. 1:28)
 - One of the ways that we care for the vineyard is by lifting our voice in teaching. She should teach and encourage others as if God were listening to her, since she will give an account to Him one day.
 - Another way to care for the Church is by lifting our voice to speak words of encouragement to others.
 - This exhortation is very similar to Matt. 28:19 – 20 where Jesus tells the disciples to go and make disciples of all nations.
- iv. In evangelism as we share the gospel to unbelievers.

H. THE BRIDE'S FINAL CRY FOR JESUS TO RETURN (Song. 8:14)

1. The Bride immediately obeys Jesus' exhortation to let Him hear her voice by interceding for Jesus to come quickly.
 - a. We see the urgency and longing of her heart to be with Jesus.
 - b. She calls Jesus, "My beloved" because her love for Him is her strength to the end. She also recognizes that Jesus is her soon coming Divine Bridegroom.
 - c. The true measurement of a mature Bride is one who yearns and longs for the return of Jesus. (1 John 1:1 – 4; Rev. 22:20; Titus 2:15)
2. Jesus was revealed as the gazelle and young stag that conquered the mountains in Song. 2:8, 17.
 - a. She asks Jesus to come quickly like a swift gazelle and a young stag to conquer all the mountains of opposition and to manifest Himself as the victorious King over all the obstacles of this age.
 - b. She recognizes that Jesus is the soon coming Conquering King who will rule and reign over the earth.
3. "MAKE HASTE, MY BELOVED, and be like a gazelle or a young stag on the mountains of spices."
 - a. She immediately responds with intercession for His visitation to all the Church and then for His Second Coming.
 - b. We see the urgency and longing of her heart to be with Jesus in full bridal intimacy. She says, "Make haste, quickly come, be like a gazelle or a young stag on the mountains."

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- c. This is the same prayer as “Maranatha,” which means, “come quickly Lord” in Rev. 22:17 and 22:20.
 - d. In her last words, she ends the song like she began it in Song. 1:4 – “Draw me and let us run.”
 - e. These are her last words in the book. She ends Song of Songs like she began it, with “draw me and let us run.” What started as a cry for a kiss, and the receiving of a seal, ends in the same urgent cry for His return.
4. “Make haste, My beloved, and be LIKE A GAZELLE OR A YOUNG STAG on the mountains of spices.”
 - a. Jesus was revealed as the gazelle and young stag that conquered the mountains in Song. 2:8, 17.
 - b. She asks Jesus to come quickly like a swift gazelle and a young stag to conquer all the mountains of opposition and to manifest Himself as the victorious King over all the obstacles of this age.
 - c. She recognizes that Jesus is the soon coming Conquering King Who will rule and reign over the earth.
 5. She offers a three-fold prayer that Jesus come near her personally in intimacy, to her city in revival and finally for her at the Second Coming. The End-Time Church has this same prayer. (Rev. 22:17, 20)
 - a. Come NEAR US in intimacy – individual breakthrough of our hearts in God
 - b. Come TO US in revival – regional or national breakthrough of the Spirit in revival
 - c. Come FOR US in the sky – historical breakthrough by the Second Coming of Jesus
 6. This will be the first time in history, that the Church worldwide will be in dynamic unity with the Spirit and therefore, the Spirit will be resting on and moving through the Church in great power.
 7. The two-fold expression of the Bride's cry for Jesus to come:
 - a. Worship – “We love You, we worship You, we beckon You to come by our love.”
 - b. Intercession – “We need You, we pray for You to come and release revival power.”
 8. A two-dimensional cry: upward to God and outward to people:
 - a. Vertical – an upward call to Jesus to come to us in breakthrough power
 - b. Horizontal – an outward call to people to come to Jesus as the Bridegroom King
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9. We call believers (i.e. revival, discipleship) and unbelievers (i.e. evangelism) to experience the Bridegroom God. The Church will “call out” in two directions.
 - a. We will call out to Jesus in intercession to “come to us”.
 - b. We will call out to people who thirst to “come to Jesus.”
 10. “Make haste, My beloved, and be like a gazelle or a young stag ON THE MOUNTAINS OF SPICES.”
 - a. These mountains are unusual and spectacular. They speak of a place of unbroken communion with the Lord face to face.
 - b. Jesus is now referred to as coming from the “mountain of spices”, the Eternal City.
 - i. This speaks of the Eternal City, which is the abundant of diverse spices beyond anything we can imagine.
 - ii. The “mountains of spices” ultimately speaks of the fragrance, the pleasure and the beauty of the Eternal City. That is where He is coming from to bring us the fullness of God whose throne is described as the “mountain of spices.”
 - c. Throughout the book, there are three kinds of spices being mentioned:
 - i. Individual believers are spoken of as having all the “chief spices”. (Song. 1:12; 4:10, 14)
 - ii. The corporate Church is spoken of as a “garden of spices”. (Song. 4:16, 5:1, 6:2)
 - iii. The Eternal City is spoken as the “mountain of spices”.

The Bridal Journey of Holy Passion

Presented in a Chiastic Framework

- A** The Bridal Cry (Song 1:1 – 4)
- B** The Bride's Initial Spiritual Crisis (Song 1:5 – 11)
- C** Establishing of Bridal Identity (Song 1:12 – 2:7)
- D** Invitation to Bridal Partnership (Song 2:8 – 17)
- E** Divine Discipline (Song 3:1 – 5)
- F** Jesus Prepares the Bride to Overcome Fear (Song 3:6 – 11)
- G** Jesus Prepares the Bride for 2-Fold Test I (Song 4:1 – 6)
- H** Jesus Prepares the Bride for 2-Fold Test II (Song 4:7–15)
- X** Turning Point of the Bridal Journey (Song 4:16)
- H'** The Bride's Ultimate 2-Fold Test (Song 5:1 – 7)
- G'** The Bride's 2-Fold Response to the Test (Song 5:8 – 6:3)
- F'** Jesus Praises the Overcoming Bride (Song 6:4 – 10)
- E'** Divine Vindication (Song 6:11 – 7:9a)
- D'** The Mature Bridal Partnership (Song 7:9b – 8:4)
- C'** Sealing of the Mature Bride (Song 8:5 – 7)
- B'** The Mature Bride of Christ and the Final Commission of Jesus (Song 8:8–13)
- A'** The Final Cry of the Bride (Song 8:14)

About IHOP – One Thing Ministries

The Heart of our Vision

*“John the Baptist said...the friend of the Bridegroom...rejoices because of the Bridegroom’s voice.”
(John 3:29)*

“Anna...did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day...and she spoke of Jesus to all...” (Luke 2:37 – 38)

“Pray that the Lord of the Harvest would send out laborers into His Harvest... therefore go to all nations and make disciples.” (Matthew 9:38; 28:19)

“...for My House shall be called a House of prayer for all nations.” (Isaiah 56:7)

Our Mission and Mandate

At the International House of Prayer – One Thing Ministries, we are committed to Prayer with Worship, the Prophetic and the Great Commission.

We embrace and seek to live out the following four heart standards (embodied in the acronym “IHOP”), in order to be a people who will partner with God in these Last Days:

- **Intercession:** a people of prayer, expressed corporately through night and day prayer and worship;
- **Holiness:** a people who have set ourselves apart for intimacy with God, and who live out the Sermon on the Mount lifestyle;
- **Offering:** a people who give extravagantly to God for the advancement of His Kingdom, and who live a fasted lifestyle (ie. living simply for ourselves);
- **Prophetic:** a people who stand boldly in faith, move in the power of God and have confidence in His provision, protection and direction.

As a **missions base**, we seek to equip and send missionaries as dedicated intercessors and evangelists with a forerunner spirit who will labour to see revival and a great harvest all over Asia.

The **heart of our missions base** is 24/7 worship and prayer; thus, we seek to establish a 24/7 House of Prayer in Singapore – a perpetual sacred assembly gathering corporately to fast and pray in the spirit of the Tabernacle of David.

Two historical figures from the Bible who inspire us are Anna, the first evangelist and forerunner in the New Testament, and King David from the Old Testament. Anna prayed and fasted for over sixty years before Jesus’ first coming (Luke 2:37), and King David organized and paid 4,000 musicians and 288 singers to worship God night and day (1 Chron. 23:1 – 25:31).

Our **mandate** is to train believers, from this place of night and day prayer, to love Jesus and people wholeheartedly as they go forth to preach the Word, heal the sick, serve the poor, plant Houses of Prayer and proclaim the return of Jesus across the earth.

THE CALL AND INVITATION TO BUILD THE HOUSE OF PRAYER

My heart burns as I invite you to partner in the vision that the LORD gave us to equip people from all over the world to live lives overflowing with passion for Jesus and compassion for people. John the Baptist described himself as a “friend of the Bridegroom” as he prepared the people for the first coming of the LORD. Today, the Holy Spirit is raising up “friends of the Bridegroom” type ministries like John, with the “forerunner spirit” to prepare His Bride for Jesus’ Second Coming.

After being a pastor for more than 15 years, my ministry has changed significantly. I now devote all my energy to establish a ministry that embraces fervent intercessory prayer and worship with daily fasting as a foundation for effective outreach and world evangelization. I deeply believe that unceasing intercession, worship and fasting are the vital keys to the completion of the Great Commission.

One Thing Ministries is committed to Prayer (i.e. intercession, worship, healing, prophecy, etc.), Fasting (i.e. covering 365 days a year), the Forerunner Spirit (i.e. preparing the Church as a Bride for the unique dynamics in the End-Times), and the Great Commission (i.e. proclaiming Jesus to all nations). We are consumed with the mandate to train believers to love Jesus and others wholeheartedly as they go forth to preach the Word, heal the sick, serve the poor and plant Houses of Prayer across Asia.

However, at the heart of our ministries is the 24-hour a day prayer with worship. Our original inspiration came from Anna in Luke 2:37 – 38, the first evangelist and forerunner in the New Testament who prayed and fasted for 60 years before Jesus’ first coming. We were also inspired by King David, who organized 4,000 musicians and 288 singers to worship God 24 hours a day (1 Chron. 23 – 25).

On September 6, 2003, I gathered together a few people with the burden to establish a House of Prayer in the spirit of the tabernacle of David. We know that it is the heart of God to establish a House of Prayer where “the fire on the altar shall never go out” in the land of Singapore. We trusted that people would come from all over the island – musicians, worship leaders and singers would come; finances would be provided; etc.

In 1722, an “Intercessory Missions Base” was established Germany by Count Nicholas Ludwig Von Zinzendorf. They named their settlement Herrnhut, which means “The Watch of the LORD” and they began prayer meetings that continued 24 hours a day for over 100 years resulting in the first Protestant missions movement in history known as the Moravians. To this we say, “Yes LORD, do this in Singapore even in our day!”

Leviticus 6:13 says that “the fire must be kept burning on the altar continuously; it must not go out.” It is our goal also to keep the fire burning that it may never go out! **We are calling out to all the worship leaders, musicians, singers, intercessors, etc.** who have the heart to establish this House for the LORD to join us to keep this fire burning continuously!

“So the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and worked on the house of the LORD of hosts, their God.” (Haggai 1:14)

Kay-Chong Yeo
Director, IHOP – One Thing Ministries